

Oliver P. Richmond
Gëzim Visoka
Editors

The Palgrave Encyclopedia of Peace and Conflict Studies

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With 58 Figures and 28 Tables

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For Eira and Erik, and Leander

Preface

The *Palgrave Encyclopedia of Peace and Conflict Studies* contains a comprehensive overview of major concepts, cases, and approaches to the study of peace and conflict across different humanities and social sciences disciplines. Peace and conflict studies (PCS) is one of the major sub-disciplines of international studies (including political sciences and international relations) and has emerged from a need to understand war and its related systems and concepts and how to respond to it afterward. Over time, peace and conflict studies has become an important site for inter-disciplinary studies, spanning war, peace, and conflict studies; security and development; state formation and state building; law and human rights; civil society and political authority; philosophy and religion; the anthropology and history of political order; environmental dimensions; as well as the arts and literature, psychology, and material conditions of peace, peacemaking, peace agreements, the peaceful state, the nature of regional and international cooperation and organization, among others. This interdisciplinary area of studies has also attracted scholars interested in ethics, alternative methodologies, and critical theory.

While there is extensive written scholarly work on various aspects of peace and conflict, there is no up-to-date academic encyclopedia which encompasses this fast-growing and highly significant area of research. Thus, we are delighted to present to you the first edition of the *Palgrave Encyclopedia of Peace and Conflict Studies* which has brought together leading and emerging scholars from different disciplines to provide the most comprehensive and up-to-date resource on peace and conflict concepts, theories, methods, approaches, case studies, institutions, policies, and practices. Matters concerning peace, conflict, security, and development – which are at the heart of this discipline – are a concern not only for a niche academic community but also the wider public (as the history of twentieth-century disarmament, pacifist, and human rights campaigns illustrate). Hence, we have aimed at making the *Palgrave Encyclopedia of Peace and Conflict Studies* an easy-to-access, updatable, and expandable online platform to cover various relevant themes widely, which is important for both the scholarly community and the general public, hopefully also making an impact on policy makers. It is a living reference work, easily discoverable and searchable, spanning the foundational, historical, and contemporary themes. It combines breadth and depth, flexibility, global reach, and academic rigor in the age of digital learning, in order to support the interdisciplinary development of critical theories and methods necessary for the continuing study of peace. The entries in this first edition

examine a broad range of topics from disciplinary perspectives, key concepts, types and histories of conflicts, and actors to institutions, networks, and practices, as well as peacemaking, peacekeeping, peacebuilding operations, and “peacegraphy” and arts.

This encyclopedic project has been in the making since 2017, and it would not have been possible without the immense dedication of a number of people. First and foremost, we are grateful to all the contributors for their creative and original work for this project, which has been essential in making it a cutting-edge reference work. We are grateful to the section editors, Sandra Pogodda, Kai Michael Kenkel, Johanna Mannergren Selimovic, Maria-Adriana Deiana, and Liridona Veliu, for their outstanding work in commissioning and reviewing entries. Finally, at Palgrave/Springer, we are grateful to Sarah Roughley for encouraging us to undertake this project, Ruth Lefevre for exceptional editorial guidance and support, and Sunali Mull and Salmanul Faris Nedum Palli for excellent and tireless editorial assistance. We are also grateful to other colleagues, such as John Doyle at Dublin City University, for supporting the project in various ways over the years.

Manchester, UK
Dublin, Ireland
May 2022

Oliver P. Richmond
Gëzim Visoka

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Oliver P. Richmond is Professor of IR, Peace and Conflict Studies in the Department of Politics, University of Manchester, UK. He is also international professor at Dublin City University and at the University of Tübingen. His publications include *The Grand Design* (Oxford University Press, 2021). He is co-editor of the Palgrave book series *Rethinking Peace and Conflict Studies* and co-editor of the journal *Peacebuilding*.



Dr. Gëzim Visoka is Associate Professor of Peace and Conflict Studies at Dublin City University, Ireland. His research expertise is on state recognition, peacebuilding, and international critical theory. Dr. Visoka is author or editor of numerous books, journal articles, and book chapters. Some of his recent books include: *The Oxford Handbook of Peacebuilding, Statebuilding, and Peace Formation* (with Oliver P. Richmond, Oxford University Press, 2021); *Normalization in World Politics* (with Nicolas Lemay-Hébert, The University of Michigan Press, 2022); and *Routledge Handbook of State Recognition* (with John Doyle and Edward Newman, Routledge, 2020), among others. He is deputy editor of *Peacebuilding* journal (Taylor and Francis), editor of *Routledge Studies in Statehood* (Taylor and Francis), and co-editor of *Rethinking Peace and Conflict Studies* series (Palgrave Macmillan).

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Alternative Dispute Resolution

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Synonyms

Adjudication; Arbitration; Conciliation; Contract embellishment; Dispute resolution; Facilitation; Fact-finding; Local civil dialogue; Med-arb; Mediation; Mediation-arbitration; Mini-trials; Mock Trials; Ombudsmen; Pareto optimal agreement; Private Tribunals; Rent-a-judges; Summary jury trials

Description

When parties in conflict cannot negotiate or manage their own conflicts, they sometimes resort to one of several forms of “alternative dispute resolution.” Some are informal variations of adjudicatory processes such as torts with a judge and jury, others originate with more consensual methods, and still others mingle the two. Beyond the methods described below, those more suitable to national and international disputes are discussed separately under Search for Peace. (Haltorn and McCann 2004, McQuillan et al. 2007).

Arbitration is a quasi-judicial process in which a neutral, the arbitrator, decides how to resolve a dispute based on the competitive presentation of

Non-violent alternatives to the courts for resolving disputes with distinct strengths and weaknesses are described in this article.

information by the disputants. Arbitrators usually are selected based on substantive expertise concerning the type of dispute. Either or both the process, the decision can be advisory or compulsory and usually is not appealable except for causes such as bias. It is particularly appropriate when speed is desirable or confidential or proprietary information is involved. In some forms, the arbitrator must choose one of the disputants' proposals without modification, an approach that fosters moderation as arbitrators tend to choose the less extreme position (American Arbitration Association 1992; Goodman 2016; Kellor 1999).

Conciliation typically consists of private, often back-and-forth, third-party consultations to reduce tensions sufficiently for some other methods such as negotiation (discussed in a separate article) or one of the other methods mentioned in this article to have a chance of success (Ladd 2005).

Contract embellishment seeks to reach a Pareto optimal agreement. After the parties reach a tentative agreement, the embellisher interviews each party confidentially to determine the relative importance they attach to each possible resolution of each issue, usually by requiring them to distribute 100 points to each possibility for each issue. Totaling the ratings for each possible combination followed by inspection or the sort function for a spreadsheet enables the embellisher to identify the optimum resolution for each party and for the combined parties. The embellisher can then write an optimum proposal to discuss privately with each party. If all think it an improvement, it replaces the tentative one without change (Raiffa 1982).

Fact-finding by an agreed-upon neutral identifies relevant laws, witnesses, and any other information that is likely to assist in reaching a resolution through some other dispute resolution process. It is particularly common in labor-management disputes. By prior agreement, the findings may be kept confidential, admissible or not in subsequent procedures, or made public.

Facilitation. See *Mediation*.

Local civil dialogue is conducted in "safe spaces" such as libraries and churches to discuss

problems within an agreed set of rules that (with group pressure) usually ensure civility. It aims to bring together people "hungry for community" and provides them with a like-minded audience representing a wide range of opinions. Usually, there is a substantial initial turnout that dwindles with successive meetings as it becomes clear that the group lacks the political or institutional apparatus to do more than talk.

Mediation is a process in which an impartial third-party neutral facilitates two or more disputants who retain the power of decision to reach an accord. It can be voluntary or mandatory, and any decision may or may not be enforceable by law. Mediation frequently has resulted in innovative resolutions with higher satisfaction and compliance than compulsory methods. It works best in relatively small-scale conflicts where there have been close relationships between two more-or-less equal disputants. It is potentially more confidential than arbitration (although in some cases mediators can be compelled to testify if the dispute ends in court). Most mediators are impartial, avoiding any case in which they have an interest or in which even the appearance of favoritism might cost them the confidence of one party. However, some mediators believe they should help the weaker party, particularly when the disparity is great. Still other mediators employ "transformative mediation" in which they try to improve relationships in addition to helping reach agreement (Beer and Steif 1997; Bens 2016; Bush and Folger 2004; Folberg and Taylor 1984; Kaner 2014; Kolb and Associates 1994; Ladd 2005; Moore 2003; Mosten 2001).

Mediation-arbitration or *med-arb* begins as mediation and shifts to arbitration (see above) if the disputants fail to reach agreement, either the mediator changing roles or bringing in a different individual as the arbitrator if needed.

Mini-trials also known as or similar to *adjudication*, *mock trials*, *private tribunals*, *rent-a-judge*, or *summary jury trials*, each with minor variations. They usually include competitive presentations of evidence following formal procedural rules before a judge or jury often of appropriate experts who are able to ask questions and have either advisory or decision-making

authority. The judge or the jury, often joined by a facilitator, retire to reach a settlement that results in an order, judgment, or decree, usually appealable to some higher authority.

Ombudsmen are selected by and paid for by an organization to prevent, minimize, or mitigate complaints, conflicts, or problems with or among employees and customers. In some cases, the institutional affiliation may compromise their supposed impartiality and neutrality.

Summary

These methods and the variations on them in name and method, each with its own strengths and weaknesses and thus appropriateness to different situations, are a few among the proliferating non-violent methods that can be used to manage or resolve a widening range of conflicts (Deutsch 1973, 2006; Purkey 2010).

Cross-References

- ▶ [Culture and Conflict Resolution](#)
- ▶ [Human Dignity and Transitional Justice](#)
- ▶ [Independent Commissions and Peace Settlements](#)
- ▶ [Negotiation](#)
- ▶ [Search for Peace, the](#)
- ▶ [Urban Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Use of Force in Peace Operations](#)

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- ▶ [Identifying Stable Solutions to Conflicts](#)

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- ▶ [Popular Protest in Palestine](#)

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Armed conflict

- ▶ [Armed Conflicts in Africa and Indigenous Conflict Resolution](#)

Armed Conflicts in Africa and Indigenous Conflict Resolution

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Synonyms

[Africa](#); [Armed conflict](#); [Indigenous conflict resolution](#); [Peacebuilding](#); [South Africa](#); [Ubuntu system](#)

Definition

Most peace interventions in the conflicts in Africa have proved ineffective due to the lack of knowledge in understanding the crisis environment coupled with the inability to appreciate the cultural value of the people in the resolution of the crises. Indigenous conflict resolution in Africa has its unique prescriptions in contrast with the Western models. It is aimed at restoring social equilibrium by reconciling parties to a dispute for

sustainable peace. In the adjudication of dispute in traditional African societies, the guilty ones are integrated back into the society for social harmony. The entry is an important contribution to the body of knowledge in peace studies and conflict resolution. It is believed that the extant methodologies used in traditional African societies could be adapted into the policy framework of the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council along with the Western model. This entry also has wider implications for African cultural revival and indigenous conflict resolution.

Introduction

As armed conflicts have ravaged most communities in Africa, the search for peace in the continent has dominated discussions at the international level. In the search for durable peace in Africa, conflict resolution processes and peace initiatives have often been executed by various institutions that include the UN, regional organizations such as the AU, international and local NGO's and governments (Mpangala, 2004). Some of the peace efforts have been through peace negotiation and mediation, peacekeeping, and peace enforcement. It is common knowledge that conventional mechanisms for conflict resolution in Africa have in some cases proved ineffective to address the problems, although there have been little success in some areas. The failure to integrate the cultural value of the people into the peace policy and identifying the structural causes of conflict is one of the reasons why Western models of peacebuilding have failed in Africa (Kirby, 2006). For instance, the 1993–1994 UN Security Council peacekeeping force to Rwanda UNAMIR failed to broker peace between the government and RPF rebels, leading to the genocide of 1994 in Rwanda (Khan, 1998). In another example, the UN taskforce in Somalia in 1992 UNITAF failed to deliver, but later was withdrawn due to casualties it suffered in 1993 while in confrontation with one of the rebel groups in Somalia (Mosha, 1998).

Given the armed conflict scenario which has reduced Africa into theatre of war and genocide in the world, indigenous approaches to conflict

resolution and its relevance for sustainable peace is discussed in this entry taking into consideration the South Africa's ubuntu peacebuilding strategy. The ubuntu system of conflict resolution epitomizes African value system as conflict is resolved at the communal level claims Murithi (2006). Indigenous approaches to conflict resolution could be adapted into the policy framework of the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council along with the Western model. Even though Africa has been transformed through colonialism which introduced new values into the society, there remain certain African cultural practices such as local conflict resolution mechanisms and traditional peacebuilding methods that have survived the colonial onslaught (Zartman, 2000). The methods of conflict resolution in traditional society in Africa were deeply rooted in the customs and traditions of the African people. Bennett (1993, p. 32), posits by saying that in traditional African societies "the essence and processes of conflict resolution was to reconcile the parties to a dispute in the communities." Indigenous approaches to peacebuilding in Africa include mediation, accommodation, reconciliation and negotiation which are rooted in the knowledge, customs and history of Africans. As espoused by Mbiti (2010), African's peacebuilding processes, including reconciliation are not foreign notions and their intensity has accelerated wound healing and consensus building.

After a brief discussion on the crises in Africa and indigenous methods of conflict resolution, this entry outlines five key issues relevant to armed conflicts in Africa and indigenous conflict resolution. First, it provides the theoretical background and the critique of the Western models of peacebuilding (liberal peacebuilding). It then analyzes armed conflicts in Africa, highlighting the causes, dynamics, and consequences of the conflicts in some African countries. The entry shifts attention to Western model of conflict resolution in Africa, while the fourth part analyzes indigenous conflict resolution in Africa. The ubuntu system and peacebuilding in South Africa explicates how ubuntu is implemented during peacemaking process. It ends with a summary.

Theoretical Framework

Theories have been formulated in peace studies to explicate the concept of peacebuilding relative to the conflict resolution in the affected societies. However, the arguments for indigenous approaches to peacebuilding and conflict resolution in Africa have also developed. As an intervention strategy, peacebuilding is complementary to peacekeeping and peacemaking in an environment of crisis. With the objective of creating the conditions for a self-sustaining peace in order to prevent a return to armed conflict, peacebuilding is directed toward the eradication of the root causes of violence (Cravo, 2018). The theory of peacebuilding is an assumption that developed from the liberal peace model, as a transition from armed violence to lasting peace. Johan (1976) developed the concept of peacebuilding in his writing *Three Approaches to Peace: Peacekeeping, Peacemaking and Peacebuilding*. The theoretical assumptions for peace studies are found in the conception of triangle of violence and the triangle of peace. The understanding behind cultural violence calls for the practice of international intervention with the concepts of peacekeeping, peacemaking, and peacebuilding by Galtung. From peacekeeping and peacemaking conceptions, Galtung develops the concept of peacebuilding. Peacebuilding is an associative approach to conflict aimed at direct, structural, and cultural causes of violence in the longer term for positive peace (Cravo, 2018). Coming from the background of Galtung's theoretical assumptions, peacebuilding began as a key focus of international intervention in international crisis in the early 1990s, in particular by the UN.

Boutros-Ghali (1992, p. 27) defines peacebuilding as "the process by which an achieved peace is placed on durable foundations and which prevents violent conflict from recurring by dealing with the underlying economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems responsible for the conflict." He emphasized further by declaring that "peacebuilding is the actions undertaken by national or international actors to identify and support structures which intend to strengthen and

solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict.” In the implementation of peacebuilding agenda, scholars have viewed with skepticism the execution of Western liberalism agenda. However, liberal peacebuilding was thus adopted by the UN as an agenda for international commitment to transform post-war nation-states. The elements of democratic elections, market liberalism, humanitarian assistance and the rule of law that underpin liberal peacebuilding gained this approach, massive international support to be used by the UN as well as other donor countries for transforming war affected nations (Hoffmann, 1995) including Angola, Namibia, and El-Salvador.

Without a doubt, the liberal peacekeeping model is widely acknowledged and supported, yet the critics like Roland Paris and Timothy Sisk, Oliver Richmond, and Kristoffer Liden have pointed out the flaws contained in the approach toward achieving durable peace through the Western liberalism. They backed up their argument with the failure recorded in countries like Angola, Mozambique, Rwanda, Somalia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina where peacebuilding efforts have failed to secure peace and they rather renewed violence. The Western approach of the liberal peace was, however, integrated into collective security instruments for the maintenance of peace (Michael, 2005). The adoption of maximalist approach, according to Roland Paris (Paris 1997, p. 55), “is an experiment in social engineering that involves transplanting Western models of social, political, and economic organisation into war-shattered states in order to control civil conflict - pacification through political and economic liberalization.” In another view, Paris (1997) is critical of liberal peacebuilding model for its ineffectiveness and failure to establishing sustainable peace, most especially in Africa. It is rather viewed with shocking revelations that its adoption has caused political and economic destabilizations in some war-torn countries with renewed violence by parties in conflict.

About 50 of those countries affected by wars that signed peace agreements in the 5 years of hostilities for instance, relapsed into violent conflicts (Collier et al., 2003).

In the case of Angola, political liberalization contributed to the resurgence of the violence in the country. Similar experience was witnessed in Mozambique as economic liberalization threatened to reignite the fragile peace in the country. After the peace agreement in Mozambique in October 1992 following 17 years of intermittent warfare, a democratic election supervised by UN was held. However, the World Bank and IMF imposed Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) limited government’s efforts to deliver, with high rate of poverty in the country. As a result, the worsened living conditions led to armed banditry in the rural community that heightened tension and a possible uprising. Against this background, scholars have renewed the call for indigenous approaches to peacebuilding and conflict resolution in Africa against the current Western models (Bukari, 2013; Zartman, 2000). The state of insecurity caused by armed conflicts in African countries would be the major discussion in the next section in this entry.

Armed Conflicts in Africa

At one time or another, African countries have witnessed relative peace and experienced crises since their independence. When put side by side, there have been more periods of conflicts than the period of peace on the continent, as the largest number of armed conflicts in the world happened inside Africa (Straus, 2012). It is obvious that many African states have experienced civil wars, mass killings, and other forms of direct political violence right from the period of independence (Straus, 2012). It used to be inter-state wars at the initial stage however, the theatre of war changed from the kind of battle fought outside the state borders since most conflicts today occur within the states. These are intra-state conflicts such as civil-wars/guerrilla warfare, ethnic/religious conflicts, political violence, armed banditry and terrorism. Straus (2012, p. 179) corroborates this much in *Wars do Change! Changing Patterns of Political Violence in Sub-Saharan Africa* where he observes that the character of warfare in the

region has changed. In his estimation, today's wars are typically fought on the peripheries of states, and insurgents tend to be militarily weak and somewhat factionalized.

The civil wars that have occurred in African countries, particularly in the 1990s include: war in Somalia between 1990 and 1993, ethnic violence between Tutsis and Hutus in Burundi 1991, ethnic war in Rwanda 1991–1992, ethnic war in Liberia between 1989 and 2003, warfare in Sierra Leone from 1991–2002, etc. Meanwhile, low intensive conflicts (LIC) emerged in some African countries in the late 2000s and early 2010s. This type of conflict include: 2006 Casamance rebellion in Senegal, the 2004–2007 Ogaden fighting for self-determination in Ethiopia, the Caprivi strip secession bid, Namibia, the 2003 Lord's Resistance Army offensive in Northern Uganda, the 2004 and later 2007 Cabinda separatist armed struggle in Angola, the 2014–2015 Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria, Communal conflicts in Chad from 2006–2007, the 1996–2006 insurgency in the Central African Republic, the 2003–2010 violence in the western region of Dafur, Sudan, the 2009 communal violence in South Sudan, as well as 2007–2008 attacks by the Tuaregs in Northern Mali.

Apart from warfare and mass killings that characterized post-colonial experience in Africa, two forms of violence have come to feature in the conflict dynamics in the region: political violence and livelihood clashes. Political violence is associated with election-related violence, while livelihood clashes present themselves as farmer-herder conflict, over access to land, water, and other local resources. Political violence became raged in the 1990s, when one party system gave way to multi-party democracy. Electoral violence, that is, violence directly associated with an electoral contest, either before, during, or after a poll has continued to feature in Africa with such examples in Zimbabwe, Cote d'Ivoire and Kenya (Mueller, 2008). Violence had been witnessed in both Mali and Cote d'Ivoire in particular, over land and water, on resource conflicts (Bassett, 1988).

The UCPD/PRIО Armed Conflict data show that war, in particular civil war, has been a central feature of most Africa's post-colonial history.

About thirty countries in Africa or around 65% of all states in the region have experienced an armed conflict since independence (UCDP/PRIО Armed Conflict data, 2012). Some of these wars lasted for a long period of time having devastating consequences on both social and economy of affected states (Straus, 2012). For example, the wars that burst out in Angola and Sudan lasted more than 20 years. On the other hand, the recent PRIО Paper (2020) *Conflict Trends in Africa, 1989–2019*, reveals that Africa excels in various conflict resolution attempts despite being one of the most violent regions in the world.

The latest episode of violence in Africa concerns the act of trans-border terrorism in which insurgent groups move around and terrorize the people across national borders. The examples of this form of violence traverse many areas in the region. A typical example represents the terrorist activities of the Al-Qaeda in the Maghreb (AQIM) across the Sahel, in Mali, Niger, and Mauritania. Another terrorist organization, Al-Shabab, whose operational base is in Somalia, has been known to have launched sporadic armed attacks in Uganda and Kenya. The group was responsible for the multiple suicide bombings that occurred in Kampala in 2010. Williams Reno says that between 1990 and 2009, about 25 deaths were recorded through the "non-state armed conflicts" in the DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria, Somalia, Sudan, and Uganda (Reno, 2011). In the recent time, the IS acts of terrorism have become widespread in Africa. According to the PRIО Paper (2020, p. 35), "in 2019, nine countries in Africa (Cameroon, Niger, Chad, Nigeria, Libya, Burkina Faso, Mali, Somalia, and Mozambique) witnessed attacks by IS terrorist group within their territories." It is also reported in the PRIО Paper (2020) that from 2018–2019, the number of both state-based conflicts and battle-related deaths increased in Africa. Further, the number of state-based conflicts increased from 21 in 2018 to 25 in 2019 as a result of internationalized civil conflicts that occurred in Cameroon, Burkina Faso, Somalia, and Burundi (PRIО Paper 2020, p. 35). As in foregoing, armed conflicts and associated violence is still on a high scale in Africa with the latest acts of terrorism by IS which shifted base

from the Middle East to Africa. Having analyzed the armed conflict scenario and state of insecurity in African countries in this section, this entry would also look into the factors behind armed conflicts in Africa in the following section.

Causes of Conflicts in Africa

The factors behind violent conflicts which have hampered development and made Africa to be unstable elicit a discussion in this section. This is done by investigating the root causes of armed-conflicts in Africa. What are the triggers for the conflicts and the reasons for the continued crises in the region? Studies on armed conflicts *Warfare in Independent Africa* (Reno, 2011) and *The Causes of Conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa – Framework Document* (DFID, 2001) show that the root of violent conflicts and civil strife in Africa is linked to a multiplicity of factors which include: availability of arms; unemployment; the abuse of ethnicity; exclusion (socio-political); weak states and state collapse; historical factors; natural resource wealth.

Availability of Arms

It has been confirmed in the literature on violence (which is dominated by studies of war and mass killing) such as *Small Arms and Light Weapons Transfer in West Africa: A Stocktaking* (Keili, 2008); *State-Making, State-Breaking and State Failure: Explaining the Roots of “Third World” Insecurity* (Mohammad, 1996), that the major factor causing the instability in some countries in Africa is the issue of small arms and light weapons (SALW), which are readily available in most countries in the region. It is believed that easy accessibility to small arms is fueling and sustaining the conflicts in some African countries. For example, the DFID (2001, p. 15), in *The Causes of Conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa – Framework Document* observes that “between 1972 and 1990, Ethiopia and Somalia imported \$8 billion worth of small arms and light weapons.” “In 1992, the Angola government distributed an estimated 700,000 rifles to the population for their defence against UNITA” (Keili, 2008). Also, arms were

supplied by governments to aid civil wars in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Cote d’Ivoire (Keili, 2008). To clarify this further, Charles Taylor’s National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) was accused of supplying and distributing Foday Sankoh’s Revolutionary United Front (RUF) with arms to fuel the civil war in Sierra Leone. The conflict resulted in the death of over 50,000 people; 30,000 amputations; and over 257,000 women were reportedly raped in the crisis (Ploughshares, 2014). In another example, the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) rebel group received weapons from Guinean governments which they used in killing civilians in Monrovia during the conflict in Liberia (Keili, 2008).

It is therefore to be noted that wide circulation of illicit arms across African states has reinforced conflicts within the region. The ready availability of these weapons has been able to fuel and sustain most ethnic and religious conflicts witnessed in some countries in Africa.

Tackling insecurity by reducing armed violence, the states in Africa have taken some initiatives against illegal arms trafficking and proliferation. These include: the ECOWAS Moratorium on Light Weapons, and the East African Action Programme on Illicit Arms Trafficking and SADC Arms Protocol. However, there are challenges toward the realization of the objective above due to the porous nature of most borders, weak enforcement, and large arms deposit on the continent, as well as well-established illegal supply chains.

Ethnicity

Ethnic violence is common in most states in Africa and has served as a potent source of conflicts in the region. The reason has to do with the inability by leaders to effectively manage the diversity there, as the region is configured by many states that comprise various ethnic groupings. Having said this, ethnicity by itself is not violent. However, violent conflict erupts when people resort to the use of ethnicity as primordial and make claims in its names as a means of advancing group interests (Turton, 1997). Again, what generates ethnic conflict is rather observed by Annan and Danso (2013) as the situation when

identified groups in a fractured society or nation use ethnicity as instrument, most especially when they experience or feel being marginalized. Many studies identified ethnic fragmentation as one of the root causes of armed conflicts and civil war that broke out in Liberia such as that of Vinck et al. (2011) which say that 49% of the population reportedly identified ethnicity and ethnic divisions as the root cause of the Liberian civil wars. Specifically, in the 10-year rule of Samuel Doe, the Krahn and Mandingo ethnic groups were more favored than the others. This resulted in various ethnic tensions that involved the rebellion by Charles Taylor, an Americo-Liberian in 1996. The local militia led by the latter, stirred a civil war in the country. The Nigeria's civil war (1967–1970) resulted from unhealthy competition for power and ethnic rivalries among the major ethnic groups in the country. Similarly, ethnic tensions brew up in Nigeria (1993–1999) over the annulment of presidential election by the military in 1993.

Indeed, ethnic rivalry has been the major cause of internal conflicts in Nigeria. The examples of this are also found in other African countries such as Liberia, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Somalia, Sudan, Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Cote d'Ivoire, Zimbabwe, and Kenya.

Exclusion and Inequality

Social exclusion occurs when the institutions that allocate resources and assign value operate in ways that systematically deny some groups the resources and recognition that would allow them to participate fully in social life (Zeitlyn, 2004). Social exclusion in conflicts is related to those who feel marginalized socially/economically and who tend to have recourse to violence or rebellion (Stewart, 2017). In African countries, some crises that have occurred had their roots in the politics of exclusion and social inequality. Stewart (2017) asserts that large numbers of people in developing countries (Africa) are socially excluded. According to him, these people are excluded by mainstream society from participating fully in the economic, social, and political life of the society where they live in – often because of their cultural, religious, or racial characteristics. The apartheid

South African government was notorious for the practice of the policy of exclusion targeted against the majority blacks in the country. As a result, the blacks in South Africa were up in arms and took offence against the apartheid regime over the discriminatory policies which advanced socio-economic and political inequality between the white and black population in the country.

The Nigerian civil war (1967–1970) resulted from politics of exclusion by the political elites (ethnic group) who controlled power at the center. In Nigeria, the July 29, 1966 coup d'état brought with it dynamics in power relations that resulted in the politics of exclusion by political leaders in the country. Meanwhile, the competition for power by major ethnic groups in Nigeria ignited local sentiments and subsequent attacks, forcing the Igbos to migrate to their region and declared the Independent Republic of Biafra in 1967 (Naffziger, 1973). As a corollary, Nigeria underwent war of attrition in the fate to keep the nation together and united, with attendant blood and destruction, until 1970 when the war was terminated. Political exclusion by the government helped to serve as a major instigator of the conflict in Cote d'Ivoire in 2002. Deeply rooted in ethnic-religious divisions and identity, the situation in the country was aggravated by politics of exclusion. As a result, Cote d'Ivoire broke into civil war in September 2002 (Ogwang 2011, p. 1).

Natural Resource Wealth

Resource control or access to natural resources has in many instances reinforced the conflicts in African states. The African states accommodate two types of resource-based conflict, one being wars of resource scarcity and wars of abundance. The most common conflicts of scarcity relate to the control of land and water rights (DFID, 2001). DFID (2001, p. 15), in "*The Causes of Conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa*," asserts that countries whose economies are dependent on natural resources such as oil and minerals face a high risk of conflict. The work of three expert UN panels on the relationship between illegal exploration of natural resources and conflict in Sierra Leone, Angola, and the DR, in 2011 conclude that "apart from diamond, trade in coltan, cobalt, gold, timber, and oil may play a more

important role in fuelling conflict” (World Development Report, 2011). However, this position holds firmly with the Nigerian situation where poor management of oil resources provoked militancy by the youths in the oil rich Niger Delta region. The situation in the region created state of insecurity in which many oil expatriates were kidnapped by the militant groups, notably the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND). As a matter of fact, the armed groups in the Delta region engaged in oil theft and arms trafficking in the area. The studies conducted by Ashforth (2009) and the International Crisis Group (2008) estimated that 250,000–300,000 barrels, valued at more than US\$3.8 billion, were stolen each year through “oil bunkering” from pipeline or storage facilities. This development, however, enamored the militants and prolonged the crisis in the oil rich region.

The civil wars in both Liberia and Sierra Leone, though not resource based at inception, the presence of minerals like diamond and timber in the region reinforced the conflicts. The above is corroborated by the outcome of research by UNODC (2015) and Harwell (2013) that the conventional political conflict in Liberia that spread to Sierra Leone and Cote d’Ivoire, later gave way to a more organized crime across the region as warring factions pillaged natural resources. Further studies confirm that at the height of the conflict in Sierra Leone, illegal exports accounted for more than 90% of its diamond trade Gberie (2002), or more than US\$200 million in 2002 (Even-Zohar, 2003). In Liberia in 2001, timber valued between USD\$168–180 million was illicitly traded off (UNODC, 2015). It is clear from above that armed conflicts in African countries resulted from many factors laying background for the state of insecurity in the region. In the next section, the consequences of armed conflicts in African countries would be analyzed.

The Consequences of Armed Conflicts in Africa

The armed conflicts in Africa have wreck havoc in the affected areas with attendant deaths and

material losses. The continued warfare has claimed the lives of many, including children. For example, the civil war in Burundi, 1993–2005, claimed over 300,000 lives (Jackson, 2006), while over 250,000 people lost their lives in the 14 years civil war in Liberia (BBC, 2018). The same situation was witnessed in the 10 year Sierra Leone crisis where about 50,000 people were reportedly killed, and half the population displaced (Gberie 2002, p. 2). In an article by diplomatic editor Patrick Wintour, for example, the recent clashes in Libya have left more than 1000 people dead and more than 300,000 people displaced (The Guardian, 2019). Before the civil war in Angola got terminated in 2002, more than 15,000 deaths were recorded in the battle between government army and the rebel (UNITA) forces led by late Jonas Savimbi. In the war that started in Burundi in 1998 and lasted until 2008, over one hundred thousand people died as a result. The ethnic warfare involved Tutsis and Hutus for control of central government held by the minority Tutsi since the country independence in 1962. In the war in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) between 1996 and 2003, an estimated 5.4 million people were reportedly killed (Zenko, 2016). Between 2010 and 2011, some three thousand (3000) people were reportedly killed in the post-election conflict in Cote d’Ivoire which involved Laurent Gbagbo and Alhassan Quattara (France 24, 2011).

Appraising development and security issues in the risk environment, and the links between them, DFID (2001) research, *Tackling Poverty by Reducing Armed Violence*, observes that violent conflict is a major cause of poverty and a key barrier to development in many poor countries. It estimated that war leads to a large-scale population displacement, reduces access to basic services and human rights abuses. In a situation of war, DFID avers that people are denied access to land or employment; markets are disrupted; and public and private assets destroyed; and the entire community livelihoods are destroyed. As noted in conflict research, violence compromises human security and dignity. It is on this basis that more than 90 countries endorsed the 2008 Geneva Declaration on “Armed Violence and Development”.

The 2008 Declaration argues that living free from the threat of an armed conflict is a basic human need. To achieve stability by reducing violence in the region, therefore, African countries in 2000 signed the Lome Declaration which established standards and a regional response mechanism to unconstitutional changes in government.

This has been associated with a reduction in coups d'état from 15 in the 1990s to 5 from 2000 to mid-2010 (World Development Report, 2011). Despite this fact, human sufferings and material losses are still experienced in Africa due to violence associated with armed conflicts across the region. In Sudan, for example, more than two million people died in the long running civil war. In Rwanda, over 800,000 people lost their lives in the genocide that occurred in the civil war in 1994 (DFID, 2001). On the human sufferings in the Rwanda's war, about 250,000 rapes reportedly took place in 1994. For decades, countries such as Liberia, Sierra Leone, Cote d'Ivoire, and Guinea-Bissau were crippled by conflicts and civil strife in which violence and incessant killings were prevalent (Afolabi 2009, p. 24). In the 2007 election aftermath in Kenya, gangs and politically motivated groups engaged in ethnically aligned violence (Ashforth, 2009; ICG, 2008). Quoting DFID (2001, p. 9) in UNCHR, 2000, "in 2000, almost eleven million people in Africa were internally displaced." The effects of violence are profound for countries that have gone through civil wars in Africa. Thus, poverty in most countries in the region today is linked to the environment of crisis created by armed conflicts, leading to displacement of people and destruction of communities' livelihood.

In violence-prone and war-ravaged countries in Africa, school children are affected as school infrastructures get destroyed, leading to displacement of teachers and abrupt suspension of school program. Similarly, violence and armed conflicts in these countries destroyed the household assets of poor people; pervading fear of violent attacks prevented the locals from farming or travelling to schools, clinics, workplaces, and markets. As witnessed in Nigeria, economic neglect and alienation from political power triggered violence in the Niger Delta oil-rich region. The environment

as a result became militarized by the local militia who engaged in kidnapping of foreign oil workers and massive oil theft in the area. In recent time, terrorism and armed banditry spread from the Sahel and Lake Chad area in West Africa. The Low Intensity Conflict (LIC) developed in the North East of Nigeria when a local Islamic group morphed into insurgency and launched attack against civilians. The Boko Haram insurgency spread from Nigeria to other neighboring states of Chad, Niger, and Cameroun. In the Sahel region, terrorism and armed banditry were launched by the Tuaregs in the Northern Mali. Countries like Senegal, Guinea, and Burkina Faso have been affected by the attacks from the terrorist groups in the area. In Kenya, the Al-Shabab terrorist group has established an operational base in the country, with frequent armed attack on civilians, both in the country and some other states in the region. Equally, North Africa had experienced a series of dramatic social protests and political turbulence (the Arab Spring), escalating into outright conflict in these countries, first in Tunisia, Egypt, and later in Libya. Armed conflicts in Africa are intense and have continued to wreck havoc on the continent. The armed conflicts in Africa have had consequential effects on the economy of most states in Africa. However, the interventions in the conflicts in Africa have been through external supports or local initiatives by regional African organizations. Most often, these interventions come in form of cease fires, peace agreements, and peacekeeping missions which constitute the basis of discussion in the next section.

Western Model of Conflict Resolution in Africa

In the 1990s, the increase in the number of violent conflicts in the world and Africa in particular, was given visibility and prominence on the international agenda for peace (Sollenberg & Wallensteen, 2000). Again, the nature of armed conflicts, particularly devastating civil wars call for interventionism (Mohammad, 1996). In the *UN Agenda for Peace* (1992), Boutros-Ghali

called on the international organizations to address the threats to international peace and security. The Western model of peace was thus institutionalized in the UN peace agenda. These are 4 interrelated strategies: preventive diplomacy: peacemaking, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding. Preventive diplomacy refers to actions to prevent the occurrence of conflict or to prevent escalation of existing conflict and the effort to limit the conflict. On the other hand, peacemaking is conflict transformation which is aimed at preventing future conflict. Peacekeeping refers to activities undertaken to stabilize peace in a conflict environment, while peacebuilding is an activity that aims to resolve conflict by dealing with the roots of the conflict through peaceful methods.

Peace negotiations and mediations have come as intervention strategy in the conflicts in Africa. For instance, a religious NGO in Rome, Italy, called Saint Egidio served as a mediator in the peace negotiations between the FRELIMO government and the RENAMO rebel group in the civil war 1975–1990 in Mozambique (Romano, 1998). In the Burundi crisis, Julius Nyerere and later Nelson Mandela served as independent mediators through Nyerere Foundation. The peace interventions in African crises have also been internal or external based negotiations. The peace negotiations in Sudan between 1996 and 1997 reflect an example of internal based peace negotiations. This involved a peace deal between the government of Sudan and five rebel groups (The Sudan Peace Agreement, 1997, 4). In most cases, peace negotiations in Africa have often witnessed signing of peace agreements, ceasefire agreements and implementations of the agreements.

The deployment of troops by the UN, and other regional organizations has been a feature of peacekeeping in crisis area in Africa. This has involved the African Union (AU), ECOWAS, and the SADC. Peacekeeping by troops is a preventive strategy as a process that involves signing of the peace agreement for its implementation to avoid the conflict escalation. Through ECOMOG, the ECOWAS countries deployed peacekeeping troops in the Liberia and later Sierra Leone civil wars in the 1990s.

The peacebuilding approach as spelt out by the African Union (AU) in 2002 is an all-embracing strategy that aimed at restoring security, managing political transition, anchoring socio-economic development, promoting human rights and justice, and resource mobilization (NEPAD, 2005). In order to strengthen continental peace architecture, the African Union (AU) established an institutional framework to implement the concept of comprehensive policy that encompasses conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping, post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding. It is undeniable the fact that the Western interventions in the conflicts in Africa have been successful in some areas, yet, its failure in achieving sustainable peace has been attributed to the inability to consider the crisis environment and the cultural values of the people. The resolution of conflicts in traditional African society is embedded in the cultural values of the people. As a related topic in this entry, the indigenous approach to conflict resolution in Africa is analyzed in the following section under.

Indigenous Conflict Resolution in Africa

The nature and processes of resolving dispute in traditional African society is in contrast with that of the Western society. Indeed, the object, methods and focus of conflict resolution in traditional African society is in contrast with the Western model. The methods of conflict resolution in traditional society in Africa are deeply rooted in the customs and traditions of the African people. One of the most important features distinguishing between Western and African processes of dispute settlement is the manner in which the social relationships between the parties involved in the respective processes are treated. The relationship determines the procedural form of the attempt at settlement and thus determines the outcome of the dispute (Nader & Todd, 1978). The important feature of the conflict resolution processes in traditional African society is the restoration of the social relationships between the parties involved in a dispute. It is important to note that in the processes of dispute resolution in traditional

society in Africa, the parties are interested in mending rather than terminating relationships (Cappelletti, 1992).

Among the Ashanti of Ghana, oath is used as a means of seeking redress in times of infractions of the social norms (Agisi, 1979). Among the Kamba of Kenya, the *Kititu* oath and *Ndundu* oaths are used to determine guilt or innocence of disputants (Elias, 1956). The *Asande* of Sudan employed oath to adjudicate over disputes, especially those involving witchcraft and adultery (Evans-Pritchard, 1937). Among the Gurage of Ethiopia, ritual oath-taking is a prominent feature of the adjudicating process to determine the guilt or innocence of disputants. Ordeal and oath-taking as methods of settling dispute are referred to as that of “proof” as against trial (Sanni, 1999). Importantly, however, the methods are not based on any objective standard or norm; rather, they are pivoted on certain unscientific hypotheses.

According to Allot (1960, p. 121), adjudication of dispute in traditional African society involves integration i.e., the losing party or even a criminal is integrated back into the society in order to achieve social equilibrium. For instance, among the Bunyoro of Uganda such a party is ordered to bring beer and meat, to be eaten by the disputants and adjudicators. This is to mark the reintegration of the guilty into the society (ibid). The duty of adjudicators, therefore, is to settle dispute, assuage injured feelings, restore peace and reach a compromise acceptable to disputants (Adewoye, 1977). Because of the importance attached to the settlement of disputes, adjudicators are determined to get to the root of any matter before them. Hence, they sometimes subject disputants to various ordeals in order to determine their guilt or innocence.

Among the Kalabari and Urobo of Nigeria, disputants or accused persons are asked to swim across a creek full of crocodiles; whoever does not come out alive, is adjudged guilty (Adewoye, 1977). Among the Itsekiri of Niger Delta, a fowl’s feather is besmeared with some charms (juju). If the feather’s quill easily passes through the tongue of the defendant, false charges would be brought against him (ibid). The adjudication of dispute by ordeal among the Yorubas in the South-

Western Nigeria is usually administered by *Sango* or *Ogun* priest and by the *Ogboni* fraternity in very serious matters (Olaoba, 2002). Similarly, the *Poro* and *Sande* associations of the Mende of Sierra Leone oversee dispute adjudication through ordeal (Opoku, 1978). Conflict resolution promotes consensus-building, social bridge reconstructions, and the re-enactment of order in society. Conflicts hardly break up societies (Oтите, 2000). As an indigenous method of conflict resolution in South Africa, the ubuntu system adopted by the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (SATRC) in the post-apartheid South Africa is examined and discussed in the following section in this entry.

Ubuntu System and Peacebuilding in South Africa

The indigenous ubuntu peacebuilding mechanism is an African value-system for social harmony commonly found among the Bantu people in East, Central and Southern Africa. Peacemaking through the concept of ubuntu emphasizes the principles of reciprocity, inclusiveness, and a sense of shared destiny between peoples. In the ubuntu system, conflict or dispute or disagreement is resolved at the level of the family, at the village level, between members of an ethnic group, or even between different ethnic nations in the same region depending on the situation at hand (Murithi, 2006). In the context of the ubuntu societies found in South Africa, disputes would be resolved through an institution known as the *Inkundla/Lekgotla* which serves as a group mediation and reconciliation forum (Nomonde, 2000). This is a community-based conflict resolution committee saddled with the responsibility of finding a lasting solution to problems threatening social cohesion and corporate existence of the community. It is usually convened in the public and in attendance of the parties in the dispute including their family members and the general public, including women and children.

In principle, the proceedings would be led by a Council of Elders and their Chief or, in a serious

issue, the King himself. The ubuntu concept as a cultural-world view holds that “a person is a person through other people.” Which means that ubuntu tries to capture the essence of what it means to be human, emphasizing the humanity in us. The practical peacebuilding processes of ubuntu is articulated and reflected in its effectiveness to preserve law and order in the society, as ubuntu society is embedded in communalism that maintains positive relations within the society as a collective task by every individual. For instance, a dispute between fellow members of a society is perceived as a matter related to the whole community. According to the notion of ubuntu, each member of the community is linked to each of the disputants, the victims or perpetrators.

The practical demonstration of ubuntu as indigenous conflict resolution and peacebuilding mechanism was renowned at the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (SATRC) in the post-apartheid period. In the post-apartheid South Africa which came about in the 1990, indigenous method of ubuntu was used to reconcile victims and the perpetrators of injustice during the apartheid period in the country. The system of ubuntu was used to stabilize the polity for a new South Africa just emerging from the apartheid experience. The cardinal objective of ubuntu in post-apartheid South Africa was to create a durable peace for harmonious relations in the society by forgiving and let go of the past. To institutionalize the concept of ubuntu for building durable peace in post-apartheid South Africa, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established. In the modus operandi of the Commission, the principles of forgiveness and reconciliation which ubuntu emphasizes guided the conduct of the tribunal for building peace in post-apartheid South Africa. In his work titled *No Future Without Forgiveness* the TRC Chairman, Archbishop Desmond Tutu was quoted to have said that the principles (of ubuntu) helped to guide the thoughts and actions of some of the perpetrators and victims who came before the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (SATRC) to confess and forgive (Graybill, 1998; Mani, 2002; Villavicencio & Verwoed, 2000).

Graybill (1998) also observes that during the TRC process, perpetrators openly confessed their sins, and victims freely forgave them. In essence, this turned to be the foundation for restorative justice legislation in South Africa. Before the TRC in South Africa, the ubuntu system facilitated sincere apologies from the perpetrators of injustice during the apartheid period, as well as forgiveness by the victims. For an instance, Major Mbina (former Captian of Ciskei Defence Force) testified before TRC saying that “some people who shot; probably shot without having been given orders, knowing that at the end it is the boss that will answer. That is what I want to make clear. I also ask for forgiveness. I empathise with families that lost their members. I ask forgiveness on behalf of the Ciskeian Defence Force, especially those that were involved. We ask for forgiveness” (TRC Report, 1998).

The ubuntu system of building peace is a recipe for reconciliation and social cohesion in post-apartheid South Africa. In the words of the Chairman South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), Archbishop Desmond Tutu (1999), a person with ubuntu is open and available to others and does not feel threatened when others achieve because he or she recognises that they belong to a greater whole. Augustine (2011), Gathogo (2001), and Teffo (1994) explicate that African hospitality in *ubuntu* is ingrained in African cultural norm, values and customs that are relevant and important to the process of integration. The process of peacemaking in ubuntu is reflected in the principles of reciprocity, inclusivity, and a sense of shared destiny between peoples. The traditional societies in the countries of East, Central and Southern Africa utilised cultural practice of ubuntu as conflict resolution and peacebuilding mechanisms to regulate law and order within the society. In the principle of ubuntu, each member of the community is linked to each of the disputants, be they victims or perpetrators. The ubuntu system of conflict resolution and peacebuilding is aimed at resolving disputes and reconciling parties to disputes with a view to healing past wrongs and maintaining social cohesion.

Summary

Considering the state of insecurity in Africa and enormous resources that have been committed into the peace process on the continent with little success, especially by the UN and regional organisations, it is thus concluded that the revival of cultural practices of resolving disputes through communal efforts in Africa ought to be reconsidered. As a recipe for peacebuilding in post-apartheid South Africa, the ubuntu system of reconciliation and conflict resolution could be integrated into policy framework of entrenching durable peace in Africa. This could be operational along with other indigenous methods found in different societies in Africa. As a matter of policy, the African Union Peace and Security Council could adapt the indigenous approaches to conflict resolution and peacebuilding by digging into extant methodology used in traditional African societies. The idea is that the research institutes in Africa would be committed into how the relegated African values could be revived and made relevant in resolving conflicts in Africa using the knowledge long neglected by the policy makers.

This is not to say complete abandonment of liberal Western methods in use at the moment. Rather, indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms of ubuntu adopted to reconcile victims and perpetrators of injustice at the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (SATRC) and other indigenous methods could be institutionalized alongside Western models. For example, consensus-building peculiar to Africans, based on African value system ought to be strengthened and institutionalized, as a preventive mechanism for power struggle that often escalate into open conflict and armed struggle in many African states.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Indigenous Approaches to Peace](#)
- ▶ [Liberal Peace and its Critiques](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding in Africa: The African Union's Evolving Approach](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Transitional Justice and Peacebuilding](#)

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Armed Rebellion

► Yemen Conflict

Arms Control

► Humanitarian Disarmament and the Era of Disarmament Without Disarmament

► Search for Peace, the

Art

► Textile-Making as Research Method

► Theatre and Peacebuilding

Art = Culture

► [Art and Reconciliation](#)

Art = Peace

► [Textiles Making Peace](#)

Art and Reconciliation

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Synonyms

[Art = culture](#); [Crafts](#) [Visual materials](#); [Photography](#); [Drawing](#); [Painting](#); [Performance](#); [Dance](#); [Theatre](#); [Music](#) [Reconciliation = social cohesion](#); [Accord](#); [Settlement](#); [Harmony](#); [Compromise](#); [Rapprochement](#)

Definition/Description

Art and reconciliation is an emerging area of scholarship and practice that explores the potential of art in transitional justice, specifically to foster one of its core goals: reconciliation. Art encompasses a wide range of practices, from large public art initiatives to very small-scale participatory workshops, and involves diverse art forms, including fine art, photography, film, theatre, dance, music, embodied practice, and traditional crafts. Reconciliation is more difficult to define but is usually conceptualized as a process of coming to terms, which can occur at a variety of different levels – with oneself and one's own experience, with other individuals, within a community, society or state, or inter-state. The relationship between art and reconciliation is both instrumental – what can art do to help foster reconciliation, and what are its

limitations? – and instructive – what can art tell us about what reconciliation might entail?

Introduction

There has been a recent turn to the arts as a way of overcoming some of the challenges and shortcomings of institutional and formal transitional justice and peacebuilding interventions. There is widespread acknowledgement in transitional justice that while formal mechanisms might be necessary, they are by no means sufficient to deal with trauma associated with violent conflict and atrocity. Together with the recognition of the significance of individual and community-level processes in the “everyday,” this has opened the door to reflect on the potential role of art. Research and scholarship is catching up with the “visual turn” in International Relations and peace and conflict studies now also reflected in the field of transitional justice to address the question of what can art do for reconciliation? And what are its limits?

Concepts

Reconciliation is a contested concept. It is contested in terms of its meaning, and its application. For some, it is a byword for impunity, understood to be antithesis to justice or a vehicle for a politics of distraction, diverting attention from the inequality and injustice that might have led to conflict in the first place. Nonetheless, it is often cited as a core aim of transitional justice processes; an “absolute necessity” (Bloomfield et al. 2003, p. 12) for societies contending with legacies of violence and atrocity.

The concept of reconciliation deployed in transitional justice is rooted in the Christian tradition of reconciliation between an individual and God, involving confession, repentance, restitution, and forgiveness. It is not simply “forgive and forget” but requires something of the individual in the form of a reckoning and mercy from God (Frayling 2009). In the political and secular domain, it is conceived of as a process, with “thin” and “thick” versions (Hamber and Kelly 2009), from the mere

absence of violent conflict, to a deeper empathy, more akin to the Christian conception. Archbishop Desmond Tutu described reconciliation as the engine of transition to a new South Africa built on pillars of love, understanding and redemption (Daly and Sarkin 2007).

For many, reconciliation denotes transformation, rather than simple restoration, of relationships, requiring something of both sides – a dialogue. John Paul Lederach described reconciliation as the discursive space in which paradoxical and competing tensions can be mediated (Lederach 1997). As psychologists William Longe and Peter Brecke have shown, this process of mediation is not linear and rational, but “evolutionary” and driven by emotions (Longe and Brecke 2003; Cohen 2005). The conception of reconciliation as discursive space and the recognition of the importance of emotion lends itself to an obvious connection to art and opens up the possibility of creative approaches to engage and to spark the “moral imagination” (Lederach 2005) needed for reconciliation to occur.

The potential of art as a tool of reconciliation has begun to be explored, and there are at least two ways of thinking about its contribution. The first, and most prominent, is instrumentalist – what can art do to help foster goals of reconciliation among individuals, communities, and societies? Can it provide a “creative pathway” to reconciliation, breaking silences, communicating across cultural divides, and restoring human dignity (Rush and Simic 2014)? The second is more conceptual – what can art, artists, and creative processes offer us as a way of understanding what the possibilities of reconciliation might be?

There are several ways in which art is deemed to be instrumental to reconciliation. Scholars like Peter Rush, Olivera Simic, and Cynthia Cohen have focused on the possibility of art to open up dialogue, to break silences, to create and nourish empathy, to give voice (and public recognition) to marginalized victims, and to heal (Rush and Simic 2014; Simic 2017; Cohen 2005; Kerr 2017).

The healing power of art draws on work on art therapies in health studies and psychology. It does not necessarily have to be focused on dealing with the immediate trauma; it can have therapeutic effect

simply by bringing people together to have fun, celebrate community, and make new friendships. According to Lederach, “Art and finding our way back to humanity [are] connected” (cited in Naidu-Silverman 2015).

Cohen, meanwhile, argues that there is something about the aesthetic experience that makes it especially suited to reconciliation. Because it engages on a sensory level, it can help transcend discord, accommodate difference, and nourish empathy in a way that purely cognitive, rational engagement cannot (Cohen 2005). Catherine Cole also talks about the centrality of the aesthetic to “represent and activate cultural memory, stimulate cultural imaginaries, generate participatory engagement, depict charged subjects [and] reveal depth, complexity and the effective and embodied dimensions” (Cole 2014). Art leaves the outcome of engagement open and tolerates multiple “truths.” As such it can be a “precious site of reflection” (Simic 2017) and dialogue. Whether in a fixed installation, a performance, or participatory workshop, art can open up discursive space necessary for contestation and disruption of fixed narratives through experimentation with temporality and space (Cohen 2005; Kurze and Lamont 2019). Confronted with different stories, people can be inspired to re-imagine their own.

Others have highlighted the ways in which art can offer an alternative form of representation, filling in where language, or “cold statistical data,” is inadequate to relay the depth and breadth of human suffering across generations and in multiple spheres of life (Edkins 2003; de Greiff 2014). For example, photographs of victims, or spaces where they should be, connect more viscerally with the sense of loss than mere numbers could, and create what Peter Rush labels “affective justice”, through “visceral notions of personal and collective responsibility” (Rush and Simic 2014).

Art can also either complement or challenge official or localized narratives (Rush and Simic 2014), empower and give voice to marginalized victims, demonstrate resilience, demand respect, and celebrate diversity (Naidu-Silverman 2015). Finally, reconciliation is itself a creative process, requiring “moral imagination” (Lederach 2005), of each other’s experiences, and of a shared future (Cohen 2005).

Practice

Throughout history, people have responded creatively to conflict, making art that glorifies, commemorates, memorializes, or laments war and atrocity. It is only recently, however, that there has been a more purposeful application of the arts to peacebuilding and reconciliation activities and a more concerted effort systematically to study these initiatives (Fairey 2017).

There are a large number of projects around the world that have sought to use the power of art in peacebuilding, generally, and a smaller number that have focused specifically on reconciliation, and these vary significantly in form, scope, and ambition. Some organizations work globally, for example: *Global Arts Corp*, an international theatre group that puts on productions such as *Truth in Translation* (telling the story of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission), and runs reconciliation workshops; *In Place of War*, which works with community-based organizations in Africa, the Middle East and Asia to support arts-based initiatives; and *Search for Common Ground*, which uses participatory theatre in areas affected by conflict to spark dialogue and change perceptions.

Others are locally based initiatives, working in a single region, country, or community using the arts in different ways. In Northern Ireland, considerable investments were made into community theatre and other arts-based initiatives following the 1998 Good Friday Agreement (Rush and Simic 2014; Fairey 2017), whereas in South Africa, art was a “radical form of political participation” in the transition from apartheid (Garnsey 2019). In Indonesia and Myanmar, festivals provided opportunities for inter-cultural exchange, while in Nepal and Afghanistan, participatory theatre opened up unthreatening spaces for testimony (Naidu-Silverman 2015; Rush and Simic 2014).

In the Western Balkans, and in Bosnia and Herzegovina in particular, there has been a proliferation of arts projects. Some, like *Most Mira*, were aimed specifically at bringing together divided communities, and others with a more generalized intent to build capacity and opportunities for young people (Fairey 2018). *Most Mira (Bridge of Peace)*

is an arts-based organization founded in 2008 in Prijedor, one of the areas most affected by the conflict, with the aim of bringing people together “to make friends across ethnicities and celebrate diversity” (Fairey 2018). It does this through participatory workshops in dance, theatre, music, circus skills, photography, and through festivals and exchanges. *Most Mira*, like other community-based organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina and elsewhere, deliberately avoids using the term reconciliation, because of its negative political connotations, although, as founder Kemal Pervanic acknowledges, everybody understands that reconciliation is what the projects are about: “You can start this process (of reconciliation) and you can run it successfully without talking about it” (Fairey 2018).

Elsewhere, projects have focused more overtly on reconciliation. *Portraits of Reconciliation* was a series of photographs of survivors and perpetrators of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda involved in a community-driven process whereby perpetrators formally requested, and were afforded, forgiveness from survivors (Simic 2017). In the photographs, they are standing or sitting together, embodying what reconciliation meant to them with the distance between them reflecting the extent (or not) of forgiveness.

It is not only in postconflict settings that art has played a role in reconciliation; artistic approaches have also been employed in the context of indigenous-settler relations. For example, creative expression played a central role in and around the Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission and was positively encouraged by the TRC as a form of testimony. Statements were gathered in the form of poems, songs, books, videos, photographs, performances, blankets, quilts, carvings, drawings, and paintings. Beyond the TRC, art opened up new and critical spaces to explore and contest the complexities of reconciliation, to reclaim identity and culture, and also to resist (Dewar et al. 2013).

Dilemmas

Artists have always responded to conflict but what is new is the attempt to harness the power of art

strategically to foster reconciliation. The potential of art to transform relationships is enormous, but its potential to transform society is limited. Post-conflict transformation requires political intervention and one of the dangers of focusing on, and lionizing, art, is that it distracts attention from the necessity for larger structural reform. Olivera Simic states it clearly when she says that “Art alone cannot address the needs of the victims or communities who still strive to afford basic needs such as education, health care and housing” (Simic 2017).

We must also remember that reconciliation is a political as well as a social and psychological process. Just as art can help foster empathy, it can also reinforce division, and privilege one narrative over another (Simic 2017). It can also be a means of challenging transitional justice institutions and approaches. As Arnaud Kurze points out, in some cases, young people have used art to establish what he labels “strategic confrontation spaces” in which to contest transitional justice practices (Kurze and Lamont 2019).

There is also the danger of inflated expectations. There is a gap between the reality of working creatively in unstable and highly sensitive situations and the expectations of donors for robust evidence of measurable outcomes (Fairey 2017). It can be hard to reconcile the instrumental bias of transitional justice and the noninstrumental bias of the arts, which may be fundamentally at odds, with artists valuing “opacity, ambiguity, irony, indirection, instability and disruption” (Cole 2014). As Catherine Cole argues, artists may want to keep transitional justice practitioners at arm’s length. But it may be precisely that ambiguity and dialogic space that makes art an appropriate site for reconciliation: “[S]ometimes it takes a broken shoe to fit a broken foot. Theater’s loose ends and available center are well matched to a subject that will not be fully located or known in a satisfying way” (Cole 2014).

Summary

There are many ways in which art is supposed to contribute to reconciliation, and countless examples of arts-based projects aimed at doing just that. The

potential of art is enormous, but it would be naïve to think that alone, it can foster social repair. What it can do is to provide discursive space and the tools to nourish the creative imagination necessary for reconciliation. As such, the contribution of art to reconciliation is not only instrumental; it encourages us to recast reconciliation not as a goal to be measured but as discursive space in which relationships are negotiated.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Conflict, Memory, and Memory Activism: Dealing with Difficult Pasts](#)
- ▶ [Culture and Conflict Resolution](#)
- ▶ [Everyday Peace](#)
- ▶ [Hybrid Courts and Transitional Justice](#)
- ▶ [Memorials and Transitional Justice](#)
- ▶ [Photography and Peace](#)
- ▶ [Theatre and Peacebuilding](#)

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Artificial Intelligence

- [Future Peace: Digital Innovations and the International Peace Architecture](#)

Artpeace

- [Artpeace: Validating Political Power or Imagining Emancipation](#)

Artpeace: Validating Political Power or Imagining Emancipation

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Synonyms

[Aesthetics](#); [Artpeace](#); [Emancipation](#); [Emotions](#); [Justice](#); [Peace art](#)

Definition

Peace is rarely celebrated, noted, or described, except in passing, or in juxtaposition with violence, a celebration of glory, or as a depiction of the horrors of violence. Much art depicting war and peace is related to power and to just war thinking. Depictions of the higher ethical dynamics of peace, in parallel to those of often repeated virtues of war, are rarely referred to. On the one hand, it is clear that aesthetic and visual representations of peace, and the support of peace, has been a recurrent interest for artists, but, on the other hand, these representations have traditionally followed predictable and relatively limited themes. Yet, peace has been documented as a key part of human history, politics and relations from very early on and has engaged a multi-disciplinary group of thinkers. More recently, it has become clear that “artpeace” may offer forward looking insights and may be able to identify inequality and injustice from below. Yet, such sources are easily lost though they may signal the emancipatory qualities that peace requires.

“*Pax optima rerum*” (Peace is the greatest good)
 “*Pax optima rerum quas homini nouisse datum est, pax una triumphis innumeris potior. . .*” (peace is the best of things which it is given to man to know, a single peace is more powerful than countless triumphs). Silius Italicus, *Punica*, (25-101 AD)

Introduction

From Hiroshima to the Somme, from the Killing Fields of Cambodia to the genocide church in Ntarama, Rwanda, artistic and stylized, visual representations and memorials of war and conflict are commonplace (Bourke 2017). They are part of our everyday lived environment. They enable us to navigate around the seminal crises that mark the history of empire, and later, ideology and the state. They have provided a platform, space, and creative or critical mode for dealing with issues ranging from marginalization and injustice, to reconciliation, identity, and commemoration, regardless of how little formal power participants or its exponents may have. The arts have perhaps been conducive to such critical dynamics, because they connect “subaltern” (that is marginalized by identity, gender, class, and nationality) agency to a wider social and global consciousness (civil or perhaps global civil society which is mostly anti-war and supports the wide proscription of violence in its multiple forms).

Yet, violence dominates our media, our aesthetics, and everyday representations, emphasizing the value of sacrifice, the potential of war, as well as its costs, normally from an elite, state, or imperial perspective (Bevan 2015). World War One and Two memorials are common in city centers, churches, and shrines around the world (King 1998). Most capitals have a “tomb of the unknown soldier,” an eternal flame, and tributes for the heroes who laid down their lives in order to found or save their country, to fight for justice and equality, against (but sometimes supporting) imperialism, fascism, totalitarianism, predation, nationalism, and discrimination. Often, it is argued that wars were fought for peace. War cemeteries, from long forgotten wars and battles are common around the world, even in the most isolated places: they often contain the bodies of

people from far away, who often fought in wars that were relatively distant to their own everyday lives and contexts. Rarely are there memorials to those more indirectly caught up in wars and violence, principally women and children, directly or indirectly (though this has become a growing trend more recently). Even less likely are commemorations of peace treaties, processes, peacekeeping, or peacebuilding.

This essay outlines, with reference to a number of arts-based sources (presented in footnotes via website links), (I have used this method, rather than direct illustrations in the text, because copyright costs for most are prohibitive.) a general evolution and development in the aesthetico-political engagement with, and representation of, peace. It examines the connection of social and ethical claims for peace with artistic representation, and resistance to injustice and hegemony. What emerges from the marriage of arts and peace represents a radical and emancipatory synthesis we could call “artpeace”.

The imprint of artpeace on global consciousness has been somewhat significant given that the more formal history of the state and international relations is mainly focused on war, conquest, hegemony, and governmentality. However, in recent times the association between peace and the arts has returned to more subaltern modes of critique partly because of the rejection of the liberal/neoliberal peace framework more widely, and because the return of multi-polarity at the geopolitical level, and the rise of populism and authoritarianism. These new modes are engaging with complex and very entrenched, often hidden power structures in specific localities (such as Colombia or Sri Lanka) and localized issues. They may point to issues may only indirectly be associated with violence (e.g., authoritarianism, quasi-liberal states, capitalism, social class, and related stratifications) as well as highlighting matters related to identity, environmentalism, historical and distributive justice, such as colonialism, land appropriation, and slavery.

This essay firstly outlines key dynamics in the history of peace art, offering a conceptual framework for its evolution, and then proposes the concept of “artpeace” as a basis for critical

engagement in contemporary peace and conflict studies.

Discernible Dynamics of Peace and Art

Our understandings of the development of world history, of politics, society, and economy, are all informed by crucial moments in history – often battles or wars won or lost. Memorials often underline how violence is always tragic, but more creative, critical, and radical representations challenge systems of politics and representation. They tend to intimate that wars can never really be ‘won’ especially in the relational sense of international relations, or in the everyday sense of the local context. Social and cultural reactions to tragedy of World War I are a case in point, even if elite actors battled over achieving victory (Winter 2014). Peace has been elusive and tragic, as Keynes famously warned, (Keynes 1919) based upon new waves of domination, boundary setting, establishing new hegemonies, even if it is significant in its everyday senses. Even in art an unnuanced “victor’s peace” (see Richmond 2005) has all too often been celebrated aesthetically.

Peace has been rarely celebrated, noted, or described, except in passing, or in juxtaposition with violence, a celebration of glory, or as a depiction of the horrors of violence. Depictions of the higher dynamics of peace, in parallel to those of often repeated virtues of war, are rarely referred to. The everyday, state, and international dimensions of peace have proven difficult to capture, or artists find it uninteresting, or even unpopular: more plausibly such representations are easily erased. On the one hand it is clear that aesthetic representations of peace, and the support of peace, has been a recurrent interest for some artists, but on the other hand many surviving representations have followed predictable and relatively limited themes which have supported power, militarism, empires and states.

Yet, peace has been documented as a key part of human history, politics and relations from very early on, as the early Kadesh peace treaty illustrates, as an important part of power-relations

(Kadesh Treaty) Its early stages indicated a limited artistic and creative record, and may have reflect a disinterest on the part of elites in general in peace as distinct from war, or the elusive, empathetic qualities of a social peace. They may have also represented an attempt to reduce and censor the wider significance of peace from view to preserve the status quo and its associated power relations.

Later stages, and critical currents, in the arts tend to be much more reflective, creative, emotionally sensitive, and culturally and socially attuned, and forward looking. In other words, they are able to identify inequality and injustice from below, hidden by the political structures of society, the state, and the international system. The arts detect undercurrents and perhaps communicate them, though less tangibly than formal systems of codification: for example, Hans Holbein’s painting, *The Ambassadors* (1533) clearly depicts the power and mastery of diplomacy. Yet it also more obliquely suggests it was linked with death rather than peace through the presence of an anamorphic skull, which can only be seen from an oblique perspective (Holbein 1533; Constantinou 1994). Thus, often the arts in relation to war and peace point to the limitations of political frameworks of agency based on power-relations, which effectively preserve war as a tool, structural violence, and inequality. However, artistic endeavor often hints at an alternative, critical vanguard of peace development from a social perspective, even if its engagement is sparse and simplistic in aesthetic terms compared to war. The state or empire has often harnessed the arts for propaganda purposes with respect to the latter (Adorno and Horkheimer 2002; Groys 2008).

The more critical undercurrents in the arts may foreground the beauty and contradictions of peace across multiple dimensions. This strategy, rather than glorifying power, promises to open up emotional, relational, and solidarity elements. It may point to cooperation and higher levels of co-existence, and highlights the longer-term political, social, and cultural dramas related to war and peace in IR, rather than merely the brutish immediacy of violence and power (Bleiker 2017).

This is especially so given the role of critique and emancipatory thinking in political and social commentary and in representing and imagining better modes of being for societies in general. The harder aesthetics of war often captured popular imagination and so have seemingly been more successfully translated into power than the aesthetics of peace. The latter often seem ethically correct from a critical perspective that focuses on the positionality of the weak, hidden, and marginalized. Consequently, it is also thoroughly suppressed and marginalized (although there has been a strong movement to valorize the ‘higher’ ethics and aesthetics of war and heroism throughout history).

Yet, the critical, radical, undercurrents and imaginaries of peace present in aesthetic representations appear to have more traction in the long term in terms of the survival of the human race than the oft repeated cul-de-sacs of imperialism, nationalism, and fascism (however ‘heroic’ they may initially appear). The advances that have been made in translating subaltern claims for security, freedom, rights, justice, and sustainability, step by step across a range of historical artifacts, into practical political life in the modern world, was thus often imagined first, created, and the reinforced across society (and the global) through the arts, following undercurrents, resistance and innovation in society (see, for example, Beales 1931). Through various media reached communities widely and deeply, often through undercurrents that may have represented more political legitimacy than more obvious narratives about and exercises of unequal power.

There have been chinks or breakthroughs that allowed more critical challenges, revolutionary learning, and creative responses, to emerge in several stages of the development of a relationship between peace and art (outlined below). These often subaltern-style interventions have had world changing impacts over the long term, perhaps because of the emotive and cultural power and weight they represent, even if little direct, structural, or governmental forms of power. Many such breakthroughs emerged from social, creative, and radical movements at grass roots levels. They have influenced how the arts reflect

and interpret the world, how history is memorialized, how political order is legitimated formally and within society (more to the point within excluded groups), and how peace is maintained, stabilized, rebuilt, and developed further.

The diagram below (Table 1) outlines a possible historical typology of six stages for this relationship. This chronology is not concrete, as these stages overlap and often run forwards to the present, forming a sort of sediment for each other (connecting them to the evolution of the International Peace Architecture that I have outlined in other work) (Richmond 2021). Many of the artworks alluded to are not explicitly about peace, but their relevance to peace (and its related elements) as one of the eternal issues in the evolution of political philosophy, political theory, and history is clear.

A Historical Sketch of an Aesthetics of Peace

As the following examples endeavor to illustrate, following the path of the various stages outlined in the diagram above, the arts offer a range of openings for peace. Primarily, as these stages develop, they offer the possibility of firstly, highlighting violence and injustice; secondly, appealing to human emotions for solidarity and to commemorate; thirdly, advocating and educating different audiences on matters of rights, justice, sustainability across generations and across borders or locations; finally, using a common language of aesthetic sensibilities to support reconciliation and pluralism (i.e., in stages three to six in particular).

Artpeace is flexible, mobile, and often emerge from underground or subaltern groups, which are nonthreatening, but can build long term community links and consensus. They have historically been networked widely and have been available to powerful actors when they needed symbolic capital for peacemaking. They cut across boundaries via a common language which is nonverbal. They offer new narratives for mobilization, calm for reflection, group safety, conflict avoidance, accessibility for the marginal to develop platforms for

Artpeace: Validating Political Power or Imagining Emancipation, Table 1 The Evolution of the Relationship Between the Arts and Peace

Imperial, Nationalist, and Conservative phase

Stage 1: In ancient times, art was used to delineate territory, to embed centralized authority, to spread hegemony or law, through or after war. It was used to legitimate and expand authority.

Stage 2: It was used to memorialize and heroize, through a linkage between art and war, especially as empires grew and were replaced by nationalism and sovereignty, buttressed by conservative thinking on the role of war in the state and empire.

Cosmopolitan discovery and awakening

Stage 3: With the emergence of rights struggles during the last millennia a more critical, subaltern (often underground) wing of the arts became more prominent. It was used to highlight victimhood, arbitrary power, and to evoke an emotional response to injustice within a more cosmopolitan domestic and international framework.

Mainstream arts also continued to valorize empires, the state, battles and heroism, and diplomacy.

Stage 4: After the Enlightenment the subaltern arts were used to promote tolerance, independence and self-determination, and to campaign against violence as a political tool, creating a more heterogeneous understanding of cosmopolitanism. Disarmament and pacifism became common motifs, as well as labor rights, equality, an explicit social and transnational empathy.

Mainstream sources continued to valorize empires, the state, battles and heroism, and diplomacy in the context of various ideologies.

Revolution, resistance, and rethinking

Stage 5: By the nineteenth century, new wings of the arts, more plausibly able to represent more marginal views and groups from below, because of new formats, were being used as a revolutionary force to mobilize groups and networks across a wide range of rights claims. They targeted power structures deemed to be unjust, to help advocate, mobilize, codify and to incentivize campaigns such as those against slavery, imperialism, war, armaments, discrimination, racism, and poverty within both a state-centric and international framework. Disarmament and pacifism remained common motifs, as well as labor rights, equality, an explicit social and transnational empathy. Along with a new experimentalism in media this allowed for more subaltern expressions (as opposed to the ‘high arts’ epistemology that often valorized war and power).

Mainstream approaches were also being deployed to support war recruitment, intelligence gathering, nationalism, and self-determination struggles simultaneously, along with their traditional pursuits of enabling empires, the state, battles and heroism, and diplomacy. States and empires adopted (or co-opted) such representations and discourses over time because they carried such wide global legitimacy by the twentieth century.

Stage 6: The concept of “artpeace” is consolidated. More recently, it has shifted to a subaltern, bottom-up, grass-roots mode and turned against the state, empire (formal and informal), capitalism, and extraction, and began to align themselves with global justice debates (distributive, historical, and environmental). They have used increasingly experimental modes of engagement across a broadening range of the arts. These modes have been used to satirize power and its corruption, often through intense experimentalism in content and format, as well as to promote and disseminate subaltern and creative thinking about the evolving conditions of peace across multiple dimensions. In particular, they unpick the intellectual and practical limitations of centralized power, sovereignty, capitalism, injustice, and related and arbitrary reductionism after the Anthropocene, demanding global and environmental justice.

In parallel, it has become increasingly implausible to legitimately disseminate the values of old-fashioned empires, the state, valorize battles and heroism, and maintain elitist approaches to diplomacy (unless via propaganda, authoritarianism, and coercion). Indeed, high-level representations as in earlier stages are now seen often to represent hypocrisy or to be anachronistic.

growth, as well as the potential for elites to understand the experiences of the marginal (depending on the nature of the arts in question). They offer social legitimacy through relationality that politics often wants to emulate in its contracts, but often cannot reach because elites are more power-driven than consensus based. (See various outcomes of the Art of Peace, AHRC research project

at the University of Manchester (2018–2021) among others. See also, Alison Bailey, *The Art of Peace*, British Council, undated.)

Yet, underlying this progressive path are the more reductive uses that states, empires, and elites have put the arts to in the early stages (including one and two in particular), which have echoed onwards throughout contemporary eras, acting

as both a foundation of political order and stability, and obstacles to progress and political change. Indeed, the overwhelming capacity of discursive and state power, when united, can bend critical and challenging representations for peace, justice and emancipation, backwards toward founding narratives associated with nationalism, the state, and empire (as with Delacroix's work, mentioned below) (Delacroix 1830).

Early Examples: The Imperial, Nationalist, and Conservative phase

Building an aesthetics of peace into political and economic systems and settlements has long been an implausible task, given that they have mostly all been founded through clashes of power, war, domination, extraction, and hegemony: in stages one and two, the arts were deployed as validating baubles, if at all. Yet it was also the first step toward making such systems socially responsive and accountable in the later stages. Historical sources show very small steps toward peace often utilized, or even depended upon, critical and subaltern modes of representation that communicated such needs deeply with their audiences, however.

For example, the Kadesh Treaty represented a classic stage one type of example of political and arts. It ended the Battle of Kadesh between Ramesses II's Egypt and the Hittites of Muwatalli II in around 1274 BC. This battle is thought to be the largest chariot battle ever fought, involving perhaps 5,000 chariots. The peace was made via a treaty in around 1258 BC. A clay copy of the written treaty – itself now an artifact – survives in the Istanbul Archaeology Museum. A replica is on display at the headquarters of the United Nations, and an Egyptian version survives on papyrus. It has become one of a few global symbols of peace. Peace, as evidenced by the treaty, was determined by war rather than justice or rights at this early stage; it was shaped by violence more than anything else. Yet, it also required documenting and communicating to allcomers, preserved for eternity on stone, to capture the valuable moment that peace was made and to inscribe and guarantee the new political order and its boundaries. Such political orders were

generally built on hegemony and coercion, colonialism, and imperialism even if they removed overt violence and communicate from a platform of power and domination to 'lower' social orders. Representing peace in concrete and also emotive ways governed the experience of peace among the population, allowing leaders to add to its permanence through forms of communication that worked upon multiple levels, beyond the diplomatic table where powerful and elite signatories of any treaty had once gathered (i.e., drawn on, or written in stone, literally). This elite dominated, instrumentalized form of the arts, placing it at the service of power, represented perhaps the longest stage in the history of the relationship between peace and the arts, and it continues to form the bedrock of later stages, with mixed consequences.

The extent of the prevalence of indirect and direct violence in the history of international, domestic, political, social, and economic relations and systems was rarely comprehended until it was too late by their victims. It was and often remains widely accepted that peace is 'all other times, except war...' to quote Thomas Hobbes, a famous (and tragic) theorist of civil war and power relations (Hobbes 1996, 2013). His work on the ubiquity and inescapability of war and its association with authoritarianism has often been taken as the last word on the matter since he wrote his famous book 'Leviathan' in the 1600s.

The overwhelming dominance of different forms of media, expression, and aesthetics by depictions of violence and their aftermath represents a self-fulfilling drama – often taken to be the only human drama – and a self-censorship of the possibilities for peace. It might be useful to consider why this is so and how such a dominant 'print capitalism' (Anderson 1991) of violent imperial and state mythologies might be displaced. The result has been the elevation of war and power in thought, politics, society and aesthetics, over peace to achieve that which Augustine called the "tranquillity of order" (Augustine 1993). This compromise is reflected in the lack of nuanced aesthetic reflection on peace in the early stages of artpeace.

When further evolution emerged, it advanced relatively rapidly from stages two through to six,

this latter development taking in the scope of emancipatory thinking from the Classics to contemporary times. This process of development seemed to increasingly hope for the power of the state and international political economy to become more aligned with the anti-war and anti-violence sentiments of more radical peace representations, if only briefly, often drawing on the early classical lineage of Plato, Aristotle, Thucydides, Cicero, or Augustine, as with much else in wider remit of the Humanities (Boucher and Kelly 2003; Brown et al. 2002). It is difficult to find in creative arts (as opposed to the instrumentalized arts of stage one) any deference to such thinking early on at least, and this tends to be a growing characteristic from stages three onwards.

By stage three, representations of a desire for something more than war – or a form of peace – become clearer. Thus, contra Henry Maine, peace is not a particularly “modern invention” but the scale of its representation has slowly improved (Henry Sumner Maine 1888: See also Kustermans 2018). However, peace representations were to receive little enough attention in a world dominated by imperial and extractive rationalities, or later one dominated by fascism, nationalism, and capitalism other than where violence threatened their own integrity (reflected in the early stages mentioned above). Apart from a few pacifist communities (Fabbro 1978) or countries with demilitarized constitutional orders (such modern Germany, Japan, or Costa Rica,), the rationality of politics was predicated on the controlled use violence, the related search for domination, profit, leadership, and heroism, to reward sacrifice. Yet, the tragic, cathartic Realist drama that emerged led to peace becoming all the more complex, which is why the artpeace relationship evolved against the odds.

Toward a More Enlightened Engagement: Cosmopolitan Discovery and Awakening

Stages three and four became platforms for the earliest clearly political representations of peace to incorporate both a higher thematic symbolism as well as a more everyday depiction. Lorenzetti, a Renaissance artist, painted a series of frescoes on the walls of the Hall of the Peace (Lorenzetti)

(Sala della Pace) in the Palazzo Pubblico of Siena from 1338–1340. *The Effects of Good Government on Town and Country* represents a rare and early characterization of what peace may mean beyond nonviolence, reiterating the classical lineage of the relationship between certain forms of ‘good’ government, and peace, order, and justice (i.e., the good life). His work sets the scene for a significant break with early stages. It proclaimed the importance and benefits of peace by depicting life in a well-ordered and prosperous city, while in a related picture, *Allegory of Bad Government*, the horrors of destruction and disease caused by war are portrayed in the same town by way of comparison. This is not merely an ethical commentary on immediate acts of war, or a representation of a victor’s peace, but constituted a substantial reflection upon the relationship between peace and war with the longer-term nature of political order.

A Ruben’s piece, *Minerva Protects Pax from Mars*, (1629–1630) (Paul) added a further dimension to this aesthetic-political evolution. This painting illustrated Rubens’ hopes for peace between England and Spain even as war loomed, which he, in his role as envoy to Philip IV of Spain, was attempting through negotiation to prevent. The painting depicted the sublime and elevated nature of the gods’ relation to peace, as well as symbols of the more mundane everyday aspects of peace. It also became a mechanism for peacemaking itself. Pax (peace) is represented by the goddess of the earth, who is sharing her resources while Minerva, goddess of wisdom, drives away Mars, the god of war. The picture was presented to Charles I of England as a gift to advocate for peace. It consolidated the idea that leaders had a responsibility to both god and the state no to follow naked interests and to deploy the mechanisms of war, but to follow the wisdom of cooperation and trust.

The Lorenzetti and the Rubens paintings revolved around the juxtaposition of peace and war, illustrating peace’s higher and everyday qualities, both advocating for peace and warning against war. Both hoped to have a diplomatic and political effect following the interests of elites, nobles, church, as well as – to some extent

more than had been usual at this time – representing the views of society, intellectuals, and artists. Both also illustrate the difficulties of depicting peace in the flamboyant or emotive manner that wars are often represented by. Peace tends to be banal and every day, hard to detect even, though its processes were coming to be seen as depending on elite actions, government, as well as on social activism. Even in these laudable attempts at its depiction, the threat of war or violence becomes their main method through which peace gains its aesthetic life through the mechanism of contrast. Both paintings ultimately provided different avenues (divinity or more earthly politics) towards the proscription of violence. There was an early sense of possibility in peacemaking as opposed to the determinism of war.

The continuing repetition of the stereotypes of horror and bravery associated with glory and power, versus such more marginal possibilities, meant that violence or a victor's peace remained the dominant motif during stage three. It had by now gained a new life that translated into the exceptionalism of empire and the state, summed up in Weber's famous dictum about the state's monopoly over violence (Weber 2015). From this understanding, peace continued to be shorn of its wider, aesthetic, emotional, and ethical potential, remaining a narrowly conceived artifact or rarity, an outcome of power-backed war, formed by force relations rather than the emancipatory imagination harnessed to human potential. Art that turned in the direction of power was rapidly discredited, however, for wider society, opening the way for more radical, ethical intent inherent in artpeace.

The efforts of Lorenzetti and Rubens to offer peace as an elite aesthetico-political agenda opened the way for more subaltern advocacy and for further explorations of the socio-political potential of peace, against the broader foil of the failings of power, as stage four suggested. Power had shaped rather than followed society, art, and aesthetics, in other words, but there was also growing evidence that power, state, and empire were partly socially constructed, even at the grand scale indicated in such depictions. This realization

gave artpeace approaches, and social actors, substantial agency and a hitherto little understood capacity to shape politics. The next two centuries were to host an epic aesthetic battle over the forces of imperialism, fascism, nationalism and the state (which ultimately was to lead to a nuclear standoff during the Cold War), and the subaltern critical agency aimed at the expansion of rights and related issues like disarmament (notably brought together by the Greenham Common campaign on the 1980s).

Into the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries: Revolution, Resistance, and Rethinking

Artpeace was often represented by horror and emotion, and an assumption that it was the opposite of what was being depicted: the opposite of death, destruction, injustice, and arbitrariness (see, for example, *The Apotheosis of War* by Vasily Vereshchagin, also mentioned below) (Vereshchagin, 1871). In the high imperial, and the later fascist phases, of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the focus tended to be on horror of violence for a radical audience, or the glory and honor that war may represent for a conservative audience who are more taken with motifs of power, nationalism, heroism, stratification, restoration and counter-revolution. Artpeace was generally connected to Augustinian notions of "just war" as early stages inferred, where war was justified to protect a "higher" political order (empire, state, and elites) and to further its ambitions for itself against others (Guthrie & Quinlan 2007). More sophisticated depictions of peace remained something of a rarity, leaving much to be assumed, and the workings of the processes by which peace (even as a limited negative peace inherent in the balance of power) was arrived at were difficult to depict. The ease in depicting war placed its representations in the general terrain of propaganda, to glorify its relationship with individual heroism, to either celebrate or disguise imperialism and nationalism. References to peace were often exploited to try to legitimate war in such guises, as with De Neuville's *Defence of Rorke's Drift*, which heroized the British defense of their garrison against enormous numbers of Zulus, during the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879

(Alphonse de Neuville, 1880). Indeed, countless memorials, sites, museums, and galleries around the world continued to depict heroism, battles, war, glory, beauty, sexuality, and only very rarely the full horror of war. In these paradigms, war consumed so much political and social-aesthetic energy that the question of what comes next was rarely engaged with until stages four and onwards. Stage four represented both a continuation built on the bedrock of stages 1 and 2, and a turning point where political agency was becoming democratized and artpeace was expanding its range.

This fork in the road was evident in Delacroix's *Liberty Leading the People*, which celebrated the goals of the French Revolution and its aim of liberty, but also illustrated the sacrifices it entailed (Delacroix 1830). This painting commemorated the July Revolution of 1830, which toppled Charles X. Liberty, represented by a woman holding the *tricolore* flag and a gun and leading the people forward, echoing the French Revolution of 1879 and its goals. Using what has also nationalist iconography, revolutionary violence was offered as a legitimate mechanism to achieve liberty and a resurgent nation. This was to be an area of contestation for peace throughout this period, whether through just war, revolution and resistance to oppression, or later forms of humanitarian intervention. This argument illustrated that peace was subject to power, but that it was also determined by rights claims made by the masses. It connected peace to a larger project aimed at liberty, equality, and justice, though social justice was corralled into a reformed state project: nationalism would become something of a contradiction during the twentieth century.

What was significant for stage five was that peace was now something that could be claimed through the exercise of emancipatory agency by subaltern actors, from below. These very actors, previously ignored, were now driving history, preferably nonviolently (but often via the mechanism of revolutionary violence), across a range of terrains of human activities: from politics to the arts. Suddenly, the powerless (in Delacroix's context, the Third Estate) had representational, if not practical, leverage in the fundamental terrain of

politics and international relations, about the nature of political order. The contested, age-old pairing of peace with war driven by elite power relations and cemented by the state and empire was weakening a little, and social agency was now being depicted in the context of struggles against the mechanisms of war and power, even if they were again soon deflected into nationalistic or imperial enterprises. This trend also revived the age-old problem of whether violence was justified in the name of peace if there was a just cause (and who determined any such causes)? There were increasingly subtle and emotive references to explicit justifications for such agency, lying in opposition to violence and war, discrimination, racism, and imperialism, and in support of more complex forms of justice. Revolutionary or emancipatory violence lurked in the background of such claims, just as violence lurks in the foreground of imperialism, authoritarian state, and other forms of oppressive hegemony.

Vasily Vereshchagin's painting, *The Apotheosis of War*, is thought to be one of the earliest explicitly pacifist paintings (Vereshchagin, 1871). It adopted the typical strategy of graphically displaying the horrors of violence pioneered by the likes of Goya, rather than depicting the pleasures of peace, as with Lorenzetti, or offering liberty as a peace worth fighting for as with Delacroix. This painting was inspired by the horrors associated with the Russo-Turkish War from 1877–1878. In this desolate picture there is no hint of hope or of a cause that justifies the violence portrayed or any attempt to produce empathy for its subjects (portrayed merely as objects). Its pacifist message is simply that there cannot even be a limited form of peace derived from violence. Peace art had until this point normally avoided such a stark rejection of violence, but the expanded platform that stage five provided perhaps now allowed for more radical, nonviolent demands to arise. These were being disseminated in an increasingly connected world as fundamental critiques of the way politics had previously been organized.

Artpeace still lacked a constructive vision for the most part, however (which is an accusation that could also be aimed at most other disciplinary

areas). When it did endeavor to go beyond war, it often had an unexpectedly large impact as was the case with Goya's *Execution* or later Picasso's *Guernica*. (See <https://www.pablocassio.org/guernica.jsp>: <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/becoming-modern/romanticism/romanticism-in-spain/a/goya-third-of-may-1808>) Depicting the horror of violence was increasingly being seen as a subversive protest against stratified political power and a foil for subsequent, though still vague call for peace, as with works by Goya, Picasso, and Kollowitz (Goya 1814; Kollowitz 1924a; Picasso 1937). As in particular with Picasso's *Guernica*, the more graphic the depiction of violence, of futility and loss, the more it pointed to perhaps unspoken alternatives which consequence for the nation, the state, and humanity in general. This reflected the growing swell of public opinion and its heightened capacity to influence politics at 'ripe' moments since the start of the nineteenth century (and to be completely ignored when geopolitics dominated, such as in 1914).

Indeed, artpeace still appeared, even in this more sophisticated stage, to depend on the sponsorship of, or influences on the artist: thus it balanced toward power, glory, and honor. In stage five, however, it was also more clearly beginning to represent and preserve a humanist, critical commentary. As in Goya's piece, *The Third of May*, victimhood, even potential innocence, may be used as a mechanism to underline the injustice of violence and war. So, while the arts may represent and disseminate the architecture of power and the state of exception that allows the state to monopolize violence and deploy violence as a political tool (Drawing on Carl Schmitt, see Agamben 2005), artpeace was now beginning to challenge hegemony as underground movement became aware of an inexorable path toward rights and democracy as a standard by which to judge power and violence. The arts were more clearly challenging violence from a subaltern perspective by stage five, echoing and amplifying historical undercurrents pertaining to the proscription of violence and the expectation or right for a good life, which required the reimagining of political

order. This impulse travelled along the networks that disseminated arts and rights thinking, which were also expanded during industrialization and the imperial era, from letter writing and small, local meetings, to large-scale conferences and international campaigning. These dynamics perhaps were to culminate (at least before the contemporary digital era) with Picasso's *Guernica*, and its twentieth century travels and travails (Van Hensbergen 2005).

By stage five, shocking viewers into confronting the dangers of using violence was increasingly problematic if it only supported a political system or form of peace settlement acceptable to power. Until this stage, art had normally been coopted into imperial or nationalist projects of war, rather than emancipatory collective action: it had constantly flirted with powerful propaganda, or artists had been dependent on power, or unaware of their own underlying assumptions. Representation was dominated by power, with only small corners left available for critical challenges.

With stage five, peace was also slowly mobilized by art at a more residual level, compared to the elite academic texts of Erasmus or Kant during the Enlightenment, or the grandiose paintings of Rubens. By the early twentieth century, the connections between art, protest against war, the exposure of war's relationship with iniquitous forms of power, and advocacy for peace, as well as intimations of its potential complexity, had been consolidated. A stage six was emerging, which foregrounded subaltern agency even further in the marriage between art, politics, and peace.

Hints of these developments were present in one of the most famous art movements of the early twentieth century. Dadaism emerged at a time of great stress and change in the period during and after World War One. It emerged in Zürich "the peaceful dead centre of the war" as Hans Richter, a leading exponent wrote – at the Cabaret Voltaire and spread to Paris, Berlin, and New York. Members of this avowedly anti-war movement were appalled by WWI. Hans Arp, a member of the Zürich Dada movement wrote,

Revolted by the butchery of the 1914 World War, we in Zürich devoted ourselves to the arts. While the guns rumbled in the distance, we sang, painted, made collages, and wrote poems with all our might. We were seeking an art based on fundamentals to cure the madness of the age, and a new order of things that would restore the balance between heaven and hell. We had a dim premonition that that power-mad gangsters would one day use art itself as a way of deadening men's minds.

Out of this maelstrom of imagination, social and political commentary, radical rejectionism, and anti-foundationalism, was born an anti-nationalist, internationalist, and disruptive movement that hosted some of the great experimental writers, thinkers, and artists of the twentieth century. Though Dadaism was an internationalist, avant-garde reaction against nationalism, it often adopted a humanist and also universalizing tone. It quickly became famous because it often adopted a directly provocative tone with its audience: insulting the audience was a common occurrence. Dadaism was an aesthetic and anarchistic representation of the human and political challenge, not just of rebuilding Europe after WWI, but also of constructing a peace that would be self-sustaining and not reliant on the violence that was materially or aesthetically built into custom, institutions, and conservative representation of naturalistic orders.

Founded in 1916, and defunct by the early 1920s, it laid the way for the emergence of the subsequent debates about the multiple ways in which what was 'real' could be investigated and represented beyond romantic or realist expressions that valorized status and power. Through its experimentation with 'events', chance, installations, mobiles, collages, phonetic poems, film, and more generally attempts to disorientate and disrupt the expected medium and matter of art, it showed how the 'real' was simply an interest-based hegemonic representation rather than a naturalized order or representation. In the age-old balance between peace and war, this was biased toward the latter. Dadaism was designed to,

...bring home to the bourgeois the unreality of his world and the emptiness of all his endeavours, even including his profitable nationalism.

It represented a sharp break with the past, conservative and complacent sense that war and the higher representation ethics of arts were comfortably aligned. Art was now challenging power and disseminating scientific thought about progress with the need for radical social and political change, shocking as this might have been no longer enough. A revolution was required and it would not be denied. Tentative engagements with the social conditions of peace and justice could no longer be acceptable if the arts were to represent more than the tool of power. These dynamics were marked by an attempt to push back boundaries and hierarchies, to promote solidarity, empathy, and new networks of political creativity, through challenging existing and conservative categories, rather than to prove their sanctity. It was only one of such movements that were initiated as a reaction to WW1.

Its main challenge to war lay in its rejection of the existing order of politics, representation, and society that glorified war, or warned of its excesses, but also saw it as a plausible basis for peace. But it also consolidated the radical, creative energy and insight that the arts offered for peace that was relevant to society, rather than merely celebrate yet another elite victory. Hannah Hoch's collage from 1919, "Cut with the Kitchen Knife Through the First Epoch of the Weimar Beer-Belly Culture" (See <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/art-1010/dada-and-surrealism/dada2/a/hannah-hoch-cut-with-the-kitchen-knife-dada-through-the-last-weimar-beer-belly-cultural-epoch-of-germany>) portrayed war as self-destructive chaos that would debase humanity, rather than creating peace. The methodology of such work suggested an awareness of the potential of networks, relationality, and of social power, which were growing among populations more aware of their status and rights, though the disruption that was to be achieving through deploying them against existing political order was to be more ambiguous in practice. Substantively, it offered a challenge to the tendency to await a victor's peace following a 'glorious' war, and was connected closely with the more pacifist representation of Vereshchagin. However, it was also indicative of a level of desperation

that radical methods and claims such as these had failed given the international and domestic circumstances, and the looming catastrophe of violence might be the only alternative: to meet fire with fire. Methodologically, such methods would also soon come to form the basis of often reactionary propaganda, aimed at delegitimizing emancipatory, non-violent claims and mobilizing violence in order to re-establish domestic and international hierarchies.

Though politics was coming to the fore in artpeace, artists still normally eschewed dangerous confrontation for more empathic and subtle modes of engagement that were perhaps less risky, during this period of heightened ideology. Those associated with peace movements, or at least with resistance to war, also often portrayed a sensitivity to issues such as identity, discrimination, property, and gender inequality as representing negative stratifications (as opposed to historical, conservative arguments which tended to see them as important frameworks for a social Darwinist world). For example, Kathe Kollwitz, a Polish artist who dealt in particular with women as subjects for her art, illustrated very plainly the impact of war on women but in particular their agency against war in her image, “Never Again War” (Kollwitz 1924b).

Similarly, the level of sectarianism, discrimination, and racism often evident in war was represented in the painting by a German Jewish painter in the period leading up to WWII. Felix Nussbaum was killed at Auschwitz in 1944, and his painting, ‘The Pearls’ is widely regarded as one of his most important (Nussbaum, 1938). It shows a Madonna and Child image superimposed over a battle scene, offering a complex anti-war protest, working on several different levels at once (especially if the viewer knows anything about the painter’s biographical details and context).

Perhaps the seminal example of artpeace is Picasso’s *Guernica*, which attempted to combine many of the motifs of peace art, including Dadaist confrontation. It was painted for the 1937 Exposition held in Paris, (Picasso 1937) and has become one of the most famous paintings in the world. It portrayed the suffering of the small Basque town of Guernica which was attacked by the Luftwaffe in April 1937. Its focus on suffering

in its ordinary, everyday context, caused by a cynical, surprise air attack against innocent civilians, was underpinned by allusions to long standing Spanish myths of survival and power. It brought together radical epistemic-aesthetic innovations in modernity: artistic experimentalism with radical political challenges to fascism and the violence it valorized, as all as emotional, social appeals for solidarity and empathy. It deployed the tactic of relying on empathy to expose war and its connection with underlying, elemental and structural forces of nationalism, evil, and violence, while also appealing to a certain national character of resilience and eternity. It became a powerful symbol of the international and transnational peace movement during and after WWII, becoming associated with a number of different anti-war campaigns, including against the Vietnam War. The remarkable transversality of these movements – ordinary, powerless, global networks of people opposing total war as a political tool, along with all the power it engendered, and proposing various alternatives – were to become perhaps defining features of the post-war world. This was the basis for stage six in the artpeace evolution. *Guernica* spent most of its life at the Museum of Modern Art in New York before it was returned to a newly democratic Spain in the 1980s, in accordance with the wishes expressed by Picasso in his will. Basques have been calling for its relocation from Madrid to Bilbao ever since, as a symbol of the suffering the Basque country has endured and the peace it now hopes for.

Picasso also produced the most well-known emblem for contemporary peace movements, drawing on a common historical metaphor. His *Dove* from 1949 is now widely recognized in many different guises (Picasso 1949). It made no reference to violence, but offered a globally resonant symbol through an allusion to a more environmental, “commons” perspective of peace at a time in the Cold War when social movements were beginning to mobilize in the East and the West (Goedde 2019). He also composed several other peace images that focused on symbolizing peace independently (Picasso 1962). Also, around this time, his creation, *War and Peace* was painted

onto the walls of a chapel in Vallauris in France during a period sometimes referred to as “the summer of War and Peace”. It depicted “war” as a tank and a figure with a bloody sword, a basket of bacteria, and a sack of skulls. These were opposed by a ‘peace fighter’ carrying a shield with a dove on it, and by a child ploughing the sea, drawn by a winged horse. This was the last major political composition produced by Picasso and made explicit a more complex motif the balance between war and peace (Picasso, 1952). This perhaps prefigured peacekeeping and peacebuilding practices later in the century, which were attempts to maintain and improve peace through a variety of different military, economic, political, social, and cultural tools. His support and recognition of peace movements both endorsed and heightened the transnational and transversal “rights” revolution that emerged after WW2, which challenged war and uncovered other forms of violence (Moyn 2018).

Broadening Approaches

The evolving depiction of artpeace and its relationship variously with power, hegemony, domination, imperialism, totalitarianism, authoritarianism, territory, heroism, tragedy, and inequality, as well as with balance, justice, and sustainability, was now gathering pace in a variety of different media. By stages five and six, the sophistication of the message was perhaps eclipsed by the possibilities inherent in global mobilization and advocacy, especially when subaltern artpeace connected with like-minded international or transnational actors, and were able to form cross-cutting alliances (assuming these were not formed for superficial purposes on either side). The arts provided a common grammar that was now coming into view and becoming more audible (especially when compared to its glacial pace over the previous several millennia).

Soon after WWI, and after it had destroyed the fabric constructed over previous generations, there emerged the phenomena of “peace museums”. There are now many of these around the world. Probably the most famous is the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum ([Hiroshima Peace Memorial](#)). This museum is sited on the

original “ground zero,” where the US atomic weapon, absurdly named “Little Boy” was detonated. This location is marked by the eerie remains of a building in Hiroshima Peace Park called “Genbaku”. It is the sole architectural reminder of the damage and death caused at 8.15 in the morning of the 6th August, 1945. About 70,000 individuals were killed instantly, and many more in the period afterwards. The city of Hiroshima is now closely associated with civil resistance to nuclear weapons. The use of the A-bomb was commonly justified by Western scholars and policymakers on the grounds that the 140,000 deaths it caused were significantly less than the many possible deaths a land invasion of Japan would have caused, given the complete militarization of Japanese society at the time. An aesthetic, humanities influenced approach would, if following the rationale of early contributions to peace aesthetics, underline this philosophical ethical dilemma, probably making it extremely difficult to justify the level of violence applied even so. Such issues are not referred to in the rather anodyne museum which perhaps relates more to stages three and four than later developments in artpeace (perhaps more displaying a masterful diplomacy. Instead it focuses on cataloguing the events of the day and the suffering the bombing caused in an understated manner, perhaps because of acute political sensitivities over the admittance of Japanese or western guilt. However, the museum’s presence speaks for itself: a terrible catalogue and a warning, as well as place of memorialization, tranquility, and reflection about how to avoid such catastrophes in the future. Its reflectiveness points the observer to stage six concerns about radical alternatives from the subaltern perspective.

The preservation of widespread war damage and its use in public monuments or symbols became common after WW2. This practice reconnected the post-war epoch with the pre-war period, travelling over the rupture that war represented. This was the case with Marienkirche in Lübeck in Germany. This church, dating from 1250 was badly damaged in Allied bombing of civilian areas during World War II. Its church bells, in what is now a UNESCO listed church,

fell from their tower in Allied bombing, and have since been left as a reminder on the floor of the rebuilt tower. (<https://st-marien-luebeck.de/>: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Mary%27s_Church,_L%C3%BCbeck) This dramatic, thought-provoking scene works on several different levels, again pointing toward stage six concerns.

Cartoons in newspapers have also been widely used to critique the incompetence and hypocrisy of war leaders, war, and inconsistent peace settlement processes. For example, J.N Ding Darling drew a series of cartoons opposing war during WW1, WWII, and after. These relied on the shock factor of futility, atrocity or tragedy, and represented peace as a necessary alternative. Others incorporated an element of satire, humor and irony. Cartoons continue to be used to critical effect in contemporary media to highlight a popular desire for peace and a resistance to war, particularly during the Iraq War from 2003, for example in the work of Steve Bell, spanning stages four to six. (See, for example, “We Have Gained 200 Yards of the Enemy Trenches—Dispatch from the Front—1916”, “Sign Him Up Before He Gets Over His Headache”, “*Waiting for the Sword to Fall*”, “*Eventually, Why Not Now?*” in Christopher D. Koss (ed.), *A Ding Darling Sampler: The Editorial Cartoons of Jay N. Darling*, Christopher Koss, 2004, See for example the many cartoons of Steve Bell in *The Guardian* on President GW Bush’s conduct during the Iraq War: <https://www.theguardian.com/Iraq/cartoons/0,,912730,00.html>)

As noted above, peace art has become a part of public architecture (though mainly decorative rather than structural), (Thanks to Stefanie Kappler for this important point) whether through the concurrent glorification of war and a victor’s peace, through the vilification of war and its mechanisms, the celebration of peacemaking, peacekeeping, peace treaties, the UN, peacemakers, civil society actors, or more marginally the attempted depiction of peace as a form in itself. For example, representing the common peace, disarmament, and development theme of the early post-war era, of converting the implements of war into those of peace, one public

sculpture at the UN headquarters in New York depicts a figure holding a hammer aloft in one hand, and a sword in the other, which he is making into a ploughshare (Buchetich, 1959). Perhaps this was a confirmative of the dramatic developments in artpeace in stages five and six.

Also at the UN Secretariat building in New York is Marc Chagall’s stained glass window in the Public Lobby. It was a gift from United Nations staff and Chagall in memory of Dag Hammarskjold, the second Secretary-General of the UN. He and fifteen other people died with him in a plane crash while on a peace mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 1961. The window contains several well-known symbols of peace ([UN Headquarters](#)). Indeed, the United Nations family of organizations has been active in documenting peace in its own institutional terms, in the context of its work in the areas of international security, refugees, development, and health, via an extensive archive of historical photographs and posters. Many of them highlight the cooperative, legal and institutional, as well as the human stories of peace and war, though many also point to the fact that states remain the pre-eminent actors in international relations. Again, these images span the later stages of artpeace development but does so in via a rather traditional aesthetic form. (See the wide variety of UN posters spanning the end of WW2 to the contemporary era. Edward B. Marks & Katie Burke, *For a Better World: Posters from the United Nations*, Pomegranate Europe, 2000.)

Another well-known piece at UN Head Quarters is *Non-Violence*, by Carl Fredrik Reutersward, again at the UN Headquarters in New York (Reutersward 1988). This portrays a giant revolver with its barrel twisted into a knot, making the gun useless (ironically, this sculpture became less public after the security perimeter of the building was expanded after 9/11). It symbolizes the ease with which weapons can be made impotent, the waste they represent, and represents a powerful call for disarmament.

More ambivalent references to peace through violence, threat, or force remain common. The ambiguity of war and peace art remained visible in post Good Friday Agreement (1998) murals

long after the agreement was struck, on house walls in Belfast. These murals became a tourist attraction and though some are still expressions of militantism, many have been repainted with less ambiguous messages about the benefits of the peace process. Walls, with their fluid aesthetic, that once glorified violence now reflect more optimistic messages illustrating how representation itself is renewed after war (even if aimed at tourists) (Hocking 2012). Murals tend to be repainted repeatedly, representing the changing environment and shifting politico-aesthetic responses to the dynamics of the post-Good Friday Agreement (1998) period. They were originally quite traditional representations of artpeace, but increasingly have shifted toward stages five and six.

Overall, during the stage six period, the artistic representations of peace have diversified substantially, as seen with arts that were deployed in the CND resistance movement around Greenham Common since 1981, (See <https://www.theartworks.org.uk/our-greenham>) or as mentioned above in Northern Ireland. One of the most poignant tragedies of the early post-cold war era, until the massive civilian losses that occurred in the Iraq war after 9/11 or the Rwandan Genocide in 1994, was the siege of Sarajevo during the breakup of Yugoslavia during the early 1990s. This drawn-out conflict was the scene of many poignant reminders of the hubris of the claims that peace had arrived after the Cold War, when set into relief by the political claims for justice, economic assistance, restitution, reparations, as well as a sustainable political order that conflict-affected populations were now raising. Many Sarajevans remember the U2 rock concert of 1997 (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/U2_concert_in_Sarajevo;) as a final realization that the war was over, and the constant bombing and sniping that the city had endured for around 1000 days from 1992 to 1995 would not return. The strange process behind the realization of this unlikely concert was related in a quirky book, which may also be said to offer a more literary dimension to artpeace (Carter 2005). Of course, this book stands in a long but relatively recent line of examples in the literary peace genre, spanning Leo Tolstoy in the nineteenth century to Ernest

Hemmingway, George Orwell, and beyond (Tolstoy 2007; Hemmingway 1940; Orwell, 1984).

Another creative example could once be found in the divided capital of Cyprus, Nicosia, Lefkosa, or Lefkoshia. From the late 1950s until 2003, an impassable so-called green-line divided the city's Greek and Turkish Cypriot inhabitants. One General Young marked the line on a Nicosia map to establish a buffer zone between the two communities. This was a strategy of divide and rule or divide and pacify, particularly after the city became the scene of intercommunal riots in December 1963. After a war in 1974, the green-line became part of an island wide buffer zone, patrolled by a UN peacekeeping force. In 2005, a painted pink line also appeared in the city, which was supposed to transgress the green line's patriarchal demarcations, categorizations, and divisions (Kamerić 2005). In a sophisticated challenge to the related dynamics of war, division, nationalism, and patriarchy, the pink line implied that war and division in Cyprus could be blame on such traditional categories.

More radical and satirical stances on the inadequacies of politics, and on the way they scarred the social landscape with violence, as well as the exploration of completely new directions, were developing at pace. They were also more visible to various global audiences than ever before, because of new communication technologies. They partly converged in the work of Banksy, a self-described "guerrilla graffiti artist" known for his resistance to war and violence in his public, hit and run style art, which has a habit of randomly appearing all around the world. He is associated with anti-capitalist and anti-Establishment pieces of work, as well as opposing various wars and oppressive political systems, including in the Middle East, the Iraq War, and War on Terror after 9/11, using the massive popular appeal of his to discredit establish modes of order and to raise the issue of what should come next (Banksy 2006). His window view through to a seeming paradise beyond the Israel/ Palestine buffer wall (2005) pointed to radical possibilities of peace despite conflict and division. (<https://community.atlasobscura.com/t/locations-of-banksy-art/2074/2>: <https://banksyexplained.com/the-segregation-wall-palestine-2005/>) His interpretation of the

peace dove for Christmas in Bethlehem, in the Westbank in 2007, was also far more complex than Picasso's earlier drawings (mentioned above). (https://www.dailysabah.com/gallery/political-street-art-best-of-banksy/images?gallery_image=undefined#big) Yet, even during stage six of artpeace's development, it is common that exhibitions purporting to be about peace generally fell back on campaigning against war (a trend reflected in an exhibition in the Tate Britain in London in 2007, which touched on the Iraq war). (See the recreation of peace campaigner Brian Haw's *Parliament Square Protest*, Mark Wallinger (2007).)

Implications of Stages 1–6 for Practices Associated with Peacemaking

In the selections above of a range of aesthetic representations of war and peace, familiar and simple dynamics are illustrated: by stages three and four what artpeace is being used as a subaltern form of advocacy against war, and peace arts came to represent a critical resistance to war, often by appealing to emotion, religion, solidarity and community, or focusing on its tragedy. Sometimes, simple recording of names and dates is used, or more recently various types of humor to attack war-based systems, satirize them, or even undermine their legitimacy. However, until stages five and six artpeace also often works within the parameters of the state or empire, just as much as it may challenge iniquitous and unjust exercises of power.

This is a deficit in artpeace's creative imagination, leaving peace innovation to be dominated, often in reductive ways, by formal political and policy actors and powerful propaganda, at least until recently. This deficit illustrates an ambivalent attitude toward war but often also supports its metastructures via bureaucratic, technocratic, management, and stabilization techniques aimed mainly at propping up an imperfect, negative form of peace and a relatively crude international order. This parallels the paucity of ideas beyond the ideological debates of modern times (within which new alternatives have also not emerged).

Peace and conflict studies debates have recently focused on descriptive and methodological approaches (such as issues of locality and positionality), partly perhaps because of the regressive dynamics emerging that are pushing back scientific and ethical progress. Yet, the critical edge of peace art has continued to develop, pointing peace more broadly to issues of global justice (historical, distributive, and environmental) (Reid and Taylor 2010; Nussbaum 2015; Pogge 2001; Kohn 2013; Gonzalez 2017; Della Porta et al. (2007)).

The more creative and radical work this essay has examined, especially since Dadaism challenged WWI propaganda, has reinforced norms of nonviolence, underlined the hypocrisies of power in emotive and accessible ways, and sought to mobilize and consolidate a collective anti-war and anti-violence understanding in, and across, societies. This appears to be understood more broadly as a challenge to political elites, the state, geopolitics, neo-colonialism, and geo-economics, and intimates local to global-scale networks of solidarity, empathy, and global justice. Artpeace strategies have juxtaposed violence intuitively with imaginaries of calm, artisanship, beauty, connecting nonviolence and alternativity with justice and reconciliation. They highlighted in compressed ways the shocking historical, cultural, and humanistic information available about the consequences of violence. They have depicted the effects of violence on civilians, on public spaces, and on the innocent. They worked primarily by unsettling, perhaps in much more direct and assertive ways than in the past, common assumptions about violence as heroic, strategic, necessary, increasingly relating personal tragedy with major philosophical and systemic questions as well as creative new possibilities. It has increasingly expressed emotive and subaltern issues against run of dominant state-centric, military-industrial, autocratic, and neoliberal rationalities of power. It imagines responses and alternatives in intuitive sketches.

This has produced an elusive commentary with implications for peace and conflict studies. It guides peacemaking toward primary emotional

and empathetic responses, considerations of subaltern voice and representation. This implies peacemaking probably becomes much less Burkean and more focused on reform, experimentation, and much improved systems of law, government, and institutions, as well as equality, rights, justice, and sustainability as responses. The performances of the Arts, their ability to transcend convention, boundaries, and systemic enclosures juxtapose themselves with the brutal oversimplifications of war and violence as power was historically transmitted through empires, states, militaries, alliances, international political economy, and classes to the modern era. From stages four to six they invite a broad social and subaltern consideration of the philosophical, ethical considerations of war as a political tool or historical event. While earlier stages left open the question of what must be done for there to be a good peace for the long term, later stages have clarified the imaginary of a peace with global justice. (See the UN's Sustaining Peace agenda, for scientific and political implications on this matter. UN Secretary-General 2018, para. 6.) As media and platforms for networked production and representation proliferate, the subaltern perspective is for the first time also much more accessible across, rather than enclosed by, international boundaries of empire, state, region, race, and class.

However, while more accessible it also still represents a substantial lacuna when compared with mainstream representations of victor's peace or peace that follow power. It reiterates the question of why technical and aesthetic representations of peace remain so limited, widely scattered, and in such a low volume (despite some acceleration over time)? Censorship and erasure of emancipatory political arguments has been historically common in imperial and state history, as well as in ideological terms, and the same appears to be true for artpeace, even in a digital age (where disinformation and propaganda can muddy the waters so easily). There can be little other explanation for the paucity of exemplars. Aesthetico-political projects also mirror power-relations in their survival and influence. Ultimately, much artistic peace work challenges war through broad brush emotions, or associates

peace with elite and northern power or ideas, challenging, perhaps, the direct use of violence but less frequently the political systems that mobilize it.

Theoretical contributions on peace have made substantial advances over the last century, reflected in UN doctrine, (See Richmond 2020. See, on the policy evolution, among others, UN General Assembly *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* (ECOSOC), United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2200A (XXI), 16th December 1966: UN General Assembly, "Right of peoples to peace", *UN General Assembly Resolution 39/11*, 1984; Report of the Secretary-General, "An Agenda for Peace, Preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping", *A/47/277 - S/24111*, 17 June 1992, paras 3 & 5; UN General Assembly and Security Council 2018) however. In some ways this was spurred by cultural legitimacy following the evolution of stages in art peace that this article has outlined. Attempts to moderate clashes of interests for states following the rationality of territorial sovereignty, for example, has received substantial theoretical critique translated into liberalism, multilateralism, international law and organization, and social movements, and the dilution of sovereignty in peace processes such as Northern Ireland. Yet, it has been rare for artistic representations to pre-empt and foreshadow such levels experimentation (such as the juxtaposition of improbable territorial maps mentioned below) though they generally support and disseminate innovations in popular, philosophic, and scientific thought. This indicates that more could be done in terms of aesthetic-political challenges against the legitimization of violence in political order, if artpeace wants to be more than an amplification of norms of co-existence and nonviolence. From Lorenzetti to Dada, this is clearly possibly and occasionally powerful. Such heightened levels might point to artpeace representing a synthesis of radical creativity and emancipatory political agendas, rather a simple marriage of emotive art and power-politics, or art with social aspirations for peace.

In order to disseminate and lock-in systems designed to produce and ensure peace in its more

creative or expansive forms, widespread cultural understanding and experimentation (where it is safe to do so) are required. Yet, long standing blockages exist, divorced from social and ethical priorities and lying in complex political structures that also control representation. They usually support the state and the national interest, as well as capital and political ideologies that maintain stability in international order, making the whole edifice very conservative. They have had a retarding effect on the transmission of aesthetic-political forms of emancipation in order to compete with power-based representations. Peace aesthetics and representations are forced to deal with the immobilities and conservatism that comes with the preservation of existing order and its historical grounding in violence and injustice. This takes up most of the available creative-political resource, further hindering progress. The very gradualist pace of anti-war representational development indicates the scale of the task, perhaps mirroring calculations about revolutionary versus gradual change. Imagining alternative approaches and orders is more plausible in experimental media, while it is ethically risky in practice.

Widespread representations of more complex agendas rarely emerge (exceptions such as Lorenzetti's, mentioned above, are rare). Peacemaking, mediation, peacebuilding, peacekeeping, as well as the UN system, multilateralism, the donor systems, and the global array of NGOs are more or less completely absent from cultural forms of representation at an international level, and even in conflict-affected societies. The complexity of peace is often not even present in dry, realist representations of terrible violence, as in the Peace Museum in Hiroshima. This raises some worrying and substantial questions about the evolution of the international peace architecture, and how far it may have always been secondary and subsequent to the evolution of war and geopolitical power in the modern world.

Yet, this essay's limited collection of examples illustrates that efforts are evolving to depict how the commonplace desire for peace is represented in multiple forms and across dimensions. Indeed, the habitual celebration of war and conflict is

more an ironic representation of a desire for a form of peace based upon dominance that would never be plausible because it would be without broad legitimacy. Often, this means an unviable form of peace, based on victory. Read more deeply perhaps, the selection in this essay also invariably illustrates an appeal to humanity and common decency, a repulsion toward violence, and a will toward its proscription. More radically, it indicates a concern that political elites and the political, social, and economic structures they support cannot yet prevent war or offer a high quality of peace. The arts underline social forms of resistance to violence and injustice, and mobilization against it, but only offer hints of a subsequent political order.

In summary, a will to peace is increasingly perceptible and complex, aesthetically, throughout history; there appears to be a gathering momentum over time toward a more nuanced engagement with peace. These representations rest on the weakening of elite, state or imperial monopolies over representation, connected to social revulsion toward war, as well as solidarity, resistance, and a growing understanding of how violence breeds violence down the ages. It partly represents a responsibility to represent peace as a pluralist, transnational, trans-scalar, and transversal endeavor. Developments in the aesthetic representations of peace hint at "pluriversalism" rather than hegemony, universalism, top-down, or even "common" narratives (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2018; Querejazu 2021; Behr and Shani 2021).

Toward a Creative and Just Synthesis

The items examined in this essay represent a limited catalogue of what might be described as elite peace art, more easily accessible to western eyes, and preserved for posterity by powerful actors in the cultural sectors related to the state and global political economy. Though they contain some radical critique their import is limited to commentary on violence and its proscription, diplomacy, the art of government, emotions and the role of social advocacy. Reconstruction would be its next logical, ethico-political, aesthetic step.

It is likely that more radical, subaltern work, in line with the findings of recent critical scholarship and scientific progress, has been regularly erased in the past. Aesthetico-political challenges of this sort are ephemeral, and there clearly may be a problem with what can be described as “disappeared” subaltern peace art versus the more formal and elite sources from the west that have survived. If more subaltern contributions have disappeared, they cannot inform the political process nor play a role in peacemaking or emancipatory reform. Some may make it into the mainstream of course, but the selection criteria (and curation process) is little understood. While there is a widespread sense in critical terms that art, philosophy, and science should lead and inform power, there is actually a more empirically observable tendency for power to lead and influence. Hence frameworks like ‘policymaking’ and ‘policy relevance’, lead both representation and scholarship toward their needs. Funding programs do likewise, leading them toward the state, while counter-insurgency strategies are meant to induce loyalty. Certainly, art and scholarship often appear to be comfortable with power, and mainly point to peace when uncomfortable contradictions threaten hegemony or the international system. There have been some honorable exceptions, but we must assume there were many more subaltern contributions, now lost or erased.

When subaltern agency demands peace and elite actors have exhausted war as a political tool, there is a chance that artpeace, representing an archive of knowledge, elite or subaltern, may be rescued. It may come to mark a new political era of enhanced peace methodologies and epistemologies, as many of the sources cited above once did. At the same time, it is in power's interests to claim control of artifacts and aesthetics, and to erase them. This may explain why it seems there is a tendency for artpeace traditions to follow some kind of reactive power politics, whether at state, empire, religious, or other levels. Because art (culture and counter-culture) responds *after* or at best during war, power easily restrains its radical critique. Steps forward may occur when power aligns with social consensus and

representation, or alternatively when power-structures suffer a collapse and a vacuum emerges, enabling creatively and hitherto marginalized approaches to develop and become visible. Its subaltern or controversial nature means it is necessary to broaden what is considered to be peace art in order to understand much wider political critiques of violence as well as reconstructions of the good life.

It may be that artifacts of artpeace mainly survive because power has failed to erase them, and there is social and elite demand and receptivity to creativity and new thinking. In some cases, arts-based narratives are the creation of power, emphasizing state or imperial prerogatives to the people. Thus, surviving artpeace needs special attention. The most radical critical work may not survive because of the intensity of its challenge or reconstruction, the less critical work that does survive censors itself to limited the goals of peace to fit within the existing order, and power-based art effectively reinforces the war machine. The artpeace referred to in this essay shows the potential (e.g., see Lorenzetti in the fourteenth century or Matobi in the twentieth century, as mentioned below) for radical and critical statements about rights, good government, sustainability, and responding to the contradictions of war over territorial sovereignty.

The preceding analysis illustrates that visual art defines and determines peace in very Eurocentric frameworks: it reflects the westernized story of art as well as the “whiggish” view of history as progress through a kind of Hegelian dialectic. Artpeace is related to, and often is attracted to, or appreciates power, perhaps allowing peace to follow power rather than scientific and emancipatory endeavors. Nevertheless, simultaneously it also offers a platform for creative resistance to achieve emancipation. Yet, many creative endeavors connected to everyday life throughout history have left little in the way direct traces. Its recovery, as well as the preservation of contemporary sources would be significant. A more substantive critique of power has led to innovations in social agency, for which artpeace has always offered hints, sometimes across the whole international geography.

One such critique involves a comparison between Abraham Ortelius' illustration for Thomas Moore's text 'Utopia' (c.1595) (See <https://orteliusmaps.com/book/ort234.html>) and Satomi Matoba's work depicting *Utopia* (1998). (See https://www.englishgallery.com/artists/artist_work/?mainId=129&groupId=non&p=3&_gnum=&media=Prints) They both represent the contradictions of peace and war. Moore's *Utopia* represents a set of impossible geographic and social features and rests upon a totalitarian form of peace many today would find unacceptable (which even Moore himself may not have been comfortable with). Matoba's remapping of the political world in this instance sees Hiroshima and Pearl Harbour imagined as geographical neighbors in the same detailed cartography, normally deployed to emphasize territorial sovereignty and separate political and cultural spaces, but instead now signifying a cosmopolitan but diverse cartography of peace after the extremes of violence.

Summary

Translating all of the above into a value contribution for peace and conflict studies, which provides indicators for future emancipatory paths offers an overall conceptual framework for artpeace. This represents a confluence and a synthesis of historical political and creative forces to make peace, one often overlooked or blocked for disciplinary reasons or by power. The grammars of humanities, social sciences, and the arts merge in this conceptual framing, often despite powerful interests and opposition. The arts have historically offered a platform of creativity for political innovation and alternative perspectives on violence not easily identifiable from a Eurocentric rationality, as well as creating alternative frameworks for a peaceful solution. They have suggested them centuries before they became social, state, and international practice in many cases, rehearsing the emancipatory and nonviolent potential of social imaginaries when fed into reformed political systems.

This suggests that in a contemporary setting, artpeace – as a platform for imagining emancipatory improvements to political systems that rest on violence and war – could offer new methods that would help solve power deadlocks, build legitimacy, reconciliation, justice, and contribute to peace formation processes. It would reimagine the nature of the state, good life, and international political order (by promoting positive forms of peace, highlighting unseen violence, and supporting the proscription of violence across the different scales of analysis from local to global). Its synthesis would be a source of practical reform in the longer term. It offers a grounded, resonant, alternative grammar of representation that utilizes transnational and transversal networks for peace-oriented communication, advocacy, reconciliation, justice, reform, and nonviolence.

Artpeace thus represents an overall conceptual framing of the synergy between arts and peace, as well as a methodological strategy for addressing conflict through the arts. In turn, "artpeacebuilding" represents an amalgamation of medium-term, peacebuilding strategies often dominated by top-down, external factors. Even so, it provides useful platforms for further creative, subaltern networks and synergies to be rediscovered or to emerge. "Artpeace formation," connected to social movements, resistance, civil society engagements, represents long-term, social, cultural, and bottom-up engagements with peace, including dynamics related to about cultural shifts, emotions, representation, memorialization, and reconciliation.

There may be many other subcategories that offer such synergies between arts and peace praxis, but their conceptual separation in disciplinary terms represents epistemological blockages brought about by specific rationalities of political order: from imperialism, geopolitics and the state to the international political economy, as well as the marginalization of creativity, race, class, and gender by zero-sum, positivist, epistemological frameworks. The exploration of art and peace represented in this essay illustrate the work they have done to come back together into a synthesis to suggest emancipatory practices for the long term, to consolidate and disseminate an

aesthetico-political consensus that aims to remove war and violence and establish a just and sustainable political order from local to global scales. Artpeace formation represents critical, post- and de-colonial, and emancipatory attempts to refashion existing and mainly failing peace praxes in the context of underlying and creative grammars and representations associated with artpeace. More radically, they aim to resolve underlying structural divisions and respond to global justice issues.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Art and Reconciliation](#)
- ▶ [Civil Society and Peacebuilding: Critical Review](#)
- ▶ [Culture and Conflict Resolution](#)
- ▶ [Everyday Peace](#)
- ▶ [Local Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Nonviolence and Civil Resistance](#)
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- ▶ [Photography and Peace](#)
- ▶ [Street Art and Peace](#)
- ▶ [Textile-Making as Research Method](#)
- ▶ [Theatre and Peacebuilding](#)

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Arts-Based Research

► Textile-Making as Research Method

Asian Approaches to Peace

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Synonyms

Developmental peace; Eastphalian peace; Emerging power; International order; International peace architecture; Postliberal peacebuilding; Rise of China

Description

Asian Approaches to Peace is not a term with an agreed dictionary definition; rather, there is no fixed definition of the term. It is included in the lexicon used in the academic field of peace and conflict studies. In the previous study of peacebuilding which grew in the post-Cold War era, Asia was seen as a conflict-prone area and was treated, by and large, as an area requiring

intervention, as seen in the cases of Cambodia, Timor-Leste, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, and Nepal. Asia as an agent for peace has never attracted sufficient attention from mainstream scholarship, except for some philosophical approaches to non-violence led by Gandhi (2019) and subaltern aspirations which crystalized into a “Non-Aligned Movement.” However, because of the rapidly increasing presence of emerging actors in Asia in the field of not only economics (especially, trade and investment) but also peacekeeping, peacebuilding, and development, mainstream scholarship can no longer continue to neglect alternative contributions or contestations presented or potentially projected by (re)emerging Asian powers such as China and India. This coincides with a series of setbacks in the post-Cold War era experienced by Western donors in their efforts to advocate for “Liberal Peace” in post-conflict societies (Paris 2004), embodied by the practice of humanitarian intervention and the notion of “Responsibility to Protect” (Evans 2009; Bellamy and Luck 2018) (see sections R2P and Prevention; Liberal Peace in Peace Operations). In light of this, *Asian Approaches to Peace* began to receive more than passing attention as an alternative to “Liberal Peace” or as a promising prototype for “Post-Liberal Peace” approaches (Richmond 2011; Uesugi 2020).

Introduction

Asia is a dynamic concept. From a Eurocentric point of view, it represents a geographic area ranging from Iran (West Asia), through Central, South, and South-East to East Asia, reaching Japan on the “far eastern” edge. Russia, Mongolia, Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, and Pacific Islands countries may fall into an expanded geographic category of Asia (or Asia-Pacific); however, the term “Asia,” associated with *Asian Approaches to Peace* as used in peace and conflict studies, encompasses countries in East, South-East, and South Asia. In terms of demography, Asia accommodates multiple centers with growing populations, such as China, India, and Indonesia. It provides an attractive

market and serves as a driver for economic growth. In the post-World War II recovery and development, the economic success of Japan, plus the Asian “Newly Industrialized Economies” (NIEs) – South Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, and Hong Kong – led the “miracle of Asia” (Schuman 2009; Stubbs 2018). Now China and India, because of their scale, add and reinforce the economic centrality of Asia. From the point of view of international relations focusing especially on the maintenance of international order, the rise of China (in terms of its increasing influence on the global economy, politics, and security affairs) has stimulated discussion about whether Asia constitutes an opportunity for or threat to the United States (Allison 2017). Because the center of gravity has shifted back to Asia, the twenty-first century has been recognized as the Asian century (Khanna 2019). It is in this context that *Asian Approaches to Peace* have received considerable attention from scholars of peace and conflict studies.

The term *Asian Approaches to Peace* encompasses peace efforts (including peacemaking, peacekeeping, peacebuilding, development aid, and other modalities) carried out by Asian actors who operate under distinctive philosophies, epistemologies, and methodologies with different premises and objectives from those of the mainstream approaches led by the West. To capture the image featured by a series of uncoordinated and spontaneous peace efforts by Asian actors, a label “Eastphalian Peace” was introduced as opposed to the much more familiar term, “Westphalian Peace” (Uesugi and Richmond 2021). In the following, outstanding features of the “Eastphalian Peace” will be outlined as an example of *Asian Approaches to Peace*.

Westphalian Peace

The current international peace architecture is based on the norms and principles established as the Westphalian system, under which the inviolability of sovereign states is respected and every sovereign state is treated as equal (see section International Peace Architecture, Blockages and

Counter-Peace). The United Nations, in essence, rests on this Westphalian foundation, albeit it incorporates other logics or operational procedures (e.g., the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) operates against the principle of sovereign equality and preserves the privileges of its permanent members). Nevertheless, in the aftermath of World War II, the United Nations, upholding the Westphalian principles, helped many subalterns in Asia and Africa to claim their self-determination and thus facilitated their decolonization process (see section Secession and Self-Determination). Because these newly independent sovereign states suffered from foreign intervention and colonization, the Westphalian principles of inviolability of sovereignty and non-intervention in internal affairs of other states were very appealing to leaders of the newly independent states, to the extent that they still adhere to and guard the Westphalian principles rigidly today.

Amid the Cold War, some newly independent states formed the “Non-Aligned Movement,” with China, India, and Indonesia among others playing an instrumental role, which in 1954 established the *Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence* – (1) mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty, (2) mutual nonaggression, (3) mutual noninterference in internal affairs, (4) equality and mutual benefit, and (5) peaceful coexistence – as mutually acceptable parameters. Likewise, the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), one of the most outstanding regional organizations in Asia, also maintains these principles as the core values that dictate their diplomatic relationship. As safeguards against colonial interference or imperial intervention by major powers, Asian leaders such as Zhou Enlai (China), Jawaharlal Nehru (India), and Sukarno (Indonesia) declared these five doctrines, which resonated well with the Westphalian premises.

During the Cold War, the principle of non-interference in internal affairs of other states might have contributed to the rise of dictatorship, authoritarianism, or military junta in Asia, e.g., the Philippines, Indonesia, South Korea, North Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, Thailand, and Myanmar, albeit some of them were defeated by popular

democratic movements in their respective societies. Despite the fact that many countries in Asia were liberated (though maintaining authoritarian attributes), Asian leaders, organizations, and people still cling to the orthodox principle of the Westphalian order, from which Western liberals have departed since the end of the Cold War. While the current international peace architecture still stems from the Westphalian order, usurpation of the sovereignty of a failed, fragile, or rogue state by major powers or the United Nations has been legitimized and advocated by the Western liberals in the form of robust peacekeeping, peacebuilding, statebuilding, humanitarian intervention, and sanctions, all of which are also based on the founding liberal values of the United Nations. This liberal deviation from the principles of sovereign equality and nonintervention translated into cosmopolitan but inevitably intrusive policies and actions now entitled “Responsibility to Protect” (see section R2P and Prevention), safeguarding human rights, promoting democracy, and embracing nonstate actors such as civil society in the arena traditionally handled by states (see section Civil Society Inclusion in Peace Mediation).

Liberal Interventionism

During the Cold War, the “Non-Aligned Movement” served as an alternative framework for countries that wished to distance themselves from the two superpowers or maintain a balanced policy between the two competing hegemon. In the aftermath of the Cold War, however, the “Non-Aligned Movement” lost its attraction and salience while continuing to exist with 120 member states (Munro 2020). Under the “Pax Americana,” a new world order was envisioned and the so-called “international community” led by the United States initiated the Gulf War in 1991, a concerted effort in response to the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq. The United Nations intervened in a civil war in Cambodia, brokering the Paris peace accord in 1991, which gave rise to an unprecedented United Nations Peacekeeping Operation (UNPKO) called the United Nations

Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC). UNTAC was given an executive mandate to govern the territory and people of Cambodia on behalf of the sovereign state for 18 months in 1992–1993. The international community also intervened in a series of civil wars which erupted from 1991 onward in former Yugoslavia, and in 1995 the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) conducted airstrikes on recalcitrant parties to enforce the Dayton peace agreement (see section NATO's Approach to Peace Operations and Peacebuilding). There were setbacks in such interventionist approaches by the "international community," as peace enforcement attempts by the United Nations in a civil war in Somalia in 1992 could not bring about peace (see section War and Peace in Somalia), and the United Nations also failed to prevent the genocide in Rwanda in 1994, and the "ethnic cleansing" in Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1995 (see section UN Missions in Ex-Yugoslavia). Nevertheless, liberal interventionism prevailed; for example, the International Criminal Tribunal for former Yugoslavia was established (see section Transitional Justice in Bosnia and Herzegovina).

After the September 11 attack on the United States in 2001 (9/11), retaliatory military invasions by the United States and its allies took place in Afghanistan and Iraq. While these interventions were successful in overthrowing the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and the Saddam Hussein regime in Iraq, both societies continue to suffer from violence, and in the case of Iraq, the collapse of the regime paved the way for the rise of the "Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)." In retrospect, the post-Cold War liberal interventionism that was later hijacked by the post-9/11 counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations did not bring sustainable democracy nor prevalence of human rights to the above-mentioned societies in a manner that the "Liberal Peace" approach anticipated (see section Liberal Peacebuilding in a Transitional International Order). These setbacks seem to have demonstrated the diminishing power (and interests in providing public goods) of the superpower, the United States (see section Human Rights and Peace). The relative decline of the hegemonic

influence of the United States has coincided with the rise of China.

Decline of Liberal Peace and the Rise of Asia

Against this backdrop, a large number of critical scholars of peace and conflict studies scrutinized "Liberal Peace" norms and practices with an aim to improve them or search for alternatives. As a result, what later became known as a "local turn" was advocated in which national or local ownership was emphasized in peacebuilding as opposed to orthodox statebuilding approaches using a Western state model – democracy and the market economy – as a template and remedy for peacebuilding in non-Western contexts (Donais 2009, 2012; Lee 2019) (see section Local Peacebuilding). The local turn has become more sophisticated and has led to a number of academic discussions revolving around the concept of hybridity (Mac Ginty 2011; Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013) (See section Hybrid Peacebuilding). The local and hybrid turns gave rise to a number of criticisms of "Liberal Peace" and offered suggestions for improving the theory and practice of peacebuilding (Uesugi et al. 2021). These contributions, while underlining the role of local agencies, contexts, and dynamics, have had a limited impact on a dominant discourse and architecture of peacebuilding as they have been dictated by geopolitics and neo-liberal geoeconomics.

Meanwhile, the sheer magnitude of influence exercised by growing powers in Asia has become no longer negligible. In addition to Japan and the Four Asian Tigers (aka the NIEs) that had already achieved exceptionally high economic growth during the Cold War, China, India, and the ASEAN states have also experienced skyrocketing economic development, after recovering from the "Asian financial crisis" of 1997. In terms of the world ranking of GDP in 2020, China is placed second (after the United States), followed by Japan (third), and India (fifth), embodying the Asian Century. While the United States is still the richest country in the world and the GDP of Europe as a

whole still exceeds that of China, the economic power and potential of these Asian countries are enormous. Economists were forecasting this trend a long time ago, and likewise security experts in the United States were also warning that the rise of China could pose a considerable threat to the United States' hegemony in Asia and beyond (Mearsheimer 2003). In the last two decades, this view has begun to be shared by scholars and practitioners of development and peacebuilding, in the context of emerging powers or the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) (Richmond and Tellidis 2013).

Developmental Peace

In the past, the Bretton Woods Institutions – the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) – and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) have monopolized the standards and leading practice of development aid (see section Peacebuilding-Development Nexus). However, emerging powers in Asia, such as China and India, while receiving aid from the OECD members, do not have to follow the guidelines set by the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) when they extend their support to their fellow developing countries in Asia and Africa. In fact, they have opposed the OECD-DAC model and the use of aid as political interference (Lauria and Fumagalli 2019).

New international organizations – the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) established in 2001 – and financial institutions – the New Development Bank (formerly referred to as the BRICS Development Bank) established in 2014, and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) established in 2016 – were formed by emerging powers, offering alternative channels to the conventional West/North-centric aid. Furthermore, foreign direct investment, trade, foreign aid, and other forms of “South-South Cooperation” were explored by emerging powers (BRICS, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, and others). These aim for a “win-win” partnership and a

mutually beneficial relationship, an antithesis of unilateral aid which has created a donor-recipient structural hierarchy.

Japan and South Korea – the only two states in Asia admitted to the OECD-DAC – have followed the aid policy and model set by the OECD-DAC. At the same time, they also share distinctive strategic priorities: economic infrastructure development and production facilities (Stallings and Kim 2016). Both of them spend half of their official development assistance (ODA) on these two focus areas, while the other DAC donors spend less than a quarter (*ibid.*).

Major Asian economic powers – China, India, Japan, and South Korea – share a philosophy of international cooperation which values the idea of recipients taking the lead (self-help and demand-driven aid) (*ibid.*). For example, Japan defines aid as mutually beneficial cooperation, and Japan's ODA aims to promote the self-help and self-reliance of the aid-recipient society (Ogawa 2019). The strategy of major Asian actors is based on their similar development experience, in which the first tasks were increasing productive capacity and fostering the development of human capital (through technical assistance, capacity building, and scholarship), with strong public-sector leadership (*ibid.*).

Unlike Western aid-related government agencies such as the United States Agency for International Development and the United Kingdom's Department for International Development, governmental aid agencies in both Japan and South Korea – the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) – have included the term “cooperation” in their name to reflect their fundamental spirit of seeing foreign aid as “win-win cooperation.” The equivalent organization in China is the China International Development Cooperation Agency (CIDCA), and in India the Indian Agency for Partnership in Development (IAPD), initially to be called the India International Development Cooperation Agency (IIDA). These propensities in Asia symbolize their preference to see development assistance as “cooperation” or “partnership” between equal

partners rather than charity (Gulrajani and Faure 2019).

Large scale infrastructure projects financed by “yen loan” and implemented by Japanese private companies have been spearheaded by Japan’s ODA. This is known as Japan’s “commercial aid” model of development assistance in which the trinity of aid-trade-investment has been established as an operational standard (Kondoh 2015). Having been the most significant beneficiary of Japan’s ODA for the last 40 years, China has followed in Japan’s footsteps and also holds up “win-win cooperation” (Yang 2019) as a basic philosophy of its development aid, called “developmental peace.”

Japan and South Korea have adopted the state-led “commercial aid” model, in which their international cooperation is channeled through the aid-recipient government of middle-income countries, albeit they often collaborated with NGOs in their own countries when delivering humanitarian assistance to low-income countries (Stallings and Kim 2016) (see section Peacebuilding and Korean Civil Society). There are a number of vibrant NGOs in India dealing with India’s domestic, social, and economic issues, and civil society organizations in India have been instrumental in agenda setting and shaping India’s policy (Saran 2018). However, they have been focused on their domestic front, and the government of India has not relied on Indian NGOs when it has executed its overseas development projects (Mawdsley 2010). South-East Asian countries that experienced democratization or a people’s revolution such as the Philippines (against Marcos’s dictatorship) and Indonesia (against Suharto’s dictatorship) have powerful civil society organizations, and many of their leaders are elite in the society and embedded in the domestic politics of the respective country.

Peacekeeping

In the case of UNPKOs, Asian countries have contributed their troops and police officers with South Asian countries such as India, Bangladesh,

Pakistan, and Nepal being major contributors (see sections Assessment of Peace Operations; Conceptual Evolution of Peace Operations; Evolution of Practice in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations). As of 31 December 2020, of the contribution of 81,832 troops and police personnel to 22 UNPKOs (including Special Political Missions) worldwide, six Asian countries are ranked within the top ten contributors: Bangladesh contributing 6,798; Nepal 5,715; India 5,425; Pakistan 4,737; Indonesia 2,827; and China 2,520 (UN 2020).

The Western countries, especially the United States and the United Kingdom, preferred to mobilize their military alliances such as the NATO when they sought to enforce peace, instead of relying on UNPKOs, as seen in the cases of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Libya, or the coalition of the willing as in the case of the US-led invasion of Iraq (see sections United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo; Peacemaking and Peace Agreements on Kosovo; Different Layers of Afghan Conflict; The Libyan Conflict). In contrast to tendencies in the West to circumvent the United Nations, what is noticeable in Asia is that the United Nations is still seen as the only legitimate organ in the international community that can authorize peace operations, let alone other types of foreign military intervention. For instance, China has maintained its position that any foreign military intervention must be carried out with the consent of the host government and the United Nations should be the only legitimate authority that can call for foreign military intervention (Zürcher 2019, 2020). Since China started contributing its troops to UNPKOs for the first time (to UNTAC in 1992), China has become the leading troop and police contributor to the UNPKOs among the Permanent Members of the UNSC.

Due to its constitutional and domestic constraints, Japan has put self-restraints on its military overseas deployment, and it has deployed mainly to UNPKOs such as the UNTAC, the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISSET), and the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) (see sections

Post-conflict Timor-Leste; UN Peacebuilding in Timor-Leste; Civil Wars in Sudan and South Sudan; UN Missions in Sudan/South Sudan). After major combat between the US Forces and the Iraqi Army ended in 2003, the Japanese government created a time-bound special measures law to legitimize the deployment of self-defense forces to the Multi-National Force-Iraq (MNF-I) by referring to the UNSC resolutions (678, 687, 1441, and 1483) as the presence of a relevant resolution was a prerequisite for such deployment. This practice embodies Japan's adherence to the United Nations as the sole legitimate body to grant foreign military intervention (see section UN Security Council and International Interventions). Although Japan has upgraded its commitment to peace, operations under the slogan of "proactive contribution to peace based on the principle of international cooperation" and the so called "Peace and Security Legislations" enacted in 2016 allow the Japanese government to send its troops to non-UN peace operations; Japan in principle continues to maintain its traditional and conservative posture, avoiding its engagement in enforcement actions (see section Use of Force in Peace Operations).

Summary

Asian Approaches to Peace, which were outlined in the above discussion, comparing "Eastphalian Peace" with "Liberal Peace," have two shared features. First, they are based on the Westphalian principles, from which the Western liberal approach has already deviated. Second, while the primary agencies in *Asian Approaches to Peace* are public actors such as the state and thus their endeavors have the characteristic of "state-centricity" (Howe 2018), private entities, the state-owned enterprises (SOE) in the case of China, are also closely intertwined with the state-led efforts. These place emphasis on economic infrastructure development and are usually characterized as the trinity of aid, trade, and investment (Fukuda-Parr and Shiga 2016; Shimomura and Wang 2015). With the rise of

Asia and the emergence of an alternative "Eastphalian Peace," Western "liberal" deviations will be pulled back, and interventionist developmental practices will be replaced by the recipient-led approaches adhering to Westphalian principles, with an emphasis on economic development that can foster mutual gains. Such features have led "Eastphalian Peace" to be characterized as the perfection of Westphalian principles (Ginsburg 2010).

Cross-References

- ▶ [Assessment of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Civil Society Inclusion in Peace Mediation](#)
- ▶ [Civil Wars in Sudan and South Sudan](#)
- ▶ [Conceptual Evolution of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Different Layers of the Afghan Conflict](#)
- ▶ [Evolution of Practice in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations](#)
- ▶ [International Peace Architecture, Blockages, and Counter-Peace](#)
- ▶ [Liberal Peace in Peace Operations](#)
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- ▶ [UN Missions in Ex-Yugoslavia](#)
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- ▶ [United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo \(UNMIK\)](#)
- ▶ [UN Peacebuilding in Timor-Leste](#)
- ▶ [UN Security Council and International Interventions](#)
- ▶ [Use of Force in Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [War and Peace in Somalia](#)

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Assessment of Peace Operations

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Synonyms

Evaluation; Multiple missions; Multiple operations; Outcomes; Peacebuilding; Peacekeeping

Description

Valid assessments of peace operations are essential for policymakers designing effective strategies and actions. Yet accurate evaluations can be difficult and are compounded by several limitations. This chapter begins with a specification of various considerations that go into the process of creating benchmarks or criteria for success and failure in peace operations: (1) multiple operations, (2) multiple missions, (3) multiple stakeholders, (4) time frames, and (5) baselines. Following this is a brief overview of the primary approaches used in analysis for determining peace operation success; these focus on limiting violence and are assessed by reference to any renewal of warfare and civilian casualties, among other indicators. Finally, the chapter explores some alternatives that go beyond the modal approaches. These deal with other peace operation missions such as the delivery of humanitarian assistance and election supervision.

Introduction

In analyses of peace operations, whether scholarly or policy-making, the central concern has been with if, when, and how they work (or not).

Accordingly, much of the focus has been on the independent or causal factors (e.g., force size, conflict context, peacebuilding strategy) affecting peace operation success. Much less attention has been given to the dependent or outcome variables that define and measure success. Nevertheless, the benchmarks against how we assess peace operation success are critical in developing scholarly generalizations and policymaking adaptations. Defined incorrectly or too narrowly, success assessments might draw myopic or incorrect conclusions about the consequences of peace operations. Equally important, the factors that promote peace operation success on one dimension might be irrelevant or even counterproductive if success is judged according to different criteria; such a circumstance could lead to negative policy decisions.

This article considers questions concerning how peace operations are assessed. It begins with a specification of various considerations that go into the process of creating benchmarks or criteria for success and failure in peace operations. Following this is a brief overview of the primary approaches used in analysis for determining peace operation success. Finally, we discuss some alternatives that go beyond the modal approaches (see also Caplan 2019).

Considerations in Peace Operation Success

Evaluating peace operations might appear to be a simple process, but there are a series of considerations that analysts must address in making judgments.

Multiple Operations

Typically, peace operations are assessed in isolation of other efforts directed at the same goal. In fact, however, a given peace operation can be related to other operations deployed simultaneously or sequentially in the same conflict. Some peace operations such as the United Nations (UN) and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) cooperation and codeployment

in operations in Sierra Leone and Liberia suggest that analysts cannot look at operations separately in making judgments on success; the actions of one organization influence the other (Balas 2011). In addition, some conflicts experience multiple peace operations in sequence. For example, there have been eight UN operations in Haiti over several decades. The actions and prior success/failure of the preceding operations influence the outcomes of succeeding ones, and thus some consideration of the nonindependence of cases is required. There is also the consideration that multiple organizations conduct peace operations; whereas the UN still conducts a plurality of them, many other agents (e.g., regional organizations, multinational coalitions) collectively represent a majority, and how one analyzes those operations must be adjusted accordingly (Diehl and Balas 2014).

Diehl and Druckman (2010) identified a series of other dimensions of evaluation decisions, and these are addressed in the sections to follow.

Multiple Missions

Peace operations now conduct a variety of different missions, ranging from traditional cease-fire monitoring to election supervision to peacebuilding tasks such as promoting the rule of law and fostering local security or security sector reform (SSR). Indeed, the average operation in the post-Cold War era involves almost five different missions (Diehl and Druckman 2018). Fundamentally, different kinds of missions require, at least in part, different criteria for evaluating success.

The standards used for success and the associated need to be specific to the mission's goals. For example, if the mission is cease-fire monitoring and therefore the goal is to contain violence, assessments might examine violence levels in the area of deployment and measure the number of casualties both for members of the disputing parties and for the peace force. If, however, another mission of the operation deals with civilian protection and the goal is to protect human rights, a key concern is whether atrocities have been reduced or genocidal incidents avoided. The bottom line is that assessments will need to be

multifaceted and reflective of the missions that peacekeepers are asked to perform.

Stakeholders in Peace Operations

When analyzing peacekeeping success, the question arises: success for whom? Although rarely addressed in total, there are several sets of stakeholders in peace operations, each of which might generate different standards for success: the international community, states contributing personnel, the primary disputing states or groups, and the local population. Success for one stakeholder might not be translated to the same benefits for another, and indeed the outcome might be the opposite. For example, successful cease-fire monitoring might benefit the disputant that has seized control of a given geographic area but disadvantage the population living in that area who are subject to human rights violations committed by that disputant. There needs to be recognition that success is defined in different ways by the various stakeholders with political and economic interests in the same operation. The issue of multiple stakeholders with different interests arises with regard to a large variety of evaluation research projects (Druckman 2005).

Time Frame

Defining success also involves a decision on whether one adopts a short- versus long-term perspective (or both). From a short-term perspective, this could be the achievement of goals during the course of a peace operation or in some time frame immediately following the withdrawal of the peacekeeping force. An illustration could be the improvement of medical conditions during a humanitarian operation. Short-term, it is often easiest to tie the actions of the peace operation to the observed outcome in a causal sense. This can be accomplished with an interrupted time series analysis where the interruption is the point where the peacekeepers exit the operation.

Assessing peace operations from a long-term perspective generally means looking at conditions for more than a few years after the operation, even as much as a few decades. The assumption is that many of their effects are only evident many years in the future. This is necessary for particular

missions carried out by the peace operation, such as those promoting larger societal changes such as the rule of law or democratization. These are generally long-term processes that require assessments that are only apparent in the long run and when outcomes have stabilized. For example, various peacekeeping efforts in East Timor were almost universally considered a success in the immediate aftermath, only to prompt a reassessment when violence and instability returned in 2006. Similarly, reassessments are needed to take account of the recent eruptions of violence in Mozambique and in Nagorno-Karabakh about 20 years after the agreements were signed (1992 and 1994, respectively).

Two concerns arise in making long-term assessments. First is determining how long a window should be considered in evaluating outcomes; too long or too short time frames each raise their own validity problems. Second, the longer the time period that passes between the end of the operation and the assessment, the more difficult it will be to draw causal conclusions about the impact of the operation *per se*; intervening forces are likely to have as great or greater impact on future conditions than the peace operations.

Different standards are appropriate for short- and long-term success. For example, slowing refugee flows is a short-term indicator of success, whereas refugee repatriation is a process more appropriate for long-term evaluation. Short-term assessments are often useful to policymakers in order to make adjustments in an ongoing operation. Long-term outcomes better serve policy planners for the future.

Baseline

Implicitly, assessments of peace operations consider outcomes in comparison to a baseline; in practice, this means determining whether the situation during or after a peace operation is better than a referent standard. The choice of that baseline, however, can have a dramatic effect on whether the final judgment is success or failure. One comparison is against a situation in which no action was taken, what can be called the “better than nothing” or “absence-based” standard.

Unfortunately, peace operations can automatically be regarded as successful for any improvement in the situation, and intervention choices are also rarely between only peace operations and inaction.

Another standard for evaluation is comparing peace operations to other policy alternatives. This assumes an accurate list of alternative policies. Even then, many of these options are not mutually exclusive, and thus it is difficult to determine the extent to which the selection of the peace operation option affected other choices on the decision-making menu. There is also the problem of making an accurate counter-factual or scenario-based analysis of what would have happened if other alternatives had been selected. Would systemic war crimes of rape in the Congo been avoided if France and the United States launched military action or a team of mediators from African states had been sent to the country? Analysts might need to compare different alternatives across cases, some with peace operations and others with alternatives, assuming that such cases are comparable. Guidelines for making these comparisons can be found in the literature on structured focused comparisons (George and Bennett 2005).

Another standard is one in which the conditions prior to deployment are compared to those during and following the operation, a “before versus after,” pretest-posttest, or interrupted time series design. This standard has the advantage of making comparisons across missions possible or “normalizing” the baseline, as moderate levels of violence during peacekeeping might be considered progress in some contexts (e.g., deployment during full-scale civil war) but backsliding in others (e.g., deployment following a cease-fire).

A final baseline of effectiveness is achieved by comparing effectiveness across peace operations, a cross-sectional rather than longitudinal comparison, or what is referred to as “benchmarking.” This approach generates only relative or comparative assessments. A relatively successful operation might still have significant flaws, which are masked when the baseline is composed largely of failed missions. A variation would be to use the most successful operation or an ideal type as an

aspirational benchmark, but this assures, almost by definition, that most operations will fall short.

Complicating all assessments is that peace operations are disproportionately sent to the most serious or violence-prone conflicts. This selection bias increases the difficulty of making progress for peace operations and makes comparisons to alternative lesser conflicts invalid.

Assessing Peace Operations in Practice

Various organizations such as the UN have units dedicated to “lessons learned,” and scholarly research on peace operation outcomes is extensive. Most conclude that “peacekeeping works” (Di Salvatore and Ruggeri 2017; Sandler 2017; Fortna 2008), although this is not an unqualified assessment. Nevertheless, these conclusions are largely a function of the criteria used to evaluate effectiveness, even as the judgments are valid. Overwhelmingly, the approach has been to focus on the cease-fire monitoring and missions related to the limitation of violence; this is usually done to the exclusion of other missions. Many studies have developed indicators for monitoring violence abatement following cease-fire agreements (e.g., Fortna 2008; Mullenbach 2005). There are several good reasons for this emphasis. First, early peacekeeping operations had this as a primary mandate, and even as peacekeeping has evolved into peacebuilding, those missions have retained their centrality. Second, from a causal standpoint, it is likely that success in limiting violence is a prerequisite (although not a guarantee) of success in other missions such as delivering humanitarian assistance and supervising democratic elections. Finally, indicators and data are more readily available for violence-related goals than for other missions such as building civil society.

Various indicators are used to assess whether peace operations are successful in limiting violence. Most common is the concept of “peace duration” or the time from the deployment of the peace operation to the outbreak of the next serious violence incident (this often is the onset of a new civil or interstate war between the disputants, but one could adopt many different severity

thresholds). The longer the period of time to the next conflict, the more successful the peace operation is said to be. If “robust” peacekeeping operations are sent to contexts of active wars, duration could be measured from the time of deployment to the end of significant violence. The stakeholder(s) for this benchmark is unclear, although there seems to be an implicit assumption that all of them benefit from the preventing or, in the case of spoilers, renewing violent conflict. Similarly, assessments of whether the conflict has spread or diffused to other areas of the country or neighboring states are also a general standard for effectiveness (Pushkina 2006; O’Neill and Rees 2005).

More specific to individual stakeholders are counts of casualties during the peace operation deployment. One type is peacekeeper deaths during deployment, getting at some of the interests of troop contributing states but also indirectly indicating support for the operation among the disputants and general levels of violence in the area. Civilian casualties have more recently been a measure of peace operation effectiveness, indicating a UN priority in mandates. This also reflects some concern with the local populations as those vested in outcomes as well as a difference between the country sponsoring the mission and the country hosting the peacekeepers.

In most cases, there is a cross-sectional and sometimes temporal comparison of violence propensity in the peace operations. That is, analyses try to specify the conditions under which the same operation is more successful (which months or years) or which operations are more successful relative to the others based on certain factors (e.g., force size).

To the extent that peacekeepers keep the disputing parties apart, in order to prevent recurrences of violence, the force may be more effective in managing than in resolving the conflict. A question of interest is how can peace operations make progress toward resolving the underlying sources of the conflict? This is the more difficult challenge. It entails designing a peace (or negotiation) process that makes progress toward a durable peace. (See Druckman and Wagner 2019, for an approach as well as indicators of peace outcomes.)

Assessing other missions beyond violence abatement is less common. There are some suggested evaluation questions relating to mission goals and numerous possible indicators (see Diehl and Druckman 2010), but in most cases these have not been applied empirically and therefore remain hypothetical (an exception is Druckman and Diehl 2013). These missions generally fall under the rubric of peacebuilding and therefore take place in a post-conflict context in which a peace agreement exists and the operation is charged with a number of duties beyond truce supervision.

Evaluations of election supervision missions examine whether the peace operation could facilitate “free and fair” elections, and most often have a short-term orientation; indicators include the percentage of those eligible registering and turning out to vote in the initial election. Longer-term assessments of democratization effects operate from a more holistic perspective of the political system and take an extended view, considering democratic processes after a designated time period (range of 2–10 years is most common) after the peace operation (see the Freedom House yearly updates of indicators of democracy and good governance).

Other evaluations could focus on short-term missions such as delivering humanitarian assistance (indicated by volume of deliveries, reductions in suffering, and other indicators) or disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR – measured by among other things the volume of weapons collected and number of militias disbanded). Longer-term peacebuilding missions, including (re)establishing local security, governance, and the rule of law, are effectively designed to strengthen the state. Evaluations are often made according to standards for legal infrastructure and benchmarks for delivering basic government services; these can be evaluated at various short- and long-term junctures. More difficult is considering whether peace operations facilitate economic development and well-being (see Beber et al. 2019); these are best seen in long-range perspectives, but there are many factors other than peace operations that are likely to have a greater impact on the economy. Further, there is evidence

showing that economic growth following peace agreements lags behind security and governance reforms. This is due to a reluctance to invest in the formerly war-torn society until the banks become stable, a process that often takes as many as 8 years (O’Reilly 2014). In many peacebuilding assessments, the stakeholder is in the form of the central state, as this is often the focus of the so-called liberal peace model (Richmond 2011). Nevertheless, there is now increasing concern with local effects of peace operations and the population most directly impacted by operations.

Shifting the locus of assessment to the local populations does more than change the level of analysis; it also leads analysts to ask different questions and make different judgments. Firchow (2018) considers some of the same evaluation dimensions as those studies at higher levels – security, human rights, development, and social – but conceptually they are different as are the indicators used in evaluation. Considering “Everyday Peace” first means using participation rates of the local population in peacebuilding as a standard for assessment. The perceptions of the local populations are also critical in determining the level of peace achieved by peace operations. Thus, perceptions of local security and safety and whether locals are involved in community groups are among many different indicators of peace. The local approach is more focused on positive peace aspects, such as access to education, medical care, and clean water. Not all of these can be directly tied back to the peace operation, but they do provide a more all-inclusive picture of success for those who live in areas where peace operations were deployed (although everyday indicators could be applied to any society). The focus on the local level also means that assessments will rely extensively on surveys and focus groups rather than the aggregate data (e.g., number of casualties) that are employed for valuations involving other stakeholders. This makes it more difficult to construct “just in time” assessments and is considerably more labor intensive than other approaches.

Evaluations of peace operations typically look at the mandates and missions given to the

operations by the authorizing organizations. In one sense, this is logical given that operations are assessed on what they were asked to achieve. On the other hand, this potentially misses other outcomes of interest that go beyond the formal assignments given the operation. Some have labelled these as “unintended consequences,” from the perspective of the mandate provisions (Aoi et al. 2007), and the negative ones are usually the ones identified. Most prominent have been the sexual abuse and exploitation perpetrated by peacekeeping soldiers (Nordas and Rustad 2013). Analysts have also considered how peace operations have affected local economies, civil-military relations, and the like. Additional impacts, including those with respect to refugees, terrorism, infant mortality, crime and inequality, are widely analyzed but not with respect to peace operations (Di Salvatore and Ruggeri 2017). These are most often from the perspective of local population stakeholders, but outcomes can also be felt for the countries that contribute the troops. Thus, scholars and policymakers need to look beyond mandates to understand the impact of peace operations and therefore to make comprehensive assessments. A more holistic approach to assessment, perhaps along the lines of dynamical systems models, would be appropriate (see Diehl and Druckman 2018).

Conclusion

In this article we addressed the challenges posed by assessments of the effectiveness of peace operations. It should be apparent to the reader that this is a task fraught with difficulties. It is no longer the case that peace operations have an exclusive goal of reducing violence and upholding the provisions of cease-fire agreements. Modern peacekeepers deployed in any country ravaged by war conduct multiple operations and missions. For the evaluator this complexity presents challenges for assessing impacts on the conflict or population: Which operation and missions had the key impacts on the post-conflict events? Added to this dilemma are the various stakeholders with

interests in the way the conflict is managed or resolved. These interests may clash, particularly with regard to the host and sponsoring countries as well as the local populations. Thus, the question is effectiveness for which group or constituency?

Additional assessment considerations are time frames and baselines. Some missions, such as violence abatement, can be evaluated over the short term (in months), but they can also be judged over a longer time period of years. On the other hand, the more ambitious goal of societal change, such as democratization or creating a rule of law, can only be appraised over a long period of time. The long-term assessments make it difficult to attribute cause to the peace operation *per se*.

Peace operations can be treated as case studies and understood within their own context. Alternatively, they can be understood in relation to other, largely comparable, operations. The former may consist of a longitudinal or time series analysis in which change is traced over the course of unfolding historical events. The latter entails a cross-sectional evaluation in which different country operations, usually over a similar time period, are compared. Both approaches address the question: compared to what? Both types of comparisons are valuable and can be used in a complementary fashion.

More ambitious evaluations search for evidence of conflict resolution, in which former combatants consider the sources of their conflict. Although relatively rare, this is a gold standard for effectiveness and prevention of further conflict. It merges with peacebuilding activities. Monitoring the progress made toward achieving this aspiration would be useful. One approach is to design holistic programs following the discussion by Diehl and Druckman (2018) and elsewhere.

There is little doubt that we are no longer in an evaluation culture that strives for bottom-line results on easily measurable outcomes. The new world of peace operations alerts us to a need for developing more complex architectures for judging progress in the various missions deployed by international organizations and countries around the world.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Conceptual Evolution of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Everyday Peace](#)
- ▶ [Peace Operations, Principles, and Doctrine](#)
- ▶ [Unintended Consequences of Peace Operations/Sexual Abuse and Exploitation by Peacekeepers](#)

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Assistance

- ▶ [Unintended Consequences of Peace Operations/Sexual Abuse and Exploitation by Peacekeepers](#)

Asymmetrical Warfare

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Definition

Although asymmetrical warfare has been part of nonconventional warfare for much of human history, it has become increasingly prevalent in recent times. This entry argues that this form of warfare is characterized, first and foremost, by significant material asymmetries between belligerents, both in terms of number of troops and most significantly in terms of the vast technological differences between belligerents. Yet this type of conflict is also characterized by four additional albeit related asymmetries, namely, asymmetrical strategies, asymmetrical status, asymmetrical moral standing, and asymmetrical weapons systems. These features have further entailed that this type of conflict blurs the traditional borders

separating war from peacetime, war from crime, combatants from civilians, and even traditional geographical borders. Finally, this entry examines the deep legal, ethical, and strategic challenges that asymmetrical warfare creates.

Introduction

It is often suggested that there has recently been a shift in the paradigm of war. Most contemporary wars are described as “new” (Kaldor 1999), “fourth-generation” or “nonlinear” wars (Paul 1994), “borderless” wars (Chayes 2015), as well as increasingly asymmetrical wars. These notions point to different ways in which these new scenarios diverge from conventional warfare which, at least in modern times, has been typically a geographically circumscribed armed conflict between professional, armed state forces with somewhat comparable firepower. In them, each belligerent engages the enemy forces directly and generally pursues geopolitical interests, and all parties, at least recently, acknowledge that fighting is regulated by the laws of armed conflict (LOAC) or international humanitarian law (IHL). Against this general framework, asymmetrical warfare captures a type of violent struggle that differs in concrete and relevant ways from this type of conventional wars by opposing belligerents that are to be considered asymmetrical in terms of their material and technological capacities, their normative or legal status, the way in which they engage each other, and the objectives they pursue. These wars are typically associated with guerrilla tactics, terrorism, targeted killings, torture, information warfare, and the threat of use of weapons of mass destruction (Metz 2001).

As a form of nonconventional warfare, however, it is not particularly new. Although conceptualization of asymmetrical warfare is fairly recent (Metz 2001), forms of asymmetrical warfare, at least as parts of hybrid wars, have been identified as far back as the Peloponnesian War in the fifth century BC and the conquest of Germania in 9 AD (Mansoor 2012; Lacey 2012, respectively). In any event, asymmetrical wars have attracted an enormous amount of scholarly and policy attention

over the last 20 years. Furthermore, its use as an analytical tool has expanded and is currently crucial in law, IR, philosophy, and military studies. There is, as a result, a certain amount of disagreement about its precise conceptual contours.

One influential definition of asymmetrical warfare goes as follows: “[i]n the realm of military affairs and national security, asymmetry is acting, organizing, and thinking differently than opponents in order to maximize one’s own advantages, exploit an opponent’s weaknesses, attain the initiative, or gain greater freedom of action. It can be political-strategic, military strategic, or a combination of these. It can entail different methods, technologies, values, organizations, time perspectives, or some combination of these. It can be short-term or long-term. It can be deliberate or by default. It can be discrete or pursued in combination with symmetric approaches. It can have both psychological and physical dimensions” (Metz & Johnson 2001). Similarly, it is generally accepted that it covers the whole spectrum of war, from the tactical to the operational and strategic levels (Schmitt 2007). These approaches indicate, at the very least, the broad, all-encompassing character of this notion and its increasing significance in the twenty-first-century warfare.

Nevertheless, it is worth trying to provide greater conceptual precision in terms of the defining features of asymmetrical warfare and its implications. This entry shall delve into the specific asymmetries that characterize this type of warfare (Section “[Different Forms of Asymmetry](#)”) and the challenges these features raise legally, ethically, and doctrinally (Section “[Key Challenges Posed by Asymmetrical Warfare](#)”).

Different Forms of Asymmetry

Several key features have been identified as embodying the nature of asymmetrical warfare. Perhaps the prevailing one is the significant disparity in power between opposing actors in a conflict. As suggested by Benvensiti & Cohen (2014), discipline and training around legal regulation has allowed states to amass huge numbers of troops, by contrast to insurgent and non-state

organizations, based on familial, societal, or ideological relationships. Furthermore, it increasingly seems that the large technological gap between belligerents is significantly more decisive than the numerical gap between them. These differences may obtain also between countries. Most brutally, during parts of the twenty-first century, US military expenditure was expected to equal that of the whole of the rest of the world put together (Price Waterhouse Cooper 2005). Accordingly, Brazil, Venezuela, and other emerging countries have provided for asymmetrical conflict strategies as official policy in respect of potential conflicts with greater powers (e.g., Brazil's National Defense Strategy 2010).

Furthermore, material asymmetries entail further broad forms of relevant asymmetry between belligerents. First, asymmetrical fighting has serious implications in terms of the strategic goals pursued and the tactics favored (Malis 2012). As clearly put by Mao Tse-Tung, "defeat is the invariable outcome where native forces fight with inferior weapons against modernized forces *on the latter's terms*" (cited in Mack 1975, emphasis in the original). As a result, stronger and weaker states seek to fight each one on its own terms. Arreguín-Toft (2001) has conceptualized this insight through the comparison of direct approaches that "target the adversary's armed forces in order to destroy the adversary's capacity to fight," against indirect approaches that seek to undermine the adversary's will to fight. On this basis, he has influentially argued that weaker parties increase their chance of defeating stronger ones when they resort to opposite-approach strategic interactions, namely, when they use an indirect form of defense, such as guerrilla warfare, against a direct form of attack, such as the blitzkrieg form of attack, or when they use direct attacks against indirect ones. Such increase in the chances of winning – it has been plausibly suggested – has significantly to do with the capacity of opposite-approach interactions to lengthen the war and exploit stronger powers frequent political vulnerability vis-à-vis this type of armed conflict. By contrast, stronger parties reportedly win more often when they adopt

same-approach interactions (although sometimes, they are politically too costly to pursue).

Accordingly, asymmetric warfare creates incentives to resort to certain means and methods of warfare. Dominant strategies in asymmetrical warfare include terrorism, guerrilla warfare, and use of human shields for the weaker party and rendition and illegal interrogation – usually amounting to torture – indiscriminate attacks, as well as targeted killing operations for the stronger side. An underappreciated implication of these strategies is that these strategies often involve lower levels of killings than in conventional wars. As Gross (2012) illustrates, "Communists fighting the British in Malaya between 1948 and 1960 killed fewer than three thousand civilians during their 12-year insurrection before giving it up (...). In Kenya, the Mau Mau insurgency's (1952–60) highly publicized attacks on British and Asian civilians took about 60 lives, but thousands more among African civilians who supported British policy . . . while IRA and Palestinian guerrillas (since 2000) have taken fewer than one thousand civilian lives in their respective struggles." This feature of asymmetrical war is related to the fact that it often entails a fight for legitimacy and influence over the relevant populations (Malis 2012), rather than an attempt to directly claim territory. Doctrines of counterinsurgency and counterterrorism – popular in asymmetrical warfare – are construed largely with this aim in mind.

Second, asymmetrical warfare involves a broad variety of actors, with very different legal and normative status. Schmitt (2007) captures this feature by reference to US involvement in Iraq: "There are more contractors in Iraq today than all non-US Coalition forces combined. At the same time, consider the variety of forces facing the Coalition: the regular army, Republican Guards; Special Republic Guards; Fedayeen Saddam paramilitary forces; civilians impressed into services; groups led by tribal leaders whose authority was at risk; religious zealots fighting the Christians; those who wanted a political voice (Sadr and his Mahdi Army); those who had a relative killed, wounded or insulted during the fighting; foreign jihadists; and pure criminals." In his recent novel

Limónov, Carrere (2013) further illustrates this colorfully by referring to those participating in the wars in the Balkans during the 1990s: “the hordes of young farmers thrilled to have a drink while shooting their guns, soon were joined by all sorts of football hooligans, petty and big criminals, genuine psychopaths, foreign mercenaries, Russian Slavophiles who arrived to defend orthodoxy (with the Serbs), neo-Nazis nostalgic for Ustaše (with the Croats), and jihadists. . .” fighting with Muslims from Bosnia.

There are also vast differences in the political economy of each of these groups. That is, whereas in conventional wars, belligerents are funded through a centralized economy, in asymmetrical wars, these state forces often fight groups that need to resort to pillage, kidnappings, the traffic of illicit substances, as well as voluntary/ideological financial assistance to fund their forces. Others still act, serving as proxies for a state (Chayes 2015).

This wide variety of participants encompasses a large variety of drives and motivations. Kaldor (1999) emphasizes the relevance of identity politics in many asymmetrical wars; others highlight religious fanaticism, financial gain, as well as an organization often based on familial and societal relationships, rather than the brutal discipline of professional armies (Murray 2012). Crucially, this form of asymmetry reinforces the sense in which asymmetrical warfare is considered to be blurring the distinction between soldiers and criminals. In Neff’s (2005) words, “[t]roughout the whole of human history, the soldier and the murderer . . . had always been seen to be playing very *different* deadly games, governed by very different sets of rules” (emphasis in the original). This is hardly how belligerents perceive each other in contemporary asymmetrical conflicts.

Third, and relatedly, asymmetrical warfare is conducted between morally or normatively asymmetrical belligerents. They are often conceived as traditional just wars, as law enforcement much like ordinary crime fighting. Examples of this abound; they go from the US expedition against Pancho Villa in 1916–1917 to the so-called war on terror. That is, unlike the majority of situations in conventional wars, belligerents in asymmetrical

warfare typically have very different claims or justifications for fighting. Many states attribute guilt or culpability to non-state actors, guerrilla, or terrorist organizations and generally label them as criminals or at least unlawful combatants, while non-state groups characterize state armed forces as oppressors or infidels with no legitimate claim to be there, let alone to fight. As we shall see in the following section, this has important legal and moral implications. Because more and more conflicts are portrayed as fights between aggressive villains rather than “honorable foes or brothers in arms” (Gross 2012), the treatment of enemy fighters and even civilians varies significantly in terms of the rights and protections afforded to them. This moral asymmetry often entails also a rejection of neutrality, as well as supports the belief that the winning party will pass stern judgment, often through criminal prosecutions and punishment, over the losing one (Neff 2005).

Fourth, asymmetrical wars are characterized by the employment of certain types of weapons that are related to its dominant strategic aims. Remotely piloted aircraft systems or drones constitute an incremental though crucial tool to fight an enemy in both remote and densely populated areas. Nonlethal or less lethal weapons are also useful if stronger parties are to fight belligerents that hide behind human shields. They include kinetic weaponry, such as beanbag projectiles, or rubber bullets as well as non-kinetic weapons including chemical weapons such as calmatives, which allow troops to render subjects unconscious by depressing neurological functions; electromagnetic weapons such as Active Denial System (ADS), which create the sensation of intense burning without causing tissue damage; and acoustical weapons, which allow troops to repel or subdue crowds by causing pain and suffering. This type of weapon is typically aimed at combatants and non-combatants alike.

Cyber warfare is perhaps the archetype of an asymmetrical war, given the “easiness of use,” “high potential medial leverage effect” (Maupeou 2009), the low level of the entrance barrier, and the involvement of the private sector and of “irregular” participants. As recently put by Poulsen (2015), “a defender has to get it right

every time, while an attacker only has to succeed once.” Cyber is also directly linked to asymmetries of participants: for instance, the Russian government recruited hackers on social networks to conduct a computer assault on Georgia; similarly, China also resorts to “patriotic hackers,” thereby renouncing both to a reliable command structure and also the legal status as combatants (Malis 2012). Typically, cyberattacks blur the distinction between military and nonmilitary objectives.

Finally, many asymmetrical conflicts have been described as “decentralized, somewhat sporadic, and clearly psychologically oriented” (Jaeger and Paserman 2009). As a result of all these features, asymmetrical warfare not only blurs the distinction between war and crime, with its moral and legal implications. The borders between war and peace, as well as geographical borders, are also becoming increasingly porous, marked by the broad heterogeneity of participants, the prevailing strategies and complex scenarios in which fighting takes place, and the broad temporal and geographical dimensions in which asymmetrical warfare materializes. Also, even though the total number of fatalities has decreased vis-à-vis conventional wars, the distribution of harm has increasingly affected noncombatants. As Kaldor (1999) recalls, the ratio of military/civilian deaths has gone from 8:1 at the beginning of the twentieth century to almost 1:8 in recent wars (whereas it was roughly 1:1 during World War 2).

Key Challenges Posed by Asymmetrical Warfare

The main features of asymmetrical warfare highlighted in the previous section pose a series of profound legal, ethical, and operational challenges for the conduct of war.

Asymmetrical warfare has important implications for IHL. For one, even when the laws of armed conflict apply, they do not necessarily apply in the same way to different belligerents. As a result of the blurring lines between participants in armed conflicts and nonparticipants, of the use of new technologies such as nonlethal

weapons and cyber-capabilities, or of certain tactics including the use of human shields and terrorism, the principles of distinction, necessity, and proportionality are seriously weakened or reinterpreted. In turn, the principle of precautions in war, which involves taking all the relevant measures to minimize harm to noncombatants and civilian objects, applies differently between belligerents, given the fact that technologically advanced militaries can do this to a far greater extent due to their greater capacity to gather and process information via different means and the availability of precision-guided munitions. Some claim that we are even “witnessing the birth of a capabilities-based IHL regime” (Schmitt 2007).

Others argue that asymmetrical warfare undermines the principle of separation between the *jus ad bellum* and the *jus in bello* (Benvensiti 2009), one of the cornerstones of the international legal regulation of warfare. This, in turn, puts into question the legal symmetry *in bello* between belligerents. In effect, in asymmetrical warfare, it is often the case that state actors qualify non-state belligerents as “unlawful,” or better, “unprivileged” combatants in international armed conflicts, and prosecute them for domestic offences, notably terrorism. Although there is significant controversy regarding the scope and implications of these notions, it is increasingly clear that such fighters lose significant legal protections under IHL (Baxter 1951), even if not all protection.

Nonetheless, perhaps the most serious legal challenge of asymmetrical warfare is the lack of reciprocity between belligerents, produced by the material and moral asymmetries highlighted above. This, in turn, entails a systematic violation of IHL, which is one of its defining and most problematic features. Examples of this include the use of protective emblems to conceal military objects, such as the marking of the Ba’ath Party building in Basra with the emblem of the Red Cross, or the reported misuse of ambulances and Mosques for military purposes during the battle of Fallujah in November 2004 (Schmitt 2007). The reason for this is not hard to explain. Weaker belligerents have little incentives to comply with legal rules that would not allow them to win; similarly, strong belligerents consider to be

legitimized to use excessive force on the grounds that they fight criminals and those associated with them. When “belligerents see themselves as disadvantaged by normative boundaries, those boundaries may well be ignored” (Schmitt 2007). Furthermore, stronger belligerents are typically less concerned with forging a lasting peace than with destroying the enemy’s capacity to conduct operations (Gross 2012), and they often feel IHL would force them to fight “with one hand tied behind [their] back” (HCJ 1999). At the same time, it is also important to note that IHL favors state belligerents by providing them with a tool to control huge armies through discipline and training, thereby “making the decision to go to war less risky than it would be otherwise”; for them, compliance with IHL may prove costly in the short run, but it significantly benefits stronger states in the long run (Benvenisti & Cohen 2014).

From an ethical perspective, it has been argued that asymmetrical warfare poses the following dilemma (Rodin 2006): either it denies the weak party the right to resort to asymmetric tactics, which entails denying them the right to resort to military force, or if we grant them that right, this will necessarily weaken the protections afforded to noncombatants. This dilemma presupposes that certain means or methods of warfare are *pro tanto* impermissible on grounds that they violate a key principle, such as the distinction between combatants and noncombatants or the prohibition of directly targeting noncombatants. In this sense, work on military ethics has been concerned with the moral permissibility of resorting to irregular or unconventional war, including guerrilla tactics, the use of human shields, and even resort to terror-bombing (Fabre 2012). For many, this type of inquiry ultimately entails examining when the moral weight of the just cause may suffice to justify resorting to certain tactics or weapons that would affect civilians or civilian objects, often directly.

However, ethical thinking on asymmetrical warfare may need to go beyond this dilemma. For instance, it may need to assess the impact a legitimate authority’s order to fight (or lack thereof) has on the permissibility of fighting generally. In this respect, it must look at the different

ethical standings of a variety of actors, from professional armies (from democratic to non-democratic regimes) to non-state armed groups, private security companies, and even forces fighting under authorization of multilateral organizations such as the UN. It may be that under certain conditions, each of these groups is morally entitled to fight, yet it is likely that the conditions under which it is legitimate for them to engage in military action are different (Gross 2015).

Furthermore, much ethical thinking is looking at the particular moral difference that certain weapons or tactics make for the permissibility of certain actions and weapons systems, even when their use is not *pro tanto* impermissible. For instance, we may consider whether or not the more discriminatory capabilities of drone strikes may make resort to force permissible (i.e., proportionate) in a wider set of contexts than the use of conventional troops (Chehtman 2017), as well as how the fact that drone operators are not themselves at risk may affect the moral limits imposed by the principles of necessity and proportionality to the permissible use of force (Kahn 2002). Similarly, much debate has focused on the weight that must be given to the presence of voluntary and involuntary shields standing next to the enemy forces in calculations of necessary and proportionate harm (Haque 2018).

Finally, asymmetrical warfare poses important and indeed very difficult challenges from the point of view of the strategic thinking on how to win this type of war. This issue is particularly sensitive since, according to the empirical data available, although strong belligerents have won more than 70% of all the asymmetrical wars fought between 1800 and 1998, weak actors have won increasingly more during the same period, going from winning only 11.8% of the time between 1800 and 1949 to as far as 55% in the period 1950–1998 (Arreguín-Toft 2001).

It is generally claimed that unlike the approach prevalent in conventional conflicts, main strategies in asymmetrical warfare are directed toward demoralizing the opponent and achieving support of the local population rather than directly claim territorial control. Since the attacks of September 11, the dominant approaches against terrorist

organizations in particular have been counterinsurgency (COIN) and counterterrorism (Chayes 2015). COIN focuses on winning over the population rather than destroying enemy forces. However, it has hardly delivered on its promises. For one, it increases the threat for troops on the ground and requires a significantly greater number of them increasing the political pressure for governments. At the same time, it has not been “effective in reducing violence in regions already experiencing significant security problems” (Beath et al. 2012).

Counterterrorism, in turn, has been defined as “actions taken directly against terrorist networks and indirectly to influence and render global and regional environments inhospitable to terrorist networks” (US Government 2009). Targeted killings are a central component of this strategy, which has also been pursued through extraordinary renditions and harsh interrogations usually amounting to torture. Counterterrorism does not put as many ground troops in the line of fire as COIN but has hardly delivered better results (Finkelstein et al. 2012). Targeted killings using drones are far more precise than conventional airpower or missiles, thereby bringing down the number of civilian casualties. Nevertheless, according to a number of empirical studies, this type of strategy has hardly been successful in weakening terrorist organizations or curtailing their capacity to conduct attacks (cf. Chehtman 2017).

Cross-References

► Cyber Conflict

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Augustine

- ▶ [Just War Theory Across Time and Culture](#)

Autonomy

- ▶ [Human Dignity and Transitional Justice](#)

Autophotography

- ▶ [Auto-photography](#)

Auto-photography

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Synonyms

[Autophotography](#); [Participatory photography](#); [Photo-elicitation](#); [Photovoice](#); [Pluralist photography](#); [Qualitative research](#); [Research ethics](#); [Visual peace and conflict research](#)

Definition/Description

Auto-photography is a visual research method where research participants are asked to take photographs on predetermined themes. Often the themes concern the daily lives of the research participants and are extensive in nature, such as “who am I,” “my current life,” or “my daily struggles.” The resulted photographs form the basis of *photo-elicitation interviews* that are conducted between the research participant and researcher. In the interview situation, the photographs are used as a stimulus: the photographer explains why each picture was taken and its relation to the provided theme. As a method, auto-photography is lengthy and may be costly if traditional cameras are used and/or photographs developed. However, researchers have found that auto-photography tends to provide extremely rich and informative research data when compared to qualitative interviews alone. There are several ethical issues to consider when utilizing auto-photography which makes it particularly relevant to peace and conflict researchers. For scholars in this field it should be a natural part of the research process to consider ethics at all stages of the research process from planification to publication ethics. This is particularly crucial if field research

is conducted in fragile and/or conflict-ridden environments.

Introduction

It is a persistent challenge for a social scientist to find the most applicable methodology to grasp the realities of those researched upon. One the one hand, the research participant may come from a social environment parallel to that of the researcher having somewhat similar spoken and unspoken languages, cultural codes, and gestures. On the other hand, there might be such cleavages between the social realities of the researcher and the research participant that finding a shared language between these two worlds seems almost impossible. Participatory image methods originate from the desire to bridge this gap – of the need to lessen *epistemic violence* (Spivak 1988) between the researcher and the research participant – through careful methodological choices. This chapter presents one method from this wider group, auto-photography, by detailing its practices, variations, and historical background with selected empirical examples attached.

Auto-photography: Participatory Research Method with a Photographic Element

Auto-photography is a research method that belongs to the wider category of participant-generated image methods (Balomenou and Garrod 2015). In auto-photography, the research participants are asked to photograph their everyday lives typically under predetermined themes. The themes are often extensive, such as my *current life, aspirations, fears, hopes, or daily struggles*; themes that give the photographer a significant amount of expressive freedom. Therefore, in comparison to structured or semi-structured interviews alone, the research participant is less limited in this method by the agenda or predetermined question set of the researcher than in the traditional qualitative methods and thus possesses a significant amount of interpretative

freedom (see, e.g., Dodman 2003; Vastapuu 2018a). As Thomas (2009, p. 3) writes: “Photos are the production of the research subject and reflect her or his intent or position when snapping the picture.” The practical steps of auto-photography are typically the following, albeit many types of variations occur:

1. Contextual/background research in order to choose the individuals whose participation will be requested
2. Explaining the potential research participants the insights of the project as well as their rights and obligations in the process
3. Asking participants an informed consent, preferably in a written format
4. Providing the research participants with clear practical instructions on the process, such as which cameras to use and how to use them
5. Giving the participants clear instructions on the themes to be photographed and the ethical guidelines and limitations of the process, preferably in a written format
6. Waiting for the participants to take the photographs within a given timeline and answering their questions during the process
7. Conducting *photo-elicitation interviews* with the research participant (please see details below)
8. Transcribing the interview material
9. Organizing and analyzing the interview material
10. Producing the research publications that *may or may not* entail the original photographs (please see the ethics section)

Photo-elicitation is a method where a photograph is placed in a research interview. The photograph may be already existing (e.g., archival material), may have been taken by the researcher, or the interviewee herself (Harper 2002, p. 13). In the case of auto-photography, the final option applies. Depending on the research design, the photographs may be developed before the interview or examined directly from the screen in the actual interview situation, where the research participant explains her/his reasoning and motivation for taking the photograph in question and its

insights to the researcher. Interestingly, according to Harper (ibid.), photo-elicitation interviews seem to produce not only more information than regular interviews alone but also different kinds of information. Harper (ibid.) argues that this may be related to physical development of the brain: the sections of the brain processing visual information are evolutionary older than those processing verbal information.

The transcription and organization of the interview material may be done with the help of a program designed for qualitative research, such as NVivo or ATLAS.ti. This is in no way obligatory, however, and the researcher is free to choose the best-fitting method to organize the material. Often, researchers tend to arrange auto-photographic research data according to the provided interview themes, which makes it convenient and somewhat easy to do comparisons between various data sets.

History of Participatory Photography

Variations of participatory photography have been used in academia for more than 60 years. In the mid-1950s, a documentary photographer John Collier Jr. took pictures of the living surroundings of research participants in Canada as a part of a larger project with the aim to examine the effects of environmental factors for the mental health of local residents. He placed the resulted photographs in interview situations and named the process as *photo-interview*, which thus became one of the first documented applications of the photo-elicitation method in a research setting. Overall, Collier's work (1957, see also Collier 1967) has been instrumental in the development of visual studies in various academic fields from anthropology to sociology (Harper 2002).

A decade after Collier, in 1966, Sol Worth and John Adair launched a research project with Navajo Native Americans with the aim to record the "Navajo" way of seeing the world. They acquired 16 mm film cameras and gave them to selected research participants, taught them to utilize the cameras and perform simple film edits, and asked the participants to capture their living

surroundings. Even though the reported research results have also faced criticism – such as over-emphasizing ethnic and racial differences – their project needs however be mentioned as one of the critical steps in the development of participatory image methodologies (Thomas 2009, p. 2).

Instamatic cameras became popular in the 1970s and 1980s and presented the next step in the development of auto-photography and other participatory image methods. Despite the fact that the results were very promising – after all, it was possible to conduct photo-elicitation interviews immediately after capturing the photo – the high costs related to the process prevented the wider usage of instamatic cameras. An answer came in the form of disposable cameras of the 1980s and 1990s, which allowed for a cheap and straightforward tool for auto-photography (ibid.). However, the quality of the produced photographs was often very poor.

Today's increasingly visualized world provides huge potential for methods such as auto-photography. Cameras are regularly installed in smart phones, and photos can be instantly shared online or examined directly from screens. In practice, this means low costs and easy applicability but also a demand for increased ethical awareness.

Variations of Auto-photography

In 2015, Nika Balomenou and Brian Garrod conducted a systematic review of "participant-generated image methods" in the field of social sciences by examining 286 research projects from 1970s onward. They found out that the field was highly fragmented and that only slight alterations could be found between differently named research methods. Interestingly, the naming of the method and the research references used were typically dependent on the disciplinary context (Balomenou and Garrod 2015, p. 2). The majority of anthropological studies used the term *photovoice*, making it also the most popular term with over 120 hits. At the second place was the term *autophotography* (another way of writing auto-photography), originating from the field of psychology, with 37 research projects recorded

(*ibid.*, pp. 4–5). The researchers came to the conclusion that there are no significant differences between auto-photography and photovoice on methodological terms (albeit it can be argued that an empowering element can be found more often from photovoice projects than from auto-photography). It is important to be aware, however, that also terms other than auto-photography can produce relevant hits from online searching engines. Indeed, Balomenou and Garrod (*ibid.*) found out that in addition to these two terms, there were also 40 other options that were used while describing a participant-generated image method (*ibid.*). This reveals the significant fragmentation and inconsistency of the field.

In addition to anthropology and psychology, auto-photography or its variations have been used in several academic fields, such as sociology and especially visual sociology (e.g., Hockey and Collinson 2006), urban studies (e.g., Delgado 2015; Dodman 2003), leisure studies (e.g., Garrod 2009), gender studies (e.g., Bilsky 1998), aging studies (e.g., Phoenix 2010), landscape planning (e.g., Yamashita 2002), and international relations (e.g., Bleiker and Kay 2007; Vastapuu 2018a, b), to mention a few examples.

Ethical Considerations

Research reports on auto-photography unfortunately tend to lack some of the basic information of the research settings: sampling methods and sample size, number of photographs required/taken, and the possible usage of incentives in the process (Balomenou and Garrod 2015, pp. 10–14). The first two pieces of information are easy to gather and report, nevertheless, the usage of incentives is a more challenging issue even to decide upon. By incentive is meant a monetary or other compensation to the participant. The decision if incentives should or should not be used requires careful ethical consideration and should reflect the social positioning of the research participant and the cultural context where the study is conducted upon. For instance, if a taxi driver is asked to photograph her daily realities and use her time not only to the process

itself but also to the interview session, it might not be a bad idea to pay for her meal, transportation fees to the research site, and possibly even a per diem. After all, the taxi driver cannot work and earn money during the time she uses for the research process. At least in some research settings, donated cameras have been given to the research participants as an incentive, alongside food and transportation costs (Vastapuu 2018a).

At the heart of auto-photography are photographs. Their usage and publication, nonetheless, requires careful ethical consideration that is regrettably rarely present in auto-photographic research reports. Some issues need to be emphasized here: (1) the research participants should always be informed how and why their photographs are used; if and how they have the right to withdraw their participation from the project; and who has the final rights over the produced photographs, including their storage. (2) Publishing the participant-generated photographs is in no way obligatory in the research outputs and should not be done if there are any doubts over the safety and security of the research participants. In auto-photography, photographs *are a tool* and means to understand the lifeworlds of the participants and *not research products* as such. Therefore, it is entirely acceptable to explain the insights of the research photographs in a written format instead of publishing the photographs, or even modify the photographs as visual art to blur the identities of the research participants (*ibid.*). Especially in times of rapidly developing facial recognition techniques and other AI tools related to visual images, the necessity to safeguard the privacy and safety of the research participants cannot be emphasized enough.

Summary

Auto-photography is a fascinating research method with high potential in today's visualized world. Albeit it is questionable if the method directly allows for the researcher to “see” in the eyes of the research participant, it provides as a minimum the researcher another, complementary way of seeing and understanding the realities of the research participants and has thus potential to

lessen epistemic violence in various types of research projects. Auto-photography should not be used hastily, however, and numerous practical and ethical decisions need to be taken before applying the method. All in all, auto-photography has huge and largely untapped potential in peace and conflict research.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Art and Reconciliation](#)
- ▶ [Conflict Fieldwork](#)
- ▶ [Conflict, Memory, and Memory Activism: Dealing with Difficult Pasts](#)
- ▶ [Culture, Anthropology, and Ethnography in Peace Research](#)
- ▶ [Ethnographic Peace Research](#)
- ▶ [Everyday Peace](#)
- ▶ [Female Combatants and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Feminist Peace Research](#)
- ▶ [Gender Justice and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Intersectionality and Peace](#)
- ▶ [Photography and Peace](#)
- ▶ [Silence and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Unintended Consequences of Peace Operations/ Sexual Abuse and Exploitation by Peacekeepers](#)
- ▶ [Urban Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Youth and Peacebuilding](#)

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B

Balance of Power

- ▶ [International Peace Architecture, Blockages, and Counter-Peace](#)
- ▶ [Search for Peace, the](#)

Balkan as a Concept

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Synonyms

[Balkan Linguistic Union](#); [Balkan studies](#); [Balkanism](#); [Balkanization](#); [Southeast Europe](#); [Southeast European studies](#); [The Balkans](#)

Introduction

The term Balkan has a number of manifestations that can be grouped into three categories. At its simplest, it is a name: first, the name of a mountain, later the designation of a region, as well as the political entities within. It is also used as a personal name and the name of institutions dealing with the region. Secondly, Balkan is employed as a metaphor, mostly, but not exclusively, negative. By the beginning of the twentieth century, it

became a pejorative, a symbol for the aggressive, intolerant, barbarian, savage, semi-developed, semicivilized, and semioriental. This array of stereotypes, although of relatively recent origins, stepped on a deeper layer of oppositions between Catholicism and Orthodoxy, Europe and Asia, West and East, and especially Christianity and Islam. Based on the metaphoric use of the notion, a specific power discourse developed in the twentieth century. Its utilization in the real world of politics – *balkanism* – shapes attitudes and actions toward the Balkans. Thirdly, the Balkans can be approached through a scholarly category of analysis, the notion of historical legacy, which is intimately intertwined with the character of the Balkans as a concrete historical region. As a concept, “Balkan” has a modern provenance.

The Name

A Turkish word meaning “mountain,” “balkan” as a noun entered the peninsula with the arrival of the Ottoman Turks. Its earliest mention in the writings of the Italian humanist writer, poet, and diplomat Filippo Buonaccorsi Callimaco (1533) in the late fifteenth century, designated as Balkan the ancient Haemus, the mountain range crossing Bulgaria from east to west. In 1577, the German priest Salomon Schweigger was the first traveler, after Callimaco, to communicate the Turkish name of the mountain, thus documenting its further spread (Schweigger 1608). Throughout the eighteenth

and nineteenth centuries, Haemus and Balkan were used side by side or interchangeably, but exclusively for the mountain. Since the nineteenth century, Balkan was applied to the whole south-east European peninsula, becoming the name of a region. The first to coin and use the term “Balkan peninsula” (*Balkanhalbeiland*) was the German geographer August Zeune (1808) who, in his 1808 work *Goesa*, looked for a name analogous to the Apennine and Pyrenean (Iberian) peninsulas. In this he replicated an over two millennia old erroneous geographical belief that the Haemus served as the peninsula’s northern border. This was corrected by Johann Georg von Hahn and Theobald Fischer (1893), who proposed “Southeast Europe” in place of the names used thus far: Hellenic, Illyrian, Dardanian, Roman, Byzantine, Thracian, South-Slavic, Greek, Slavo-Greek, Turkey-in-Europe, European Levant, Peninsula Orientale, and Balkan. By that time, however, the term had gained currency and ascendancy over the earlier ones, and also began to be increasingly used with a political connotation. So widespread was the use of the name, that in 1918, the Serbian geographer Jovan Cvijić (1918), perfectly aware of the incorrect employment of the term, used it in his seminal *La péninsule balkanique*.

While both “Balkan” and “Southeast Europe” as designations stem from the nineteenth century, they are elements of two very different cartographic taxonomies, even as they aim to describe the same region. “Southeast Europe” belongs to a classification which presumes Europe as a bounded territory with a center and respectively with regional positions in relation to this center, i.e., Northern, Eastern, Western, Southern, and Northwestern, Northeastern, Southwestern, and Southeastern. Balkan, on the other hand, although clearly a European subcategory, does not carry this implicitly. It is of the same family as regional designations like the Caucasus, Scandinavia, the Baltic, the Caribbean, Latin America (instead of South America), Sub-Saharan Africa, Polynesia, Melanesia, etc., based on a prominent geographical characteristic.

In the interwar period, there were attempts, both in Germany and the USA, to use Southeast Europe as a neutral, nonpolitical, and

nonideological name, but this was discredited when *Wirtschaftsraum Grossdeutschland Südost* became an important concept in the geopolitical expansion of the Nazis (Bernath 1973; Kaser 1900; Drace-Francis 2006). In the postwar era, Southeast Europe and the Balkans have been used interchangeably as geographic and historical designators, even in the works of one and the same author. There have been also some subtle differences, although even these are not systematic. In a number of German-language academic works, building upon a geographical approach, the lands southeast of the Carpathian range shape the entity Southeast Europe, of which the Balkans is considered a geographical subregion. Hungary and occasionally Slovakia are catalogued as southeast European, but not considered Balkan within this matrix. A few others count as Balkan only the lands south of the Danube and therefore leave Romania out. In a majority of works, the Balkans are usually confined to Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, the states of the former Yugoslavia, and European Turkey (Brunnbauer et al. 2019). The important thing to note is that the classificatory efforts of geographers and historians are closely related to the immediate physical characteristics of the region or to common historical and social characteristics. They are, thus, removed from the subsequent decontextualization of the notion.

This is also reflected in the institutions that research and dispense knowledge about the Balkans, some of which are named Institutes for Balkan Studies, others Institutes for the study of Southeast Europe, but all have the same research agendas. Balkan Studies, broadly defined as a scholarly subfield analyzing Balkan societies as an entity in a historical perspective, began to be gradually shaped at the end of the nineteenth century. This came at a time when the newly created states, seceded from the Ottoman Empire, were creating the infrastructure of their national state institutions and were “nationalizing” their populations. In the humanities, research from the outside had been organized around Oriental Studies, a discipline with an already long and illustrious pedigree from the Renaissance on, with important institutions in France, Great Britain

and the Habsburg Empire, and the addition from the eighteenth century on of Slavic Studies (Slavistics) primarily in Russia, the Habsburg Empire and Germany (Lockman 2004; Lapteva 2005; Palacký and Döbler 1833). As early as the 1890s, the universities of Sofia, Belgrade, Bucharest, and Zagreb had opened chairs in Slavistics.

The two fields of Oriental and Slavic studies, however, were not in direct communication. The comparative thrust of Slavic studies prompted their practitioners in the Balkan countries to look beyond the national borders and promulgate first a common South Slavic space and then to branch it further to the non-Slavs, and slowly arrive at the notion of a common Balkan cultural space. The impetus came from ethnography and folklore studies which, while serving national goals, were steeped in the historic-comparative method and implicitly refuted the notion of national uniqueness. These broadly educated scholars – Ivan Shishmanov, Boian Penev, Niko Županić, Jovan Cvijić, Nikolaos Politis, Bogdan Hasdeu, Nicolae Iorga, etc. – early on recognized the potential of an all-Balkan approach, even as many of them became prominent political figures in their respective nations (Mishkova 2019). What is most significant is that this impetus began from scholars within the region. The pioneer in shaping the Balkan commonality lies with linguistics, which was the first to devise the term “balkanisms” to signify commonalities, quite opposite to the present-day pejorative use, signifying fragmentation. But even in linguistics, which devised the concept of a Balkan linguistic union and is associated with Kristian Sandfeld, it is often forgotten that the first to perceive these links were Slovene scholars in the Habsburg Empire, Jernej Kopitar, and Franz Miklosich (Friedman 2009; Schaller 1975). Thus, while developing in the shadow of “orientalistics” and “slavistics,” balkanistics” was a scholarly discipline generated from within and until the First World War defined mostly with its contributions in the fields of folklore, linguistics, ethnography, and literary studies.

All of this is not to minimize the crucial role of German scholarship, especially in the Habsburg Empire, for the institutionalization of regional research with the creation of the first “Bosnian-

Herzegovinian Institute for Balkan Research” in Sarajevo in 1904. This was followed by the Institute of Southeast European Studies, founded in 1914 by Iorga, and the creation of courses on Balkan history in the national universities. In the interwar period, with the sole exception of Germany which continued regional research, scholarship in France, Britain, and the United States not only lagged behind the German achievement but was conducted on a fragmented, nation-state basis. By contrast, the interwar period, and especially the 1930s, saw the heyday of Balkan Studies from within, with the Belgrade-based Balkan Institute (1934–1941) and the Bucharest located Institute for Balkan Studies and Research (1937–1948), led by Victor Papacostea, which gave the most radical expression of the belief in Balkan unity and uniqueness. Remarkably, the most imaginative work was conducted on the Middle Ages (Mishkova 2019).

While the Second World War undid much of this momentum, by the mid-1960s, there was again a powerful spur with the foundation in the subsequent decades of research institutes in Romania, Bulgaria, Greece (already in the 1950s), Yugoslavia, and a Balkan section in the Albanian historical institute, all within the network of the AIESEE (Association Internationale d’Études du Sud-Est Européen). As the Balkans were politically fragmented, these institutes served as a way to circumvent the political divisions and guarantee a fruitful scholarly exchange, even as they had to walk the delicate line of adhering to national agendas. It is probably too early to generalize about the state of Balkan Studies in the present era, with the assault on area studies in most of the West and the limited resources for research in the Balkan countries themselves, coupled with the mobility of scholars. Nonetheless, valuable research is being produced (Daskalov and Marinov 2013; Daskalov and Mishkova 2014; Daskalov and Vezekov 2015; Daskalov et al. 2017), often neglected if written in the local languages. On the outside, German balkanological scholarship, usually under the rubric of *Südosteuropaforschung*, continues to preserve its premier place (Sundhaussen and Clewing 2016; Brunnbauer et al. 2019;

Calic 2016, 2019; Hinrichs et al. 2014). While Balkan scholarship finds outlets in general European, Slavic, Oriental, and comparative journals, there are also an important number of specialized periodicals using both names (Balkan and Southeast European): *Études balkaniques* (Bulgaria), *Revue des études sud-est européennes* (RESEE)/*Journal of South-East European Studies* (Romania), *Balkan Studies* (Greece), *Balkanica* (Serbia), *Balkanologie* (France), *Südost-Europa* (Germany), *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* (Germany), *Journal Southeastern Europe* (Italy), *Contemporary Southeastern Europe* (Austria), *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* (Greece), *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies* (UK), and others.

Finally, “Balkan” is also used as a personal name: a given name in Turkey and a common family name in Bulgaria (as in Balkanski, Balkanska). In both countries, the noun form “balkan” is a synonym for mountain mostly in the vernacular. In all Balkan languages, Balkan as an adjective can be used with an emotional ingredient varying from neutral to derogative. There are two exceptions to this rule: in Turkish, where Balkan as a whole does not have the exclusively pejorative component; and in Bulgarian, which has all the range from negative through neutral to highly positive, as a synonym for courage and independence (Todorova 1997/2009). Thus, in the region itself “Balkan” has a deep-rooted and living presence as a name. This brief survey of the occurrence and different employments of the name “Balkan” is significant, because it illustrates its life and persistence quite outside and independent of its metaphoric use.

The Metaphor

Like “bugger” and “Byzantine,” sobriquets coming from the same geographical area of Southeastern Europe, “Balkan” is a notion that was disassociated from its ontological base and began a life of its own in the realm of ideas. “Bugger,” a term for sodomite, as well as an offensive form of address, comes from the medieval heretics in Provence, the

bougres, deriving their name from the Bulgarians, among whom the medieval Christian dualist Bogomil sect was first formed. By now, it is so far removed both in name and in time from its beginnings, that only an intrepid scholar would trace its geographic origins. “Byzantine,” a sixteenth-century neologism, first used to designate a specific art form and applied retrospectively to a historical entity, the (Eastern) Roman Empire, that never used the name, became a synonym for complicated, scheming, intriguing, and hypocritical. While clearly alluding to an existing entity within the historical knowledge of the educated public, it still refers to something that has gone down in history. “Balkan,” on the other hand, became a signifier that was not only “metaphorized” fairly recently (in the early twentieth century), but because of the continued and dynamic presence of its signified, exerts an enormous and adverse pressure upon it (Todorova 2012).

During the nineteenth century, Balkans was increasingly employed with a political connotation, rather than in a purely geographical sense, to designate the states which had emerged out of the Ottoman empire: Greece, Serbia, Montenegro, Romania, and Bulgaria. There was also a parallel process of disintegrating imperial formations in one part of Europe, and unification of large nation states, most notably Germany and Italy, in another part. Not only German nationalists were opposing the phenomenon of mini states. Liberal political thought shared the disdain for small state formations. The aversion of some early socialists against the “Völkerabfälle” in the Balkans can be explained not only in terms of their anti-peasant and anti-Slav bias, but also in terms of their derision against the “Kleinstaaterei.” This was not preserved in the tradition of the international communist movement in the twentieth century (Szporluk 1988).

By the end of the nineteenth century, the Balkans were acquiring a negative connotation, although this was only a gradual process, triggered by the events accompanying the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire and the creation of small, weak, economically backward and dependent nation states, striving to modernize.

The return of Macedonia to the direct rule of the Porte after the Treaty of Berlin in 1878, opened the way for revolutionary action against the Ottoman Empire and, at the same time, guerilla warfare between contending factions from the neighboring countries. The birth of the Macedonian question enhanced the reputation of the peninsula as a turbulent region. However, violence as its *Leitmotiv* was a post-Balkan Wars phenomenon, when a thoroughly negative value was conclusively sealed to the Balkans. The cruelties of these wars, in a European climate which believed in the stability of the *belle époque*, gave rise to the stereotypical images of a particularly harsh and savage region. These persisted, no matter that European barbarities largely outnumbered and outdid Balkan atrocities only a few years later, during the First World War (The Other Balkan Wars 1993). So enduring are these stereotypes, that the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand in Sarajevo is still often evoked as the principal reason for the global imperialistic conflagration despite definitive scholarly verdicts about the war's causes. Accordingly, the sobriquet "powder keg of Europe," coined at that time, can still be heard. In fact, all Balkan states tried to avoid the war. They never became a major theater of operation, although the war proved devastating for their populations and their economies.

The term "balkanization" (see section ► [Balkanization](#)), the most important notion deriving from "Balkan," came into being as a result of the Balkan wars and the First World War. "Balkanization," most often used to denote the process of nationalist fragmentation of former geographic and political units into new and problematically viable small states, was not created in the course of the 100 years when the Balkan nations gradually seceded from the Ottoman empire. When it was coined, at the end of the First World War, only one Balkan nation was added to the already existing Balkan map: Albania; all others had been nineteenth-century formations. Rather, the great proliferation of small states as a result of the Great War was triggered by the disintegration of the Habsburg and the Romanov empires, and the emergence of Poland, Austria, Hungary,

Czechoslovakia, Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania. Yugoslavia creation, on the other hand, was, technically speaking, the reverse of "balkanization." The falling apart of the Austro-Hungarian and Russian empires resembled the previous disintegration of the Ottoman Empire and the term "balkanization," employed as a comparison, entered the political vocabulary after the system of treaties following the First World War sealed the new European divisions (Todorova 1997/2009).

The interwar period added yet another attitude which had seasoned as an integral part of nineteenth-century European thinking, the racial, and the "hopelessly mixed races" of the Balkans were an easy target (Mowrer 1921). A distinctive feature of modern racism was the continuous transition from science to aesthetics, where beauty was based on an immutable classical ideal, and became identical with the middle-class world of white Europeans. As a rule, it was based on racial purity. The Balkans, the classical territory of antiquity, were a double disappointment. Not only did they breathe havoc, but the classical archetype was nowhere to be seen. The racial verdict began with a more open rendering of the formerly subdued and nonjudgmental motif of racial mixture. What in the nineteenth century were almost neutral renderings of the ethnic and religious complexity of the Balkans, evoking only an occasional characterization as "strange nationalities," now produced feelings of impurity and revulsion about the repellent "cross-breeds." It could be argued that interwar racism was a fairly short-lived phenomenon, culminating in Nazi atrocities in Greece and Yugoslavia, but the ethnic diversity of the region has hardly achieved the status of celebrated multiculturalism.

After the Second World War, the negative designation Balkan all but disappeared, submerged in the bipolar Cold War rhetoric. It resurfaced again in the course of a twofold process after 1989. The first was the EU expansion to the east. The strategy and costs of this expansion, and the potential competition between candidates, resulted in the differential treatment of Eastern Europe's subregions. The Central European ideology of the 1980s (in Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia)

evoked the Balkans as its constituting other (Schöpflin and Wood 1989). Rhetorically successful, it all but disappeared after it achieved its goals. The second coinciding process was Yugoslavia's bloody disintegration. None of the other Balkan countries was ever involved, yet the world insisted on naming this a "Balkan" conflict, even the "Third Balkan war." To a great extent, this was the result of an attempt not to get involved, to restrict the problems to Europe's southeastern corner. Rhetorically, it was based on cultural arguments, particularly the "clash of civilizations" theory, positing that international conflicts would occur not so much between states and ideologies but along cultural, especially religious, fault-lines (Huntington 1996).

It was the time of the blooming of *balkanism*, the discursive paradigm that described the region as essentially different from Europe and legitimized a policy of relative noninvolvement and isolation. This ended with the unintended consequences from the 1999 NATO bombing of Yugoslavia. Its rhetorical legitimization as defense of universal human rights effectively pushed the Balkans back into the Western political sphere and brought Europeans and Americans deep into the Balkans. They are running several protectorates in the newly devised area of the "Western Balkans" (see section ► [Democratization in Postconflict Western Balkans](#)). The rest of the region is no more Balkan, but effectively part of Europe. There is the curious but predictable restraining of the balkanist rhetoric: it no longer serves power politics, although it is there, conveniently submerged but readily at hand (Todorova 2000).

While the powerful negative outside ascriptions have been to a great extent internalized in the region as a self-ascription (what some define as self-colonization), there is also an opposite trend. As already mentioned, Balkan has also served as a positive metaphor, especially in Bulgaria, where it denotes independence, love of freedom, resistance, courage, and dignity. Folk songs and literature abound in eulogies to the Balkan range, which figures as a pillar of Bulgarian liberty and a symbol of its nationhood even in the national hymn. In this case, the

metaphoric use is still closely related to its geographic signified, maybe because the Balkan range lies entirely within the confines of Bulgaria. In several other Balkan countries today, next to the disparaging use common to the one shared by outsiders, the notion can also have a positive connotation, signifying pride, defiance, and a certain *savoir vivre* (Todorova 1997/2009).

The array of negative stereotypes that was formed gradually in the course of centuries, crystallized in a power discourse after the First World War. In the next decades, it gained additional features and in its broad outlines continues to be handed down almost unalterable, having undergone what is defined as "discursive hardening" and a persistent "mental map" in which information about the region is placed, most notably in journalistic, political, and literary output. To put it succinctly, *balkanism* expresses the idea that explanatory approaches to phenomena in the Balkans rest upon a stable system of stereotypes that place the Balkans in a cognitive straightjacket. *Balkanism* was coined both as mirror and foil of *orientalism*, to both pay homage to Edward Said (1979) and to argue for similarities but also substantive differences between the two categories. Practically all descriptions of the Balkans offer as a central characteristic their transitional status. The West and the Orient are usually presented as incompatible entities, anti-worlds, but completed anti-worlds. The Balkans, on the other hand, have always evoked the image of a bridge or a crossroads. They have been compared to a bridge between East and West, Europe and Asia, but also between stages of growth, invoking labels as semi-developed, semicolonial, semicivilized, and semioriental. Unlike orientalism, a discourse about an imputed opposition, balkanism is a discourse about an imputed ambiguity. The lack of a colonial predicament for the Balkans also distinguishes the two, as do questions of race, color, religion, language, and gender. Yet, the main difference between the two is the geographic and historical concreteness of the Balkans versus the mostly metaphorical and symbolic nature of the Orient, thus challenging the scholar to deal with its ontology, rather than simply with its metaphoric functions (Todorova 2010).

Balkan: The Historical Legacy

A better way to approach the malleability of boundaries and to deconstruct the stark and reified opposition between “civilizations” is the concept of historical legacy. It allows a calmer reflection on the scholarly project of making sense of the Balkans, which is a sub-question of how to think about historical regions. The notion of historical legacy has numerous advantages over more structural categories of analysis such as borders, space, territoriality, insofar as it more clearly articulates the dynamism and fluidity of historical change. It appears to be the most appropriate category for analyzing long-term regional developments, avoiding the reification of contemporary, or latter-day, regions. It does not displace the notion of space; instead, it retains the valuable features of spatial analysis while simultaneously refining the vector of time and making it more historically specific.

Any region can be approached as the complex result of the interplay of numerous historical periods, traditions, and legacies. For purely cognitive purposes, one can distinguish between legacy as continuity and legacy as perception. Legacy as continuity is the survival and gradual waning of some of the characteristics of the entity immediately before its collapse. Legacy as perception, on the other hand, is the articulation and rearticulation of how the entity is seen at different time periods by different individuals or groups. These should not be interpreted as “real” versus “imagined” characteristics: the characteristics of continuity are themselves often perceptual, and perceptions are no less a matter of continuous real social facts. In both cases, the categories designate social facts, which are at different removes from experience, but in the instance of perception, the social fact is removed yet a further step from immediate reality (Todorova 2002).

Of the political legacies which have shaped Southeastern Europe as a whole (the period of Greek antiquity, Hellenism, Roman rule, etc.), two can be singled out as crucial up until the nineteenth century. One is the Byzantine millennium with its profound political, institutional, legal, religious, and general cultural impact. The

other is the half millennium of Ottoman rule that gave the peninsula its name and established the longest period of political unity it had ever experienced. Not only did part of Southeastern Europe acquire a new name during this period, it has been chiefly the Ottoman elements, or the ones perceived as such, which have formed the current stereotype of the Balkans.

This Ottoman legacy is different from the Ottoman polity as a whole; it is a process that began after the Ottoman Empire ceased to exist and is the aggregate of characteristics handed down chiefly from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. A systematic review of the workings of the Ottoman legacy as continuity in the political, cultural, social, and economic spheres reveals different degrees of perseverance. In practically all spheres, the break began almost immediately after the onset of political independence in the separate Balkan states and, as a whole, was completed by the end of the First World War; in the realms of demography and popular culture, it continued and was gradually transformed into the influence of the Turkish nation-state. After the First World War, the Ottoman legacy as perception became the process of interaction between an ever-evolving and accumulating past, and ever-evolving and accumulating perceptions of generations of people redefining the past. This legacy is not a reconstruction, but rather a construction of the past in works of historiography, fiction, journalism, and everyday discourse. Being one of the most important pillars in the discourse of the different Balkan nationalisms, it is bound to be reproduced for some time to come, both in its negative connotation for the Christian Balkan states and in its romantic garb as neo-Ottomanism in contemporary Turkey. In the narrow sense of the word, then, one can argue that the Balkans are the Ottoman legacy (Todorova 1997/2009).

In the broad sense of the word, however, the Balkans, utilized as a synonym for Southeastern Europe and expanding its time-span to archaeology and antiquity, are characterized by numerous historical periods, traditions, and legacies, some of which have been synchronic or overlapping, whereas others have been consecutive or completely separate. Thus, one can speak of

synchronic and overlapping periods, by taking the example of the late Roman, Byzantine, and early Ottoman empires, and the period of great migrations from Central Asia (with its numerous political legacies as well as the social legacy of semi-nomadism), which peaked in the fourth-fifth centuries and whose spurts were felt until the fifteenth-sixteenth centuries. The same goes for the synchronic workings of the whole variety of different religious systems in the region, both as legacies and ongoing processes. An instance of caesura between periods, and little if any overlap between legacies is, for example, the Hellenistic and communist period and legacy. Otherwise, legacies fade away in intensity with the passage of time but, in principle, they would be overlapping by definition, forming a complex palimpsest (Todorova 2007).

Some legacies have played themselves out in the same geographic space, whereas others have involved it in different mega-regions. An example of the first would be the Byzantine and the Ottoman period and legacy. Until the sixteenth century, there was an almost complete spatial coincidence between their respective spheres of influence, both in Europe and in Asia Minor. After the early sixteenth century, the Ottoman Empire expanded its space in North Africa and elsewhere, but in the Balkans, both the space of the historical periods and that of the legacies are coincidental. For an example of the second sort, one can point to another two period and legacies. The Roman Empire, which included Southeastern Europe in a space stretching from the British Isles to the Caspian and Mesopotamia (but excluding much of Northern and Central Europe). The period and legacy of communism, on the other hand, involved part of Southeastern Europe in a space encompassing the whole of Eastern Europe, and stretching through the Eurasian landmass to Central Asia (including China, Vietnam, and Cuba in some counts) (Todorova 2007).

Periods and legacies can also be classified according to their influence in different spheres of social life: political, economic, demographic, and cultural. In the religious sphere, one can single out the Christian, Muslim, and Judaic traditions with their numerous sects and branches; in

the sphere of art and culture, the legacies of the pre-Greeks, the Greeks, and the numerous ethnic groups that settled the peninsula; in social and demographic terms, the legacies of large and incessant migrations, ethnic diversity, semi-nomadism, a large and egalitarian agricultural sphere, and late urbanization alongside a constant continuity of urban life.

Thinking in terms of historical legacies – characterized by simultaneous, overlapping, and gradually waning effects – allows to emphasize the complexity and plasticity of the historical process. In the case of the Balkans, it allows to rescue the region from a debilitating diachronic and spatial ghettoization and insert it into multifarious cognitive frameworks over space and time. Europe itself, in this vision, appears as a complex palimpsest of differently shaped entities, which not only exposes the porosity of internal frontiers but also questions the absolute stability of external ones. In this respect, the task for balkanologists consists not so much of “provincializing” Europe (Chakrabarty 2000) but of “de-provincializing” Western Europe, which has heretofore expropriated the category of Europe with concrete political and moral consequences. If this project is successful, one will actually succeed in “provincializing” Europe effectively for the rest of the world, insofar as the European paradigm will have broadened to include not only a cleansed abstract ideal and version of power, but also one of dependency, subordination, and messy struggles.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Balkanization](#)
- ▶ [Democratization in Postconflict Western Balkans](#)

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Balkanization

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Synonyms

[Barbarism](#); [Disintegration](#); [Disunity](#); [Division](#); [Fragmentation](#); [Secession](#); [Separation](#); [The Balkans](#); [Tribalism](#)

Definition

‘Balkanization’ has no clear definition. Derived from troubling occurrences in the Balkans, it has most often been used to describe a wide range of complex and problematic situations, people, and events. The word was coined in the beginning of the twentieth century to depict events which took place during the Balkan wars (1912–1913) and the First World War (WWI) (1914–1918) in reference to occurrences that had happened before in the Balkan Peninsula. WWI was a reminder of the collapse of Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century and the appearance of separate Balkan states that emerged from it. To describe the dreadful consequences of this war in reshuffling Europe’s map, ‘balkanization’ was coined to transmit an alarming call for preventing a Balkan apocalyptic scenario to resituate itself in Europe. Hence, in its more specific definitions, ‘balkanization’ is tightly connected to historical events related to wars and conflicts in the Balkans.

In its most general description though, ‘balkanization’ refers to the division, partition, compartmentalization, or splitting up of a whole into hostile and sometimes homogenous

parts. Retaining its main conceptual thread, ‘balkanization’ nowadays persists to refer to the unwelcomed disintegration of a previously existing unit and all the undesirable symptoms that come with it. However, the word has moved beyond its reference to the Balkan Peninsula to currently describe similar scenarios taking place in a variety of places and spaces, disciplines, and fields of thought such as economy, architecture, gastronomy, poetry, and others. While it might seem that ‘balkanization’ is being used as detached from the Balkan Peninsula, it continues to transmit negative stereotypes of the Balkans and which, considering the growth in usage and explanatory power that the term is currently gaining, also risk to grow.

Introduction

Maria Todorova (1997), to whom canonical reference is made when it comes to studies on the Balkans, considers ‘balkanization’ as “the most important word and notion deriving from Balkan” (p. 32). Along the lines of Edward Said’s *Orientalism* (1979), Todorova (1997) coined *balkanism* which “expresses the idea that explanatory approaches to phenomena in Southeastern Europe, that is, ‘the Balkans’, often rest upon a discourse (in the Foucauldian sense) or a stable system of stereotypes (for the ones who shun the notion of ‘discourse’), which place the Balkans in a cognitive straightjacket” (Todorova 2010, p. 176). Taking forward such a position by inspecting ‘balkanization’ as an explanatory approach not only of phenomena in the Balkans but also elsewhere, recent research (see Velu 2018) argues for a constant use of the word as inserted within single quotation marks with the purpose of questioning the cognitive conventionality that encloses it and enhancing awareness on its discursive nature. As an enduring discourse of stereotyping and region labelling not only of the Balkans but beyond, such endeavors of deconstructing ‘balkanization’ are relevant for enabling a better understanding and comparison of discourses of differences and otherness across Europe and elsewhere.

Initially used by journalists and politicians, ‘balkanization’ served the role of an explanatory conceptual device that would help them make sense of the new world order emerging from the disintegration of the Habsburg and Romanov Empire by comparing that with the secession of the Balkan nations following the crumbling of the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century. Following the Second World War (WWII) (1939–1945), ‘balkanization’ would undergo its most substantial manifestation. Its explanatory logic was applied to understand occurrences which not only transcended the Balkans and Europe and extended its geographic scope to include Africa and the United States, but they also surpassed politics and journalism and entered the realm of linguistics, demography, information technology, gastronomy, and others. Herein ‘balkanization’ stretched its scope of descriptive faculty to a diverse and extensive range of phenomena of prevailing pejorative and derogatory nature. This has not escaped the attention of critical scholars who by the end of the twentieth century and early twenty-first century took forward endeavors of denaturalizing and reclaiming ‘balkanization’. This entry follows the logic of focusing in each one of these endeavors as specific subheadings. The first subheading focuses on the first conceptual articulations of ‘balkanization’ and its contextualization in the geography and events of the Balkan Peninsula surrounding WWI. The second subheading unravels the wave of decontextualizing ‘balkanization’ from the peninsula and recontextualizing it to a variety of other geographies and fields of thought which oscillated after WWII. Finally, the third subheading explores the attempts of different scholars which emerged during and after the Yugoslav Wars with the purpose of unwrapping the discourse from its metahistorical obviousness by historicizing it and scrutinizing the interplay of powers operating underneath.

Birth: Coining ‘Balkanization’

‘Balkanization’ as a word was conceived during the Balkan wars and WWI to describe these

events through the prism of similar occurrences which had before taken place in the Balkan Peninsula. The disintegration of the Habsburg and Romanov Empire which conditioned the emergence of Austria, Czechoslovakia, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, Latvia, and Lithuania was the new political constellation that needed to be understood and explained. Since the Balkan people had faced something similar at the end of the nineteenth century with the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire and the emergence of Bulgaria, Greece, Montenegro Romania, and Serbia, this made the Balkans a suitable comparison unit to the new political reality that Europe needed to face. However, as Todorova states, “when the term was coined, at the end of WWI, only one Balkan nation, Albania, was added to the already existing Balkan map; all others had been nineteenth century formations” (Todorova 1997, p. 32). During this time, considering the nature of events that the word was designed to describe, its main conceptual connotation was disintegration, but not only, as ‘balkanization’ would never be a neutral descriptive term synonymous to division, fragmentation, dissolution, or any other similar expressions. ‘Balkanization’ was coined retrospectively to enable the apprehension of the mutating European subject and its present, by replacing it with the Balkan subject and its past. The discourse was established to convey everything political that led to and resulted from the crumbling of previously functional entreties, and as such it communicated an uninvited and undesirable condition. Since such a gruesome scenario that Europe was facing was being looked at through the experiences of the Balkans, the uninvited and undesirable Balkan subject also came to life.

The Oxford English Dictionary traces the word’s first appearance in 1914 at the College of Surgeons Fellowship address by E. H. Bradford Amer where he is quoted to have said: “How long the present *Balkanization* [emphasis added] of Europe is to continue. . . no one can tell, but it is certain that the Mexicanization of North America will stop at the Rio Grande” (“balkanization” 2013). The statement made by Bradford Amer is inaccessible as a full entry online.

This is different from what Todorova (1997) considers the first written appearance of ‘balkanization’ which did not take place until December 20, 1918, when Greenwall (1918) under the title “Rathenau, Head of Great Industry, Predicts the ‘Balkanization of Europe’” would write for *The New York Times*: “Black ruin will face us, and there will be a great tide of emigration probably to South America and the Far East and certainly to Russia. It will be most dreadful, and the result will be the Balkanization of Europe” (Greenwall 1918). Greenwall was reiterating Walther Rathenau who served as the German Foreign Minister during the Weimar Republic and was leading proponent of the idea for a Central European economic union. His definition of ‘balkanization’ witnesses for the politically charged nature of the term and the pejorative connotations it represented already in its newborn stages.

After Rathenau’s statement, Todorova (1997) traces ‘balkanization’ in a set of different early twentieth century newspapers such as the *The Nineteenth Century* and *Public Opinion*, as well as the novel *Europe-Whither Bound* by Stephen Graham (1922) and Arnold J. Toynbee’s (1922) *The Western Question in Greece and Turkey: A Study in the Contact of Civilisations*. As a concept being mainly coined and introduced by journalists, ‘balkanization’ would in 1923 be referred to by Leon Trotsky. Trotsky who had been a military correspondent in the Balkans of the newspaper *Kievskaya Mysl* in 1912 would write for the Soviet *Pravda*: “Victorious France is now maintaining her mastery only by Balkanizing Europe... Britain’s traditional mask is of hypocrisy. As a result, our unfortunate continent is cut up, divided, exhausted, disorganized and Balkanized – transformed into a madhouse” (Jordan 2007, p. 61). Throughout these references, ‘balkanization’ was used to transmit alarming warnings of apocalyptic scenarios in Europe and the West. It is safe to say that not once was the word used to describe circumstances welcomed by these authors and at times also the subjects of their writings. Although such circumstances and subjects were of a wide variety which contributed to the ambiguity of the term and which persists even now, there was no

doubt as to how threatening and dangerous and hence unwanted ‘balkanization’ was being perceived as.

Such perceptions were substantively evidenced in 1921 when ‘balkanization’ made its prominent debut. Both Todorova (1997) and Lene Hansen (2006) refer to Paul Scott Mowrer’s (1921) definition of ‘balkanization’ in his *Balkanized Europe: A study in Political Analysis and Reconstruction*. Mowrer who had been the European correspondent for the *Chicago Daily News* and who had previously reported on the first Balkan War and WWI defines “the meaning of the word ‘Balkanization’: the creation, in a region of hopelessly mixed races, of a medley of small states with more or less backward populations, economically and financially weak, covetous, intriguing, afraid, a continual prey to the machinations of the great powers, and to the violent promptings of their own passions” (p. 25). Hansen (2006) considers Mowrer’s statement as one which “links the construction of a highly inferior and negative construction of ‘Balkan peoples’ as weak, covetous, intriguing, and afraid with their propensity for violence and passion to the region’s geopolitical ability to become a cataclysmic part of European great power politics, thereby triggering wider wars” (p. 92). As Todorova (1997) states, “[b]alkanization not only had come to denote the parcelization of large and viable political units, but had also become a synonym for a reversion to the tribal, the backward, the primitive, the barbarian” (p. 3). As the next subheading reveals, the geographic reference to events in the Balkan Peninsula would not necessarily continue to be the main markers of ‘balkanization’, but rather its political connotations. ‘Balkanization’ would be recontextualized to a variety of spaces and contexts that had nothing to do with the Balkan Peninsula. Hence, even in the present, one finds less references to ‘balkanized’ Balkans than ‘balkanized’ Europe or others.

Recontextualization: ‘Balkanization’ Everywhere

With the creation of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) whose origins can be

traced back to 1942 and the establishment of the Anti-Fascist Council for the National Liberation of Yugoslavia, the end of WWII showed the Balkans as united under the popular slogan of “brotherhood and unity.” With the proclamation of the Federal People’s Republic of Yugoslavia (FPRY) on November 29, 1945, the world had the chance to see a divergent and antagonistic trend to that of disunity in the Balkan Peninsula. Yugoslavia was an antithesis to ‘balkanization’. On this premise, it would be expected that the word would be used less frequently or at least not grow in its descriptive scope. Contrary to such expectations, ‘balkanization’ would not only persist to exist in the vocabulary of political insults, but it would further be used to widen its explanatory power to places and spaces which transcend the European continent and the West in general. The dimensions that ‘balkanization’ would gain through time exceed any geographic references to include fields of thought and disciplines, and they continue to enlarge currently. However, even as resituated in a set of diverse contexts and as upgraded in meaning as to include phenomena that are not necessarily wars which result with disintegration of states or other entities, the discourse retained its derogatory conceptual connotations and its analogous references to the Balkans.

The recontextualization of ‘balkanization’ would take sway around the events of WWII. Already before WWII references to ‘balkanization’ are found in United States court cases in relation to disputes of trade and economy. The Supreme Court of the USA, in a 1941 case of *Duckworth* challenging the constitutionality of an Arkansas statute which required permission for the transportation of liquor, would refer to Congress potentially “suffocating and retarding and Balkanizing American *commerce, trade and industry* [emphasis added]” (*Duckworth v. Arkansas* 1941). Not too long after this, in another case ruled by the US Supreme Court, ‘balkanization’ was equalized to “trade barriers so high between the states that the stream of interstate commerce cannot flow over them” (*H. P. Hood & Sons* 1949). The Supreme Court insisted on referring to ‘balkanization’ as the

growing risk of local restraints that would threaten the free flow of goods and services. This trend would persist as 20 years later in another case of 1979 on legislation governing wildlife on federal lands, the Supreme Court would refer to “economic Balkanization” as that which “had plagued relations among the Colonies and later among the States under the Articles of Confederation” (*Hughes v. Oklahoma* 1979).

‘Balkanization’ would substantially be used to synopsise the troubled and brimming relations within and among colonies. Travelling from the Balkans across Europe and the USA, the wind of *decolonization* processes in Africa in the period of post-WWII would also be looked at through ‘balkanized’ lenses. William Edward Burghardt Du Bois (1945), among others known as a dedicated Pan-Africanist and the leader of the black civil rights organization Niagara Movement, would state that “Americanization has never yet meant a synthesis of what Africa, Europe, and Asia had to contribute to the new and vigorous republic of the West; it meant largely the attempt to achieve a dead level of uniformity, intolerant of all variation” (p. 72). Such Western influence, according to Du Bois (1945), used “balkanization” to subjugate other smaller states into “‘spheres of influence’ and investment centers, and then often succumb into disfranchised colonies” (p. 72). Being exposed to such ideas of Du Bois, Kwame Nkrumah as the first Prime Minister and President of Ghana upon the country’s declaration of independence from Britain in 1957 would be extensively referring to analogies between the Balkans and contemporary Africa to call for the unification of Africa (see Nkrumah 1961, 1963). Nkrumah and other anti-colonial African leaders such as Leopold Sedar Senghor, Ahmed Sékou Touré, and others, as Neuberger (1976) states, would use the term “balkanization” or “balkanisation” and which “rapidly became a basic part of the phraseology of modern African nationalism” (p. 523). Boubou Hama (1974) and Julius Kambage Nyerere (see Mwakikagile 2010) would be other names to add to the list of African nationalists to which ‘balkanization’ became a reference point on issues of colonial legacy in the continent and the way

forward. To Nyerere's regionalization attempts of unifying East Africa before independence, Nkrumah has reportedly been referring to as "'balkanization' on a large scale" (Mwakikagile 2010, p. 582). To these and other African leaders, 'balkanization' has stood for different associations; however, as Neuberger (1976) states, they "[a]ll are agreed that an inherent feature is fragmentation" (p. 523). As to what degree of that fragmentation would be tolerable or acceptable, "there is no consensus" says Neuberger (1976, p. 523).

Around this time when 'balkanization' was increasingly used to explain phenomena that were taking place in a territorial range which surpassed Europe and the West and gained global geographic dimensions, the word would enter the vocabulary of a diverse set of disciplines which also surpassed the field of politics and international relations and elaborated on questions of human identity. Ayn Rand's (1977) lecture titled "Global Balkanization" would use 'balkanization' to refer to "the process of the collapse of a *civilization* [emphasis added]" (p. 3) and hence all that it entails. Although with 'balkanization' Rand (1977) understands the "breakup of larger nations into ethnic tribes" (p. 14), she considers this breakup as the reason for the collapse of everything else. "How long would the achievements of a technological civilization last under this sort of tribal management?" (p. 14) asks Rand (1977), equating balkanization with "global tribalism" (p. 15). References that would contribute to the global magnitudes of 'balkanization' are to be found in many other sources that resemble Rand's fuming resentment of the Balkans as the source of the misfortune that was about to hit the Western civilization. Along the same lines, Patrick Glynn (1993) would issue a warning to the world in his "The Age of Balkanization": "A fundamental change is under way in the character of global political life. . . The ferocious war in the Balkans is but one manifestation of a reemergent barbarism apparent in many corners of the earth." Another example of this would be Harold Bloom who, as Todorova (1997) states, "introduced 'balkanization' to mourn everything he detested in his discipline" (p. 36). "Finding

myself now surrounded by professors of hip-hop; by clones of Gallic-Germanic theory; by ideologues of gender and of various sexual persuasions; by multiculturalists unlimited, I realize that the Balkanization of *literary* [emphasis added] studies is irreversible" declared Bloom (1994, p. 517) who was also considered as "immortal" and "greatest literary critic on the planet" (Martin 2017).

Placing 'balkanization' in the heart of debates which aim to establish what it is that differentiates the civilized from the tribal has paved the way for the word to explain a specter of events and phenomena that need no geographical determinants. 'Balkanization' is now being used in reference to conceptual spaces as much as places. Through an analysis on Twitter, Velu (2018) finds 'balkanization' used in association to events taking place in around one hundred existing or unexisting places around the globe, including here the North Pole (see Paul 2012) and EUgoslavia (see Karnitschnig 2016). Her list of 124 conceptual archetypes associated to 'balkanization' identifies, among others, references being made to *demographic* 'balkanization' (Frey 1996, 1999), 'balkanization' of the *Internet* (Cooper 2015), of *news media* (Evans 2016; Herzfeld 2017), *education* (Liberalteacher 2016), global *financial market* (Weber 2017), *academia* (Dreier 2016), *advertising agency business* (Crain 2015), *digital health* (Wilkins 2014), and even the 'balkanization' of *burgers* (Pollack 2011). References to 'balkanization' are made in poetry (Repass 2016) and art (Balkanization 2016). This drives Velu (2018) to conclude that "the growth in usage and meanings associated with 'balkanization' is due to the ambiguity it conveys and *vice versa*" (p. 98). She further adds that 'balkanization' "lives in the constant reinvention of meanings by bringing together and at the same time separating, by differentiating and at the same time equalizing wholeness and particularity, homogeneity and heterogeneity, 'us' and 'them'" (Velu 2018, p. 98). This dynamic of "us" and "them" reflected from and on that of "self" and "other," no matter the contexts that it is being replicated in, derives from continuous comparison between the Balkans and the West.

Hence, “[n]o matter the diversity and ambiguity of meanings that the ‘balkanization’ discourse represents, it is still based on a red thread of analogous references to the Balkan Peninsula” states Velju (2018, p. 98).

Balkanism: ‘Balkanization’ Deconstructed and Reclaimed

A series of interconnected events which started in 1991 led to the Yugoslav Wars and eventually to the collapse of the Yugoslav state. These events were preceded by the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and a wave of revolutions in Central and Eastern European states which ended the communist rule in these countries and put an end to the Eastern Bloc. Predrag Simić (2013) argues that such occurrences “revived old Western stereotypes about the Balkans and ‘Balkanisation’” (p. 113) and as a result a series of new studies about the Balkans emerged. He identifies two main strands of this literature: on the one side, there is the works of Samuel Huntington (1993), Robert Kaplan (1993), Noel Malcolm (1998), and Morton Abramowitz (1993) as those who reinterpreted and reproduced the history of the Balkans as to support political and military intervention in the region; and on the other side, concurrently to these authors, there is the emergence of the first momentous wave which brought a deconstructing and critical view on the Balkans and which, among others, was headed by Todorova (1994, 1996, 1997, 2010), Vesna Goldsworthy (1998, 2003), and Mark Mazower (2002). Through a sequence of writings which aimed to desubstantialize and destabilize the Balkans as a discourse, and with that ‘balkanization’, the latter authors conditioned the first serious resistance to old and rejuvenated labels and portrayals of the Balkans. Some of these authors’ incentives went further by aiming to reclaim ‘balkanization’ and used the discourse in a subversive manner by adding to it some positive nuances. Some other authors, including here Simić (2013) himself, took forward genealogical incentives of historicizing the discourse and revealing its power telos to say that “the

wars fought in the Balkans do not differ substantially from other civil or religious wars fought in Europe or elsewhere” (p. 127) and that, hence, the Balkans “have no monopoly over barbarity” (Todorova 1997, p. 7).

Todorova’s major breakthrough in the study of the Balkans was preceded by the work of others such as Milica Bakić-Hayden and Robert M. Hayden (1992; Bakić-Hayden 1995), who in their own manner, similarly to Todorova, were paving the way for the decomposition of the naturalized pejorative nuances conveyed through the Balkans and ‘balkanization’. Different from Todorova (1996) who considered *balkanism* as an academic-explanatory approach to the discourses on the Balkans which is “seemingly identical, but actually only a similar phenomenon” (p. 10) to Orientalism, Bakić-Hayden and Hayden (1992) examine the European construction of itself versus Yugoslavia and the Balkans through orientalist variations of the latter. Bakić-Hayden (1995) calls these variations “nesting orientalism” which “is a pattern of reproduction of the original dichotomy upon which Orientalism is premised. In this pattern, Asia is more ‘East’ or ‘other’ than eastern Europe; within eastern Europe itself this gradation is reproduced with the Balkans perceived as most ‘eastern’; within the Balkans there are similarly constructed hierarchies” (p. 918). Todorova’s work which followed that of Said (1979) shared with the latter, among others, the focus on discourses as central in the construction of “self” and “other” and the creation of subject positions such as that of the Balkans in Todorova’s case and the Orient in the case of Said. With this, a debate on whether or not the Balkans are a distinct and specific category of othering and hence deserving of their own investigation emerged. Such debates were heavily centralized around discussions on colonialism and questions of whether or not were the Balkans a subject to colonial rule, as well as pro and against argumentations on the geographic fixities of the region. Upholding the position that “‘Balkanism’ is not merely a sub-species of orientalism” (Todorova, 1994, p. 454; 1996, p. 10), Hammond (2007) would add that “the emphasis should now be on furthering knowledge of

the specificities of balkanism and of its intricate relationship to both the changing realities of the peninsula and the vicissitudes of Western diplomacy” (p. 215).

Hence, the work of Todorova and some others remained concentrated around revealing and unravelling the Western discursive imagery of the Balkans. This wave of literature argued for a genealogical examination of ‘balkanization’, which, as James Der Derian (2009) claimed, “seems to have enjoyed the standing of common wisdom and thus avoided critical scrutiny” (p. 101). Their efforts, however, were taken a step forward or aside, by other authors who took it upon themselves to reclaim ‘balkanization’. Such intentions are indeed stemming from the similar vocation of disrupting the idea that ‘balkanization’ as a discourse of pejorative portrayals was inherent and natural only to the Balkans, but they further attempt to shed some light on different positive aspects and qualities that ‘balkanization’ already did or could possibly convey. Already in 1994, Stjepan Meštrović wrote *The Balkanization of the West: The Confluence of Postmodernism and Postcommunism* in which he argued that “Balkanization is a genuinely postmodern phenomenon, if one understands postmodernism to be a rebellion against the grand narratives of the Enlightenment” (p. 179). David Campbell (1998) explains the European and American fear of ‘balkanization’ as one connected to the fear of multiculturalism as deriving from a “fictive notion of a prior time of unfragmented community that is itself produced by a discourse of coherence” (p. 167). He claims that “balkanization stems from the desire for a bounded community and the nostalgia for a politics of place rather than a problematization of identity politics” (Campbell 1998, p. 169). Andrej Grubačić (2010) made the call: *Don't mourn, balkanize!* as he speaks of “balkanization from below as a tradition and narrative that affirms social and cultural affinities, as well as on customs in common resulting from interethnic mutual aid and solidarity, and resulting in what can be termed an interethnic self-activity, one that was severed through the Euro-colonial intervention” (p. 158). Recognizing that ‘balkanization’ had now entered the realm of mathematics, international law,

digital world, software, and others, Srdjan Jovanović Weiss (2011) reverses the negative connotations of the discourse by further stationing it in the field of architecture by asking: “[a]rchitects are not particularly happy with how desolate corporate architecture has become clean minimalist forms turned into postmodern cubes. What if we Balkanized it?”. He claims that ‘balkanization’ “also has positive aspects, it depicts political self-determination: not in order to fight, but rather to maintain its differentiation, its autonomy,” and as such “[i]t is a chance for the small” (Weiss 2011) versus the sophisticated and selective potencies of capitalism and corporations.

In most recent research, ‘balkanization’ has been inspected through the prism of the Euro-Atlantic integration processes of the Balkans and reviewed in reference to the process of Europeanization. This has resulted with the hitherto conceptualization of ‘balkanization’ to broaden up as to include literature on EU enlargement and regionalism. It remains unclear whether the work of these authors can be considered as one of deconstructing or reclaiming ‘balkanization’ due to while on one side it continues to refer to the discourse to explain certain periods or events in the region, on the other it nevertheless offers with explanatory accounts as to how the discourse arose. Dorian Jano (2008) claims that when it comes to literature on the Balkans, “the ‘Balkanization paradigm’ has dominated the debate” (p. 56). He proposes the term “last Balkanization” as the “situation of the Western Balkan states in the ’90s undergoing their last disintegration process” (Jano 2008, p. 58) on their way to Europeanization. With this he joins other author’s attempts of not only reclaiming the discourse as one among the other steps which, in a way, have led to Europe and the West but also of automatically revealing that, if seen under the light of the integration processes of the Western Balkans, ‘balkanization’ had always been a discourse of constitutive and negotiating identities of “self” and “other” between the Balkans and the West. Other more recent and less critical literature on ‘balkanization’ versus the Europeanization of Western Balkans (see Džankić et al. 2019; Vučković and Đorđević 2019) also almost inevitably can be read as recognizing

the constructed character of the Balkans through ‘balkanization’ as a process of othering the region from Europe and the West in general. Some others as Othon Anastasakis (2005) refer more explicitly to “‘Europeanization, South East European style’ as an increasingly demanding, externally driven, and coercive process of domestic and regional change brought about by the EU” by calling the process “uneven” (p. 77). Such uneven interactions between the Balkans and the West continue to call for studies which address the discourse of ‘balkanization’ under the light of more local literature coming from the Balkans themselves. An example of this is the recent work of Diana Mishkova (2019) which, in her own words, “reverses the perspective and looks at the Balkans primarily inside-out, from within the Balkans towards its “self” and the outside world” arguing that “‘Balkan’ self-understanding has rarely received attention” (p. 3).

Summary and Future Work

‘Balkanization’ has its semantic roots in the events of the Balkan Wars and WWI. The first time the word was used was to explain the collapse of the Habsburg and Romanov Empire in reference to the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and what it had done to the Balkan Peninsula. ‘Balkanization’, in other words, was not coined to convey the then reality of the Balkans, but rather that of Europe while comparing it to events that belonged to the Balkans’ past. Until WWII and the establishment of SFRY, the word would be used to explain occurrences that had some relations to those of the Balkan Peninsula. With the wave of decolonization movements and literature, ‘balkanization’ would transcend the geographic borders of the Balkan Peninsula and Europe and it would find application in a set of diverse settings stretching to the USA and Africa. Moreover, beyond its geographic and political connotations, ‘balkanization’ would be recontextualized to describe various phenomena in jurisprudence, literary studies, demography, and others. Its conceptualization would stretch and narrow and accommodate to convey the needs of many institutional as well as individual

authors. Following the collapse of Yugoslavia and the emergence of a series of writing on the Balkans, ‘balkanization’ would receive some critical attention. Studies would dispute the obviousness that the discourse was surrounded by and the consequences that it entailed for the Balkan people. Congruently, both strands, that of constructing and deconstructing ‘balkanization’, continue to exist as the discourse is gaining more attention on its constitutive nature, while the word continues to broaden up in its explanatory parameters and be applied to different context, fields of thought, and disciplines.

As a derivative of “the Balkans,” ‘balkanization’ is a discourse of identity construction and othering in which the “self” and “other” or the “us” and “them” oscillate between the Balkans on one side and the West on the other. Beyond its contextualization in the Balkan Peninsula, ‘balkanization’ continues to be used to describe or refer to a highly divergent set of scenarios and phenomena where the Balkans and the West are replaced with other subject positions. The nature of the relationship between these subjects is defined by imbalanced power relations, and hence whether used in the field of literature, art, informatics, finances, economy, jurisprudence, or others, ‘balkanization’ is or brings about destruction and collapse. Deriving from collapsing events in Europe and used in reference to similar events that had previously taken place more specifically in the Balkan Peninsula, the discourse even as recontextualized and reclaimed continues to be associated to apocalyptic scenarios. From this perspective and given its semantic origins, the word ‘balkanization’ will always convey something pejorative about the Balkan people. Considering this, further discussions on whether or not should the word be even used due to its insulting nature would convert the debate into one on political correctness. However, the question of whether or not the usage of ‘balkanization’ should be considered as a politically (in)correct act does not exclude and moreover should include continuing endeavors of debunking the discourse. The dose of naturalness that the word has gained by now and the wide explanatory dimensions that the discourse has reached require discussions which

would bring about awareness rather than uniformed obedience upon a prohibitory request.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Balkan as a Concept](#)
- ▶ [Democratization in Postconflict Western Balkans](#)
- ▶ [Divided Cities](#)
- ▶ [Grounded Nationalism](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding and Postcolonial Subject](#)
- ▶ [Secession and Self-determination](#)
- ▶ [Stabilization Operations and their Relationship to Liberal Peacebuilding Missions](#)

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Barbarism

- ▶ [Balkanization](#)

Bargaining (see Negotiation)

- ▶ [Negotiation](#)

BDS

- ▶ [Popular Protest in Palestine](#)

Big Data

- ▶ [Future Peace: Digital Innovations and the International Peace Architecture](#)

Bosnian Genocide

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Keywords

Bosnia and Herzegovina · Crimes against humanity · Genocide · Yugoslav Wars

Definition

The Bosnian Genocide refers to the 1992–1995 campaign by Serb nationalist forces, sponsored

and directed by the then government in Serbia, in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) during the Bosnian War that aimed to exterminate and expel the non-Serb population in the parts of the country that had come under the control of the self-declared *Republika Srpska* (RS) entity. This campaign disproportionately affected members of the Bosniak community, who account for nearly 65% of all casualties during the war. Although the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) has limited recognition of the genocide to the events in the Srebrenica area in July 1995, other relevant courts as well as the consensus opinion within the scholarly literature situates Srebrenica as only the deadliest episode within a broader, systematic genocidal project targeting Bosniaks and other non-Serbs in RS-administered territories during this period.

Introduction

The Bosnian Genocide refers to the systematic campaign of extermination and expulsions of non-Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) during the Bosnian War (1992–1995) conducted by the Army of the Republika Srpska (VRS), directed by the wartime leadership of the self-declared Republika Srpska (RS), in particular its President Radovan Karadžić, and organized and financed by the then regime in Serbia. While Serb nationalist authorities targeted both BiH's Bosniak and Croat communities during this campaign, according to the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), the Bosniak community accounted for nearly 65% of the total victims of the Bosnian War, and nearly 70% of all civilian deaths during the conflict (Zwierzchowski and Tabeau 2010). As such, in most of the scholarly literature, the Bosnian Genocide refers to the specific genocidal campaign against the Bosniak community of BiH by the VRS et al.

To date, the ICTY and its residual mechanism has only formally recognized the killings in Srebrenica in July 1995 as genocidal in nature. Other European courts have expanded the genocide label, however, to other killing sites in BiH, and

these, taken together with the ICTY decision(s), gesture clearly also at a legal justification for the Bosnian Genocide label. In 1999, the German Federal Court of Justice upheld a lower court ruling against Nikola Jorgić on 11 counts of genocide, committed during his tenure as a member of a Serb nationalist paramilitary in the Doboj region of central Bosnia (International Crimes Database [n.d.-a](#)). In the case of Novislav Đajić, the Bavarian Appeals Court upheld a lower court ruling on 14 counts of murder and 1 count of attempted murder (International Crimes Database [n.d.-b](#)), which the ICTY interpreted as having concluded that genocide had occurred within the territory of the municipality of Foča in the summer of 1992 (International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Former Yugoslavia since 1991, [2001](#), pp. 207–208). A still third German court convicted Maksim Sokolović of “five counts of inflicting physical injuries to Muslim civilians and 56 counts of unlawfully detaining Muslim civilians. [The court] also held that this conduct qualified as aiding genocide” (International Crimes Database [n.d.-c](#)).

As such, in political commemorations in the EU, the term “Srebrenica Genocide” is often used. But owing to both dissenting opinions in repeated ICTY decisions which addressed the question of whether virtually identical killings in other Bosnian municipalities constituted one singular campaign, and the widespread consensus in the academic literature that they did, there has been a growing normative shift toward adopting the term “Bosnian Genocide” (or “Genocide in Bosnia”) as a reflection of the logical improbability that a genocide – the highest crime in international law – could be localized to a single municipality.

The Historical and Political Facts of the Bosnian Genocide

There are two primary streams of evidence regarding the facts of the Bosnian Genocide: One concerns the political and practical preparatory documentation for the killings and expulsions by

the RS and Serbian governments; the other focuses on the actual realization of these plans through mass killings, expulsions, extralegal internment, torture, and sexual violence. The latter was not the product of random or localized initiatives by individual units within the military and political hierarchy of the VRS/RS. The former clearly demonstrates that the actual realization of the Bosnian Genocide was politically directed and organized, and that its execution required significant resources that could only be marshalled through the specific direction of the RS and Serbian leadership.

Perhaps the most significant piece of evidence concerning the formal intent of the Serb nationalist authorities in BiH to enact a genocide is the adoption of the “Six Strategic Goals of the Serb People” by the self-declared “Assembly of the Serb People of BiH.” This body was formed in October 1991, prior to BiH’s formal declaration of independence in March 1992, and already clearly demonstrated the exclusionary, sectarian intentions of the Serb Democratic Party (SDS), the leading political bloc among ethnic Serbs in BiH.

To wit, the “Six Strategic Goals” were:

1. State delineation from the other two national communities
2. The establishment of a corridor between Semberia [sic] and Krajina
3. The establishment of a corridor in the valley of the Drina River, meaning the elimination of the Drina as a border between the two Serb states
4. The establishment of a border on the rivers of the Una and Neretva
5. The division of the city of Sarajevo into Serb and Muslim parts, and the establishment of a state authority in each part
6. Creation of an outlet for Republika Srpska to the sea (Karcic [2015](#))

The summation of all six goals was the creation of an ethnically homogenous political space in a region defined by centuries-long ethnic cohabitation and pluralism. Moreover, the realization of such a homogenous space could only be

accomplished using violence and terror, as the entire RS leadership both recognized and embraced. However, as Edina Becirevic (2014, p. 61) notes, the “Six Strategic Goals” were themselves a “program of activity and . . . measures. . . designed within the wider context of a war plan known simply as ‘RAM’ (which means ‘the frame,’ a reference to ‘reframing Yugoslavia’). A functional extension of the SANU Memorandum, RAM had existed since at least early 1991; it outlined plans to achieve Yugoslavia without Slovenia, and to conquer territories of Croatia and [BiH].” The *SANU Memorandum* was a treatise written in 1985 by members of the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences (SANU), and leaked to the Yugoslav media in 1986, which laid out a comprehensive set of grievances concerning the overall status of Serbia and the Serbian people within the federation. It claimed that Serbs in Kosovo were the victims of a genocide organized by local Albanians and that Serbs were the subject of widespread discrimination throughout that country; that Serbia was being economically plundered by Slovenia and Croatia; that there was no distinct Bosnian and Herzegovinian people and that all ethnic Serb intellectuals and artists from BiH were exclusively Serbian; and that status of the Serbian nation could only be properly addressed the cultural and political unity of the Serbs. In short, the document became the intellectual foundation of the Serb nationalist revival during the 1980s and 1990s. Becirevic goes on to observe that “RAM originated in the top circles of Serb operatives of the Yugoslav counterintelligence service. It involved the deployment of a network of secret operatives whose aim was to arm Serbs in Croatia [BiH] and to prepare them for war. The RAM plan was presented as evidence in The Hague to prove that Slobodan Milošević had a clear and developed scheme to purge non-Serbs from territories he aimed to conquer in Croatia and [BiH]” (p. 62).

Taken together, the *SANU Memorandum*, RAM, and the “Six Strategic Goals” represent a clear body of evidence showing intent to forcibly exterminate and expel non-Serbs from the territories in Croatia and BiH which came under the control of Belgrade’s proxy forces in those

countries between 1991 and 1995. The locus of these activities was BiH, as the incorporation of the “west bank of the Drina River” (i.e., eastern BiH) had since emergence of the modern Serbian state in the early nineteenth century been, arguably, the central foreign policy concern of successive generations of Serbian nationalist leaders (Hajdarpašić 2015, pp. 18–52).

This gambit, in turn, was the loadstar of the broader concept of a “Greater Serbia,” which Milošević and his counterparts in BiH and Croatia sought to create through their genocidal efforts (Donia 2015, pp. 10, 47–48). That is an irridentist conception of Serbia, whose origins too date to the nineteenth century, which would, ideally, see the state stretch from the “Virovitica–Karlovac–Karlobag line” in Croatia and include all Yugoslav territories to its south and east (i.e., approximately two-thirds of Croatia, and all of BiH, Serbia proper, Vojvodina, Kosovo, Montenegro, and North Macedonia). By the time of the onset of the Croatian and Bosnian Wars, that concept had been reduced to the occupation of the territories which initially formed the RS in BiH and Republika Srpska Krajina (RSK) in Croatia, as well as what was then the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia, Montenegro, and the Serbian provinces of Vojvodina and Kosovo).

The Bosnia Genocide in a Historical Context

Belgrade’s expansionist-sectarian aspirations in the 1990s were not entirely without practical precedent either. The expansion of the Serbian state into contemporary Southeastern Serbia, Kosovo, and North Macedonia over the course of the latter half of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century had also entailed the mass expulsion (and extermination) of non-Serb peoples, in particular Slavic Muslims (in particular Bosniaks) and ethnic Albanians. Djordje Stefanović (pp. 468–469) writes of the policies of the then Obrenović court in seizing control from the aforementioned territories from the receding Ottoman Empire in the 1870s and 1880s, and the ensuing demographic changes in the region:

...the Serbian regime ‘encouraged’ about 71,000 Muslims, including 49,000 Albanians ‘to leave.’ The regime then gradually settled Serbs and Montenegrins in these territories. Prior to 1878, the Serbs comprised not more than one half of the population of Niš, the largest city in the region; by 1884 the Serbian share rose to 80%. According to Ottoman sources, Serbian forces also destroyed mosques in Leskovac, Prokuplje, and Vranje (Stefanović 2005).

Corresponding with Stefanović’s account, Edin Hajdarpašić (2008, p. 719) observes that “[in] most towns in Serbia, the native Muslim population was forced to leave in several waves that culminated in the 1860s and 1870s with the expulsion of nearly all ‘Turks’ and the destruction of most mosques and other sites associated with Islam or the Ottomans.”

It is important to recall that the term “Turk” in the nineteenth century did not necessarily refer to ethnic Turks but was more commonly a derogatory term for Slavic Muslims, who in converting to Islam were characterized by Serb nationalists as now being “Turkified” (from the Serbian “*poturice*”/“*poturčeni*”) (Sells 1998, p. 41). This, in turn, was an act of categorical betrayal because in the Serb nationalist discourse these Slavic Muslims were, in reality, lapsed Serbs who had betrayed their faith (Orthodoxy) and their nation and adopted the customs and religion of the invading Ottomans. As such, violence done against such apostates was a necessary part of the purification and liberation of the Serb body politic. This logic was one of the central ideological claims of the architects of the Bosnian Genocide. Ratko Mladić, for instance, declared upon the entry of Serb nationalist forces into the Srebrenica enclave in July 1995: “We gift this town to the Serb people. Finally, the moment has come, after the uprising against the *Dahijas*, for us to take revenge against the Turks” (Mujanović 2021). The *dahije* were members of the Janissary order who seized power in the Sanjak of Smederevo in 1799, in opposition to the central rule of the Porte, and were in turn toppled by local Serbian rebels during the First Serbian Uprising (1804–1813), which helped precipitate the formation of the modern Serbian state after 1815. A clear line was thus drawn by the architects of the Bosnian

Genocide and the anti-Muslim pogroms in Serbia in the nineteenth century.

In that sense, the Bosnian Genocide was conceptualized by its architects as the culmination of a process that had begun more than a century earlier. This further speaks to the necessarily systematic nature of the violence during the 1990s. Precisely because the Bosnian Genocide was the “completion” of the purification of the whole of the political space conceived of as being “rightly” under the dominion of the Serbian state – i.e., the extermination and expulsion of Muslims from the incipient “Greater Serbia” – it required the political and logistical support of the government in Belgrade.

The Serbian State and the Genocide in BiH

Given the scale of the violence, it is not possible within the confines of this discussion to provide an exhaustive accounting of each relevant atrocity site. Despite this, it is possible to provide a broad overview of the major episodes in this sustained campaign, of which the killings in Srebrenica were only the culmination. After all, by July 1995 Srebrenica had been under siege for the better part of 4 years, and every major settlement along the eastern border of BiH had been almost wholly cleansed of its non-Serb population by the VRS et al.

As Becirevic (2014) notes, the SDS regime in BiH had, in coordination with their superiors in Belgrade, laid the groundwork for the onset of the genocide already by 1991. This preparatory work involved the creation of so-called “crisis staffs” and the detailed planning of the onset of atrocities by Serb militants; handing out arms and munitions to Serb nationalist paramilitaries; identifying and seizing critical transportation nodes and corridors; and identifying Bosniak and Croat community leaders and otherwise significant individuals (such as those with military training) and targeting these in the first round of executions (a process referred to as “*eliticide*,” the purposeful destruction of social and cultural elites within a given community). The SDS regime had so effectively

laid the groundwork for the commencement of this project that when the violence was fully unleashed – in April 1992, nominally in response to BiH’s declaration of independence in March – it effectively amounted to a “blitzkrieg” (Becirevic, p. 82). Noel Malcolm, arguably the premier historian of BiH, likewise observed that it was “evident that. . .this entire joint operation of regular and paramilitary forces. . .had been prepared for quite some time” (1994, p. 237). “Using the advantages of surprise and overwhelming superiority,” he continues “the federal [Yugoslav] army and its paramilitary adjuncts carved out within the first five to six weeks an area of conquest covering more than 60% of the entire Bosnian territory” (ibid., p. 238).

The timeline and territorial spread of these operations, in turn, correspond exactly to the major killing sites of the first portion of the Bosnian Genocide. By the end of 1992, for instance, the towns and outlying areas of Bijeljina, Brčko, Banja Luka, Bosanski Brod, Foča, Prijedor, Višegrad, and Zvornik, among others, had been completely overrun by VRS forces. Their entire non-Serb populations were by that point already executed, expelled, or detained in a network of concentration camps that spanned the territory of VRS-occupied BiH. In these camps, physical and sexual violence was routine. As many as 50,000 people are estimated to have been raped or otherwise sexually assaulted during the war (Bell 2018, p. 3), the majority of which are believed to have been Bosniak women assaulted by Serb nationalist forces. The scholarly literature has centered sexual violence as a central pillar of the Bosnian Genocide, wherein the desecration and violation of women’s bodies and personal autonomy was seen by perpetrators as instrumental to destroying their community in its entirety.

Simultaneously, nearly every other major population center in the country was besieged by VRS forces, with the civilian population deliberately targeted, including the capital Sarajevo, but also Tuzla, Bihać, Mostar, Goražde, Žepa, and, of course, Srebrenica. The Siege of Sarajevo, the conduct of which resulted in a litany of crimes against humanity convictions at the ICTY for Karadžić, Mladić, as well as two leading VRS

commanders, Stanislav Galić and Dragomir Milošević, was especially significant in this respect. Due to the near-total encirclement of the capital for the duration of the war, the Bosnian government was severely limited in its capacities to mount a sustained defense of its citizens. As such, large portions of government held territory operated essentially as self-contained units, where in the Army of the Republic of BiH (ARBiH) and the civilian population could depend on little in the way of direction or aid from the government in Sarajevo. This remained the case until the tail end of 1994, at least, and continued into 1995 (most obviously in Srebrenica but also Žepa).

In the capital itself, the civilian population was exposed to continuous bombardment, targeted sniper fire, and cut off from electricity, water, food, and medical supplies except those that were occasionally brought in by the UN. According to the *Bosnian Book of Dead*, generally considered the most exhaustive account of the war’s death toll, 13,952 people were killed in the capital alone – of which 5,564 were civilians and 705 were minors (Tokača 2012, pp. 164–166). VRS forces never successfully managed to seize the city as such, but they made deep intrusions into the Grbavica neighborhood, for instance, which allowed them to freely target every major civilian installation in the city; hospitals and clinics, schools, libraries, archives, mosques, and Catholic churches were all deliberately targeted.

This campaign of “culturicide” – the destruction of culturally significant (but militarily irrelevant) objects and sites – was one of the major war aims of the VRS, and its political leadership. Much as with the aforementioned policy of eliticide the destruction of BiH’s cultural heritage, in particular segments of which were associated with the Bosniak community, aimed to destroy both this community’s history and sources of identity, as well as to eliminate all traces of multiethnic, prewar life (Nikolić 2016, p. 170). In so doing, the architects of the war and genocide in BiH aimed to not merely remake the country’s demographic and political structure but also to rewrite its history, an attempt which can be likened to the “Year Zero” concept by the Khmer

Rouge regime in Cambodia, which sought to do away with all social and cultural history prior to the assumption of power by this movement in 1975.

Postwar Genocide Denial and Triumphalism

The RS regime and its benefactors in Belgrade, ultimately, failed in erasing the Bosniak people or their culture from BiH, or appending the Bosnian state to Serbia. After the signing of the Dayton Peace Accords in 1995, the RS became one of the constitutive entities of the postwar Bosnian state, but BiH retained its independence and internationally recognized sovereignty, which it had gained in 1992. Yet the Serb nationalist project in BiH also, doubtlessly, succeeded by certain key metrics. The Bosniak community was devastated by the genocide; in large parts of Eastern and Northwestern BiH (i.e., in the RS entity) the Bosniak and broader non-Serb population declined precipitously. According to the 2013 census, the first census in the country since 1991, the Bosniak population in what is today the RS entity in effect halved, declining from 441,077 (28.0%) to 171,839 (14.0%); the Croat population declined from 144,129 (9.2%) to 29,645 (2.4%). During this same period the Serb population increased from 872,610 (55.5%) to 1,001,299 (81.5%) (Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2013). More broadly, the degree of ethnic polarization across the country has greatly increased, while sites and the extent of ethnic cohabitation has decreased (although not disappeared).

More fundamentally, it is difficult not to characterize the mere existence of the RS, even as administrative unit within BiH, as a major “accomplishment” of the genocide. This is a polity whose creation was explicitly premised on the genocidal extermination and expulsion of non-Serbs, and its postwar leadership has remained both openly hostile to the restoration of multiethnic life, and maintains an officially negationist and revisionist posture toward the facts of the genocide and the nature of the dissolution of

Yugoslavia. Returnee communities, in particular ethnic Bosniaks, are the targets of frequent harassment, intimidation, and institutional discrimination (Al Jazeera Balkans 2021); Bosniak children are prevented from referring to their language as “Bosnian” within RS schools (Radio Slobodna Evropa 2021); discrimination against non-Serbs in the social service and health care sectors is widespread (Radio Slobodna Evropa 2021); and the government spends millions of Euros every year promoting and publishing media which denies the genocide, and/or glorifies perpetrators (Rosensaft 2021).

In a society that is characterized by large-scale segregation, the RS is a virtual apartheid regime, a political space significantly less free and less democratic (including for ethnic Serbs who happen to oppose the long ruling Alliance of Independent Social Democrats [SNSD] government) than the already illiberal state within which it is embedded. The SNSD was founded in 1996 as a relatively moderate alternative to the extremist and militant SDS. The party was part of an ostensibly reformist coalition government in the late 1990s, during which time the bloc’s leader, Milorad Dodik, was at pains to emphasize his pro-Western credentials. After this government was ousted in 2000, Dodik and the SNSD reconstituted themselves as the premier opposition bloc in the region, and by 2006 they had won government outright. As late as 2007, Dodik maintained some pretense of his old reformist credentials; in 2007, for instance, he formally recognized the events in Srebrenica as genocide, and his party continued to embrace NATO membership for BiH for some years later. But already by the decade’s end the party had moved sharply to the right. In 2012 the party was ejected from the Socialist International for its embrace of ultranationalism, secessionism, and genocide denial. Today, the SNSD is, rhetorically at least, as extremist as the wartime SDS, while the SDS, ironically, has reconstituted itself as a comparatively mild-mannered nationalist-conservative bloc.

Moreover, the Bosnian Genocide has entered the collective political imagination of the Western far right, as a model for the kind of anti-Muslim pogroms that they desire in their own societies.

As noted elsewhere, “[b]y the 2010s, Bosnian Genocide denial and the valorization of Serb nationalist war criminals became a staple of Western far-right discourses – a pillar of their ideological and political lexicon like the Confederacy, the Third Reich, or the African apartheid regimes. It soon started featuring in the manifestos of far-right terrorists including those of Anders Breivik and Brenton Tarrant, among others” (Mujanović 2021).

For Bosnians and Herzegovinians themselves, especially members of the Bosniak community, it is the institutionalized and government-sponsored regime of negationism and denial in both the RS entity and contemporary Serbia that is the most immediate concern, as well as the state ambitions of these governments to again undermine or challenge the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Bosnian state. The experience of the genocide has convinced large segments of the Bosniak community that their survival as a distinct people is intrinsically tied to the preservation of the state of BiH. This is especially so because inasmuch as denial represents a form of continuing rhetorical violence against their community, the architects of the genocide clearly succeeded also in capturing the political mainstream of ethnic Serb politics across the region. Absent a major, categorical transformation within this community – of which there are only fragmented signs at present – Bosniaks and other “pro-BiH” actors in BiH (i.e., the broad spectrum of political parties and actors who, generally, are advocates of BiH’s sovereignty and territorial integrity but are also pro-EU, pro-NATO, and advocates for liberal-democratic constitutional reforms of the existing Dayton-era constitution) will necessarily feel that that they and their community remain targets of a committed and militant revanchist project.

Summary

The Bosnian Genocide was the systematic campaign of extermination and expulsions of non-Serbs, and Bosniaks in particular, conducted by Serbia’s proxy forces in BiH during the Bosnian War. While to date only the July 1995 killings in Srebrenica have formally been characterized as

genocide by the ICTY, the scholarly, and increasingly political, consensus considers the entirety of the “Greater Serbia” project in BiH as part of one, singular, genocide. Despite this, revisionist and negationist accounts remain mainstream in Serbia and the RS entity in BiH, and much of the political agenda which animated the killings in the first place remains intact within the broader Serb political establishment.

Cross-References

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Cameroon and the Anglophone Crisis

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Synonyms

[Civil War](#); [Conflict](#); [Identity and Conflict](#); [Marginalization](#); [Nationalism](#)

Description

Decades after independence, Cameroon, once divided between the British and the French during the colonial period, continues to experience sustained conflicts between its Francophone and Anglophone citizens. The government has failed

to reconcile the sharp differences coined around linguistic identities inherited from the former colonial powers. While this crisis threatens to split the country, it has received little attention from scholars and peace advocates. This entry traces the historical roots of the conflict and discusses the role of social media in spreading identity consciousness, and how slow response by international actors has prolonged the crisis. The entry identifies government failure in post-independence state/nation building as being a catalyst to the protracted conflict. The entry provides recommendations encouraging swift action to address the deep-rooted grievances, proactive measures to avert a possible crisis in the future, and involvement of regional or international actors to pool resources needed to promote sustainable peace.

Introduction

Since the end of World War 2, the nature of conflict and war has greatly transformed. Whereas there is a significant drop in interstate conflicts, intrastate conflicts have drastically increased. Some of these conflicts have been due to causes such as religious intolerance, ethnicity, struggle for political power, secession, terrorism, and the struggle over scarce natural resources (Duffield 2014; Nyadera and Bincof 2019; Kaldor 2005).

The manner in which these conflicts are fought has often increased time frames for conflict resolution and resulted in extensive loss of human life and resources. While conflicts have been widespread across the globe, Africa has been host to some of the most vicious conflicts with some spanning decades (Nyadera 2018; Kacowicz 1997; Deng 1996). Indeed, postcolonial African states continue to experience the challenges of establishing single national identities largely due to the diverse nature of African societies and their colonial heritage that either exploited these differences or attempted to change the indigenous cultural identities. In Cameroon, competing colonial interests by the British and the French left legacies that continue to impact the country for more than a century later.

Cameroon is located in Central Africa and neighbors Central African Republic to the east, Chad (northeast), Republic of the Congo (southeast), Equatorial Guinea and Gabon to the South, and Nigeria (west). Having become independent in 1960, Cameroon marked its 59th anniversary as a republic in 2019. However, this has been arguably the most volatile periods for the country that continues to be deeply entrenched in decades of domestic conflict emerging from colonial era disagreements and sentiments. These disagreements are manifested in the ongoing Anglophone conflict that has further been fuelled by ethnicity and religious intolerance.

Cameroon was founded under the sphere of influence of the Germans in 1884 before they were displaced by a military coalition of the British, Belgians, and the French during World War I in 1919 (Friedrichsmeyer et al. 1998). This led to the consequent subdivision of Cameroon into regions under the protectorate of both England and France. When the League of Nations was established as the new international organization among other mandates to guarantee world peace, Cameroon was formally divided to France and Britain with each European power controlling four-fifths and one-fifth of the Cameroonian territory respectively (Dupraz 2019: 644). The region under British influence included a long stretch near the eastern Nigerian border that the British referred to as Northern and Southern Cameroon.

After the collapse of the League of Nations following its failure to prevent World War I, Cameroon reverted to a United Nations trust territory in 1946 (Jones 1965; Gardinier 1978) but still under the sphere of influence of the French and British. While both colonial powers were reluctant to give up their colonial territories, the anticolonial sentiments blowing across Africa and the new constraints put by the UN Charter regarding self-determination of former colonies led to the establishment of an autonomous state of French Cameroon in 1956. Four years later in 1960, the Republic of Cameroon acquired full independence under the presidency of Ahmadou Ahidjo (Fanso 1999: 285). While the British had merged their colonial sphere of influence in Cameroon (northwest and southwest Cameroon) to Nigeria due to administrative purposes (Ngo 1987: 245), United Nations arranged a referendum in the north-western and south-western regions to decide whether they preferred a political union with the Republic of Cameroon.

Whereas the Southwesterners voted in favor of such a union, the Northwesterners rejected the vote in favor of a merger with Nigeria (Mehler 2014: 53). Consequently, the new Federal Republic of Cameroon constituted two states including the former French zone (Cameroon Oriental) and Cameroon Occidental that was under the British influence.

Soon after independence, the government began to marginalize the federalist Anglophone political class and its nationalist movement that was being spearheaded by the *Union des Populations du Cameroun* (UPC) by abolishing party politics. The *Union Nationale Camerounaise* (UNC) that was established in 1966 became the sole entity to take charge of all organized social and political affairs (Bayart 1973: 132). The regime of President Ahmadou further consolidated power in 1972 by abolishing all federal states and cutting down on the powers of the subnational states (Eyoh 2004: 99). Following radical antidemocratic changes in the political system, the state was officially renamed as the Republic of Cameroon, and this marked the beginning of the Anglophone discontentment in the new republic.

The Colonial Roots of Anglophone Cameroon Conflict

The tensions experienced in the Anglophone occupied regions in Cameroon emerged from an intricate and highly contested process of decolonization in Cameroon beginning from the 1950s to 1960s when the country gained independence. Unfortunately for British Southern Cameroon, independence meant that they either accept joining Nigeria (integration) or Cameroon (reunification), without the right of gaining independence. This option was operationalized during UN-imposed plebiscite in February 11, 1961, it established the basis of the Union between the two Cameroons. According to Konings (2005), the decision by Southern Cameroonians to vote in favor of establishing a union with the French Cameroon during the 1961 plebiscite was because of the prevailing discontentment of the people toward the British indirect administrative system and the influence of Nigerians in the region.

The British had serious oversight for failing to take into consideration the territorial boundaries between Nigeria that was under their complete sphere of influence and Cameroon. This led to conflicts of interests between Nigerians and Southern Cameroonians as it facilitated the dominant Igbo tribe from Nigeria to easily migrate into Southern Cameroon, develop enterprises, and impose themselves as the key actors in various sectors of the economy through trading in goods such as palm oil and transportation (Delancey 1974). By the 1950s, the Igbo from Nigeria were the leading economic actors in towns such as Kumba, Tiko, and Limbe, and worked in important institutions such as the Cameroon Development Cooperation (Konings 2005). Additionally, they constituted approximately 30% of the total population in Southern Cameroon and 80% of the entire work force in the region.

The increasing domination by the Igbo from Nigeria led to the emergence of marginalization sentiments by indigenous Southern Cameroonians who accused the British administration in Nigeria for being behind their economic and political marginalization (Konings 2005: 8). They

demanded for more political representation in the Nigerian administration that seemed a more important colony to the British and succeeded in this endeavor by attaining regional status in the Nigerian Federation even though the autonomy was limited. The favoritism of Nigeria by the British at the expense of the Southern Cameroonians established an Anglophone Cameroon nationalistic consciousness that was exemplified by their decision to vote in favor of forming a union with the French Cameroon as a possible means to regain their sovereignty in 1961 (Tiewa and Vudo 2015). Northern Cameroon however voted to remain with Nigeria. While this was a strategic move at the time, it has proven to be a precursor of today's Anglophone problems in Cameroon.

What had appeared to be a big success for the Southern Anglophone Cameroon toward increasing their sovereignty turned out to be a "trap" because their emancipation for federalism did not account for their differences of cultural identity that was more oriented with the English. Instead, this merger became a transitional process in which the region became integrated into a highly centralized unitary state where they became a minority (Ebune 1992). The failure to grant independence to Southern Cameroon and a forced plebiscite to choose whether to either join Nigeria or French Cameroon solidified grounds for further marginalization of the Anglophone Cameroonians. This gradually established a strong sense of Anglophone consciousness; sentiments of being economically, culturally, and politically marginalized; and a sense of being dominated by the Francophone-hegemonic state. According to a column published in the *East Oregonian* (6th June 2010), these sentiments and the recognition of the cultural dichotomy between Anglophone and Francophone Cameroon continues to exist and has often led to tensions. Fanso (2017) argues that the benchmark for finding a solution as claimed by the Southern Cameroonians has therefore been pegged to the attainment of autonomy for their own state, Ambazonia, or the implementation of a federalism system of governance as envisioned during independence.

The Reemergence of the Anglophonic Consciousness After Independence

The popular sentiment among Southern Cameroonians led by the proindependence nationalists maintains that the decolonization process did not offer them a meaningful opportunity to determine their destiny through independence. This is because the federal arrangement that was provided for during independence was unconstitutionally abolished by the Francophone-dominated central government (Konings and Nyamnjoh 1997: 196). Anglophone Cameroonians therefore developed the feeling of being marginalized not only economically but also in other key sectors of the society such as education and in judicial processes. Moreover, despite the substantive oil reserves that were discovered in the regions dominated by the Anglophone Cameroonians, they did not benefit from the natural resource.

The 1990s became a significant time frame in as far as the Anglophone conflict in Cameroon is concerned. While Africa was experiencing the wind of political liberalization in the 1990s, Cameroon was not left behind. Specifically, the region dominated by Anglophone Cameroonians witnessed the emergence of political parties and movements that became the avenues through which a rejuvenated push for national independence of the region was advanced. In 1990, the Social Democratic Party was established in the Anglophone region and received significant support of 86.3% in Northwest and 51.6% in Southwest during the 1992 presidential elections (Chereji and Lohkoko 2012: 14). Even though the party did not register overall presidential electoral vote victory that declared in favor of the CPDM, the Anglophone regions contested the results as having been rigged (Gwaibi 2018: 12).

The violent protests led to the declaration of a state of emergency by President Paul Biya in 1992 for 3 months with the opposition leaders from the Anglophone areas placed under house surveillance (*Cameroon Tribune*, 26 October 1992). While these acts were condemned by USA, Germany, and European Union with threats of cutting down foreign aid, France continued to provide assistance to the Biya regime to safeguard French

interests in Cameroon. According to Konings (1997), this period also saw the emergence of radical groups such as the Ambazonia movement that pushed for secession, and other groups such as the All Anglophone Congress (AAC) and the Cameroon Anglophone Movement (CAM) that pushed for federalism (Nkwi and Nyamnjoh 2011: 295).

While the popularity of the Social Democratic Party was dwindling among the Anglophone Cameroonians because it had evolved into a national party drawing support even among the Francophone Cameroonians, new groups mounted pressure for political autonomy (Konings and Nyamnjoh 1997: 216). These other political formations such as the Ambazonia movement and the Cameroon Anglophone Movement organized demonstrations and other forms of civil disobedience against the Francophone-dominated central government. These included boycott of national days of celebrations such as the national feast day on 20th May which they declared as a day of mourning and shame (Nkwi and Nyamnjoh 2011: 217). Instead they rallied the Anglophone Cameroonians to celebrate the “day of independence” on 1st October and the “day of the plebiscite” on the 11th February.

It is widely argued that the reemergence of the Anglophone consciousness after independence is influenced by four fundamental issues that have remained unsolved. These include communal stratification, economic exploitation, political subordination, and a clash of cultural identity.

- (i) The communal stratification that emerged from the partition of Cameroon into culturally distinctive administrative territories after independence has only acted to further deepen the existing differences. While the Anglophone regions were allocated two political representative territories, the centralization of power and violation of constitutional provisions have only increased the desire for the region to actively demand for secession. According to Ladson-Billings (1995), this communal stratification only reminds the Anglophones of their identity and emphasizes their perceptions of being

different from the Francophones. Indeed, it is these feelings of indifference that this entry argues have solidified the collective Anglophonic consciousness.

- (ii) Economic marginalization continues to be a significant driving factor for the call to secession of Ambazonia. The residents of Anglophone Cameroon singled out the absence of significant development projects in the region such as good schools, hospitals, accessible roads, or market centers despite the region being a key contributor to the Cameroonian economy through the oil wells under government control in their region. The SONARA oil refinery with an estimated annual output of 2.1 million tonnes of crude oil (Reuters 2019) has been cited by Anglophone Cameroonians as one among other state-owned companies in which they are marginalized in terms of employment. Another source of economic grievance is imbalance in allocation of opportunities. According to Chereji and Lohkoko (2012), high-ranking officials in the corporation are from Francophone regions while Anglophones have relegated to lower employment cadres to work as security guards and drivers. Additionally, in another major factory called the CDC Banana Plantation in Tiko, the top management is drawn entirely from the Francophone regions while the Anglophone Cameroonians are relegated to work as manual laborers with low remuneration and very poor working conditions (Chereji and Lohkoko, 2012). In other parts of the country, Anglophones also cite very low chances to gain employment as was witnessed in 2011 when the graduate recruitment program targeting 25,000 graduates in Cameroon only absorbed 1000 Anglophones in low clerical positions.
- (iii) Political subordination underlies the continued struggle for secession by Ambazonia. Having been dominated by the British during the colonial times and the Francophone Cameroonians after independence, the Anglophones continue to feel colonized in

their own homeland. The successive regimes of Cameroon reneged on the reunification agreement that granted some degree of political autonomy to the Anglophones through the federal system. When Paul Biya took over power in 1982, all influential administrative positions in the national government were reserved for the Francophone Cameroonians. According to Takougang (1993), the President, Speaker of the National Assembly, Minister for Justice and Legal Affairs, Keeper of the Seal, the Chief Justice, and the Minister for Finance were all Francophone Cameroonians.

- (iv) Clash of cultural identity also plays a significant role in fuelling the secessionist consciousness by the Anglophone Cameroonians. According to Reader (2009: 31), identity can lead to conflict when there is pursuit of competing needs and values within different groups or identities. Nfor (2000) and Anyangwe (2014) argue that residents of Cameroon Anglophone have protested against the attempt by the central government to marginalize their language and culture. They pointed out government measures such as transformation of the General Certificate of Education Board into a parasitical with its management exclusively appointed by the presidency; exclusive use of French language in public offices, whereas the country is bilingual.

Contemporary Manifestations of the Anglophone Conflict

Since 2016, the Anglophone conflict has significantly increased as more Anglophone movements whether those that support decentralization of power (federalism) or proindependence have taken up arms through violence or petitioning of international and regional organizations such as the United Nations and the African Union. Before the current spate of violence characterized by deaths, bloodshed, and destruction of properties, there were a series of events that fuelled transition into the current state of affairs. Foremost, in 2016,

thousands of teachers and lawyers in the Anglophone regions took to the streets to protest what they termed as a systematic marginalization by the Cameroon government. Among many other claims, these groups of protesting lawyers and teachers accused the government of deploying jurists who were only conversant with French civil laws and not the common law that applied to the Anglophone regions. Government teachers deployed to the Anglophone regions were also faulted for not being able to speak in English.

On the 21st November 2016, a local radio newscaster called Mancho in Bamenda (an Anglophone city) sparked a movement popularly referred to as the Coffin Revolution when he went to one of the busiest roundabouts in the city and stood inside a coffin to castigate the Cameroonian government (*Voice of Africa*, 26 May 2018). Mancho rebuked the government for the low structural and economic development in the city and declared his willingness to die protesting against the systematic cultural and economic marginalization on the Anglophone Cameroonians. This event was soon followed by another protest by students from the University of Buea in the Anglophone region on the 28th November 2016. Key among their grievances were the failure of the government to remit education grants for the final-year students and the insistence of the university administration that all students must pay a fee to check their results from the university's online portal system.

The extent of frustrations by a large section of the Anglophone Cameroon regarding their socio-cultural, political, and economic marginalization by the hegemonic Francophone-dominated government of Cameroon was captured in a speech delivered by Joseph Wirba to the parliament on 13th December 2016. While highlighting the plights of Anglophone Cameroon that included allegations of sexual violence such as rape by security forces, police brutality on students, and excessive use of force on protesters, he said:

Our ancestors and forefathers trusted you to go into a gentleman's agreement. That two people who consider themselves brothers could go to live together. If this is what you show us after 55 years, then those who are saying that we should

break Cameroon are right. They are correct! The people of West Cameroon cannot be your slaves. The people of West Cameroon, are not, you did not conquer them in war. When injustice becomes law, resistance becomes a duty.

The significance of these events in understanding how the conflict has transformed is that the government responded in a manner that has been criticized as having been excessive and provocative to the Anglophone Cameroonians. In the protests by students, lawyers, and teachers, the government cracked down heavily on the protesters. Videos emerging on several social media accounts such as Twitter and Facebook document how police among other illegitimate acts, beat up students ruthlessly, broke into students' residential buildings, forced students to roll in mud, and arrested and humiliated students of either gender. More than 100 students arrested during protests claimed to have been tortured and detained in dehumanizing conditions (Tembon 2018: 8–9). The demonstrating Anglophone lawyers also claimed to have been subjected to brutal treatment and humiliation including the confiscation of their professional attires such as gowns and wigs by the security forces.

These events organized by Anglophone Cameroonians to show their defiance to the francophone-dominated central government and the response of the government through brutal force led to the open declaration of independence on 1st October 2017. In typical fashion, the government responded, and a reportedly 122 Anglophone Cameroonians who were celebrating the declaration of independence in the region were killed by government security forces (BBC Africa 2017; International Crisis Group 2017). The Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Africa (2018) documents that Anglophone Cameroonians were labeled "dogs" and that the military resorted to arbitrary arrests including people who were conducting church services. Moreover, CHRDA reports that the security forces broke into people's homes and shot young men on their feet. This entry argues that it is these violations of universal human rights and freedoms by the government that prompted the call to arms since 2017 of the Anglophone regions as a means of self-defense

against the indiscriminate torture, murder, arson of villages, and rape of women and young girls. While the Anglophone militias also attacked and killed 22 government forces in 2018, the conflict was declared formal confrontation from 30th November 2017 (International Crisis Group 2018).

Since the new phase of the conflict began in 2017, rebels in Anglophone regions continue to engage military forces, and both sides have been accused of committing serious crimes against civilians. These include the closure of schools in Anglophone regions, burning down of villages, and killing of both civilians and military forces. According to a report by the International Crisis Group (2019), the conflict has already claimed more than 3,000 human lives and led to the displacement of approximately half a million people in Cameroon and another 40,000 who have been compelled to flee to neighboring Nigeria. Moreover, over 700,000 children have been denied the right to access education due to either closure of schools or through imposed school boycotts. The need for more urgent humanitarian assistance has since increased significantly in the region.

On 20th August 2019, the government sentenced ten leading leaders of the separatist Anglophone movements to life in prison and imposed a lock down for any strike forcing an indefinite closure of schools in the region. Several new armed groups such as the Ambaland Forces, the Vipers, the Tigers, Ambazonia Defence Forces, and the Southern Cameroonians Defence Forces have emerged to counter government military forces. Increasingly, these groups have become more organized and have started acquiring advanced weapons. Moreover, they have adopted new warfare tactics such as kidnapping for ransom and targeting civilians that are suspected to be supporting the Francophone government.

The African Development Bank (AFDB 2019) has also raised concerns regarding the impact of the conflict that continues to deteriorate further. The economy of Cameroon is facing slow growth compared to the other states in the continent. More specifically, economic activities have dropped as more farmers are abandoning their homes for safer places in the southwest and

northwest regions that are responsible for the production of 60% of all the Cocoa produced annually. These sorts of negative production trends are expected to continue as long as finding a solution for the conflict continues to remain evasive. Besides cocoa, other sectors of the economy dependent on production from the Anglophone region such as oil, timber, and palm exports are likely to continue experiencing negative growth in production. Global Risk (2019) puts the number of planned infrastructure construction projects numbering over 500 at risk of being delayed indefinitely.

Role of Social Media in the Anglophone Conflict

The internet has not only changed the way we relate to people today and conduct our businesses, but rather it has evolved to become a key component in how conflicts and wars are waged today. According to Ngange and Tchewo (2017), the proliferation of mobile phone technology has greatly impacted on information gathering and dissemination. Allan (2013) argues that this has enabled ordinary citizens to hijack the traditional role of journalist, as they are now able to spontaneously report incidents as they happen through the many social media platforms available today.

The use of social media has become a key component in the Anglophone conflict. This is because most Anglophone Cameroonians both at home and abroad have used social media to advance political discussions regarding the conflict; discuss the historical contexts of the conflict; name different phases of the conflicts such as “the coffin revolution”; expose human rights violations and ongoing violence; call for international intervention; and, the government response to the conflict. Platforms such as Facebook have seen the establishment of several groups attracting thousands of members on the Anglophone conflict.

Social media has also provided a platform through which the Anglophone diaspora based in countries such as Germany, England, South Africa, USA, and Belgium have launched group

discussions that have influenced and led millions of Anglophone Cameroonians into obedience or disobedience of the central government. Many of the online activists continue to call for secession and retaliation against the government security forces whom they accuse of genocide against the Anglophones. Moreover, the diaspora groups have been using social media platforms to galvanize other Anglophone Cameroonians to support the armed separatists using financial donations through campaigns such as “Adopt a Freedom Fighter” for a monthly minimum of \$75 or the “Feed the Nchang Shoe Boys” (WACC 2019).

The impact of social media in the conflict is recognized by the central government of Cameroon that, in light of the graphic social media posts that documented various acts of violence, decided to completely cut off internet access in Anglophone regions to curb the spread of information for periods over 3 months. This entry argues that even though the government attempted to curb the spread of information through shutting down the internet, such policies in the long run prove ineffective. This is because limiting access to social media does not prevent those in the diaspora as well as those in Francophone areas from posting any information they desire. Secondly, such policies have negative economic impacts for business that are dependent on internet for transactional purposes. Thirdly, Cameroon being a signatory to the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and other several conventions acted against its sovereign commitment to protect human rights and freedoms.

While the extent to which social media is influencing the conflict is not yet comprehensive enough and requires further research, this entry observes that social media platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, and YouTube have been exploited to amplify violence. The failure by the state to ensure justice for those that have been documented perpetrating violence against civilians, the state, and separatist groups has facilitated the emergence of a culture of retaliatory violence and thereby fuelling insecurity and conflict in the region. However, faced with an autocratic regime in Cameroon, social media remains

the most effective avenue through which acts of violence, social exclusion, and economic marginalization can be documented by the Anglophones as well as for attracting international attention to the plight of the region.

Response by International Community

The international atmosphere in the last decade and a half has been one characterized by uncertainty. While leading global powers have continued to be preoccupied by the pursuit of national security interests, there has been a shift in domestic politics. Far-right and far-left parties have emerged and foreign policies of countries to a large extent have shifted significantly to one that is focused on national instead of collective global peace and security. Moreover, the decade has also witnessed other massive security issues such as the Syrian conflict that displaced more than five million, South Sudan civil conflict, the threat of ISIS, and Boko Haram and Al-Shaabab terrorist groups. The nature of these conflicts that claimed hundreds of thousands of lives therefore sidelines other conflicts such as the Anglophone conflict that has been ongoing for several decades leading to minimal international attention until the conflict began escalating in 2017.

Due to the fact that this conflict has a colonial background, members of the Anglophone diaspora in the UK have often petitioned the British government to take a lead in resolving the conflict due to its status as a former colonial power of the region and purposely a guarantor of peace and security to the Anglophone Cameroonians. However, according to a briefing report to the House of Commons (2019), successive administrations in the UK have called for dialogue but stayed away from providing a stand on the ideal institutional arrangement that can address the concerns of both Anglophone and Francophone Cameroon. While the UK has claimed its willingness to mediate in the conflict, they have insisted that the invitation has to come from the government of Cameroon. When the UK’s Minister for Africa visited Cameroon between 14th

and 16th February 2018 after the reelection of Paul Biya, he said:

The UK congratulates President Paul Biya on his reelection. We remain deeply concerned about the deteriorating situation in the Anglophone regions, which continue to suffer from high levels of violence and human rights abuses perpetrated by both security forces and armed separatists.

The UK calls on the Government of Cameroon to now take urgent action to address the crisis in the Anglophone regions. We hope that President Biya will reach out to all sections of Cameroonian society and work to build confidence and trust. It is crucial for all parties to engage in a peaceful and structured process leading to constitutional reforms, as previously set out by the President, and avoid excessive use of force.

The UK is concerned at the worsening humanitarian situation in the Anglophone regions and the impact this is having on the lives of ordinary people. We call on all parties to grant full and unhindered humanitarian access to the affected population. The UK will continue to work alongside the international community to encourage and support efforts to resolve the Anglophone crisis. It is vital that all parties now work together to secure a peaceful future for all Cameroonians. (UK Government 2018).

The United States has also increasingly issued out public statements including condemning the government of Cameroon for alleged “targeted killings” and violation of human rights and freedoms of the people in Anglophone Cameroon. Additionally, the US Ambassador to Cameroon condemned extreme violence by the separatists (Reuters, 18th May 2018). In 2019, the United States that has been providing support to the Cameroonian government in the fight against Boko Haram Terrorist group announced the cancellation of the military aid amounting to \$17 million (*New York Times*, 7th February 2019). Additionally, the US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Tibor Nagy made calls for the release of political prisoners and urged both the separatists and the government to find an amicable solution to the conflict.

Other countries such as Canada and Germany have also condemned the separatists and security forces for use of violence and called for dialogue. The German national assembly (Bundestag) has

held several discussions with some deputies calling for the suspension of economic ties should there be further violations of human rights and freedoms of Anglophone regions (German Parliament, 27 June 2018). France which has a stronger clout on the Cameroon government and perhaps has been supporting the government’s approach has also advocated for a political solution and encouraged the convention of Anglophone General Conference. However, according to Crisis Group (2018), France privately supports decentralization (federalism) as the political solution to the Anglophone conflict. Moreover, France presents itself as a protector to the Cameroonian government against pressure from the international community, and this has enabled it to acquire some concessions such as the release of the 289 Anglophone detainees in November 2018 (Crisis Group 2019).

On the multilateral front, the United Nations has stressed the need for both the government and the separatists to ensure that there is uninterrupted access to regions that are in need of humanitarian assistance, and that both sides come to an amicable agreement that will bring to a stop the ongoing conflict. Notably, the Anglophone conflict is yet to be given the adequate attention by the international body. Efforts by the Netherlands and Norway to introduce it as an agenda in the Security Council has often faced challenges failing to garner the minimum votes needed (9/15). China, Russia, France, Ethiopia, Equatorial Guinea, and Cote d’Ivoire voted against it (Crisis Group, June 2018). The African Union has not so far put adequate pressure on Cameroon for the resolution of the conflict that is worsening further and has remained rather discreet. The African Commission of Human and People’s Rights has only issued statements condemning the government and separatist groups for the human rights violations without any concrete measures to follow-up. Egypt, which holds the chairmanship of the African Union, has reiterated that it is not the responsibility of the African Union to be engaged in the internal affairs of states. The European Union on the other hand despite being the key trading partner and contributor of foreign aid has been unable

to mediate in the conflict decisively. Nonetheless, the community has taken measures including a vote by the European parliament in April 2019 calling for the release of political detainees and the opposition leader Maurice Kamto and that a peaceful solution to the conflict be pursued (European Parliament, 18 April 2019).

Summary

In conclusion, the continued delays in resolving the conflict has already cost thousands of human lives, displaced hundreds of thousands, slowed economic growth, and likely to increase instability in the region. The window for resolving the conflict is narrowing, and this allows the status quo to consolidate their positions and hard-line stances toward the conflict. This will continue to affect the larger Central African region that links up with the insecure Sahel corridor in West Africa where Boko Haram operates alongside other jihadist terrorist organizations.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Assessment of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding: Utopia and Reality](#)
- ▶ [Search for Peace, the](#)
- ▶ [Secession and Self-Determination](#)

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Capitalist Peace

- ▶ [Liberal Peace in Peace Operations](#)

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Census Politics in Deeply Divided Societies

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Definition

Population censuses are operations conducted by states to count and collect statistical information on all persons living in a given territory. Typically undertaken once every 10 years, censuses play a number of important roles in the facilitation of the administration of a state, including in the allocation of funding to regional governments and the delimitation of electoral districts. They also provide information that is used for the planning of infrastructure and service provision, and form the “backbone” of national statistical systems, allowing for the construction of sample frames that ensure that surveys are representative.

In deeply divided societies, the census can be the site of significant mobilization or contestation. The categories of ethnicity, race, nationality, religion, or language that are employed in censuses confer recognition on groups and may contribute to the construction of identities. Since the resources and political power available to groups can in many post-conflict contexts depend on population shares, the census becomes a key institution in intergroup relations or conflict. In extreme cases, censuses may be boycotted or their results contested by majority or minority groups. While they are national exercises, the content and conduct of censuses are guided by international principles and guidelines. In many developing and post-conflict states, donor agencies and international organizations provide financial and technical support to censuses, which are necessary elements of state-building processes.

Introduction

Censuses are a key source of data for academics in a broad range of social sciences, but they have

also been the *subject* of research by historians, anthropologists, and political scientists – among others – who have sought to understand the social and political dynamics of processes of census-taking. Much of this research has focused on the role that the inclusion of questions about ethnicity and race in censuses has played in the social construction of ethnic and racial identities, and this research is particularly relevant to the context of census-taking in deeply divided societies. In such contexts, the census is often the subject of political mobilization, which is motivated by both instrumental and symbolic factors.

In the following discussion, after a brief discussion of the history of purposes of census-taking, the chapter outlines five key issues relevant to censuses in deeply divided societies. First, it provides an overview of debates about the role of censuses in the construction of ethnic and other group identities. It then considers instrumental and symbolic motives for political mobilization around the census, focusing specifically on the influence of power-sharing institutions and questions of group recognition. The chapter then moves the focus away from census-taking as a national exercise by considering the role of international actors in governing the conduct of, and supporting, censuses. The survey of key issues rounds out by highlighting an aspect of the census in post-conflict societies that has so far received little scholarly attention: its role in processes of state-building.

Historical Background

The emergence of the periodic population census as it would be recognized today dates to the late eighteenth century. Prior to this, censuses had been taken since ancient times, but they tended only to count adult men, and did so for assessing military strength or for purposes of taxation (Anderson 2015). It was only with the emergence of the modern state that whole-population counts became common, with European states conducting them both at home and in their colonies. The regular enumeration of national populations became more common into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and population

censuses are now undertaken in some form by the vast majority of states.

These censuses are typically undertaken once every 10 years, although some states do so at shorter intervals. At its most basic, the census aims to result in the production of a reliable measure of the size of the country's total population on a given date. National censuses vary in the depth of socioeconomic information that they collect. At a minimum, census forms ask for information about sex, age, and other basic demographic characteristics. They typically also ask questions about occupation, educational status, and economic activity. Individual answers to census questions are treated confidentially, but cross-tabulations of the aggregated results are published, and anonymized data is made available to researchers following the processing of the census forms.

As well as being valuable for the planning of government policy and for research in its own right, census data is also used to provide the sampling frame for surveys that take place between census dates. In order for these surveys to be representative of the total population or of specific subgroups within it, knowledge of the characteristics of the total population is required, and this can only be acquired through a census of some form. Census data also serves administrative functions, such as the determination and adjustment of electoral district boundaries.

In some states, traditional censuses based on periodic enumeration of the population have been replaced with register-based censuses or the combination of data from administrative and statistical sources (Baffour et al. 2013). Countries that have made or are making this transition tend to be highly developed, with high-quality administrative data on their populations, however, and in most developing and many developed countries, a traditional census remains the preferred option.

Key Issues

Censuses and Identity Construction

Lieberman and Singh (2017) find that the majority of states enumerate at least one “ethnic”

cleavage (which they define to include identities based on race, ethnicity, tribe, language, religion, caste, or indigeneity) in their national census. Their analysis suggests that in the 2000s, around two thirds of states enumerated at least one cleavage, with the proportion being highest in sub-Saharan Africa.

Research on the census, particularly in colonial settings, has advanced the idea that when census-takers include questions about ethnicity or race, rather than simply enumerating preexisting identities, they often contribute to process of social construction of those identities. Benedict Anderson, for instance, drawing on Hirschman's (1987) work on censuses of present-day Malaysia and its colonial predecessors, argues that the identities enumerated by Dutch census-takers, “imagined by the (confusedly) classifying mind of the colonial state, still awaited a reification which imperial administrative penetration would soon make possible” (1991: 165). James C. Scott, meanwhile, argues that “categories that may have begun as the artificial inventions of cadastral surveyors, census takers, judges, or policy officers can end by becoming categories that organize people's daily experience precisely because they are embedded in state-created institutions that structure that experience” (1998: 82–83).

The role of the census in identity construction cannot be reduced simply to the imposition (intentionally or otherwise) of identities by the state, however (Urla 1993). Censuses also provide an opportunity for ethnic entrepreneurs to have their preferred identity categories recognized, either through influencing the design of the classification system employed by statistical agencies or through attempting to shape how citizens respond to questions about their identity. Cohn (1987: 250) cites the example of a leaflet distributed in Lahore in 1931, instructing members of the Arya Samaj movement how they should respond to the religion, sect, caste, race, and language questions of the British colonial census. In his study of censuses in the post-Yugoslav states, meanwhile, Bieber argues that “the census constitutes a site where the state, citizens, and groups representing majorities and minorities negotiate national identities” (2015: 873). Lieberman and Singh's (2017) analysis suggests that enumeration

of identity categories in the census increases the salience of those identities, and is associated with the onset of ethnic conflict – although they caution against drawing policy recommendations from this association.

Rights and Power Sharing

As Kertzer and Arel note, “[s]ince census politics is expressed in numbers, the pursuit of entitlement translates into a contest for achieving the ‘right’ numbers” (2002: 30). As a result, in societies that are already deeply politically divided along national, ethnic, racial, religious, or linguistic lines, the census can often resemble an election (Horowitz 1985: 196). In such contexts, there is a clear instrumental rationale for group mobilization around the census, since entitlements are often attached to population shares. This is most obviously the case in societies that are governed by power-sharing or “consociational” political institutions. As Visoka and Gjevori note, “[t]he power-sharing nature of post-conflict and divided societies makes censuses an important measure for arranging the political representation of minorities in institutions and consequently signifies the political influence of each ethnic group” (2013: 484).

The most obvious case illustrating the links between the census and power sharing is the Lebanese one. Lebanon’s National Pact of 1943 established a system of consociational power sharing, whereby Christians and Muslims would be represented in government, parliament, and the civil service in a ratio of six to five, based on the results of the 1932 census (Maktabi 1999). The 1989 Taif Agreement, which ended the Lebanese Civil War, modified this Christian-Muslim ratio to 1:1, but it is widely understood that the Muslim population of the country now significantly exceeds the Christian population. However, the implications that any new census would have for the power-sharing formula mean that Lebanon is one of the few states in the world not to conduct a periodic population count – the 1932 census remaining the last to be undertaken (Faour 2007). While the Lebanese example might be an extreme one, concerns over the implications of updated statistics on the ethnic and regional

composition of the population have also resulted in delays to census-taking in other states, such as Pakistan (Weiss 1999).

A.J. Christopher highlights a link between population shares and political representation existing in another case: that of Mauritius prior to the 1983 census. The country’s post-independence constitution, in addition to the 62 constituency seats, reserved eight parliamentary seats for four communities – Hindus, Muslim, Sino-Mauritian, and the remaining “General Population” – in proportion to their population shares from the census. According to Christopher, “[i]nvariably the linking of the census to the constitutional representation of ethnic groups in Parliament involved its politicization,” and when a new government was elected in 1982, promising to forge a common national identity, the community question was removed from the census and the constitution was amended so that the 1972 census would be retained as the basis for communal representation (1992: 59).

The literature has also demonstrated that actual or perceived links between population shares and representation in power-sharing institutions can result in mobilization campaigns around the census. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Dayton Agreement that ended the Bosnian war in 1995 introduced a constitution establishing a system of power sharing that guarantees representation of three constitutionally recognized “constituent peoples” – Bosniaks, Serbs, and Croats – and devolved significant power to two federal entities. The country’s first census since the end of the war was held in 2013, and in many ways resembled an election. Politicians and civil society organizations associated with each of the three constituent peoples engaged in campaigns to encourage their constituents to answer questions on ethnicity, religion and language in a coherent, structured way, to maximize their share in the population statistics (Bieber 2015). These campaigns were motivated in part by concerns that if a significant proportion of the population opted out of ethnic identification, then the guaranteed representation of the three groups through consociational power sharing might be imperiled. Civic groups, meanwhile, campaigned in favor of rejecting ethnic

identification and instead adopting a common “Bosnian” identity – in part as a strategy to generate pressure for constitutional reforms that would emphasize individual rather than group rights (Cooley 2019). Ethnic entrepreneurs also encouraged members of the diaspora still owning property in the country to return to be counted in the census, in order to further boost group population numbers. Officials and politicians in the Republika Srpska entity have highlighted the presence of nonresidents in the census as a reason for their rejection of the census results published by the state-level statistics agency.

Censuses are also linked to thresholds for the realization of certain forms of group rights, such as the recognition of language rights at the national or local level. In Macedonia, for example, according to the decentralization provisions introduced by the Ohrid Framework Agreement of 2001, minority languages are recognized where they are spoken by at least 20% of a local population. The census therefore has consequences for the provision of services, such as the delivery of education in minority languages. As a result, the taking of censuses in the country has become highly politicized, and indeed the 2011 census was abandoned due to political disagreements after enumeration had started. As in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the question of whether to enumerate Macedonian citizens living overseas has been a consistent point of contention (Daskalovski 2013).

Controversy about the census in deeply divided societies does not always center on the questions they ask about identity. The relative population shares of the regions that make up a state (which might correlate with identity group distribution where those groups are spatially concentrated) can also be the source of contention. The Comprehensive Peace Agreement agreed in Sudan in 2005 specified that the two parties to the agreement would be allocated set proportions of seats in the country’s parliament, but that representation of the North and South would be revised in light of the results of a population census, which was subsequently held in 2008. The census was also to be used to determine wealth sharing. As a result, it was highly contentious, with the

Government of Southern Sudan rejecting the results (Santschi 2008). The link between regional population shares and political representation and resource sharing has also been the cause of significant contention and allegations of statistical manipulation in successive censuses of Nigeria (Ahonsi 1988; Aluko 1965; Mimiko 2006).

Questions of Recognition

Census politics is driven not only by instrumental but also symbolic concerns. As Bieber notes, censuses serve to rank identities and “if censuses enumerate a limited number of categories, inclusion or exclusion bestows a distinct value on an identity” (2015: 876). The 2009 Kenyan census, for instance, was the first to include a category specifically for Nubians under the tribe question. Nubians had previously been enumerated under broader, “other” type headings, and the addition of a specific code for them was viewed as an important form of recognition. Representatives of some other groups, previously enumerated as “others” or included as part of large, umbrella tribal groupings, threatened to boycott the census should they not be granted their own codes (Balaton-Chrimes 2011).

The symbolic importance of group enumeration is related not only to recognition through the inclusion of specific identity categories but also group size as measured by the census. As Bieber notes, even where the entitlements that flow from population shares are not legally binding, as in the case of rights and power sharing discussed above, “numerical strength is crucial for making claims and symbolic entitlement” (2015: 888). The 2013 Bosnian census, for example, was the first to include a category labeled “Bosniak” and ethnic entrepreneurs stressed the importance of members of this group identifying as such, in part to emphasize ownership of the state (Cooley 2019).

In Myanmar, meanwhile, the government backtracked on promises made to donors who were funding the 2014 census that people would be free to self-identify in response to the question on ethnicity, preventing the Rohingya population from doing so in order to placate Rakhine extremists who had threatened to boycott the census should the Rohingya be recognized

(International Crisis Group 2014). As a result, Rohingya were forced to choose between identifying as Bengali (the state's preferred term, which carries with it connotations that they are recent immigrants from Bangladesh) or not being enumerated at all (Ferguson 2015).

Censuses have also been the subject of boycotts not because the state fails to recognize a particular group but because that group does not recognize the authority or legitimacy of the state and therefore rejects its right to conduct a census. This was the case with the call for Serbs in Kosovo to boycott its census of 2011, for instance (Visoka and Gjevori 2013: 488–490). In Nigeria, meanwhile, a Biafran separatist movement called on Igbo in the south east of the country to boycott the 2006 census, on the grounds that the territory was not properly part of Nigeria but should be an independent state (Onuoha 2011: 413).

International Aspects

While censuses are undertaken by national governments, their content and conduct are governed by international principles and guidelines – in particular the United Nations principles and recommendations for population and housing censuses (United Nations 2017). These principles and recommendations divide census topics into core and non-core. Core topics include basic demographic information such as sex, age, and place of birth, whereas topics that are often contentious in deeply divided societies, such as religion, language, and ethnicity are designated as additional topics, meaning that their inclusion should be assessed based on local suitability and resources. The principles and recommendations stress that ethno-cultural characteristics are subjective and that questions about these topics, where they are asked, should allow for free and open declaration by respondents. These international guidelines are complemented by region-specific guidance produced by organizations such as the UN Economic Commission for Africa. Within the European Union, Eurostat provides detailed guidelines aimed at harmonizing collection of data across the member states (Alastalo

2018), which have agreed on a set of core topics to be included in all national censuses.

In many post-conflict and developing states, censuses also attract significant international financial and technical support from international organizations and individual donor states (see, for example, Bradford Smith 2016; Brandt and De Herdt 2019). During the 2010 census round (which ran from 2005 to 2014), the UN agency responsible for supporting countries in the holding of censuses, the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), spent a total of US\$301.7 million on census support. Approximately 35% of this total came from UNFPA core funds, with 65% provided by donors (UNFPA 2016: 19, 57) which also provide their own bilateral support. In providing technical and financial support for censuses during this round, donors recognized their importance for making international comparisons and measuring progress against the Millennium Development Goals (Baffour et al. 2013: 416). The nature of the successor Sustainable Development Goals arguably further increases the need for reliable data on development progress.

Role in State-Building

In post-conflict contexts, international support for reestablishing the capacity of the state to undertake censuses is also often necessary for the planning of reconstruction and preparing for the holding of elections (Goodhand 2008: 238; Reilly 2016: 82). To date, little academic research has been conducted into the role of census support in processes of internationally sponsored post-conflict state-building. Further research on the politics of the census might usefully consider its role in the liberal peacebuilding agenda, which has prioritized the building and strengthening of state institutions and the holding of elections as key to ensuring sustainable peace.

Some literature does focus on the domestic state-building functions of the census. Leibler and Breslau (2005), for instance, show how the 1948 census performed a crucial role in the construction of the Israeli state, and Busse (2015: 76) points out the parallels between this and the Palestinian case, where the Palestinian Bureau of

Statistics was formed by the Palestinian Authority quickly after the first of the Oslo Accords in 1993. The Israeli case is particularly interesting since it combined two functions that are usually separate: the enumeration of the population and the registration of citizens. Since the census was conducted under conditions of curfew and anyone absent from home was not be registered, the combined enumeration/registration process served to exclude Palestinian Arabs from citizenship of the new state (Leibler and Breslau 2005). While the contexts of the cases are very different, some useful insights might be drawn from this literature to shed light on the potentially exclusionary aspects of more recent, internationally sponsored censuses, such as the highly problematic 2014 Myanmar enumeration.

Summary

The role played by census enumeration of ethnic or other group categories in the social construction of identities is now relatively well documented in the scholarly literature. However, other aspects of the politics of the census in deeply divided societies have not received sustained and systematic attention. Several studies point to the relationship between political representation and rights and mobilization around the census as an important one, but there is scope for more comparative research that is able to support more generalizable conclusions on this relationship. Further research might investigate how institutions of conflict management that rely on population thresholds for the granting of group rights impact on the politics of the census, for instance. The role of the census in strategies of internationally sponsored state-building and liberal peacebuilding, meanwhile, has been almost entirely neglected by scholars and presents a clear opportunity for further research.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Human Geography and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Post-Conflict Elections](#)

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Civil Resistance for Peace and Conflict Management, Role of

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Description

This chapter seeks to add to previous conceptualizations of “resistance” within peacebuilding by exploring the following question: Which claims must be secured in order to provide a solid theoretical base for further research on resistance and peacebuilding processes? Drawing on different research perspectives – in particular, social movement studies and everyday resistance research – we seek to advance a new theoretical framework for understanding civil or peaceful forms of resistance and how it impacts on conflicts and peacebuilding processes. The label of this theoretical elaboration is the “ABC-framework”; that

is, (i) avoidance, (ii) breaking, and (iii) constructive resistance. It is argued that the ABC of resistance helps us to see how resistance actively engages dominant power, as well as direct and structural violence through a combination of *avoidance* of devastating repression and control, *breaking* free from its domination and dependence, while *constructing* self-governed nonviolent alternatives, subjectivities, and communities.

Introduction

Without a theory of resistance(s), IR’s disciplinary power will be condemned to repeat and unable to achieve its early mandate to investigate the causes of war and the creation of peace. (Richmond 2011, p. 248)

There is an increased awareness of the importance that resistance plays in relation to peace, peacebuilding, and conflict transformation processes (Duffield 2001; Hughes et al. 2015; Iñiguez de Heredia 2014; Mac Ginty 2014; Richmond and Mac Ginty 2014; Richmond 2010, 2011). It is clear that the concept of resistance has become central to the critique of liberal interventions within the field of peace and conflict studies. Researchers’ approach to resistance within this field has resulted in more elaborate studies of peacebuilding. Nevertheless, the formulations of local agency have been criticized as simplified and for lacking contextualization. For example, according to David Chandler (2013, p. 32), focusing on the “local” and “hidden agency” has not created any genuine understanding of the limits to liberal peace, nor has it provided any emancipatory alternative.

One reason for the critique is that resistance has primarily been conceptualized as a response to top-down or external “peace-building interventions.” Thus, interesting dynamics of peacebuilding processes remain obscured, while much research employs quite a limited understanding of resistance.

Another take on resistance within the peacebuilding literature is the theorization on “spoilors.” Spoilers can be seen as actors who are ready to use any means, including the use of

arms, to prevent the implementation of a peace process (Newman and Richmond 2006; Stedman et al. 2002). Such resistance can be identified as an obstacle to fulfilling expectations and hopes of the broader public and grassroots activists in the peacebuilding process.

This chapter is not limited to resistance practices that come as a response to liberal peace interventions and its aim is not to elaborate further on spoiler resistance. Instead, our discussion takes a broader stance by suggesting a framework of resistance that embraces resistance practices that exist simultaneously and are performative of and intertwined with other forms of resistance. Such combinations of resistance can, we argue, constitute a basis for understanding peacebuilding processes in contexts of violence or domination. By this, the chapter responds to the call of Oliver Richmond (2011, p. 422) to locate “. . . resistance . . . aimed towards local forms of agency and their international effects.”

Below follows an exploration of how civil resistance is practiced, and how we can theoretically understand and define these practices in relation to peacebuilding. The exploration is synthetic in nature and draws on different research perspectives – besides the peace research that is partly discussed above – we also make use of social movement studies and everyday resistance research in order to advance a new theoretical framework – the “ABC-framework” – for understanding civil resistance and, by extension, how it impacts on conflicts and peacebuilding processes.

Conceptualizing Civil Resistance

Since its inception in the 1980s, the study of “everyday resistance” (Scott 1990) has flourished yet remained focused on individuals, informal small-scale groupings and dispersed forms of resistance (as “infrapolitics,” which is Scott’s alternative concept). Meanwhile, the popular field of “social movement” studies has maintained a focus on collective mobilizations, often by limiting studies to “movement organizations,” public “episodes,” and various kinds of “campaigns.” In regard to more organized forms of resistance, the

most ambitious and recognized attempt to create a unified framework in regard to political struggles is the scholarship of “contentious politics” (McAdam et al. 2001). Still, this “unifying” framework does not even mention “everyday resistance” and excludes acts by small groups of individuals. This makes sense since “collective action” is often used by scholars as an alternative concept to social movements.

The above indicates that there is a tendency for scholars to address either more large-scale and organized forms of collective resistance (civil society, social movements, revolutions and so forth), or to embrace small-scale, informal and individualized forms of resistance practices (everyday, local and dispersed).

This is not necessarily a problem in itself. Every field needs to focus on certain things. However, the problem begins when there is a relative silence or crowding out of forms of resistance that fall in-between or constitute connections and processes bridging the “individually” and the collectively organized forms. In addition, researchers in both of these established strands equate resistance so strongly with “opposition” that most studies fully overlook when power relations are undermined by less dramatic resistance that builds new and alternative social relations (Koefoed 2017).

This chapter suggests, in order to pinpoint how resistance can contribute to peacebuilding, that more needs to be added to previous research within the field. For example, individual resistance, which is not hidden or avoiding – and therefore does not fit neatly into what is conventionally seen as “everyday resistance” – must be recognized. In a similar way, larger movements of dissent that fly under the radar and avoid all attention – such as those that are hidden on the internet, and therefore do not fit neatly into what is conventionally seen as “social movements” – must also be acknowledged. And particularly, when we look for how resistance can contribute to peacebuilding, resistance that produces alternatives rather than being in opposition, must additionally be embraced within a broader framework of analysis. One example is the peace communities, like San Jose de Apartado, that maintained a

neutral position between guerillas and the army in Colombia during the civil war. Such resistance should be considered constructive rather than non-cooperative; that is, the kind of resistance that are breaking of norms, rules, laws, regulations, and order, typically in public, confrontative ways. Furthermore, the overlaps and links between and scaling up and down of different forms of resistance must be further highlighted in order to figure out how creative combinations can contribute to undermining violent regimes, discourses and actors, while transforming communities towards more of a just peace.

Considering the above, we would like to suggest a new categorization of resistance, one that will help scholars to analyze a broad range of forms of resistance, their interlinkages and open up the opportunity for an analysis on how they contribute to peacebuilding. It is a tentative framework that is expected to require refinements and adjustments for different localities given that resistance is always contextually dependent. At this point, the framework might be mainly useful for illuminating different patterns in post-war contexts.

The ABC-Framework

In this section we further elaborate on the concept of resistance, starting from the question: Which claims must be secured in order to provide a solid theoretical base for further research on resistance and peace-building processes? The chapter argues, first of all, that in order to capture the complexity of resistance, space must be made for more forms of it and the linkages that occur between them. We would like to name this basic categorization the *ABC-framework*; that is, *avoidance*, *breaking* and *constructive* resistance. Below are examples of how these three civil resistances categories are linked to peace and conflict management.

Avoidance Resistance

Historically, studies of resistance have gone through similar stages as the studies of power. Although power was initially studied in its most

explicit forms, during the 1970s more subtle, symbolic and dispersed forms of power were increasingly acknowledged. Similarly, the earlier one-sided focus on more obvious and dramatic forms of resistance have been firmly supplemented through a recognition of more subtle and diffuse articulations of resistance (Scott 1989, 1990). One important concept in this regard is “everyday resistance.” The key characteristic of everyday resistance is the “pervasive use of disguise,” through either “the concealment of anonymity of the resister,” in which “the personal (not the class) identity of the protesters” (or the act itself) is kept secret (Scott 1989, p. 54). Thus, either “a clear message [is] delivered by a disguised messenger, [or] an ambiguous message is delivered by clearly identified messengers” (Scott 1989, pp. 54–55).

The founder of the concept of everyday resistance, James C. Scott, highlights the complicity of resistance by displaying how various forms of domination limit resistance and make it take the form of being hidden and avoiding. Everyday resistance is, then, essentially resistance that is quiet, dispersed, disguised or otherwise seemingly invisible. It is a form of resistance that exploited people use in order to both survive and undermine repressive domination; especially in contexts where rebellion is too risky.

Scott fundamentally transformed our understanding of “politics” by making the ordinary life of subaltern subjects part of political affairs. He also directly played an inspirational role for the international establishment of “subaltern studies” as a distinct school that reformulated a “history from below” of India and South Asia (see, e.g., Kelly 1992, p. 297; Ludden 2002, pp. 7–11; Sivaramakrishnan 2005), and he still inspires numerous empirical studies on everyday resistance (Sivaramakrishnan 2005) with general applications (see, e.g., Johansson and Vinthagen 2020; Smith and Grijns 1997), on how covert resistance transforms into overt forms, (e.g., Adnan 2007) or on its effectiveness (e.g., Korovkin 2000).

In liberal peace debates, the concept of everyday resistance has, as indicated above, served as a means to reveal new aspects of peace-building processes. By drawing primarily on theories of

Michel De Certeau and Scott, the concept of everyday resistance has become central to the critique of liberal interventions. Still, as argued by some, the elaborations of the concept of resistance remain limited within this research strand. Among others, in seeking to move beyond the simplifications of this “local turn,” Marta Iñiguez de Heredia (2018) argues that: “Scott’s point was not to create a different realm of politics but to show that both formal and informal forms of resistance were part of the same context and operated under the same structures, just through different means.” Iñiguez de Heredia rightly emphasizes how resistance, irrespective of the form that it takes, is constructed within the context of where it plays out.

In a similar vein, studies of everyday resistance have contributed to the understanding of resistance, but they have also limited scholars’ views by showing very little interest in the theorizing of movements that use avoidance. Here, it is suggested that “avoidance” resistance must not necessarily be seen as “informal,” “individual,” or “everyday.” “Avoidance” resistance can appear as an organized collective practice, even on a grand-scale. One prominent historical example of this is the primary form of revolt against chattel slavery in the Americas: The multitude of *Maroon communities* formed by runaway slaves in South America and the Caribbean from the sixteenth century up until the end of slavery (Lockley 2015; Nevius 2020; Price 2018). Runaway slaves (“maroons”) created their own communities in secluded territories (jungles, swamps, or mountains), ranging from tiny bands to autonomous towns and even states, some surviving only briefly before recapture, while others sustained themselves for generations (Bilby 2001; Price 1996). Although their avoidance of enslavement begun in dispersed and nonorganized forms, based on individuals or small groups, it amounted to a mass phenomenon. This opened up space for the building up of self-governed and semifree communities, with its own justice system, food production, set of rights, and formed a basis for collectively organized resistance against recapture and punishments (Bilby 2001; Lockley 2015). This is quite remarkable if we acknowledge that this was done

without a common language, in diverse groups that only shared a desperation for survival, situated in a foreign continent, relegated to the worst territories, without resources or powerful protection anywhere. Yet, some communities became strong enough to constitute a threat to the surrounding slave society, making treaties possible that recognized their autonomy (Bilby 2001; Nevius 2020). One of the biggest “quilombos” (maroon communities) in Brazil, Palmares, had more than 10,000 inhabitants and survived for nearly 100 years before it was crushed by a series of Portuguese military invasions (Price 2018). Similar communities played a key role in the revolution in Haiti 1791–1804 (which thus formed the first maroon Nation State) and the extraordinary resilience of Jamaican rebellions who were never defeated, as well as other organized resistance among Black communities against slavery in the Western hemisphere (Bilby 2001; Lockley 2015). Remarkably, today there are even remaining autonomous maroon towns, in, for example, Jamaica and Surinam, and in Brazil. In toto, we have today more than 2000 officially certified communities around the world (Bilby 2001; Leite 2015).

These Maroon communities show how avoidance on a mass scale is an effective form of resistance to the *structural violence* of slavery, and how this avoidance resistance formed the basis for other forms of resistance (both “breaking” and “constructive” resistance, forms we will expand on below).

Another example of resistance through avoidance is the mass emigration of one million professionals from Eastern Europe in 1989, which facilitated the fall of the Berlin Wall and became a drain of resources for these dictatorships, and as such played a role in the undermining of *repressive domination* (Larrabee 1992; Pfaff and Kim 2003). There is also the avoidance resistance against the *direct violence* of war-making (Lyall 2016), exemplified through the individual, yet massive, desertion from the Confederate army during the American Civil War (1861–1865), which according to Scott had a decisive impact on the war capacity of the Southern States (Reid and White 1985; Scott 1989, pp. 42–43).

In these examples we see a mass mobilization of avoidance resistance, and there might be some merits into classifying them as “everyday resistance”; but if so, they are not accurately described as “individual” or “non-organized,” but should rather be understood as dispersed “mass waves” and networks. The Confederate soldiers, for example, made no organized mutiny, but deserted individually on a mass scale, numbering some 200,000. To be hidden and yet still be a movement is no contradiction – especially nowadays. The (perceived) anonymity of Internet use makes it possible to pose as someone else or to construct new identities, at the same time as the advanced communication network makes the coordination of gigantic numbers of people possible (e.g., the multi-editing of texts through Wiki-technology, see, e.g., the biggest encyclopedia in the world: www.wikipedia.org).

Therefore, we would like to suggest that mass-based resistance also can be hidden and find ways to avoid power. This means that the line that is often drawn between individual and collective forms of resistance must be questioned and new forms of resistance explored. One thing, among others, that should be embraced is that avoidance as resistance, which is hidden and shuns different power expressions, can be individually dispersed as well as collectively organized. Thus, covert and hidden forms of resistance should not always be counted as “everyday resistance,” or seen as “small-scaled.”

Breaking Resistance

The notion of resistance as “avoidance” must be complemented with another conceptualization of dissent; that is, power relation “breaking” resistance (Vinthagen 2005, 2015, pp. 165–205). Breaking resistance operates according to a very different logic than avoidance resistance and publicly challenges power directly. This resistance might be articulated as protests, strikes, civil disobedience, objections to direct orders and road blockades, or factory occupations, consumer boycotts, etc. The “power breaking” here indicates how a power relation is – temporarily, locally, or potentially – ruptured by someone who perform a subordinated position through some kind of

public refusal to do what is ordered or expected of them (Vinthagen 2015). Here, rules, laws, or orders that are normally obeyed or accepted are challenged. Resistance of this kind, as indicated previously, has mostly been discussed within the widespread field of “contentious politics” or social movement studies, but also within the emerging field of “nonviolent action” studies or studies of “civil resistance” (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011; Sharp 1973; Vinthagen 2015), fields that have maintained a focus on collective mobilizations.

Nonviolent action or civil resistance studies is a field that is especially useful for peacebuilding efforts since it is primarily oriented towards a critique of, tactics against, and alternatives to *violence* (as part of power or resistance), through its emphasis on resistance as “nonviolent,” or “civil,” and the democratization or overthrowing of authoritarian regimes or militarized dictatorships (for overviews of the literature on this topic, including those authors that go beyond democratization of regimes, see Vinthagen 2015).

Contentious politics, which is an outgrowth from social movement studies, present a more general framework of analysis for resistance (including violence as a means). The leading researchers in this field are Charles Tilly, Doug McAdam, and Sidney Tarrow (McAdam et al. 2001; Tilly and Tarrow 2007). In essence, they claim the importance of movements’ *dynamic interaction* with other actors in society. They argue that movements are but one form of possible contention, and that it is rather the key components; “mechanisms” and “processes,” within interactions of contention that decide what dynamic develops. Their research approach, which was introduced in 2001 and further developed in *Contentious Politics* (Tilly and Tarrow 2006), has spurred a lot of debate.

The contentious politics framework claims that most political undertakings are routinely applied conventional acts (reading newspapers, registering, filing documents, etc.), while some forms of politics are contentious (involving movements, but also war, revolutions or terrorism). Contentious politics comes in two versions. “Contained contention” happens when struggles are

structured by the given rules of the existing system in, for example, courts of law, political debates, or contesting elections. “Transgressive” contention arises when new actors, new claims or new methods are used; that is, forms of politics that challenge conventional routines, norms and discourses. Since such contention between several actors happens in specific contexts and involves challenges to given political rules, it develops a relational dynamic interaction that becomes complex. According to the authors in this strand, the actual forms of contention and their dynamics are a result of certain general mechanisms and processes, which are hard to predict and not possible to capture through statistical models. Instead of focusing on war or movements, per se, they argue we need to understand the variations of possible combinations of mechanisms and processes. Thus, through detailed studies of event histories and episodes of contentious dynamics we can detect patterns, which will help us to see how forms of resistance matter in particular contexts.

While the conceptualization of contentious politics provides sophisticated analytical tools and a novel theoretical framework, it, as with the theorization of the “everyday” literature, continues to ignore significant forms of resistance. “Contentious politics” excludes acts by small groups of individuals from what they count as “events,” and explicitly limits the scope to forms of contention that display “public, collective interaction” (McAdam et al. 2001, p. 4). It seems clear that the resistance of individuals only makes sense within “contentious politics” when it is organized within collectives, either as leaders, organizers or participants in *collectively organized events*.

In contrast, in this chapter we argue that contentious politics can be both individualized and collectivized, which is something that the fields of nonviolent action and civil resistance have convincingly shown (e.g., Sharp 1973; Vinthagen 2015). If “contentious politics” is understood as the being in opposition, in a public and non-cooperative style, then individual or small-scale resistance should also be included. Individual resistance can certainly sometimes be extraordinary, and is not necessarily “everyday” or avoiding in its expression. One example of individual, dispersed, yet dramatically contentious

resistance is the Buddhist monks burning themselves to death in Tibet as a protest against Chinese occupation. These self-immolations have made the Chinese government accuse the Dalai Lama of “terrorism in disguise,” after he led prayers for those who set fire to themselves. This kind of individual contentious politics must be included into a theoretical framework of resistance, conflict and peacebuilding.

Thus, individual, small-scaled or dispersed forms of contentious resistance acts, which impact on conflict patterns or peace-building attempts, do not fit the conventional understandings of “everyday resistance” (as they are contentious) or “social movements” (as they are small-scale or individual). Some of these dispersed forms of resistance might be viewed as “violent” (although they are unarmed), as for example self-immolations, property destruction, looting or riots, and do also not easily fit within the framework of “civil resistance.” In this chapter, we propose that rigid field delimitations are a mistake that emanates from narrow categorizations that exclude significant and creative forms of resistance. It seems clear that the core concept of “social movements” – as well as “everyday resistance,” “contentious politics,” and “civil resistance” – does not capture the particular logic of this kind of public and order-challenging resistance, which is labeled here as “breaking resistance.” Here, breaking resistance is viewed as a category that includes both individualized and collectively organized forms of challenges to power. It captures the logic of its resistance, when (individual, small groups of or movements of) activists engage in contentious politics: They publicly (attempt to) break a relation with dominant power. That is how tactics ranging from protests and disobedience, to strikes and boycotts become resistance.

Constructive Resistance

Above, it has been argued that current categorizations of resistance must be broadened and consider both individual and collective resistance in terms of “avoidance” and “breaking.” In this section, we introduce our third category of the ABC-framework. By further investigating the *constructive* mode of resistance, this section aims to contribute to previous debates about

resistance that have flourished within international relations (IR) and social movement studies more generally and in peace and conflict studies in particular.

From this perspective, resistance is not only public and hidden disobedience against institutions, practices, or actors, but sometimes it also constructs new institutions, identities, discourses, communities, or practices, such as underground universities, alternative currencies, or judicial tribunals. Here, resistance is not mainly *against* something, but rather a matter of *building* new institutions, systems, discourses, or identities. Majken Jul Sørensen (2016, p. 57) writes that “surprisingly little” has been written about: “initiatives which not only criticize, protest, object, and undermine what is considered undesirable and wrong, but simultaneously acquire, create, built, cultivate and experiment with what people need in the present moment, or what they would like to see replacing dominant structures or power relations.” This indicates that even though there has been an abundant production of critical literature on mobilizations, the issue of how resistance connects to the building of alternatives still needs further elaboration (Armstrong et al. 2003; Eschle and Maiguashca 2007; Koefoed 2017).

Constructive resistance takes place: “as subaltern practices that might undermine different modes and aspects of power in their enactments, performances and constructions of ‘alternatives’” (Koefoed 2017, p. 43; cf. Sørensen 2016). This can involve the construction of unorthodox institutions, movements, “nowtopias” or the enactments of non-capitalist alternative societies, or it can denote resistance that aims to produce discourses “otherwise” and it thereby negotiates subject positions and lifestyles. Constructive resistance is a form of dissent that come to “produce and structure subjectivities, ways of life, desires and bodies, by destabilizing, displacing or replacing such production” (Lilja and Vinthagen 2018, p. 212).

In previous studies, the concept that is the most reminiscent of “constructive resistance” involves the (collective) activities of “prefigurative politics,” which is discussed in some social movement literature. However, the conceptualization of constructive resistance here moves beyond

definitions where prefiguration appears as “the conflation of movement means and ends, [the] enactment of the ultimate values of an ideal society within the very means of struggle for that society” (Maeckelbergh 2011a, b; cf. van de Sande 2013).

Constructive resistance is to be seen as a broader category than “prefigurative politics,” as it not only involves movements’ enactment of what is considered to be an ideal society, but also the construction of subversive norms, practices and subject-positions that are part of communities’ attempt to undermine prevailing domination. By this broader approach, constructive forms of resistance – which bring about “subversive knowledge,” “counter-history,” or “knowledge otherwise” – should be acknowledged (cf. Foucault 1990; Koefoed 2017; Lilja and Vinthagen 2007, 2014, 2018; Mignolo 2011; Sørensen 2016; Vinthagen 2005).

In addition, while the resistance part is somewhat implicit, it is not equally central to prefiguration (Koefoed 2018, pp. 102–105). For Simon Springer, it is even emphasized that prefiguration is *not* a “grand gesture of defiance, but . . . instead the prefiguration of alternative worlds” (Springer 2014, pp. 408, 412). It is agreed here, in line with Minoo Koefoed (2018, p. 103), that the concept of prefigurative politics does not clearly relate to (1) the concept of power, (2) the undermining of power, and (3) the performing of a subaltern position, all of which is key to the understanding of resistance. The special thing here about the concept of “constructive resistance” is that it is not just about the creation of an alternative; rather, it is about constructing an alternative as a response to existing power relations, as a creative means of resistance.

Moreover, the complex character of constructive resistance is also recognized here and it is acknowledged that many practices of this form of resistance contain both constructive and non-constructive elements, and these might work together to undermine systems of domination. Sometimes, as Sørensen (2016) shows in her mapping of a whole range of different empirical examples, constructive resistance is relatively “more” constructive or oppositional, and at other times it is “less”; as such there is a sliding

scale in this world of resistance where the building of new social facts and relations challenge existing power relations and their materialized institutions.

The above indicates that resistance must not explicitly be against something (although always somehow related to the undermining of power relations); rather, resistance can be productive of new lifestyles, ways of living, departments, etc. To probe these aspects of resistance means that one must carry out the same moves with resistance as Michel Foucault did with power; one must acknowledge how it produces discourses, subject-positions, as well as institutions. If power can be productive, why not resistance? Thus, this chapter suggests that the phenomenon of “constructive resistance” should be added to the resistance formulations of *avoidance* of power and *breaking* of power.

One example of this kind of resistance was revealed in interviews that were carried out by the authors in Japan in 2013 and 2014. The respondents suggested that Japanese civil society organizations must establish trustworthy narratives about poverty, militarism, pesticides and the climate change threat in order to make their recipients understand, embrace and act upon these issues. Among other things, when narrating “poverty,” they argued that it is essential for the organizations to use signs (images, videos, descriptions) that are seen as corresponding to, composing or depicting the real, thereby creating a “reality effect,” while simultaneously evoking emotional reactions. These strategies prevail as resistance that produces and promotes new truths and makes constructive use of different representations. This kind of constructive resistance can be a matter of producing ongoing small-scale differences that might look trivial, but sometimes have major impacts (cf. Lilja 2021, forthcoming; Sørensen 2016).

Concluding Discussion

Decades of rigorous and inspiring scholarship on dissent have provided a solid base from where one can advance some reformulations of the “types”

of resistance. This chapter has first and foremost broadened existing categories, while also suggesting a third form of resisting: constructive resistance, one that is of particular interest for peacebuilding. By using these ABC-categories, one can see that the conceptual line that is often drawn between individual and collective forms of resistance must be dissolved and new forms of resistance explored in the collective/individual nexus. With a refined categorization of civil resistance practices, one is better equipped to analyze and understand how, when and why different practices are applied, and only then we are equipped to explore what roles they might play for peacebuilding.

The form of resistance that emerges in different “peace” and “conflict” contexts depends upon why and in which setting the dissent is provoked. Previous research has emphasized the strong relationship between the character of resistance and of power (Baaz et al. 2017). However, not only power but also contextual factors impact upon how the resistance is played out (cf. Coleman Montesinos and Tucker 2015). The type of power (or violence), together with local discourses, subject positions, and other types of resistance, inform how resistance is formulated and employed (Baaz et al. 2017; Lilja and Vinthagen 2018). In other words, the specifics of the context, and the type of peace intervention, will be important in relation to which resistance practices may occur, and what role they play for peacebuilding.

Moreover, the framework of the three analytically distinct categories also makes it possible to understand how different forms of resistance mix, combine and fuse in different ways. The different kinds of resistance in the ABC-framework might provoke each other, but they can also be deployed to a different degree, or in combinations, during longer political struggles. For example, in Cambodia, the Boeung Kak Lake conflict has become a high-profile case of collective, and often gendered, resistance to forced eviction (Brickell 2014). The Boeung Kak Lake movement, which struggles for land-rights, uses different types of resistance, which seemingly support each other. On the one hand, the

movement constructs and spreads information, both locally and internationally, about how the land-evictions are illegal. This constructive resistance, in turn, mobilizes new activists and provides them with new motivations to join the struggle. This can be illustrated by the quote of a female activist, who stated: “I am happy because I helped society and other communities to make them strong and share knowledge so we can stand up together and I feel that I have contributed to society” (Woman activist quoted in LICADHO 2014, p. 3). This kind of constructive resistance supported other, more non-cooperative forms of resistance, such as sit-ins in front of the parliament and the non-performance of gendered subject-positions also in the family, which are a contentious expression of breaking resistance. In order to succeed with more manifested forms of dissent, the Boeung Kak Lake movement also employed more avoiding maneuvers, such as the spreading of disinformation as a form of avoidance resistance. The resistance practices display how a multitude of scattered patterns of resistance, together, compose the land-rights movement in Cambodia (Baaz et al. 2021, forthcoming).

Fundamentally, the renewed categorization of resistances (in the plural) is a way of trying to accommodate a continuously creative and disruptive empirical reality of resistance, conflicts, and peacebuilding. With this ABC categorization, we aim to show how resistance actively engages dominant power, as well as direct and structural violence through a combination of *avoidance* of devastating repression and control, *breaking* free from its domination and dependence, while *constructing* self-governed nonviolent alternatives, subjectivities, and communities. Something that seems to be vital for anyone interested in peacebuilding.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Culture and Conflict Resolution](#)
- ▶ [Feminist Peace Research](#)
- ▶ [Nonviolence and Civil Resistance](#)
- ▶ [Socioeconomic Justice and Peacebuilding](#)

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Civil Society

- ▶ [Grassroots Organizations and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Transitional Justice in Croatia](#)

Civil Society and Peacebuilding: Critical Review

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Definition

This entry provides a critical review of civil society's relationship with peacebuilding. It assesses both aspects concerning the negative and positive contributions of civil society to peacebuilding and conflict-torn societies. Drawing on extensive research and supporting examples, the analysis suggests clearly that civil society actors and organizations have the power to support peacebuilding processes. However, as this study also indicates, civil society players can play a negative role by contributing to conflict and undermining peacebuilding prospects. In addition, this entry ends with key observations at the practice and research level in the area of civil society peacebuilding. These key observations highlight significant issues, including (a) the lack of agreed civil society concepts and the contradictory frameworks of civil society resistance and liberal civil society; (b) the contention of peacebuilding definitions in theory and practice; (c) the increasing policy recognition of the

important role of civil society local actors in conflict and peacebuilding processes; (d) the growing dilemmas in engaging with conflict situations and armed groups by civil society organizations; and (e) the centrality of the negative and positive roles of civil society in understanding the relationship between civil society and peacebuilding. This entry proposes a serious consideration of these policy and research observations within the broader context of conceptualizing and improving the practice of civil society peacebuilding.

Introduction

The purpose of this entry is to critically review and assess civil society's relationship with peacebuilding. Informed by extensive research and a wide range of supporting examples, the entry places a special emphasis on conflict-torn societies and the positive contributions of civil society to peacebuilding processes. To present a more critical perspective, the discussions also provide a critique of civil society's negative role in conflict and peacebuilding. Following this key analysis, the entry concludes with key observations at the practice and research level in the wider field of civil society peacebuilding. These significant observations should be taken into consideration within the broader context of understanding and improving the practice of civil society peacebuilding.

It is important to note that this entry does not address the conceptual and practical approach of liberal peace. This approach prioritizes liberalization in the economic and political spheres and building Western market-oriented democracies as a formula for resolving national conflicts in non-Western societies. The critical aspect of liberal peace, including its civil society and international components, has extensively been debated and critiqued in the literature by leading scholars in the field of peacebuilding and politics (Paris, 2004) (Chandler & Sabaratnam, 2011). The application of liberal peace through the civil society arena in international conflict contexts such as Palestine has also been examined in separate studies (Alashqar, 2018).

This entry is structured in four sections. The first section conceptualizes the key terms of civil society and peacebuilding. The second section evaluates the positive role of civil society in peacebuilding. The third section highlights the negative impact of civil society on conflict and peacebuilding processes. The fourth section presents some concluding remarks for practice and research in the field of civil society peacebuilding. The final section summarizes the main arguments discussed in this entry. The key terms of civil society and peacebuilding are explored and conceptualized in the next section below.

Conceptual Notes: Civil Society and Peacebuilding

Civil society represents generally informal organizations, local actors and communities, grassroots groups, voluntary associations, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). In recent decades, these types of groups have often been characterized as civil society organizations (CSOs). On the other hand, international organizations are governed by formal treaties and include international governmental organizations (IGOs), such as the European Union and the United Nations, and international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs) that seek to address issues of public concern including human rights, healthcare, armed conflict, and poverty. Connections and cooperation among national CSOs, IGOs, and INGOs have also developed (Abidin, 2016). However, the modern understanding of the civil society sphere excludes established political parties, state actors, and commercial interests (Seckinelgin, 2002). The emergence of formal and national CSOs has been recognized in recent decades, and it reflects an ongoing process of institutionalizing civil society structures in different parts of the world with active support from international organizations and governments.

According to Thomas Grothers and William Barndt, the rise of CSOs has been attributed to a number of political, economic, and geographical factors since the 1990s. First, the global

movement toward democracy and active citizenship has opened up the space for civil society actors in formerly war-torn countries and dictatorial countries around the world. Second, in the USA and Western Europe, public weariness with exhausted party systems sparked a great interest in civil society as an important means of social renewal. Third, especially in developing countries, privatization and market reforms have presented civil society with the opportunity to step in and involve itself as some governments pulled back their reach and influence. Thus, the founding of voluntary organizations and the culture of service provision has been critical in the development of today's civil society. Fourth, the information revolution, globalization, and the Internet provided new tools for establishing connections and empowering citizens throughout the world. Finally, the lower cost of transportation and the relative absence of borders in certain geographical areas (e.g., the European Union) contributed positively to the development of recent civil association and regional projects (Crothers & Barndt, 1999).

Although a clear and agreed concept of civil society is still lacking, the status and the role of social structures became strongly recognized in recent decades. Therefore, scholarly and official attention has turned to this nongovernmental sector and its potential role in supporting peacebuilding in conflict-torn societies. In this context, according to Johan Galtung (Galtung, 1996), peacebuilding initiatives should seek to address acts of direct violence such as assaults and killing, and support trauma recovery, healing, and community dialogue. Most importantly, structural causes of oppression and inequality, as well as experiences of indirect violence at the institutional and societal level, should be dealt with in conflict situations. Ultimately, as Galtung points out, achieving these complex tasks facilitates the emergence of positive peace in divided societies. Peacebuilding can also take on more inclusive roles. Nick Lewer illustrates further:

As well as dealing with the immediate effects of war such as destruction of property and the killing and wounding of soldiers and civilians, peacebuilding

can open up questions of social justice, economic exploitation, political oppression, gender and race discrimination and abuse of human rights. (Lewer, 1999)

Michael Barnett adds eloquently that peacebuilding is “designed to create a positive peace, to eliminate the root causes of conflict” and to “allow states and societies to develop stable expectations of peaceful change” (Barnett et al., 2007). Thus, peacebuilding should continue to represent a “multidimensional activity” which is achieved by “nonviolent methods such as processes of conflict resolution, mediation and negotiation” (Atack, 2005). Jonathan Goodhand indicates further that comprehensive peacebuilding integrates strategies for “working around conflict,” “working in conflict,” and “working on conflict.” In other words, engagement in peacebuilding can entail conflict reduction measures, work to address its causes and effects, and promote conflict prevention as parallel efforts (Goodhand, 2006). Therefore, peacebuilding initiatives can occur before, alongside, or even in the absence of formal conflict resolution efforts and political settlement (Cousens et al., 2001). Drawing on these conceptual understandings of civil society and peacebuilding, the next section examines the positive role of CSOs in peacebuilding.

Role of Civil Society in Peacebuilding

The Carnegie UK Trust Report emphasizes strongly the connection between the involvement of civil society and combating challenges of violence, discrimination, and social justice. Researchers suggest that in the Report, a basic strength of informal organizations is their capacity to help make a positive change through which values and outcomes such as “nonviolence, non-discrimination, democracy, mutuality and social justice are nurtured and achieved; and as a means by which public dilemmas are resolved in ways that are just, effective and democratic” (CarnegieUKTrust, 2007).

Not only do CSOs enjoy the capacity to encourage a culture of positive peace and

understanding in conflict environments, but they are also capable of making a meaningful contribution to societies emerging out of political and violent conflicts. These are situations in which members of concerned communities have suffered and survived horrific violence and traumas. In such circumstances, civil society initiatives can help to reconstruct the social fabric of society, the broken trust, as well as the psychological damage that has been caused by the violence. Beatrice Pouligny argues that civil associations and citizens groups are central players in specifically transforming hostilities and conflicts and in nourishing new values of cooperation and rights in war-torn communities. Most importantly, they could support the local state to reestablish law and order. As she puts it:

Local civil societies, through monitoring and lobbying activists, may push the local state into fulfilling its responsibility for implementing the rule of law. They are often seen to carry the best hopes for a genuine democratic counterweight to the power-brokers, economic exploiters and warlords who tend to predominate in conflict-ridden weak or failed states, and may even capture electoral processes. (Pouligny, 2005)

Furthermore, while informal groups give expression and direction to the social, political, spiritual, and cultural needs of society members, it is crucial to understand that civil society is far more than public-benefit organizations. Thus, NGOs and CSOs with technical and professional skills “can play an important role in providing services, promoting change and working with conflict” (Barnes, 2005). Furthermore, civil society in conflict contexts combines particularly three significant powers: the power of resistance, the power of exposing oppression, and also the power of persuasion (Barnes, 2006). These distinguished advantages place civil society players in a unique position to lead various positive initiatives during violent conflict and after it has been transformed. In this context, Catherine Barnes points out:

[CSOs] play roles at every point in the development of conflict and its resolution: from surfacing situations of injustice to preventing violence, from creating conditions conducive to peace talks to mediating a settlement and working to ensure it is

consolidated, from setting a global policy agenda to healing war scarred psyches. (Barnes, 2006)

Moreover, David Bloomfield illustrates that the significance of bottom-up endeavors in conflict-torn societies exists in their ability to encourage interactions and societal participation through which grievances and terms of future coexistence are defined and negotiated. The opposite top-down official approach, he points out, is “exactly the realm where the pragmatists, the political thinkers and the realists try to see what needs to be done to build civic trust, to achieve political reconciliation, democratic reciprocity.” His conclusion is that civil society “should be also the interface where the two realms meet and could be co-ordinated and interwoven” (Bloomfield, 2006). Similarly, emphasizing this vital connection, in *Partners in Peace: Discourses and Practices of Civil Society Peacebuilding*, Mathijs Van Leeuwen clarifies that what distinguishes CSOs in conflict situations is their “comparative advantage of local knowledge and contextual understandings of barriers and opportunities” to making and sustaining peace at the local and national level. Also, unlike international organizations, they have an “inherent understanding” of the future postconflict context and associated challenges. In practice, according to Leeuwen, this has placed national agencies central to any effective efforts at transforming conflict and, confirmed the contributions of civil society to peacebuilding in conflict and postconflict situations (Leeuwen, 2009).

Assessing how civil society groups have supported efforts and activities aimed at building peace in 65 cases including the Balkans, Northern Ireland, Rwanda, Georgia, Kenya, Colombia, Lebanon, Israel/Palestine, and Guatemala, Paul Van Tongeren and his fellow researchers conclude that CSOs are able to create “safe spaces” where groups and individuals can join forces to engage in dialogue and help change their societies “based on justice and the rule of law” (Verhoeven et al., 2005). More importantly, one of their major findings is that this informal sector opens up possibilities and facilitates greater participation and involvement in the quest for sustainable and

positive peace beyond the traditional notion of political activism. Thus, artists, teachers, students, young people, labor union members, academics, environmentalists, journalists, and religious leaders are all afforded opportunities for confronting injustice and promoting peacebuilding through civil society interactions (Verhoeven et al., 2005).

Moreover, through information campaigns, public opinion polls, advocacy, and lobbying, civil society players connect the population to the “official mediation process” in conflict contexts. Therefore, there is now a “general acceptance that national actors should play the leading role in peacebuilding and that the role of outsiders should be limited to support” (Paffenholz, 2010). In their 2010 study of localized approaches to peacebuilding, Abdul Aziz Said and Nathan Funk have attempted to define further the insider-outsider relationship in the context of civil society peacebuilding. They suggest that international organizations and actors can enhance local efforts aimed at peacebuilding through: (a) playing a mediating role between national projects and international resources, such as allocation of funding and sharing information; (b) redirecting the focus of the global media on local processes; (c) providing access to international conferences where opportunities of sharing expertise can be created; and (d) helping local partners to link and network with larger groups and audiences beyond their immediate conflict environment (Abdul Aziz & Nathan, 2010).

Local CSOs and community groups also make significant contributions to peacebuilding in various but related areas. These include, for instance, establishing alternative media, monitoring elections and democratic processes in society, providing peace education, organizing interreligious dialogue, and facilitating youth leadership. Furthermore, leading initiatives for disarmament and political processes, promoting arts, music, and films to counter cultures of violence and conflict, strengthening peace constituencies, offering support to marginalized groups of refugees and women, lobbying for human rights and protection of civilians in war times, documenting war

crimes, dealing with trauma, and providing psychosocial support for conflict victims are recognized as important contributions to peacebuilding (Fischer, 2006). In her evaluation of the role of civil society especially in *war-torn societies*, Martina Fischer believes that international support and partnership with CSOs working on the ground is a key factor for addressing the peacebuilding challenges in societies torn by conflict and violence. Fischer elaborates further:

In war times, [local] NGOs contribute to maintaining or improving relationships by fostering action across conflict lines and ethnic divides through informal exchanges and joint projects. . . . International NGOs, political foundations and local communities have created partnerships with, and support programmes for, groups and individuals in conflict-torn societies in order to enable conflict transformation and peacebuilding. Many NGOs work to lobby, monitor and influence the policy of governments and international organizations. . . . Aiming to raise public awareness of the needs of war-torn societies. (Fischer, 2006)

Given these comparative strengths, civil society actors make a positive difference in conflict situations by facilitating a “direct representation” of combatants and victims. In this context, through informal contacts and meetings, CSOs can function as a mediating body for this significant representation, and for clear communication of grievances and conflicting claims to wider communities and groups beyond their immediate borders (Shaw, 1996). Similarly, Luc Reyhler considers the role of civil society players in the field to be critically important in relation to representations. He maintains that their presence in conflict environments does not only constitute available expertise, but they are also able to act as “field-diplomats.” This is through setting up early warning systems for rising conflicts, advocacy for the victims of violence, supporting existing peace structures, and bringing different groups together for dialogues (Paffenholz & Reyhler, 2001).

Undertaking all these complex and risky tasks in conflict situations requires CSOs to possess certain abilities and advantages to influence conflict dynamics and make a positive impact. CSOs have the ability to: (a) operate without being

constrained by limiting mandates of foreign policy agendas; (b) gain access to areas inaccessible to official leaders; (c) engage in dialogue with several parties without losing their credibility; (d) deal directly with grassroots communities; (e) work in confidentiality without media coverage and scrutiny; and (f) take risks and effectively network given their long-standing relationships and connections (Fischer, 2006).

The engagement of civil society in peacebuilding efforts has been also receiving further attention within the theory and practice of sustainable peace as suggested by John Paul Lederach. His theory is based on interconnecting official and grassroots levels to facilitate and sustain peacebuilding activities. Lederach suggests three levels for leadership that can equally coordinate and support peacebuilding efforts in divided societies (Lederach, 1997). These are senior government leaders (military personal, politicians, and diplomats), middle-range leaders (academics, peace and civil society practitioners, faith representatives, and CSOs), and local leadership (grassroots activists, Indigenous constituencies, refugee camp leaders, and peace and humanitarian workers). Lederach has developed these emergent themes further by prioritizing Indigenous agency and its crucial role in building positive and sustainable peace (Abdul Aziz & Nathan, 2010).

Civil society can make further contributions to promote peacebuilding and transform violent conflict situations by taking on diverse tasks of national organizations in the context of armed conflicts and comprehensive peacebuilding processes. In particular, NGOs can be divided into three categories according to the type of peacebuilding intervention they wish to be engaged in and their expertise and resources allow. The three categories are the following: (a) direct intervention, that is, delivery of assistance and aid, direct implementation of projects without working through intermediary organizations; (b) capacity building, that is, developing the capacity of individuals or contact organizations to sustain the effects of projects and long-term programs of peacebuilding; and (c) advocacy, that is, influencing and lobbying policy-makers and

decision-makers to engender and support changes at the macrolevel (Goodhand, 2006).

Drawing on extensive research and supporting examples, the previous discussions suggested that the positive role of CSOs in peacebuilding is diverse and multiple, interconnected, and as complex as conflict itself. However, civil society actors and organizations can impact negatively on conflict situations and peacebuilding processes. This critical and negative role is examined in the next section.

Critique of Civil Society Role in Peacebuilding

One of the significant points that should be made in this critique is that civil society actors have themselves undermined democratic processes as an alternative to conflict in some cases. For example, the undemocratic actions and policies of INGOs enhanced exclusive associations in some African states and ignored the ethnic organizations that constitute the most vital part of civil society in many parts of Africa. Not only they did not support wider participation, plural identities, and acceptance, as civil society players are assumed to do, but they also portrayed rejection, exclusion, and political bias. Hence, the end result is that “the failure to promote democracy in Africa has stemmed partially from a failure to recognize and accept social realities” (Harpviken & Kjllman, 2010).

In some cases, informal organizations also participate in promoting acts of direct and indirect violence instead of supporting peacebuilding. For example, following the war in 1999 in Serbia, the Serbian government worked to build “parallel structures” within the sectors of health, education, and public services to enhance its own interests and presence in Kosovo. According to Gezim Visoka, these civil society structures have contributed to violence and attacks against non-Serb citizens and constituted a “significant obstacle to the representation and participation of Serbs in Kosovar institutions” (Visoka, 2012).

The abuse of the civil society sector and its potentials by the military and authoritarian state

for its own interests has also been observed in other experiences. In the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the Israeli military government encouraged the creation of Hamas’ Islamist social and grassroots institutions in Gaza. The goal of this policy was concerned with weakening the strength of the more nationalist and secular Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO/Fatah) and facilitating an internal conflict among the major national forces in the Palestinian context (Augustus, 1996). With the current factional divisions and the absence of political unity in the Palestinian situation, it is clear that this colonial policy has produced fruitful outcomes for Israel. In addition, certain sections of civil society in the Middle East lend their support to the authoritarian state and its abusive exercise of power. In this context, authoritarianism and oppression of citizens are enhanced by civil society elements (Augustus, 1996).

Furthermore, CSOs are generally assumed to automatically support positive change in situations of conflict and peacebuilding. This is not a completely valid claim. The reason is that civil society groups can commit to peacebuilding initiatives as well as prolonging conflict situations, which have had a long history and claimed the lives of many people. Raffaele Marchetti and Nathalie Tocci argue that while significant attention has been devoted to civil society and its role in preventing and resolving conflict, little efforts are made in the literature to examine the connection between CSOs and conflict escalation. They suggest that some of the methods utilized for civil society peacebuilding, such as media and public campaigns, monitoring activities, mass gatherings, and dialogue, can also be critically employed by civil society actors for destructive purposes: to sustain the conflict and maintain the state quo in societies suffering from division and violence. Most importantly, in some contexts, civil society actors have also delayed peaceful resolutions and obstructed endeavors aimed at negotiating a political and just settlement to long-running disputes. For this particular reason, Marchetti and Tocci propose that organizations who advocate the continuation of conflict and oppression should be called “conflict society organizations” (CoSOs)

instead of CSOs. They elaborate further and provide current examples:

At times these [civil society] activities can contribute to the management and settlement of conflicts. Yet on other occasions they may constrain the scope for government manoeuvring, reducing the prospects for compromise. The lobbying efforts of the American Israeli Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) as a third party (i.e. US) CoSO on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, or the Armenian Diaspora in France and the US regarding the Turkish-Armenian relations are notable cases in point. (Marchetti & Tocci, 2009)

Similarly, civil society actors sometimes play a negative role in worsening conflicts and causing harm in local communities, instead of helping to facilitate peacebuilding. For instance, aid assistance managed and provided by informal groups can be used to do harm rather than good. This includes favoring recipients, unfair distribution, releasing funds for war through humanitarian assistance and delivery, and damaging local markets. Therefore, as Mary Anderson points out, despite their best efforts to maintain “non-partisanship” in terms of the warring parties, representatives of peace and humanitarian NGOs in the field still influence “intergroup connectors and dividers by either worsening dividers or ignoring/undermining connectors” (Anderson, 2001).

Funding and tensions between CSOs are also critical issues that must be acknowledged when discussing the negative role of civil society. The fierce competition for funding can in some cases result in a “disconnect between the peacebuilding initiatives and conflict context.” Moreover, because of the constant pressure and need for project funds, an NGO culture has emerged which is opportunistic and driven by a “project mentality” (Barnes, 2006). In addition, some CSOs change their performance and goals in conflict and peacebuilding contexts depending on the requirements of donors, and therefore they often lack independence because they are often either state or donor-driven (Fischer, 2006).

It is equally important to be aware of the role of CSOs in deepening organizational disputes in conflict-torn societies. Civil society relations are not always peaceful, and a lack of unity generally between CSOs is still a constraint on

implementation. This results in organizational conflicts which divert the social energy and commitment of activists and local groups to peacebuilding. Thus, there is a persistent concern about the lack of democratic controls and checks in the civil society sector (Fischer, 2006). Commenting on conflicts and tensions within the sphere of civil society and the implications involved, Hizkias Assefa points out:

Civil society is a microcosm of the overall society and mirrors all the divisions and fault lines in the community. Therefore, it is inevitable that civil society actors have their own biases and loyalties. They may lack the objectivity and distance to undertake the reconciler roles... Civil society actors themselves might need a reconciliation process before they can play reconciler roles. (Assefa, 2005)

Thus, while these civil society conflicts may not lead into anarchy and violence, there is a clear recognition that they do constantly bring about a degree of social disharmony in society (Foley & Edwards, 1996). In this context, some observers continue to argue that since conflicts within CSOs are inevitable, the presence of a strong functioning state is essential in managing and regulating this associational realm and its promising as well as harmful potentials (Mennell, 1995).

Final observations should be made at the practice and research level in the area of civil society peacebuilding. First, while extensive research has been carried out to understand better the concept of civil society, clear and agreed definitions are still lacking. Contradictory approaches toward understanding the arena and practice of civil society still exist. In particular, there are those who still believe that countering state power and confronting repression in the context of seeking political change and social justice requires active engagement and politicized struggles by the masses, civil society organizations, and the intellectuals of the society (Gramsci, 1978). Challenging governments in national and political crises is key in this philosophy. This represents the school of civil society resistance, which has roots in Antonio Gramsci's political writings and understandings. The Gramscian philosophy of political resistance and mass mobilization through

grassroots struggles inspired many activists and intellectuals around the world. It has also contributed to academic debates and the politicization of cultures and civil society activism (Harris, 1992).

On the other hand, there are still intellectual and liberal groups who believe in the idea of building a civil society for debate, association, and “civil behaviour,” – a “good society” that can meet the current realities of market, globalization, and democracy (Edwards & Hulme, 1992). These different understandings of civil society and its functions continue to obscure the term and practice of civil society. However, the crucial recognition of these contradictory frameworks of civil society helps us to better interpret the changing relationships between citizens and state, and the shifting dimensions of the broader institutional landscape at local, national, and global levels (Lewis, 2004).

Second, another important observation at the theoretical level is that any attempt to clearly define the role of civil society in peacebuilding is also problematic and challenging. This is because the essential meaning of peacebuilding is contentious in both theory and practice, and cultural understandings make it difficult to conceptualize. Also, the liberal peace theory makes it more elusive to distinguish other concepts of peacebuilding and civil society. In addition, a critical issue in this debate is that scholars and practitioners face a serious deficit of theories about the concept of civil society peacebuilding (Paffenholz, 2010). These challenges are important to acknowledge because they place real constraints on defining and conceptualizing the role of civil society in peacebuilding processes.

Third, at the policy level, a further observation is that the role of CSOs and local actors in peace processes is gaining further legitimacy and recognition in policy circles because of the evolving complexities of both conflicts and peace processes. In other words, while state officials are well-positioned at times to facilitate political change and power-sharing agreements between former adversaries, there is a growing recognition that if we seek to support peacebuilding and generate public support to make peace agreements stand in exceptionally fragile situations, civil

society and community organizations must be at the heart of these efforts. Recent experiences have also demonstrated that state-oriented conflict resolution approaches have major weaknesses, including the way in which root causes of conflict are overlooked. There is also the narrow, hierarchical focus on conflict leaders in mediation processes which may negatively facilitate exclusion and alienation of significant local players and their constituencies (Jacobsen et al., 2000).

Furthermore, the shift from conflict resolution to conflict prevention has created a greater policy recognition of informal actors in transforming conflict and building sustainable peace. Two outcomes have emerged as a result of this policy development. These are as follows: (a) the acknowledgment that CSOs are able to make a significant contribution toward managing and preventing future conflicts; and (b) formal peace processes cannot fully succeed without the participation of local players (Leeuwen, 2009). This growing connection between policy and practice in the area of civil society peacebuilding should be strengthened by establishing further cooperation between CSOs, IGOs, and INGOs at the national and international level. It should also be informed by the central role of CSOs and local actors in addressing the structural causes of conflict and the wider issues of direct and indirect violence, equality, and human rights.

Fourth, another important observation in the area of policy and practice is concerned with the dilemmas that arise among CSOs in working with conflict. These dilemmas are recognized in the evolving nature of distance and international politics. Distance is a key challenge for civil society engagement in international contexts of conflict and peacebuilding. The disconnection with remote civil wars and conflicts is problematic. Information regarding these distant situations is mediated by a third party, which is normally the media. Depending on how partial and honest media sources are, this can either increase or decrease the distance. Also, at the heart of this issue is the question of responsibility. For many people and national governments, being open to other political and social problems may involve taking a degree of responsibility and responding

to the conflicts. In this regard, Martin Shaw stresses that *distance* does not only exist but it also evolves with complexity and according to political and media reactions to international crises. Therefore, it either strengthens or weakens the response of INGOs to external conflicts. Shaw illustrates:

Distance, psychological or even geographical, is not a straight forward question. Distance is complex and relative and is constantly established, undermined and negotiated in our responses [to conflict and violent situations]. . . .Media coverage of global crises both creates and undermines a variety of forms of distancing. (Shaw, 1996)

The relationship between civil society peacebuilding and international politics in the context of the US “war on terror” presents another dilemma. There are serious consequences and substantial risks for civil society engagement with perpetrators of violence and nonstate armed organizations. This is because of fears about granting legitimacy to armed groups and perhaps giving them a voice. The majority of governments and state agencies are wary of contacts with non-state armed actors and have attempted to avoid them since the September 2001 attacks in the USA. As a result of representing and engaging with combatants, CSOs will be targeted on the grounds of “assisting terrorists,” and being “complicit with terrorism” (Clapham, 2009). In this situation, obtaining funds and attracting international donors may prove extremely difficult. Therefore, there is now understanding among civil society groups that involving “non-state actors needs a degree of political sophistication if one is to avoid the ‘terrorist tag’” (Clapham, 2009). Taken together, these two dilemmas in relation to distance and international politics require further attention at the research and policy level. Thus, a better awareness of such dilemmas facilitates civil society peacebuilding and helps to bridge the gap between external peaceful societies and war-torn countries.

Finally, based on the previous analysis and critical review of civil society’s relationship with peacebuilding, a concluding observation at the research and policy level is concerned with the centrality of understanding the negative and

positive roles of civil society in peacebuilding. While there is credible evidence in relation to the positive contributions that CSOs have made, and can make in peacebuilding and conflict situations as illustrated above, there are documented cases of the negative contributions of civil society to conflict and peacebuilding. Taken together, these negative examples and roles suggest clearly that the capacity of civil society to always make a positive contribution to peacebuilding should not be romanticized or exaggerated. In fact, as analyzed previously, civil society actors have the potential to play a negative role in peacebuilding and conflict contexts. Therefore, at the theoretical and policy level, these conflictual and negative elements should be studied and analyzed further with the purpose of understanding their deeper impacts on peacebuilding prospects. In addition, policy-makers should support civil society initiatives that enhance peacebuilding, and refrain from legitimizing the actions of civil society that contribute to conflict.

Summary

This entry has critically reviewed and examined civil society’s relationship with peacebuilding based on research and supporting examples. Drawing on the conceptual understandings of civil society and peacebuilding, this entry placed a special emphasis on conflict-torn societies and the positive role of civil society in peacebuilding. As the discussions demonstrated, the positive contributions civil society to peacebuilding processes in conflict situations include the following: elections monitoring; peace education; interreligious dialogue; international cooperation, protection of civilians in war times; documentation of war crimes; trauma recovery; representations of victims and combatants, grassroots participation in peacebuilding; humanitarian assistance; and capacity building and advocacy. To provide a more critical perspective, the analysis critiqued the role of CSO in peacebuilding and identified the negative contributions of civil society to conflict and peacebuilding processes. These negative contributions have involved:

undermining democracy; contributing to direct and indirect violence; participating in colonial and authoritarian policies; prolonging conflicts and obstructing their resolution; causing harm in local communities through the unequal allocation of aid and resources; and weakening the peacebuilding agenda by competing for funding and deepening organizational conflicts.

Informed by this critical review and assessment of civil society's relationship with peacebuilding, this chapter concluded with key observations at the policy and research level in the wider area of civil society peacebuilding. These significant observations have successfully established the following: First, clear and agreed definitions of civil society are still lacking within the contradictory frameworks of civil society resistance and liberal civil society. Second, defining the role of civil society in peacebuilding is problematic and challenging since the essential meaning of peacebuilding is contentious in both theory and practice. Third, the role of civil society and local actors is gaining further legitimacy and recognition in policy circles because of the complexities of both conflicts and peace processes, and also the shift from conflict resolution to conflict prevention. Fourth, CSOs are confronting growing dilemmas in engaging with conflict situations and armed groups in the context of distance and international politics. Finally, the negative and positive roles of civil society should remain central to the understanding of the theory of CSOs and their practical engagement in peacebuilding. This entry proposed taking these key observations into consideration within the broader context of conceptualizing and improving the practice of civil society peacebuilding.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Civil Society and State Violence in South America](#)
- ▶ [Civil Society Inclusion in Peace Mediation](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding and Korean Civil Society](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding Consequences](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding–Development Nexus](#)
- ▶ [Security–Development Nexus in Peacebuilding](#)

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Civil Society and State Violence in South America

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Synonyms

[Argentina](#); [Brazil](#); [Chile](#); [Human rights advocacy](#); [Military dictatorships](#); [State repression](#)

Definition

This entry examines state violence in South America, and how civil society reacts to this phenomenon, especially in the recent decades since the military dictatorships. The systematic state violence during military dictatorships from the 1960s to 1990s devastated the social fabric, leading to approximately 40,000 deaths and disappearances and 100,000 tortured people (Loveman 2011), including political leaders who would later become presidents in their countries like Dilma Rousseff (Brazil, 2011–2016) and José Mujica (Uruguay, 2010–2015). This period triggered social challenges, like the normalization of violence by police even under democratic rule, the negligence towards the prison system, and a limited transitional justice after military rule. To deal with these challenges that affect the building of lasting peace in South America, since the 1960s

the civil society has responded to blatant human rights violations in a path to overcoming inequalities and respect the memory of victims. In addition to the discussions presented in the entries ► [“Peace and Conflict in Brazil”](#) and ► [“Violent Conflicts in South America,”](#) this entry focuses on the state violence and civil society responses in Argentina, Brazil, and Chile. To start, the entry explains the historical background of military dictatorships in South America. The section following shows its legacies to the society divided in two subsections focusing on the search for truth and justice by civil society, and the normalization of violence by state institutions.

South America and State Violence: The Military Dictatorships from the 1960s to 1980s

The Cold War period (1947–1991) was not restricted to space and arms race between two superpowers in different ideological extremes. Despite not having engaged in a direct conflict, the USA and the Soviet Union disputed political, economic, and ideological influence by interfering and promoting regional conflicts (Gesteira 2014). Previously under leadership mostly by populist right-wing administrations, South America has historically closer diplomatic and economic relations with the USA. However, the increase of political power of leftist movements, as demonstrated by the Cuban Revolution (1959) and the election of Salvador Allende in Chile (1970), led Washington to incite right-wing military dictatorships with the support of local elites and companies with economic interests in the region (see Costa and Silva 2018; Sales and Martins Filho 2018; Huneeus and Undurraga 2021).

Thus, military regimes in the 1960s and 1970s were also inserted in the global economic momentum. Political upheavals had direct political, economic, and operational participation by corporations with strong participation in Latin America (such as Volkswagen, Ford, and Ultra-gás) (Costa and Silva 2018). Since its early years, the coups combined the alliance with the USA

between corporations and local elites but also received substantial criticisms from popular mobilizations led by civil society in a search for maintaining their labor rights, land reform, and wealth distribution.

It was in this global setting that several military coups in South America emerged, such as seen in Brazil (1964), Argentina (1966), Chile (1973), and Bolivia (1966) (Fernandes and Morett 2018). The upheavals bring a significant increase in political violence in South America through military dictatorships that aimed to combat the “enemy” that threatened capitalist regimes, that is, communism. Soon the new dictators started to promulgate new constitutions that would assure them unlimited powers commanding the country and a free pass to kill and torture civilians not supporting the regime.

It is important to mention that these dictatorships coordinated actions to combat movements defending democracy and resisting the regimes. The so-called Operation Condor, possibly designated by Colonel Manuel Contreras, head of DINA (Chilean National Intelligence Directorate), was a covert operation that began to chase individuals linked to the opposition throughout South America, claiming the need to respond harshly to the alliance of the left-wing politicians in South America (Quadrat 2002, p. 168).

In 1975 the intelligence representatives of the South American dictatorships met in Chile at the invitation of Pinochet’s government. They decided that Chile would be the headquarters of the operation, in addition to creating a database of leftist militants. Although the need number of deaths directly connected to Operation Condor is highly disputed because of its covert nature,

Human rights groups in the region have estimated that Condor commandos “disappeared” hundreds of persons in cross-border operations: some 132 Uruguayans (127 in Argentina, 3 in Chile, and 2 in Paraguay), 72 Bolivians (36 in Chile, 36 in Argentina), 119 Chileans, 51 Paraguayans (in Argentina), 16 Brazilians (9 in Argentina and 7 in Chile), and at least 12 Argentines in Brazil (...). These figures are likely underestimated; in the Paraguayan Archives of Terror in 1996, I saw thousands of photos and *fichas* of persons, many of various Latin American (and some European) nationalities, on the prisoner and suspect lists of

security forces of several South American countries, some dating from 1974, and some 200 persons passed through Automotores Orletti, the key Condor detention center in Argentina (McSherry 2002, p. 39).

The Condor operation worked until the late 1980s. In its history, also with support from companies such as Aerolíneas Argentinas and LAN Chile (Quadrat 2002, p. 170; see also Huneeus and Undurraga 2021), left-wing sympathizers and opponents to the military were at risk even outside the region, as was seen in the attacks against Bernardo Leighton (former vice president of Chile) and his wife Ana Fresno in Rome in 1975 (Quadrat 2002). As a painful legacy, the operation enabled the internationalization of human rights violations in South America, adding to the other legacies that still affect South American peace to this day.

Following it is explained the military dictatorships in Brazil, Argentina, and Chile. Although the states approaching to violence and repression are similar in the persecution of opposition and leftist movements, each country has had a different trajectory. In the case of Brazil, a series of military presidents and a new constitution led the country and its repression. In Argentina, on the other hand, the violence was even more brutal, led by military juntas until 1983. In Chile, the violence was driven by a centralized regime conducted by General Augusto Pinochet, in a long dictatorship that ended only in the early 1990s.

Military Dictatorship in Brazil

Brazil was the first South American country to have a military coup among the three countries here examined. Since its inauguration, the deposed president, João Goulart, was not celebrated by economic and military sectors due to his intentions to promote structural reforms, the so-called *Reformas de Base* (Reforms from the Ground), in areas like education, rural lands, and urban, among others. In support of an imminent coup d'état, the USA mobilized its navy in March 1964 in the so-called Operation Brother Sam. However, the support was not necessary when the Brazilian military seized power on April 1,

1964, without resistance from the Goulart government, which preferred to retreat in the face of a possible civil war (Fernandes and Morett 2018). Although the expectation was for a brief period to appoint a civilian president aligned with the interests of the USA and the economic elites, actually the military dictatorial regime lasted 21 years (Gesteira 2014).

The military junta and its successors (all of them generals from the Brazilian army) established *Atos Institucionais* (Institutional Acts, or AI), which were decrees to reinforce regime's rules. In the first AI, extraordinary powers were conferred to the executive, which included the removal of elective mandates and suspension of political rights of any citizen under some conditions (Hur and Lacerda Júnior 2017). Following this, AI-2 (1965) extinguished political parties; AI-3 (1966) appointed indirect elections for governors to Brazilian states; and AI-4 (1966) called the National Congress to vote on the 1967 Constitution that institutionalized the dictatorship in Brazil. Although other AIs were later sanctioned, the most important was AI-5 (1968), which suspended all individual guarantees and the political rights of citizens. AI-5 made manifest intense persecution of any individual that the military sees as part of subversive movements (Crestani 2011). Also, in the period is seen the acceleration of economic opening to foreign capital through economic policies for the establishment of multinationals (Costa and Silva 2018).

After administration of General Humberto de Alencar Castelo Branco, General Arthur da Costa e Silva, and a short period of a military junta, in October 1969 General Emílio Médici was designated as president (Neves and Liebel 2015). Médici ruled until 1974 in the most violent years of the dictatorship. His mandate was marked by urban and rural insurgent movements which were repressed with strong violence as a way to eliminate communist "threats." In Médici's government, prisons, assassinations, disappearances, and cases of torture were accentuated (Sales and Martins Filho 2018).

In 1974, General Ernesto Geisel became the president and promised a "slow, gradual and

secure” political opening, but an economic crisis brought difficulties to put in motion democratization. In 1979, João Batista Figueiredo continued to focus in the political opening initiated by Geisel, under strong pressure from civil society asking in 1984 for “Diretas Já” (motto demanding direct elections for presidential succession). The dictatorial period ended in 1985 with the election of the civilian Tancredo Neves by the Congress (Castro 2008), but it was only in 1989 that Brazil could democratically elect its president again.

Military Dictatorship in Argentina

Another case of a violent military dictatorship in South America was in Argentina. In the 1960s the country faced an effervescent feminist movement by active groups for the creation of social reforms, but these social demands were interrupted with the military coup in 1966. The dictatorship in Argentina began as a result of the “Argentine Revolution” movement that removed President Arturo Illia from power (Capelato 2006). Through the document “*Acta de la Revolución Argentina*” (Records of Argentinian Revolution) it was defined that Lieutenant General Juan Carlos Onganía would assume the presidency. After a brief civilian period (1973–1976), the Military Junta composed by General Juan Rafael Videla, Admiral Emilio Massera, and Brigadier Orlando Agosti inaugurated a permanent and brutal dictatorship in Argentina (Koike 2013). The dictatorship was conducted by successive military juntas that ended only in 1983, a year after the failure of the Malvinas War against Great Britain which resulted in more than 900 deaths, the vast majority of Argentine officials.

The Argentine military coup was the sixth coup against a constitutionally elected government, as other countries in South America such as Bolivia, Paraguay, Brazil, Chile, and Uruguay were already under a dictatorship. Despite being similar political movements, Argentina was one of the most brutal cases of dictatorship in the region with 30,000 “missing” people who were kidnapped, killed, and tortured by the authorities (Rodríguez 2009). Also, the government officials engaged also in children trafficking, in which babies from pregnant women arrested and

tortured by the regime were adopted by couples identified with military regime (Koike 2013). As a result of this brutality, the Argentine military regime is often regarded as a historical case of state terrorism (Bayer 2010).

Military Dictatorship in Chile

In the case of Chile, the military coup begins on September 11, 1973, against President Salvador Allende. As in the case of Brazil, Allende was the elected president, but when he put into practice measures of socialization of the economy and agrarian reform, he caused great dissatisfaction on the part of the country’s elite (Neto 2017). Allende’s inevitable downfall was then the result of actions on the part of the Chilean right wing and also US support. The official responsible for the Chilean presidency after the coup was General Augusto Pinochet, who persisted in power until 1990 (Neira 2010).

As soon as the military came to power, it started killing more than 3,000 left-wing activists and ordinary citizens opposing the regime in a way to eliminate any ideological propaganda and sympathy to Allende’s administration (Loveman 2011). The National Stadium was known to serve as an open prison, receiving thousands of people provisionally arrested for summary judgment. In the following years, the military regime worked strongly to control the media, the political organizations, and other institutions, leaving no space for the development of civil society (Errázuriz 2009). The regime finally ends in 1990, after the “no” wins in a plebiscite asking if Pinochet could have more 7 years in the presidency. This historical episode is represented in the movie *No* (Larraín 2012).

Civil Society and the Legacies of State-Sponsored Violence

The military dictatorships in countries like Argentina, Brazil, and Chile triggered side effects to the domestic peace. Among these negative effects are the normalization of violence by the state institutions (including the abandonment of the prison system that allowed the development of complex

criminal organizations). Also, we can notice as a civil society response the search for justice and truth in face of human rights violations during the dictatorships (while in some cases with limited punishment for perpetrators, especially in Brazil). Other legacies are extensively explored in literature, like the mismanagement of the public budget which resulted in the rise of inequality (Oliveira 1995; Souza 2016). Below we focus our analysis on the transition to democracy and the responses from civil society to reach a more peaceful society.

The Search for Justice and Truth in Face of Human Right Violations

After the dictatorships, the search for truth and justice predominated in South American countries, with a focus on reparation for the victims, the reconstruction of their memory, the reform of institutions, and the adoption of policies for the restoration of political and social rights (Río 2014). In this regard, the human rights agenda in countries like Argentina and Chile after dictatorships had repercussions even on the international and regional regimes on human rights (see Ramanzini and Gomide Junior 2020). Responses to violations committed in these countries have influenced international human rights organizations to expand their monitoring activities and seek to investigate in detail the crimes of that period in Latin American countries (Cavallaro and Brewer 2008).

Argentina began its transitional justice 5 days after re-democratization. In 1983, civilian president-elect Raul Alfonsín established a truth commission to examine the atrocities committed by the dictatorship. The CONADEP (Argentina's National Commission on Disappeared People) was created "to investigate disappearances and other human rights abuses by the military dictatorship" (Zysman 2017, p. 92). Initially, civil society institutions showed disbelief with CONADEP and preferred not to participate actively, but the pressure and cooperation of these organizations were key to CONADEP's success. Social organizations like Madres de la Plaza de Mayo (Mothers of Mayo's Square) and Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo (Grandmothers of Mayo's Square) collaborated

actively. Also, other very active organizations were Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales (CELS – Center for Social and Legal Studies); Servicio de Paz y Justicia (SERPAJ, or Service for Peace and Justice); Family Members of Detained and Disappeared for Political Reasons; and the Ecumenical Movement for Human Rights.

At the end was released the report *Nunca Más* (Never More), regarded as a positive example of truth commissions able to create a "justice cascade." In its 50,000 pages – later published in a shorter book with 324 pages – is recorded the forced disappearance of 8961 persons from 1976 to 1983, although the actual number could be higher, given that human rights organizations currently estimate 30,000 persons (CONADEP 1985). The report also presented the regime's secret places of detention and torture. Finally, the report was key to collect data on the conviction of military junta members and top officials. In 1985, 14 former members of the military regime were convicted by civil courts in Buenos Aires, which also led to the investigations and prosecution of many other officials connected with state terrorism (Zysman 2017).

In addition to the widespread sexual violence against women imprisoned by the regime (Koike 2013), the Argentine military dictatorship also was accused of children trafficking, in which children were kidnapped at the time their parents were arrested or murdered (Barreto 2018). These children were adopted by supporters of the dictatorship, but in the period of re-democratization, the mothers demanded the right to identity and parenthood. Here it is important to mention the role of feminist activism like the Madres de la Plaza de Mayo and Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo organizations, which gained ground with the strong performance of mothers who demanded that the government should answer criminally about the disappearance of their children and grandchildren kidnapped or imprisoned during the dictatorship. These groups are still very active in search of the memory of their children.

In the case of Chile, a "slow but steady progress on criminal justice" (Correa 2017, June 6) can be noticed after military rule. In the following

months after the end of Pinochet's dictatorship the first steps to transitional justice were seen. In April 1990, President Patricio Aylwin issued the Supreme Decree No. 355, officially creating the National Commission for Truth and Reconciliation, which led to investigations later published in the so-called Rettig Report.

Under the leadership of Raúl Rettig, a former diplomat before the dictatorship period, the Rettig Report dealt with the cases of just over 3000 individual victims (Baxter 2005). The initiative was the first step to bring justice after the dictatorship. Since then, "between 1995 and mid-2020, 476 final judgments have been handed in criminal (400) and civil (76) cases relating to human rights violations committed during Pinochet's dictatorship" (Lessa 2021, p. 184).

After the Rettig Commission efforts,

Chile's second phase of promoting truth, justice, and reconciliation occurred largely in the national and international legal arenas during the mid-to the late 1990s. Much of the impetus for judicial involvement came from strong international pressure that called for criminal accountability for human rights abuses in Chile. The ultimate expression of this was the London arrest and a Spanish judge's extradition attempts of Pinochet in 1998 to try him for human rights violations perpetrated against Spanish citizens during his regime. Pinochet eventually was released, but the 16 months he spent in detention again renewed a debate about redressing the human rights abuses of the Pinochet regime (Baxter 2005, p. 123).

The arrest of Pinochet also reignited human rights movements in Chile. Can here be highlighted the movement Funa, which has a strategy to make demonstrations in front of homes of militaries involved with Pinochet's regime. Many of Funa's members are the children of tortured, killed, or disappeared parents during the military regime (Baxter 2005). Recently, the union of diverse social movements – especially young university students – put pressure on the government to create a plebiscite for a new constitution, since the current one is the same as it was during the military dictatorship. The referendum occurred in October 2020, in which 78% of the population expressed the desire for a new constitution, which should be discussed and written from 2021 onwards (McGowan 2020, Oct 26).

Also, it is important to highlight the key role of indigenous peoples in response to Chilean state violence. Since 1990 the Mapuche people are actively organized in the Council of All Lands (Aukiñ WallMapu Ngülam, hereafter AWNg). AWNg's struggle is focused not only on the post-dictatorship context but also on the historical repair of Spanish colonization that has helped to conduct state violence and is active for more than four centuries. Therefore, the focus is on territorial recognition, in addition to the state's reparations for the violence suffered in Pinochet's regime (Boccaro 2002).

In the case of Brazil, the search for truth and justice did not progress at the same pace as seen in Argentina and Chile. In 1979 the Amnesty Law (#6683/1979) was approved – a controversial legislation that allowed the safe return of 2000 exiles, but which did not include all the demands from civil society to punish the regime's human rights violators (Mezarobba 2010). The Amnesty Law, created during the dictatorship, exempted the military from their crimes, making it difficult to punish the regime's torturers and murderers in the following decades.

In an attempt to support the elucidation of the truth, the action promoted by progressive religious institutions in Brazil was key. Between 1979 and 1985, three religious leaders – Archbishop Evaristo Arns, the rabbi Henry Sobel, and the presbyterian priest Jaime Wright – documented Brazilian state repression and human rights violations with the support of the World Council of Churches. After examining 707 processes of the Brazilian Supreme Military Court, the results are published in the book *Brasil: Nunca Mais!* (Brazil: Never More!), a publication deemed as the first initiative of Brazilian civil society to bring the truth about the regime (see Arns 1985).

More than two decades later, a Truth Commission was created in 2011 by President Dilma Rousseff (first female Brazilian president, also arrested and tortured by the military regime between 1970 and 1972) to obtain information about what happened during this period (Crestani 2011). According to Human Rights Watch (2009), the Brazilian military regime was

responsible for more than 50,000 people detained in the dictatorship, and 10,000 requested exile. Besides, archives of the military justice system in Brazil describe 1,918 reports of torture only between 1964 and 1979 (HRW 2009). It was difficult to obtain data on the dead and missing, as well as the torture, practiced against women, the LGBTQIA+ population, indigenous people, Blacks, and peasants. However, it was the first time that some victims were able to express the inhuman acts that occurred. Crimes such as kidnapping, torture, sexual violence, forced abortions, and the use of live animals and insects in torture practices against men and women were also revealed (Teles 2015).

Normalization of Violence by State Apparatus: Effects on Public Security and Prison System

One of the most harmful effects of the military dictatorship was the legacy of normalizing violence, even under a constitutionally democratic regime. Despite the civil society responses to the violence carried out by the military, there is a practice of indiscriminate use of force in the police forces and the prison system. Thus, the effect of this normalization can be seen in two dimensions: one, in the police violence that annually impacts thousands of South Americans, and two, in the abandonment of the prison system, leading to the development of criminal organizations.

Although societies have reformed and new laws have looked to guarantee the promotion of human rights and the rule of law, the police have remained with a structure distant from society and a hierarchy similar to the military. In Chile, despite their attempt in recent years to get closer to the community in a policing model in cooperation with civil society (Oviedo 2007), the *Carabineros* (Chilean military police) have been accused of human rights violations at different times since the end of the dictatorship (Mason 2012), especially against social movements and indigenous people (see Fuentes 2005). More recently, in the protests and mobilizations for a new constitution in 2019, numerous cases of strong repression against mobilized youth have been reported (Pallacios-Valladares 2020).

In Argentina, where the police are not fully militarized like in Chile and Brazil, a decrease in deaths and violent acts perpetrated by police forces can be seen in recent years (see CELS 2021). However, in the metropolitan area of Buenos Aires, the highest concentration of deaths is seen. It is also noted that police violence, in general, is concentrated in deprived areas, which has generated civil society movements, especially led by youth, demanding equal treatment and end of prejudice against the poor population (Plaza Schaefer 2018).

Among the three countries examined in this entry, the case of Brazil is the most worrying in terms of police violence and its effects. There are two police institutions in each state of the federation: the civil police, responsible for investigating crimes in general, and the military, responsible for repression and fighting crime. It is not uncommon for the latter to use its violence apparatus of violence to do justice with its own hands, to persecute minorities, and to marginalize poor neighborhoods in the cities. In other words, it is a police that serves especially the elites and has little concern for its primary function of maintaining democratic order. Thus,

relations between police and citizens in Brazil are still characterized in many contexts by distrust, abuse of power, and the lack of criteria for the use of force, producing high rates of police lethality and victimization. The democratic transition guaranteed political rights and the electoral process, but it did not guarantee civil rights for all citizens and the reform of police institutions. Legal control of violence remained below an acceptable level and the main obstacles were not addressed. Serious human rights violations persist [...] (Azevedo and Nascimento 2016, p. 654).

The cases of Argentina, Brazil, and Chile are an example of how “military dictatorships militarize their police forces, which presents a dilemma regarding democratization for the leadership that follows them” (Frantz 2019, p. 415). Consequently, as developed in the entry ► “Peace and Conflict in Brazil,” this violence has generated thousands of annual deaths and warlike scenarios in places like Rio de Janeiro and suburbs of cities like Fortaleza, Recife, among others. The effect of police violence brings as a side effect the disbelief

of the rule of law, allowing a gain in legitimacy for criminal organizations that operate on the margins of the state (Ferreira and Richmond 2021; Ferreira 2021).

Another dimension of the normalization of post-dictatorship violence can be seen in the Brazilian prison system. Although it was not a novelty of the military regime, the conditions of Brazilian prisons violate several basic human rights, such as lack of basic sanitation, access to health, and minimum standards of quality of food. It is not an exaggeration to say that there is deliberate negligence of the state towards its prison population, allowing the strengthening of criminal organizations within the penitentiaries. These organizations offer the basics in a chaotic setting: an informal order and self-help between criminals.

In the late 1970s, the interaction between political prisoners trained in guerrilla tactics and ordinary prisoners allowed the emergence of prisoner movements in defense of better prison conditions. The effect of this interaction would be seen shortly afterward. First, with the creation of *Comando Vermelho*, a group based in Rio de Janeiro that soon moves from advocacy for better conditions in prisons to a complex organization focused on drug trafficking in South American borders.

Similar groups would emerge years later, such as the PCC – *Primeiro Comando da Capital* (First Command of the Capital) in 1993, nowadays at the same time the main criminal group in South America (controlling the entire productive chain of marijuana and cocaine from Paraguay and distributed to the world through Brazilian ports) and a hegemonic group in dozens of prisons establishing internal rules and a unique system of informal governance (Villa et al. 2021). The level of organization of PCC is today near to a mafia – or a proto-mafia – which makes the group a security concern not only to Brazil but also to Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, and Bolivia (Sampó and Ferreira 2020).

State violence and criminal governance combined are creating blockages to peace formation in South America in the last decades. In this regard, “criminal actors’ penetration of legitimacy and governance has significant impacts on civil

society and its processes of peace formation,” in which two blockages emerge: one, “the governance structure is not directed towards the improvement of live conditions in areas of high structural violence, and also reproduces this violence” and, two, “the criminal organizations’ legitimacy is a result of the negative state presence and lack of public policies in historically deprived zones” (Ferreira and Richmond 2021, p. 17) which makes the construction of citizenship much more difficult.

Facing this challenge to peace, as Ferreira and Richmond (2021) suggest, “the local agency has potentially the competencies, knowledge, and attitudes to begin dealing with this scenario in discursive terms” (p. 18), as seen in the agency of organizations like *Rio de Paz* and *Redes da Maré* in their efforts to promote a safer environment in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro and to denounce the normalization of violence. However, “its power and capacity to effect structural change, end criminal violence, economic injustice, and paramilitary or state activity is negligible in direct terms” (Ferreira and Richmond 2021, p. 18), which highlights the importance of support to the local agency from actors and donors focused on a peacebuilding agenda, looking beyond a state-centric approach that favors mostly regular armed conflicts.

Summary

South America’s history is permeated by state violence, but also by responses from civil society. As demonstrated in another entry in this encyclopedia (see ► [“Violent Conflicts in South America”](#)), both the violence of the colonial and the post-colonial state were challenged by popular movements. However, as we explored in this entry, the recent period of military dictatorships experienced in the 1960s to 1980s had a different impact on the region. During this period, we can notice the extensive use of violence by state forces that should be focused exclusively on the defense of sovereignty. Against their people and their constitution, the armed forces of Chile, Brazil, and Argentina led governments guided by the defense

of the economic interests of multinationals and the local elite (including the armed forces themselves), while harshly repressing the opposition and popular movements.

One of the positive effects of the dictatorship was the emergence of civil society in search of truth and justice. After an estimated 40,000 killed civilians and thousands more tortured, South America experienced a period of democratic transition in the 1980s and 1990s. Demands for memory and justice emerged in addition to public reparation for numerous human rights violations. Argentina was the country that made the most progress in its transitional justice, especially due to the strong pressure from civil society. For its part, Chile also made important steps with the Rettig Commission, although at a less intense pace than its neighboring country. Brazil, on the other hand, created its amnesty law and had relevant initiatives by organized civil society, such as *Brasil Nunca Mais*, but among the three countries, it is the one that had its truth commission much later, only in 2011.

The violence of the dictatorship also had harmful side effects for South American societies. Among them are the normalization of police violence and in prisons, which led to increased responses outside the law, such as the strengthening of criminal organizations. In this context, the search for peace in South America cannot be examined solely by relying on the state as an entity that defends the constitution. In a region with a tragic history of dictatorships and state violence, a strong and active civil society is central to the construction of more peaceful societies and guided by the rule of law.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Peace and Conflict in Brazil](#)
- ▶ [Violent Conflicts in South America](#)

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Civil Society Inclusion in Peace Mediation

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Inclusion · Peacemaking · Mediation · Civil Society

Definition

Inclusivity is defined in the UN Guidance for Effective Mediation as “extent and manner in which the views and needs of conflict parties and other stakeholders are represented and integrated into the process and outcome of a mediation effort” (United Nations 2012) (see chapters “► Mediation,” “► Peace Agreements,” “► Private Peacemaking and Dialogic Approach to Mediation”)¹. Among these other stakeholders, civil society has attracted particular attention (Anderlini 2007; Paffenholz 2014; Wanis-St. John and Kew 2008). This includes a wide range of actors such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), women’s groups, business actors,

victims’ groups, local leaders, and youth (see chapters “► Social Capital and Peace,” “► Peace Infrastructures”). They are seen as complementing the conflict parties, being the armed political elite, at the negotiation table². While initial research has mostly focused on the link between inclusion or exclusion on the one hand and the effectiveness of peace processes on the other hand, scholars have recently provided insights on the rationales and operationalization of inclusion. Yet, important gaps remain regarding the context, timing, and management of inclusion as well as understanding inclusion from the perspective of civil society actors. This entry first defines the terms civil society and inclusion. It then provides an overview of current debates around civil society inclusion and finally shares some suggestions for future directions of research.

Concepts and Background

Civil Society

The concept of civil society is closely linked to the political system of liberal democracy (Hellmüller 2020b). Originally introduced by Western political philosophers, such as Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, to signal a shift away from the state of nature, civil society became a key component of democratization theories by authors, such as Jürgen Habermas (1992) or Robert Putnam (2000), who considered it as a main pillar of a functioning democracy. In practice, the roles played by civil society actors against authoritarian regimes in Latin America in the 1960s and Eastern Europe in the 1980s underlined their function as an important counterweight to the state (Fine 1997, p. 9; Kopecký and Mudde 2003, p. 1). At the same time, civil society’s role increased in the framework of the neoliberal political environment in the West in the 1980s and 1990s when the declining welfare state left space for non-governmental actors to fill (Edwards 2009; Fischer 2011, p. 290).

¹The two terms of inclusion and inclusivity are often used interchangeably. In what follows, the term inclusivity is used to refer to the norm, while inclusion is used to refer to the activity of including actors in a mediation process.

²See Hellmüller 2020b for an overview of the role of civil society in peacemaking and peacebuilding.

As mentioned in Hellmüller (2020b), political scientists usually refer to three elements when defining civil society. First, they refer to its voluntary and collective nature, as civil society actors freely work together to achieve common objectives (Belloni 2008; Fischer 2011; Jessop et al. 2007; Nilsson 2012; Orjuela 2003; Pouligny 2005; Spurk 2010; Walzer 1998). Second, they define civil society as distinct from the state, as it is neither created by the state nor part of the state's governing institutions (Belloni 2008; Fischer 2011; Jessop et al. 2007; Nilsson 2012; Orjuela 2003; Pouligny 2005; Spurk 2010; Wanis-St. John and Kew 2008). Third, they clearly distinguish civil society actors from political parties, as they do not aim to capture the state or to attract the population's favor (Diamond 1999; Nilsson 2012; Spurk 2010; Wanis-St. John and Kew 2008).

When analyzing civil society outside of the context of a liberal democratic state, as it is usually the case in conflict contexts where the entire political dispensation is being questioned and rediscussed, three nuances need to be added to this definition (Hellmüller 2020b). First, while civil society action always contains a voluntary element, ethnic and religious bonds may be more strongly linked to civil action in conflict contexts (Marchetti and Tocci 2009, pp. 203–204). It is thus crucial to include activism based on shared identities in the definition of civil society as it makes up an important part of collective action in many conflict contexts. Second, while the difference to state institutions remains a definitional element of civil society, non-state actors often take up governing functions in conflict contexts in case state institutions are no longer fully operational. Thus, the distinction between the sphere of state and non-state governance may be blurred in these contexts as activities may more strongly overlap (Fischer 2011, p. 305; Kopecký and Mudde 2003, pp. 5–8; Marchetti and Tocci 2009, p. 203). Third, although the separation from formal political parties remains an important element, identities are multiple, and armed conflicts often lead to increased politicization of the population on the one hand and competition for positions in the new political dispensation of the country on the other hand (Hellmüller 2018,

p. 130; Spurk 2010, pp. 8–9). Thus, civil society actions may be closely intertwined with political parties' behavior in conflict contexts.

These nuances point to the diversity of civil society actors. To avoid that pre-existing definitions derange the empirical analysis of how civil society is defined within a given social system, an approach that explores inductively who self-identifies or is identified by others as civil society is needed (Hellmüller 2020b). This helps to avoid two pitfalls: homogenization and essentialization. The first relates to the fact that civil society is sometimes referred to as a homogeneous entity without accounting for the variety of actors that are part of it (Anheier and Nuno 2002, p. 191). The second concerns the assignment of fixed characteristics to the term, which creates strict boundaries of who is considered civil society and who is not without accounting for contextual and temporal differences. In sum, it is important to acknowledge the diversity of civil society actors (Fischer 2011; Paffenholz 2010; Pouligny 2005). Their activities converge around different values, which are not always peace-promoting, but can also be conflict-inducing (Fischer 2011; Nilsson 2012; Orjuela 2003; Pouligny 2005). Indeed, civil society actors reflect the specificities of a given society, including its conflict lines (Hellmüller 2018; Zanker 2018). The civil society sphere is thus not necessarily inclusive and can be a space for exclusion and internal conflicts (Brühl 2010). Moreover, while many civil society actors engage in peacebuilding activities, they also work in other fields ranging from humanitarian and development issues, human rights promotion, and monitoring to social service delivery, and local governance issues. These activities are sometimes formalized in NGOs and at other times more loosely coordinated in associations or initiatives.

Inclusion

Scholars and practitioners have come to consider civil society inclusion as an important factor to correct an earlier focus on the political armed elite in mediation processes. The uptake of inclusion as a central policy objective is intimately linked to a change in the context of peacemaking. With the end of the Cold War, intrastate conflicts became

more common (Bellamy and Williams 2004, pp. 3–4; Gleditsch 2009, p. 595). Lederach (2006, p. 13) locates the difference between intrastate wars and the previously dominant interstate wars in the “immediacy of the experience” since the former reach the doorstep of the civilian population as they witness and experience killings, rapes, and abductions. Indeed, in a context of localized warfare, conflict lines penetrate the whole society and the distinction between combatants and civilians becomes blurred (Kaldor 2006; Kalyvas 2001; Lake and Rothchild 1996; Mack 2002; Wallensteen and Axell 1993). This means that “the enemy is not halfway around the globe; the enemy lives only a village away, or in some instances next door” (Lederach 2006, p. 13). Based on this changed nature of warfare, the approach shifted from merely attempting to *managing* conflicts toward substantively *transforming* them by seeking to address their root causes. This change came with an increased realization that exclusive deals at the national level were not sufficient to bring lasting peace and that more efforts were needed to extend peace mediation processes beyond the political and military elites. To do so, Lederach (1995) proposed the so-called middle-out approach with a key role assigned to mid-level civil society actors that interact with both top-level military and political leaders as well as actors at the local level. Civil society actors thus became considered an important intermediary between the narrow peace process and the broader population.

Policy documents reflected this change. Most importantly, the UN Guidance on Effective Mediation, which lists eight fundamentals for effective mediation and thereby presented for the first time the professional standards of mediation, includes inclusivity as one of them (United Nations 2012). It says that “civil society actors can play a critical role in increasing the legitimacy of a peace process and are potentially important allies” (United Nations 2012, p. 11). Regional organizations followed suit and also included inclusivity as a core principle in their guidance documents on mediation (e.g., African Union 2014; European External Action Service 2012; OSCE 2014). Likewise, international NGOs and think-tanks

supporting mediation processes integrated inclusion in their strategies (e.g., European Institute of Peace,³ United States Institute of Peace,⁴ Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue,⁵ Conflict Management Initiative⁶). Moreover, mediators often refer to inclusivity when designing their processes and justify themselves or refer to later processes if they feel that they are not inclusive enough. Therefore, while the modalities of who is included and excluded at which stage of a mediation process remain debated, inclusivity has become part of the normative framework of mediation as mediators usually do not argue against the norm in general (Hellmüller 2019, 2020a).

Current Debates and Research on Civil Society Inclusion

Most scholarly attention has been given to the question of how civil society inclusion relates to mediation success (Bell and O'Rourke 2007; Belloni 2001; Orjuela 2003). Nilsson (2012) shows civil society actors' positive contributions to peace processes by demonstrating a correlation between their participation and the durability of the ensuing peace. The assumption about a positive impact of civil society inclusion is related to at least three functions they can play. First, they can serve as intermediary between the process and the broader public by not only bringing context knowledge to the attention of the mediator but also informing the population about the discussions and hence increasing the transparency of the negotiations. Second, they can hold the parties accountable by putting pressure on them to refrain from stalling tactics and to engage genuinely in the negotiations. Third, they can be an example of compromise and bridge-building as they usually come from a wide political spectrum. By meeting each other, they send an important signal and

³ See <http://www.eip.org/en/about-us/mission>.

⁴ See <https://www.usip.org/about/strategic-plan>.

⁵ See <https://www.hdcentre.org/activities/inclusion-in-peace-processes/>.

⁶ See <http://cmi.fi/our-work/regions-and-themes/>.

contribute to reorienting society toward peace (see for instance Barnes 2002; Bell and O'Rourke 2007; Hellmüller 2019; Jessop et al. 2007; Nilsson 2012; Wanis-St. John and Kew 2008). At the same time, scholars also point to the fact that civil society inclusion can render a peace process less effective as it adds to its complexity. Two sets of reasons are given. First, authors argue that exclusionary talks are necessary to achieve breakthroughs in negotiations as a lower number of people more easily finds consensus. Thus, civil society participation risks delaying an agreement (Cunningham 2013; Kanol 2015; Nilsson 2012, p. 247; Raiffa 2004; Wanis-St. John 2006; Wanis-St. John and Kew 2008, pp. 13, 21–23). Second, scholars also point to the fact that the political nature of negotiations may require confidential talks so that conflict parties can explore concessions and test possible compromises. Yet, the involvement of civil society may render the process too public to allow for such a protected space (McClintock and Nahimana 2008). Therefore, current discussions mainly revolve around the impact of civil society inclusion on the effectiveness of the peace process presenting a trade-off between sustainability and efficiency. The first line of argumentation claims that inclusion helps to end violence in a more durable way and should therefore be prioritized even if it may take longer to reach an agreement. The second strand argues that inclusion delays the finding of an agreement and should therefore be postponed to a later stage of a peace process as stopping the violence is the main priority of mediators.

While the understanding of the relation between inclusion and mediation success is crucial, several authors underline the need to move beyond the inclusion-exclusion binary to analyze the underlying *rationales* of inclusion as well as its *operationalization* (Paffenholz 2014; Zanker 2018). This means to no longer solely ask if inclusion is important or not but to inquire into the questions of why it is important and how it can be implemented. Regarding the underlying *rationales*, scholars have analyzed both the pragmatic and normative motivations for inclusion, thereby putting decisions for or against inclusion in context (Hellmüller 2019; Lanz 2011; Zanker 2018).

Hirblinger and Landau (2020) examine the rationales that underline how the included actors, such as civil society, are framed in research, policy, and practice. Bell (2019) points to some of the challenges to inclusion in terms of actors' competing rationales by showing how development actors, peacebuilding actors, and human rights promoters differently understand the term. Mendes (2020) takes an innovative approach by analyzing inclusion through the lens of representation and thus looks specifically at one rationale of inclusion. Finally, Cuhadar (2020) provides a better understanding of the rationales against exclusion by studying the reasons, actors, and ways of resistance to including more actors in peace processes. Related to the *operationalization* of inclusion, Paffenholz (2014) presents nine models of inclusion ranging from direction representation, observation at the negotiation table, consultative forums, less formalized consultations, inclusive post-agreement mechanisms, high-level civil society initiatives, public participation, public decision-making, to mass action. She thereby sheds light on the different design options for inclusive processes. By presenting alternatives to direct participation, she adds nuances to the trade-off between sustainability and efficiency. For instance, the stated risk of rendering a process more complex may decrease if civil society actors are given an observer, rather than a direct participation role. Other authors have added insights on specific forms of inclusion. Bell and O'Rourke (2007) analyze consultative mechanisms, Dudouet (2017) and Nilsson et al. (2020) inquire into how civil resistance and mass action influence peacemaking, while Amaral (2019) examines the use of referendums in peace processes.

Future Directions

The above shows that the literature is providing new insights on civil society inclusion in peace mediation. However, three lines of inquiry remain open for further research. The first relates to the context and timing of inclusion. While many scholars have analyzed the impact of inclusion on mediation success, as mentioned above, the

question of how the context and timing influence this equation has been largely ignored (Hellmüller and Zahar 2018b). Yet, contextual factors, such as the nature of state institutions, the nature of society, and the internationalization of a conflict as well as conflict-related factors, such as conflict type, duration, and intensity influence the state of civil society in a given conflict and the contributions it can make to a peace process (Hellmüller and Zahar 2018b). At the same time, during an ongoing mediation process, there are several phases in which inclusion may be more or less adequate. At times, exclusionary and secretive talks are used in order to build confidence, to allow parties to participate that can politically not afford to be seen as engaging, and to test ideas without the attention of the broader public (McClintock and Nahimana 2008; Wanis-St. John 2006). Thus, research should provide more disaggregated findings on how different context factors as well as mediation phases influence the impact inclusion has on the effectiveness of a peace process.

A second research avenue relates to how the concrete management of civil society inclusion, in terms of the daily activities and decision-making, influences its impact on mediation success. While civil society participation arguably has an important symbolic impact in that it creates momentum for finding a political over a military solution, bringing civil society actors to peace talks will not per se increase or decrease their effectiveness. Several authors and policy-makers have already pointed out that including civil society actors is not enough to make peace processes more sustainable but that the key lies in relevant inclusion (Hellmüller and Zahar 2018a; Mendes 2020; Paffenholz et al. 2016). Indeed, badly managed inclusion is likely to leave civil society actors frustrated and thus to decrease the perceived legitimacy of a peace process, which in the end may also negatively affect its effectiveness. Moreover, the way inclusion is managed also influences its impact on the actors themselves. If inclusion is reduced to a headcount exercise, it risks further fragmenting civil society actors according to existing conflict lines. Thus, scholars should provide more

insights of what relevant inclusion means and how it can be operationalized.

This leads to a third, and arguably the most important, avenue for further research. When writing about inclusion, it is noteworthy that most authors provide insights from the perspective of international actors and their rationales and operationalization of inclusion. What remains blatantly missing are the views and voices of civil society actors included or excluded from peace processes.⁷ In-depth empirical studies on how civil society actors perceive and view inclusion and how these perceptions relate to international approaches and design options are thus urgently needed. In the end, it seems that not only peace mediation needs more inclusion but also research on it.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Mediation](#)
- ▶ [Peace Agreements](#)
- ▶ [Peace Infrastructures](#)
- ▶ [Social Capital and Peace](#)

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⁷Zanker (2018) and Hellmüller (2020a) are exceptions.

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Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)

- ▶ [LGBTQ Perspectives in Peacebuilding](#)
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Civil War

- ▶ [Cameroon and the Anglophone Crisis](#)
- ▶ [Civil Wars in Sudan and South Sudan](#)
- ▶ [Mozambique](#)
- ▶ [War and Peace in Somalia](#)

Civil Wars in Sudan and South Sudan

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Synonyms

[Civil war](#); [Diversity](#); [Institutions](#); [Peace](#); [Political Islam](#); [Social contract](#); [South Sudan](#); [Sudan](#); [System of government](#)

Definition

This article revisits debate about the root causes of civil wars with the aim of providing a coherent framework for addressing such drivers and building sustainable peace. It is argued in this article that the civil war is better explained by the absence of resilient social contract rather than the dominant theoretical perspectives that attribute causation of civil wars to grievances or greed. The resilient social contract framework with its three postulated drivers is used in this article to provide a better diagnosis of civil wars and mechanisms for nurturing enduring peace. Sudan and South Sudan that have been susceptible since their independence to recurrent civil wars provide good cases for testing the social contract framework. This entry argues that the ruling elites in both countries have adopted unitary autocratic system of government that failed to forge a social contract that builds trust between

citizens and governments and among citizens as well as failing to address the core conflict issues. The pathway for sustainable peace in the two Sudans is to forge a new resilient social contract that addresses the core conflict issues through inclusive and responsive political settlements and social contract-making mechanisms, inclusive and effective institutions and expanding and deepening social cohesion.

Introduction

There is no doubt that civil wars will continue to pose continuous threat to human lives and livelihoods, particularly in Africa. In 2018, Africa experienced about 21 civil wars that is the highest number of civil conflicts since 1946 (Rustad and Bakken 2019). Besides their persistent recurrence, the nature and dynamics of civil conflicts have been changing. While most of violent conflicts are largely within the states in Africa, peaceful civilian protests, riots, and uprising are increasingly supplanting the normal armed conflicts. The violent conflicts are not only in rise but have become the main drivers of the increased vulnerability, food insecurity, and recent resurgent of famines in Africa. In the case of the Horn of Africa, the overall economic cost of conflict was estimated to be 18.29% economic growth rate of per capita from 1990 to 2010 and lost between \$4757.24 and \$8777.96 in gross domestic product (GDP) per capita between 1990 and 2007 [Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) 2011, p. 98].

Given its persistence, understanding the root causes of civil war will continue to pose a challenge in terms of conceptualization and theorization of its genesis but also in terms of appropriate policy direction and intervention to prevent its occurrence and build sustainable peace. This article is an attempt to provide better understanding of root causes of civil wars and possible pathways to building sustainable peace. The main argument in this article is that the causation of civil wars is better explained by the absence of resilient social contract than the dominant arguments of grievance and greed. The entry is organized into four

sections including this introduction section that is followed by a section on core conceptual and theoretical framework for understanding and addressing civil war. The resilient social contract framework is applied in section three to the cases of Sudan and South Sudan to provide empirical examples of better understanding of recurrent civil wars. The conclusion section captures thought-provoking and key ideas to take away in understanding and addressing civil wars.

Understanding Conflict: Social Contract Framework

The concept of civil war is widely used but rarely defined. This entry uses the definition of civil war provided by Gersovitz and Kriger (2013, pp. 160–161) as “a politically organized, large-scale, sustained, physically violent conflict that occurs within a country principally among large/numerically important groups of its inhabitants or citizens over the monopoly of physical force within the country.” With this definition, the term “civil war” will be used interchangeably with civil conflict or violent conflict throughout this entry. The search for understanding the phenomenon of civil war has attracted various disciplines to provide their analysis that often suffers conceptually from their monodisciplinary approach. Some scholars consider religion or ethnicity as a prime driver of civil war (Huntington 1996), while some economists largely attributed the causation of civil wars to greed (Collier and Hoeffler 2002).

The political scientists such as Gurr (1970) have a long-standing position of attributing the cause of civil conflict to relative deprivation and grievances. Generally, two competing theoretical perspectives, greed and grievance, have directed the debate about causation of civil war. There is now growing empirical evidence that unequivocally shows violent conflicts are largely caused by grievances (UNECA 2011). These grievances are symptoms of governance deficit and inability of public institutions to discharge the core functions of the state to deliver public goods and to strengthen its legitimacy by building trust with

citizens and among citizens through social contract (UNECA 2011, p. 1).

However, there is a debate of whether such governance deficit is caused by the *type* of government in terms of “power sources” or *system* of government in terms of “power structure.” While the two concepts are reinforcing in determining the quality of governance and its manifestation, most civil war causation studies have focused on *types* (Ireland and Gartner 2001) rather than *systems* of government. This has largely undermined the central role played by power distribution and its management within government institutions. Some nation-states in Africa such as Sudan and South Sudan (Kuol 2019a, b) that are at war with their citizens have adopted systems of government that produced public institutions that failed to adhere to the social covenant at their independence of living together in peace.

This gap in the literature of civil war causation made some scholars to move debate beyond grievances and greed and argued instead that civil war is a manifestation of dearth or revocation of social contract (Murshed 2009, p. 31; Cuesta and Murshed 2008). In the case of Africa, it is argued that the recurrent civil wars may be better explained by the unfinished social contract-making process in countries that are at war from within (Kuol 2020). Despite its recognition in the causation of civil wars, the concept of social contract lacks appropriate definition and operationalization into a framework to better analyze and address civil wars. McCandless (2018, p. 48) provides a comprehensive definition of the concept as “a dynamic national agreement between state and society, including different groups in society, on how to live together, and notably, around how power is distributed and exercised.” This definition identifies three pillars of social contract, namely: national agreement that distributes power; institutions that exercise and manage power; and peaceful coexistence and social cohesion as outcomes of how power is allocated, exercised, and managed. The definition also captures well the centrality of a self-motivated national covenant on peaceful coexistence, trust, and social cohesion between state and citizens and among and between citizens

that is largely shaped by how power is distributed and managed. The definition has also underscored that the peaceful coexistence or lack of it within nation-states is largely shaped by “power structure” rather than by “power sources” alone. Also this definition refers not only to a structure of governance, but it implicitly recognizes the importance of institutions that exercised power to preserve and nurture social contract.

On the basis of this definition, McCandless (2018, p. 48) attempts to operationalize the concept of social contract by offering a heuristic *resilient national social contract* framework to better understand and address violent conflict through the following three postulated drivers: Political settlements and social contract-making mechanisms are increasingly inclusive and responsive to “core conflict issues”; institutions (formal, customary, and informal) are increasingly effective and inclusive and have broadly shared outcomes that meet societal expectations and enhance state legitimacy; and social cohesion is broadening and deepening, with formal and informal ties and interactions binding society horizontally and vertically. The two Sudans have been experiencing recurrent civil wars since their independence in 1956 and 2011, respectively, and providing interesting case for testing the social contract framework (see McCandless 2018). As the aim of this article is to understand the causation of the recurrent civil wars in two Sudans, this framework provides the appropriate tool for the analysis and understanding of the drivers of the recurrent civil wars.

The Case of Two Sudans: Why Recurrent Civil Wars?

In testing the utility of heuristic resilient national social contract framework (McCandless 2018), the focus will be on the first two postulated drivers of how power is allocated, exercised, and managed to address the core conflict issues such as diversity. The selection of diversity as a core conflict issue to be assessed is that the management of diversity poses a real challenge for peaceful coexistence and social cohesion not only in Africa but

also in developed industrialized countries. There is a wealth of evidence that shows the virtues of diversity in development and peacebuilding. The nexus between diversity and economic growth on one hand and between diversity and improved performance on the other hand has, respectively, been observed at macro-level in developed countries and in organizations at the micro-level (Chigudu 2018). Therefore, diversity by itself is not a problem, but the way it is managed by the state is the core problem.

Despite these virtues of diversity, there is persistent recurrence of diversity-related civil wars in Africa. Many studies have attributed the genesis of such violent conflict to various factors including colonial legacy, creation of artificial states through unnatural process that led to unstable nations-states in Africa (Deng 2008). Some argued that the countries that are at war with their citizens got their independence before nations were formed through an inclusive social contract-making process (Bob 1990). The post-colonial African political leaders became more interested in maintaining the colonial systems of the government that they inherited instead of forging new social contract to contain the threat of disunity and fragmentation (Laremont 2002). Instead of recognizing ethnic diversity as a virtue, many post-independence ruling elites in Africa detested ethnic diversity and tried instead to supplant it by building divisive national identities that contributed to more civil conflicts (Deng 2005).

The post-independence ruling elites in Sudan and South Sudan are not an exception in the mismanagement of diversity. The management of ethnic diversity is one of the issues that shaped and continues to shape the dynamics of peace and conflict in the two Sudans. If such diversity is not carefully managed, it could be a liability or even a curse (Deng 2005; Jok 2011, p. 3). There is a growing consensus in the literature that a decentralized federal system of self-rule government, despite some of its drawbacks, is the best way of managing diversity (Radon and Logan 2014, pp. 152–153; Kuol 2018). It is shown in this article that the post-independence ruling elites of the two Sudans have failed to adopt

a system of government to harness the virtues of diversity but opted instead to transform ethnic diversity to become a source of violent conflict.

The Sudan: Unitary and Autocratic Arabo-Islamic Hegemony System

The Occurrence and Cost of Civil Wars

Since its independence in 1956, Sudan has been in war with itself. This started with its first civil war (1955–1972), followed by second civil war (1983–2005), then the war in the region of Darfur (2003 to present) and war in regions of Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile (2011 to present). Sudan wasted most of its years after its independence in fighting rather than building the nation and that resulted in the overall economic cost of 52.53% economic growth per capita from 1990 to 2010 (UNECA 2011). This cost is almost three times higher than the average cost of the Horn of Africa, and it could even be far higher if the economic costs of the first and second civil wars were included.

The first Sudan civil war (1955–1972) resulted in a death toll of 500,000 and recurrent famines in the 1960s (Johnson 1989; Deng 1999). The second civil war (1983–2005) caused the death toll of about 2 million, 420,000 refugees, and over 4 million displaced in Southern Sudan (UNECA 2011). Deng (2002) estimates the excess death toll from the 1998 Bahr el Ghazal famine to be about 70,000. Also the violent conflict in Darfur produced a death toll of about 300,000, 1.5 million displaced, and crude death rate of the 1984–1985 famine to about 40 per thousand (Qugnivet 2006; De Waal 1989).

The Colonial Legacy: The Missed Opportunity for Federal System

The Anglo-Egyptian regime that conquered Sudan in 1898 adopted a system of government that recognized ethnic diversity and indigenous traditional institutions as basis for its exercise of power. In Southern Sudan, the new regime adopted indirect rule that was based on traditional self-rule through “native administration” by using indigenous customs and beliefs and local laws

(Johnson 2011). The regime later on adopted the Southern Sudan Policy of 1930 that incorporated the native administration with the aim of protecting the people of Southern Sudan from slavery, Islamization, and Arabization from northern Sudan and to promote good governance (Henderson 1939, p. 165).

During this period of British colonial administration (1898–1956), Sudan enjoyed relative peace largely because of the system of government that embraced diversity and exercised power through indigenous traditional institutions. Despite its success in maintaining the rule of law and stability, the new regime neglected development in Southern Sudan while focusing its development efforts in northern Sudan. This created uneven development between northern and Southern Sudan and planted the seed of social, economic, and political disparities.

The Southern Sudan elites demanded from the British colonial administration during the negotiation for independence of Sudan in the early 1950s for its “Southern Policy” to continue and to prepare them to join East Africa instead of being annexed to northern Sudan. The northern Sudanese elites who were negotiating for the independence of Sudan with British colonial rule rejected this demand. This led Southern Sudan elites to demand federalism instead of “Southern Policy” as the only system of government that would ensure their self-rule, preserve unity in diversity, and effective way of subduing call for secession in the post-independence Sudan. Instead of accepting this demand for federalism, the independence negotiating team of the northern Sudan elites cautiously accepted this demand and promised to give it due consideration after the independence in 1956 (Alier 1990).

The British colonial rulers who negotiated the independence of Sudan with the northern Sudan elites failed to consider and recognize this fair demand by Southern Sudan elites for federalism in the post-independence Sudan. The rejection of federal system resulted in the emergence of new state that was forcefully and artificially created without appropriate arrangements for a system of government that would manage religious and

ethnic diversity of the post-independence Sudan. It is argued that the first Sudan civil war that erupted in 1955 in Southern Sudan and before the independence of Sudan was primarily triggered by the decision of the British colonial authorities for falsely forging the united Sudan without a system of government that would ensure their self-rule and it made the south absolutely and relatively disadvantaged in the post-independence Sudan (Deng 1995).

The Post-Independence Sudan: Accentuating Unitary Arabo-Islamic Hegemony System

The new post-independence Sudanese ruling elites did not only reject the demand for federal system but it also considered it as treason and adopted instead Arab-Islamic identity as the only way to create a homogenous society in the Sudan. The new rulers of Sudan abhorred diversity and embarked on building a united Sudan with Arabo-Islamism as the sole determinant for national unity and citizenship. They saw the religious and cultural diversity of the country as a curse and a threat to unity and Arabo-Islamic hegemony and strove to eliminate such diversity (Khalid 1990). It is argued that this system of government based on Arabo-Islamic hegemony has haunted and continues to haunt Sudan with the recurrent diversity-related conflicts (Deng 2005).

In Southern Sudan, the new rulers of Sudan consistently focused on dismantling the colonial Southern Sudan Policy, which was based on traditional systems of government, and replacing it with Arabization and Islamization policy. Well-established religious, cultural, and educational norms in Southern Sudan were eroded during the early years of independence as a number of steps were taken to Islamize and Arabize cultural life and the system of government in Southern Sudan (Alier 1990). This new policy of Arabization and Islamization of Sudan caused enormous disruption in the traditional system of government embraced by the British colonial rule and contributed to the eruption of the first civil war in Southern Sudan in 1955.

The independence of Sudan was not celebrated by southerners, but it was considered instead as a

mere changing of faces of colonial power from the British to Arabized northerners (Deng 1995, p. 13). The new Sudanese ruling elites did not only neglect Southern Sudan in the post-independence national government but they virtually put the administration of Southern Sudan in the hands of northern Sudanese. After independence, the new civil servants of Southern Sudan administration became overwhelmingly “northern,” with southerners occupying less than 10% of the total senior positions (Oduho and Deng 1962, p. 18).

Equally, the post-independence systems of government were never stable due to frequent changes of “power sources,” ranging from secular to socialist to Islamic regimes. While the system of government in the post-independence Sudan remained largely unitary, the policy choice of devolving powers took the form of either decentralization or de-concentration of powers. Immediately after independence in 1956, the new northern ruling elites adopted a deconcentrated system of power transfer from the central government to local governments to maintain law and collect revenue on behalf of the central authorities.

This deconcentrated system of government continued until the socialist regime took power through coup in 1969. The new regime maintained a unitary system but adopted a decentralized system by devolving authority from the central government to local governments in the provinces. This new regime also declared the policy of unity in diversity and recognized the right of the people of Southern Sudan to have their own self-rule. This policy resulted in ending the first civil war (1955–1972) and signing of the Addis Ababa Peace Agreement in 1972 that granted self-rule and regional autonomy to the people of Southern Sudan. The provisions of this agreement were incorporated into the national constitution with the constitutionally devolved authority to the autonomous regional government of Southern Sudan, which exercised legislative and executive authority and with a system of decentralized local government. During this period of decentralized unitary system, Sudan and Southern Sudan enjoyed relative peace.

The Emergence of Political Islam

With the discovery of oil in Southern Sudan in the early 1980s, the socialist regime redrew the border between northern and Southern Sudan by carving out the areas of oilfields to be part of northern Sudan and that caused tensions between central government and regional government of Southern Sudan. This tension forced the central government to abrogate the 1972 Peace Agreement and dismantled the autonomous regional government by dividing Southern Sudan region into weaker three sub-regions. This annulment of the 1972 Peace Agreement was followed by the regime declaring Sudan as Islamic state by adopting Islamic laws. This decision was seen as part of the political survival efforts of the socialist regime to appease the Islamic political forces such as National Islamic Front (NIF) that posed increased threat to its political power. These factors contributed to the eruption of the second civil war in 1983 that was led by the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement (SPLM) that called for a secular Sudan and unity in diversity.

Despite these political survival efforts, the regime was ousted in 1985 through popular uprising that was followed by a brief period of transitional government and elected civilian government. This elected government was overthrown in 1989 through a coup orchestrated by the NIF that renamed itself later as National Congress Party (NCP) that adopted a very conservative and alien brand of political Islam. During the 1990s, the NCP adopted autocratic unitary system of government and stepped up Islamization of Sudan by enforcing Sharia law and using social and political means to mold society into an Islamic state [International Crisis Group (ICG) 2002, p. 94].

As Islamic regime became weak with intensified civil war in Southern Sudan, and other peripheral and marginalized regions of Sudan and with increased pressure from regional and international community, the regime had no choice but to sign the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005 with its ideological rival, the SPLM. The CPA that ended 21 years of civil war was a compromise between the two competing types of government, namely, the Islamic state and secular

state. Also the CPA recognized and affirmed the diversity of Sudan as a virtue and adopted a decentralized federal system.

The CPA granted the people of Southern Sudan not only autonomous self-rule government but also the right of self-determination to decide their political future through a referendum to be conducted in January 2011. The people of the border area of Abyei were given in the CPA an autonomous self-rule administration and the right of self-determination. The war-affected people of Nuba Mountains and Blue Nile were granted in the CPA special autonomous self-rule and popular consultation to assess how the CPA met their political aspirations and self-rule at the end of the interim period in 2011.

Prior to the independence of Southern Sudan in July 2011, fighting broke out in Sudan, starting in Abyei area in May 2008 and May 2011 (Kuol 2014), Nuba Mountains in June 2011, and Blue Nile in September 2011 due to the refusal of the Islamic regime to conduct referendum in Abyei, the rigged elections in Nuba Mountains, and failure to conduct popular consultation in Blue Nile and Nuba Mountains. As such the Islamic regime failed and missed the opportunity to implement the CPA that provided mechanisms and system of government for managing diversity and addressing the root causes of the diversity-related conflicts in Sudan.

South Sudan: The Autocratic Unitary System

The Occurrence and Cost of Civil War

As per the provisions of the CPA, the people of Southern Sudan voted overwhelmingly to secede from Sudan through internationally supervised referendum, and it became an independent country in July 2011. Since its independence, South Sudan slid in 2013 into first civil war in less than 3 years (2013–2015) and then second civil war (2016 to present) when the ruling elites failed to implement the peace agreement that they signed in 2015. The first and second civil wars in South Sudan (2013–now) has caused massive forced displacement of almost 4.2 million people

including 2.2 million in neighboring countries and with nearly 6 out of 10 people experiencing severely food insecure or famine.

It is estimated about 400,000 have died as a result of civil war with half of the dead were killed in fighting and other half died from disease, hunger, and other causes exacerbated by violent conflict (Checchi et al. 2018). Also about 41% of people surveyed in South Sudan showed symptoms of post-trauma disorder that are comparable to the levels of countries that experienced genocide such as Cambodia and Rwanda (UNDP 2015). The economic cost of these civil wars to South Sudan could be as high as US\$ 158 billion; the costs to the regional neighbors could rise to nearly US\$ 57 billion, while the cost to international community in terms of peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance could rise to nearly US\$ 30 billion (Brekenridge 2015).

Transition to Statehood: Exclusive Constitution-Making Process

The overwhelming decision of the people of South Sudan to secede from Sudan came as a result of the failure of the ruling northern elites to make unity attractive and to transform diversity to become a driver for development, unity, and social cohesion. Although the CPA obligated the parties to work together in making the option of unity attractive to the people of South Sudan, the attractiveness of secession prevailed for both parties (Kuol 2020). The NCP feared unity might endanger its political Islam agenda, while the SPLM abandoned its “New Sudan” agenda of united secular Sudan after the death of its leader, Dr. John Garang, and embraced secession as critical for winning its political base in South Sudan (Kuol 2020, p. 64). The international community also saw secession as the only way for managing the cultural differences and attaining and sustaining peace in the two partitioned states, and nurtured this option (Kalpakian 2017, p. 4).

The 2005 Interim Constitution of Southern Sudan (ICSS) that incorporated the provisions of the CPA affirmed the decentralized federalism system in the post-independence South Sudan. The ICSS made it clear that if the outcome of the referendum on self-determination favored

secession, the decentralized federal system established during the period of CPA would continue in the independent South Sudan. As the people of Southern Sudan were preparing for the transition to statehood after the referendum, all Southern Sudan Political Parties (ASSPP) agreed on a national roadmap (Akol 2011). This roadmap provides inclusive process for a constitutional review of the 2005 ICSS and drafting of the 2011 Transitional Constitution of South Sudan (TCSS) for the independent state.

Contrary to these commitments in the roadmap and constitution, the President of Southern Sudan unilaterally and without consulting other political parties decided to appoint a Constitutional Review Committee to review the 2005 ICSS and draft TCSS (*ibid.*). The members of this committee were mainly from the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), the ruling political party, with a two-thirds majority and that caused other political parties to withdraw in protest from the work of the committee. The 2011 TCSS was approved by the cabinet and passed by the parliament that was controlled by the SPLM.

The constitution-making process for the transition to statehood was exclusively carried out by the SPLM with limited participation of other political parties and stakeholders. This critical constitution-making exercise was a missed opportunity for nation building, as it would have contributed to the unity of people of the new nation. This constitutional-making process to statehood was flawed and marked a bad start for building national ownership and forging a new social contract and made the new state of South Sudan to be founded on a constitution that lacks legitimacy and buy-in from key stakeholders (Jok 2011).

Instead of affirming the decentralized federal system as provided for in the 2005 ICSS, the ruling elites approved the post-independence 2011 TCSS that adopted instead a centralized and autocratic unitary system of government. This system of government was not only a unitary system but it has also given excessive powers to the president such as dismissal of elected state governors, dissolution of elected state parliament,

and dismissal of senior judges without due process of law and that undermine the checks and balances (Kuoil 2020).

This exclusive process of constitution-making and adoption of unitary system of government without checks and balances marked the beginning of the failure of the post-independence ruling elites of South Sudan to embrace diversity. This made the new state susceptible to ethnic-related violent conflict, as it happened with the eruption of civil war in 2013. This transitional process created a widespread sense of exclusion that is reminiscent of the feeling of exclusion that made the people of South Sudan want to leave Sudan (Jok 2011, p. 5). The post-independence ruling elites in South Sudan have followed the footpaths of the post-independence northern Sudanese ruling elites by rejecting the federal system and establishing instead autocratic unitary system (Kuoil 2020).

The First Civil War: Governance-Deficit and Weak Institutions

The civil war that erupted in South Sudan in 2013 and in less than 3 years of its independence raises fundamental question of what went wrong. Although many factors have been cited as the brute causes, the governance-deficit as manifested in destructive dynamics of neopatrimonial governance may explain better the causation of violent conflict in 2013 (De Waal 2014; Kuoil 2020). This governance-deficit is reflected in the power struggle and internal demand for the democratization within the ruling party. The SPLM as the ruling political party undertook after the independence of South Sudan a process of reviewing its 2008 constitution and drafting new 2013 constitution. The process of drafting new constitution caused a division within the SPLM, between those who demanded for change and democratization and those who wanted to maintain the militaristic and undemocratic structure of the party with excessive powers given to the chairperson of the party without check and balance mechanisms. Some of the contentious issues included the mode of voting (raising hands or secret ballot) and tenure of the office of the chairperson of the party.

This demand for democratic governance came into fruition when the chairman of the party and president of the country exercised his new constitutional powers in 2011 TCSS and without internal party consultation sacked in July 2013 the entire cabinet including his vice president and senior leaders of the SPLM and replaced them with a new cabinet (Johnson 2014; Kuol 2020). The new cabinet excluded senior members of the SPLM who demanded for democratic reform and replaced them with new members who were argued to be a circle of close advisers and confidants drawn mainly from the president's own community, some not even members of the SPLM, and others with suspiciously close ties to the ruling National Congress Party (NCP) regime in Sudan (Johnson 2014, p. 302).

This decision of excluding in the new cabinet the senior members of the SPLM who demanded for democratization resulted in more division in the ruling party, and it caused as well vigorous suppression of freedom of speech and public debate. The disgruntled senior members of the SPLM started accusing their chairman of thwarting the efforts of transforming the SPLM from a liberation movement into a broad-based and democratic political party. This power struggle within the SPLM resulted in the eruption of violent conflict in Juba, the capital city of South Sudan in December 2013. This caused the arrest of some of these dismissed members of the SPLM including the secretary general of the party under the alleged coup and with the former deputy chairman of the party and vice president fleeing the capital and formed his armed movement against the government in Juba.

This division within the ruling party would have not deteriorated into a national crisis if there were strong institutions, particularly in the security sector such as the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), the former military wing of the SPLM, and the post-independence national army. Besides the division within the SPLM, there was a parallel division within the SPLA (Johnson 2014) that was less of a national army but amalgamation of ethnically affiliated forces mainly dominated by Dinka and Nuer with allegiance and loyalty, respectively, to their

tribal leaders, Salva Kiir, the president, and Riek Machar, the former vice president (Kuol 2020). Given weak and fragile institutions and lack of professionalism in the security sector, the crisis within the SPLM in December 2013 caused the national army and other law enforcement agencies such as the police to disintegrate along ethnic lines in fighting the civil war.

Summary

The phenomenon of civil war will continue to exist but with new and changing dynamics that would require a better conceptualization and analysis for effective mechanisms for managing it. The review of the existing approaches to the analysis of civil war shows gaps. These gaps made some scholars (Murshed 2009; Cuesta and Murshed 2008) to argue to move beyond the two competing theoretical perspectives, greed and grievance, which have directed the debate about the causation of civil war. While there is a consensus that the causation of civil war is attributed to grievance rather than greed, grievance is a symptom and a manifestation of governance-deficit that may explain better the causation of civil war.

The entry emphasizes the centrality of the system of government and social contract-making in understanding the drivers of the recurrent civil wars in the two Sudans. The case of the two Sudans shows that the social contract-making is still a work in progress in Africa and that necessitates a review of the current systems of government as a basis for forging a new social contract that would put African countries at war with their citizens on a solid path for sustainable peace and stability. Despite the depressing trend of recurrent civil wars in the two Sudans, there are opportunities for the two countries to reverse such trend. For example, the 2018 South Sudan Peace Agreement provides a golden opportunity for forging a new social contract and constitution-making process that would embrace decentralized federal system. In Sudan, the popular uprising that ended the 30 years of misruling by NCP provides an unprecedented opportunity for adopting a new

constitution and social contract that would move the country away from unitary autocratic political Islam system to a decentralized federal system that would achieve the revolutionary slogans of uprising; freedom, peace, and justice.

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Collective Security and Collective Responsibility in International Interventions

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Definition

Collective security is a concept that acquired universal acceptance with the entry into force of the United Nations Charter. The maintenance of international peace and security as foreseen in the UN system of sovereign states is outlined in Chapters VI, on the pacific settlement of disputes, and Chapter VII, on action with respect to breaches to peace and acts of aggression. Collective security presupposes an advanced commitment to uphold the inadmissibility of the use of force in international relations, unless authorized by the Security Council or as a measure of self-defense. The exercise of a collective responsibility through international interventions is associated with the debate on the responsibility to protect (R2P) civilians threatened by mass atrocities. A consensus on R2P was reached at the 2005 UN summit, which contemplated collective action when national authorities fail to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity. R2P was put to the test in Libya, when Resolution 1973 (2011) authorized all necessary measures to protect its civilian

population. As a result of differences over the conception and implementation of this decision, the 2005 consensus has become mired in controversy. In Iraq and Libya, military interventions have generated more problems than solutions. The inability of the Security Council to reconcile its mandate with contemporary challenges in Libya, Syria, and elsewhere calls for a renewed effort to reach an understanding on when and how the international community should intervene militarily, be it on the basis of collective security concerns or in response to a commonly shared notion of collective responsibility.

Collective security, as an antidote against international anarchy, is linked to the emergence of a system of sovereign states in Europe, which replaced the aspiration toward universal empire that lasted until the 1648 Peace of Westphalia. Collective responsibility, as it refers to interventions for humanitarian purposes that are not strictly related to the maintenance of international security, is an idea that has acquired relevance in the context of recent debates on a responsibility to protect civilians in situations of peril. Intervention involves a deliberate decision to override sovereignty through military action. Not all interventions are undertaken in compliance with multilaterally agreed parameters established through international law. Sovereignty refers to a supreme political authority within a territorial community, coupled with the notion of the absence of an external superior authority, and constitutes, to this day, a cornerstone of the interstate system.

Collective security has acquired legal status through multilateral institutions, as they developed after the two world wars of the XX century. The first formulation of a universally applicable system of collective security was contained in the Covenant of the League of Nations. A more lasting expression of the concept was enshrined in the United Nations Charter and remains in force today.

Although alliances are sometimes described as instruments of collective security, this is not how the term was originally conceived. Henry Kissinger reminds us in diplomacy that “traditional alliances were directed against specific threats and

defined precise obligations for specific groups of countries linked by shared national interests or mutual security concerns” (Kissinger 1994, p. 247). By contrast, collective security is designed to respond to any threat to peace. It represents an advanced commitment by the community of nations to enforce certain agreed strictures, as regards the inadmissibility of the use of force in international relations.

The adoption of the UN Charter on October 24, 1945, represents a landmark in the history of collective security. The maintenance of international peace and security as foreseen in the UN system is outlined in Chapters VI and VII of the Charter. Under Chapter VI, member states commit to seek solutions by peaceful means, mainly by negotiation, conciliation, mediation, and arbitration. If peaceful means prove to be ineffective and a dispute escalates into armed conflict, Chapter VII provides the basis for enforcement measures to restore peace. Enforcement measures can be nonmilitary in nature, such as arms embargoes and economic sanctions, or, as a last resort, may involve the use of force. Such coercive measures require explicit authorization by the Security Council. Article 51, on self-defense, represents the only exception to the prohibition on the use of force.

Both the logic of isolation, inherent to sanctions, and that of intervention, which underpins enforcement, constitute a departure from the notion of a sovereign equality of states. In this respect, Article 2.7 of the UN Charter stipulates that the principle of nonintervention in the internal matters of states will not prejudice the application of coercive measures under Chapter VII.

Although the concept of collective security, as multilaterally articulated, has been a tenet of international relations for over 100 years, no predictable operative system for enforcement measures was installed either by the League of Nations or the United Nations. In practice the Security Council, as master of its own procedures, has determined the scope and the means for the application of Chapter VII measures over the past 75 years.

Enforcement has been outsourced to a variety of actors. The arrangements foreseen in the Charter, which would have provided the organization

with the means to intervene militarily, were never concluded due to the tensions of the Cold War. Following the demise of the Soviet Union, attempts were made to revive a dormant Military Staff Committee for that purpose, to no avail. An opportunity presented itself in the 1990s as the response of the international community to the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq revived interest in the full utilization of the possibilities offered by collective security, originally foreseen in the UN Charter.

The aftermath of the first Gulf War in 1991, coupled with the end of the Cold War, created the conditions, on January 31, 1992, for the first meeting of the UN Security Council at summit level. The final document of that summit pointed toward a new platform for coercive action, by including references to the fight against terrorism and the nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction as triggers for collective security measures. However, these indications did not amount to a new paradigm, capable of reconciling different strains of realism and idealism present in the debates at the time (United Nations 1992).

In the eyes of some, the so-called unipolar moment had cleared the path for the United States to lay down the rules of world order and enforce them unilaterally. Others, including non-governmental organizations such as *Médecins Sans Frontières*, considered that the unanimous support associated with the military liberation of Kuwait had paved the way for placing collective security at the service of a moral conscience in world affairs.

A certain amount of innovation through Security Council resolutions was ensued, with an impact both on the objectives of enforcement measures as well as on the means to enforce them. Examples of the first are the establishment of tribunals to judge those identified as responsible for mass atrocities in Bosnia and Rwanda. Meanwhile peacekeeping operations, originally conceived by member states as impartial and non-belligerent, became entangled in situations of so-called mission creep, in which they were perceived as taking sides. These attempts at collective reactions to security challenges in the Balkans and elsewhere generated precedents that had the

cumulative effect of reorienting discussions on agreed parameters for coercive action. Moreover, the challenges posed by ensuring the full dismantling of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction programs resulted in a range of responses that shaped subsequent debates on international peace and security and still influence attitudes to this day.

In 1991 the Security Council adopted the most draconian disarmament and sanctions regime in UN history to ensure that Saddam Hussein would cease to pose a regional and global threat. UN Security Council Resolution 687, establishing the terms of the Gulf War cease-fire, demanded that Iraq "unconditionally accept, under international supervision, the destruction, removal or rendering harmless of its weapons of mass destruction, ballistic missiles with a range of over 150 kilometers, and related production facilities and equipment." Cooperation between Baghdad and various inspection teams was never fully satisfactory and gave way to repeated standoffs. The option of resorting to military force to ensure compliance with Resolution 687, however, never met with a consensus among the permanent members of the Security Council (United Nations Security Council Resolution 687 (1991)).

One of the systemic problems such an option raised was the thorny question of selectivity. If noncompliance with Security Council resolutions were to elicit enforcement measures, why ignore other situations of questionable compliance? Divisions in the Council did not discourage authorities in the United States from resorting to limited unilateral interventions such as operation "Desert Fox" in 1998. As the impasse between UN inspectors and Saddam Hussein's defiance persisted, however, the tragic September 11 terrorist attacks on the United States would play a decisive role in altering Washington's security concerns. The initial military responses against the Taliban in Afghanistan, on the basis of a right to self-defense, met with the solidarity and unanimous approval of Council members. The same did not apply to the perceived threat posed by Iraq.

The Anglo-American invasion of Iraq in March 2003 brought an end to the attempts by the United Nations to secure its disarmament,

consistent with the terms negotiated at the end of the first Gulf War. The large-scale unilateral military intervention, undertaken without Security Council authorization, represented in itself a considerable challenge to the established collective security philosophy of the Charter. The situation only became more problematic when it was revealed that Iraq did not possess weapons of mass destruction. With the benefit of hindsight, it is possible to contend that the disarmament of Iraq had been secured through UN inspections, without the need for enforcement action, and in conformity with Security Council resolutions. It is also possible to sustain that it would have been particularly damaging for the legitimacy and credibility of the United Nations, had a war fought on false premises been authorized by the Security Council.

The precedent for evoking a collective responsibility to intervene forcibly in the face of humanitarian emergencies can be traced to UN Security Council Resolution 688, which authorized the provision of assistance to the Kurds, in northern Iraq, in the spring of 1991 (United Nations Security Council resolution 688 (1991)). Subsequently a succession of peace and security challenges in a variety of scenarios – including Rwanda, the Balkans, and East Timor – led UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan to place the notion of intervention itself within a broader context than the one originally prescribed by the drafters of the Charter.

Kofi Annan describes in his memoirs, “Interventions” 2012, how he came to challenge conventional views on national sovereignty (Annan 2012). According to his narrative, through the trials of UN peacekeeping from Somalia to Rwanda and Bosnia, he arrived at the conclusion that intervention, under Chapter VII, need not respond exclusively to threats to international peace and security. As he reflected on a future of effective and legitimate collective security for the XXI century, he set out the case for humanitarian intervention as a lesser evil than inaction in the face of massacres or extreme oppression of innocent civilians.

A dilemma facing the United Nations was thereby laid bare: was the defense of the primacy

of the Security Council in matters of peace and security as established by the Charter compatible with passivity in the face of ethnic cleansing or genocide? At the behest of Kofi Annan in the year 2000, Canadian Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy assembled an independent International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICIS) to try to respond to this dilemma. The Commission met under the co-chairmanship of Gareth Evans of Australia and Mohamed Sahnoun of Algeria and produced a report that reframed this discussion by introducing the notion of a “responsibility to protect.” (International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (2001)).

In his opening speech to the 58th session of the General Assembly on September 2003, Kofi Annan expressed his concern with the deep divisions among the membership as regards the nature of international challenges in the realm of peace and security and the role played by enforcement measures to confront them (Annan 2003). He announced the convening of a High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Changes to provide the organization with a collective security agenda for the XXI century. The panel circulated a report on December 2004 that dedicated an entire chapter to collective security and the use of force. The text underlined the importance of the legitimacy and the legality of coercive measures. But it also admitted that the UN Charter was not “as clear as it could be when it comes to saving lives within countries in situations of mass atrocity” (UN High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Changes 2004).

When UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan presented his own report entitled “In Larger Freedom” on March 2005, he stated that “we must embrace the responsibility to protect, and, when necessary, we must act on it” (Annan 2005, p. 36). The ground was thus prepared for the inclusion in the 2005 UN World Summit Outcome of a section on the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity. Paragraph 139 thereof would start by encouraging the protection of civilians (PoC) in situations of conflict through peaceful means.

The UN membership, however, did not refrain from stating its preparedness to take collective action, including under Chapter VII, should peaceful means be inadequate in situations where “national authorities are manifestly failing to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity” (United Nations General Assembly Resolution 60/1. 2005 World Summit Outcome 2005). It is worth noting that gross violations of human rights were not included in this list. But a new international consensus regarding sovereignty and intervention seemed to be in the offing, under the acronym R2P.

A methodological proposal for implementing R2P was presented on January 2009 by Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon. It involved a three pillar approach, ranging from support for efforts deployed by states themselves to consensual cooperation in the provision of humanitarian assistance and finally through collective action in situations where a state manifestly fails to protect civilians in the four cases mentioned in the outcome document of the 2005 World Summit (Ban 2009). In 2010 a new report by the UN Secretary-General on Early Warning, Assessment and the Responsibility to Protect placed emphasis on strategies of prevention, in part as a way to address growing concerns regarding the multiple risks inherent to enforcement measures (UN Secretary 2010).

These conceptual discussions would soon be submitted to a concrete test as the so-called “Arab spring” manifestations in Tunisia and Egypt captured international attention between the end of 2010 and the first months of 2011. In the case of Libya, it was felt that the widespread and systematic attacks by the government against the civilian population could amount to crimes against humanity, as stated in the preamble to Resolution 1970, adopted by consensus in February 2011. This resolution included a referral of the situation in Libya to the International Criminal Court, in addition to imposing an arms embargo, a travel ban, and an asset freeze (UN Security Council Resolution 1970 (2011)).

The following weeks, however, would witness increasingly polarized debates, as the

toughest reaction contemplated in the R2P lexicon came up for consideration. At first, discussions centered on the creation of a no-fly zone, applicable to all parties in the Libyan conflict, as requested by the Arab League. While such a measure represented an escalation in the response to the crisis, it fell short of a full-fledged intervention. When the US delegation proposed the inclusion of the code word “all necessary measures” to protect civilians, in a draft that started by deploring the failure of Libyan authorities to comply with Resolution 1970, the consensus observed only 3 weeks before it quickly turned into bitter division.

On one side were those who viewed an intervention as the necessary response to the violent repression by Muammar Gaddafi against unarmed civilians, as he confronted growing opposition to his authoritarian rule. According to this view, Libya offered a clear example of the manifest incapacity of a government to discharge its responsibilities in protecting its own people. This position, however, met with skepticism on the part of those who either feared that military intervention would further exacerbate tensions in Libya – with negative consequences for civilians themselves – or suspected that political agendas unrelated to the plight of civilians may lurk behind the invoked humanitarian impulse. The shadow cast by Iraq persisted as a reminder of how the widespread instability resulting from a military intervention can dramatically outweigh its imagined benefits.

Rather than opening a window for diplomacy to ensure compliance with its terms, Resolution 1970 seemed to have generated “a barely disguised urge to intervene” in some member states, as pointed out by the former Ambassador of India to the United Nations, Hardeep Puri, in his book *Perilous Interventions* (Puri 2016, p. 202). The fact that the US government sought authorization from the UN Security Council for enforcement action seemed to reflect US President Obama’s personal opposition to the unilateral Iraq invasion of 2003. Notwithstanding that experience, and in spite of the misgivings expressed by Council members from all regional groups, the US delegation with support from France and the United

Kingdom decided that a no-fly zone was insufficient and the time had come to act militarily.

Resolution 1973 was adopted by ten votes in favor and five abstentions, on the part of Brazil, China, Germany, India, and Russia (UN Security Council Resolution 1973 (2011)). Although no vetoes or negative votes were cast, the division among Council members should not be underestimated. Moreover, even countries that voted in the favor of the resolution had serious doubts regarding the wisdom of the proposed strategy, as South Africa would clarify in due course. As events unfolded, over the course of 2011, not only did the Libyan authorities fail to meet their obligations, but violations of Security Council prescriptions were also committed by the proponents of Resolution 1973: weapons were supplied indiscriminately, and the no-fly zone was implemented only against the Tripoli regime. In a unilateral interpretation of the authorization to apply all necessary means to protect civilians, NATO military operations only ceased after Gaddafi was killed.

It is worth pointing out that the concept of protection of civilians had been used in the context of peacekeeping operations before the emergence of R2P. Resolutions under Chapter VII of the UN Charter were adopted authorizing peacekeeping missions to protect civilians in several locations, including Darfur and Cote d'Ivoire, without giving rise to major controversy. By contrast, the Libyan case, considered a first experiment with intervention within the R2P framework, became tainted by a host of questions regarding the real motivation behind the military action.

Even without questioning the good faith of those who believed Resolution 1973 provided the correct platform to protect civilians and bring peace to Libya, the unraveling of the country and the ensuing instability, which soon propagated itself to the entire Sahel region, bring to the fore the issue of the unintended consequences wrought by military action. In other words, an intervention that created more problems than it solved, while rendering life more dangerous for civilians across several nations, had clearly not met its objectives and became politically and morally questionable.

In the tense diplomatic environment resulting from the implementation of resolution 1973, Brazil decided to introduce a set of considerations on how to ensure that multilateral responses to challenges such as the ones posed by Libya did not make matters worse. A paper, circulated to the Security Council membership on November 11, 2011, by the Brazilian Permanent Representative, began by acknowledging the human and political cost of the collective failure to act in a timely manner to prevent atrocities such as the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. In line with the reasoning that gave rise to R2P, it admitted that "there may be situations in which the international community might contemplate military action to prevent humanitarian catastrophes." (UN General Assembly – Security Council 2011).

However it also pointed out that the world was suffering the painful consequences of interventions that had aggravated existing conflicts, allowed terrorism to spread, and increased the vulnerability of civilians. The perception among member states that R2P could be misused for regime change was explicitly mentioned. In conclusion, the paper suggested that, as it exercises its responsibility to protect, the international community should also demonstrate a high degree of "responsibility while protecting." A set of prescriptions was put forward, from an emphasis on prevention to the development of Security Council procedures "to monitor and assess the manner in which resolutions are interpreted and implemented." A new acronym, RwP, was thus added to ongoing exchanges, as these thoughts came to be considered a desirable ingredient in the search for a synthesis between collective responsibility and collective security in interventions.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon would react positively in January 2012 by stating that "we all agree on the need for responsibility while protecting. In that spirit I very much welcome the Brazilian initiative to open a dialogue on these matters" (Ban 2012) while addressing the Stanley Foundation Conference on the Responsibility to Protect. Gareth Evans, one of the intellectual originators of R2P, would position himself along similar lines in an article, published a few days later,

that starts by establishing that “The Western powers dismissiveness during the Libyan campaign did bruise them – and those bruises will have to heal before any consensus can be expected on tough responses to such situations in the future” (Evans 2012). And as he refers to RWP, Evans concludes that “the better news is that a way forward has opened up” (Evans 2012).

He may have been overly optimistic. The sad reality is that the world has not become a safer place as a consequence of military interventions, whether unilaterally orchestrated and carried out, as in Iraq, or multilaterally conceived and executed by a military alliance, as in Libya. In systemic terms, they have increased the level of mistrust among key actors within the international community, thereby limiting the scope for constructive diplomacy and responsible collective action. Syria has been a particularly tragic victim of such systemic breakdown. As a former Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Youssef Mahmoud points out: “while many states may not have measured up to their people’s democratic aspirations, ill-advised military interventions by global and regional powers have made our world less secure and ushered more uncertain and perilous times for us all” (Mahmoud 2016).

Are we to conclude that current ideas on collective security and collective responsibility are inadequate in themselves? Or should the international community at large, or individual states, be blamed for a manifest inability to translate the provisions of the UN Charter and the 2005 consensus on R2P into interventions that promote improved stability? It should be noted that both the UN Charter and the agreed language on the responsibility to protect contemplate intervention as a last resort. The RWP proposal, in turn, has added the essential point that under no circumstance can the use of force generate more harm than it was authorized to prevent. No doubt, neither the exercise of collective security nor of collective responsibility is served by military adventurism.

Enhanced multilateral cooperation for the promotion of international peace and security can be achieved within the course laid out by the UN Charter as well as by new notions on the exercise

of our collective responsibility in the face of mass atrocities. In theory a multipolar world, such as the one that is emerging, could be more conducive than a unipolar or bipolar geopolitical distribution of power to a renewed adherence to the letter and spirit of international agreements. If no individual nation can singlehandedly impose its will and determine outcomes militarily in today’s world, it follows that unilateralism becomes particularly dangerous, as it encourages disregard toward international obligations by all. The deleterious anarchical results of a surge in unilateralism, in a multipolar world, are not difficult to imagine.

A collective reaffirmation by member states of their commitment to multilateralism is the most responsible way forward. This will necessarily involve a correct understanding of the limits to what military intervention can accomplish and a readiness to learn the right lessons from past experience. Adjustments will be necessary, including a reform of the Security Council capable of conferring enhanced legitimacy to its decisions. There should also be scope for conceptual refinement. Perhaps collective responsibility should be operationalized exclusively within a Chapter VI framework. In turn, military intervention, for reasons that may include the protection of civilians, would automatically fall under a revised Chapter VII, with stricter procedures for monitoring compliance with Security Council mandates and observance of international humanitarian law.

The challenge that presents itself to the international community in the wake of Iraq, Libya, and Syria is perhaps best summarized by the wise words of a former President of the International Court of Justice, Mohamed Bedjaoui:

The task is to subject the use of force to ever more rigorous discipline, to confirm and develop the rules which fortify just recourse to it, eliminate the practices which lead it astray and to endow such recourse with the respect and recognition it inevitably arouses when it serves to found order upon justice. (Bedjaoui 1993)

Cross-References

- ▶ [Conceptual Evolution of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Protection of Civilians](#)

- ▶ [R2P and Prevention](#)
- ▶ [Troubles, The: The Northern Ireland Conflict](#)
- ▶ [UN Missions in Ex-Yugoslavia](#)
- ▶ [UN Security Council and International Interventions](#)
- ▶ [Use of Force in Peace Operations](#)

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Colombia

- ▶ [Colombian Peace Agreement 2016](#)

Colombian Peace Agreement 2016

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Description

In 2016, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People’s Army (FARC-EP) guerrilla movement and the Government of Colombia signed the “Final Agreement to End the Conflict and Build a Sustainable and Lasting Peace” aiming to comprehensively address the causes and effects of the armed confrontation that lasted for more than five decades. This entry briefly contextualizes the Final Agreement’s negotiations and approval process and describes its unique characteristics, such as the territorial approach, gender and ethnic intersectionality, and structural interdependency. It also provides a summary of the six chapters structuring the agreement text, which include comprehensive rural reform, political participation, end of the armed conflict, illicit drugs, transitional justice for victims, and implementation monitoring and verification. The final section provides an assessment of the first years of implementation.

Introduction

In December 2016, Colombia’s National Government, led by President Juan Manuel Santos (2010–2018), signed a comprehensive peace agreement with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People’s Army (FARC-EP), putting an end to Latin America’s oldest guerrilla movement. With more than 300 pages, the “Final Agreement to End the Conflict and Build a Sustainable and Lasting Peace” (Final Agreement, hereafter) commits the signatory parties to alleviating vital socioeconomic and security issues, including rural reforms to improve the accessibility and use of land, as well as demobilization and reincorporation of ex-combatant troops to civilian life. Additional pillars of the agreement include transitional justice mechanisms, political participation measures, and a holistic solution to the problem of illegal drugs.

Peace negotiations extended over 4 years and took place primarily in Havana, Cuba. The governments of Cuba and Norway acted as guarantors, while Venezuela and Chile accompanied the process as facilitators. At the center of the negotiations were the victims of the armed conflict: approximately 8 million people, among them 4 million internally displaced persons (IDP) and 30,000 persons who had been kidnapped (CNMH 2013). A subcommittee for gender issues was formed, which reviewed the whole agreement in order to assure affirmative measures for advancing the rights of women as well as LGBTI and other sexually diverse persons. In addition to this emphasis on gender rights, a subcommittee on ethnic diversity evaluated the commitments in light of cultural and geographic particularities. Thirdly, negotiators used a “territorial peace” strategy to frame the writing of the agreement.

Territorial peace is a form of peacebuilding characterized by collective construction from the bottom-up, involving local and national governments, private and business sectors, organizations and communities, the Church, educational institutions, and individual citizens (Bautista 2015; Cairo et al. 2018). It emphasizes the areas most affected by the armed conflict and acts as a bridge for dialogues between the capital city and rural

areas. For the Final Agreement, negotiators intentionally utilized territorial peace to instigate profound positive transformations after the decades-long conflict.

Despite these efforts to make the peace agreement amenable to all Colombians, political and public discussions in the country about the benefits or drawbacks of the peace agreement were highly polarized. Polarization for and against the peace agreement reached its apex when the agreement was subject to a popular referendum on October 2, 2016. The “NO” vote won, forcing the government and negotiators in Havana to open a 6-week-long dialogue with the critics of the peace agreement to review the text in light of their demands.

Once the text was revised, the Final Agreement was submitted to Colombian Congress for approval on November 30, 2016, marking December 1 as the first day of implementation. Since that moment, many of the agreement’s commitments have been met, as reported by official monitors such as the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, who is charged with providing technical support for monitoring as well (Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies 2018, 2019, 2020).

The following sections offer more background on the Colombian peace process, describe in detail the contents of the Final Agreement, and provide an initial assessment of implementation since December 2016. Gender, ethnic, and territorial peace approaches frame the six chapters of the Final Agreement, namely, comprehensive rural reform, political participation, end of the conflict, solution to illegal drug-related activities, victims of the armed conflict, and monitoring and verification. Lastly, an assessment of the first 3 years of implementation of the Final Agreement indicates that while demobilization has been largely successful and elements of transitional justice have been activated, important land reforms and socioeconomic initiatives present ongoing challenges for implementation.

Background

The history and relations between the Colombian Government and illegally armed groups, such as the FARC-EP guerrillas, contain important

precedents that inform the negotiations and text of the 2016 Final Agreement. During the 1990s and early 2000s, multiple presidential administrations engaged in negotiations, demobilization, and peace processes with a range of illegally armed groups, such as the M-19 guerrillas at the beginning of the 1990s and the United Self-Defense (AUC) paramilitary forces between 2003 and 2006. These procedures provided Colombian governments and society with heuristic experiences in disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of former combatants. Additionally, before and during these processes, a large number of human rights organizations, peace community strongholds, and peace zones survived and thrived with the support of the transnational networks and partners (Hancock and Mitchell 2007; Mouly and Hernández 2019; Bueno 2017; Lederach and Lederach 2014; Echavarría et al. 2019).

One of the key institutional precedents borne out of previous negotiations was the National Commission for Reparation and Reconciliation (CNRR), created by the Peace and Justice Law (Law 975/2005), which later became the National Center for Historical Memory (CNMH) in 2010. The CNMH has provided the public with relevant transitional justice research in the form of documentaries and written reports. The pedagogical character of their research has contributed to raising awareness about the consequences of civil war and the centrality of the victims of armed violence (CNMH 2013).

Previous governments had engaged with the FARC-EP in peace negotiations as well. During the Presidency of Andrés Pastrana (1998–2002), the FARC-EP guerrilla and government forces created a large demilitarized zone in the Southern region of Colombia called El Caguán, for the purposes of negotiating demobilization of the armed group. Three years later, negotiations for a ceasefire had floundered, and the government accused guerrilla forces of negotiating in bad faith (Echavarría 2010). Although no peace agreement was signed, the Caguán experience provided future negotiation teams with more clarity on communication norms and other lessons, such as setting a narrow and stable agenda of conversations from the beginning (Arias 2016). On the

other hand, El Caguán was detrimental for building trust between the guerrillas and Colombian society. Years later, public opinion makers and political movements in Colombia would make parallels between El Caguán and the Havana negotiations, accusing the guerrillas of negotiating in bad faith their intention to demobilize, utilizing the process to distract attention from their operations, and allowing them to build reinforcements, gain new allies, and generate resources for continuing the armed conflict (Gómez-Suárez 2017; Hernández 2019).

The international community has studied experiences in Colombia and in other places around the world, preparing states and organizations to serve as key supporters of negotiating parties, especially during moments of distress (Jaramillo 2016; Santos 2019). Best practices and insights derived from other intrastate peace agreements in the United Kingdom, El Salvador, South Africa, and Angola, for instance, were utilized explicitly by negotiators and mediators in Havana (Arias 2016; Hernández 2019). Following insights from international experiences, civil society groups were included in the negotiations and in the process of peacebuilding itself, making citizen participation one of the most distinctive features of the Final Agreement.

Negotiating Table and Major Issue Areas

Negotiations began secretly in February 2012. In August of the same year, President Juan Manuel Santos announced in television broadcasts that the government and FARC-EP delegations were preparing public peace negotiations. Although the beginning of the process was announced in Oslo, Norway, the primary location chosen for the negotiations was Havana, Cuba, where the parties would meet over the course of 4 years. Under the slogan “Nothing is agreed, until everything is agreed,” President Santos framed the contours of the negotiations. The government and FARC-EP negotiating teams agreed on a fixed agenda, centered on six themes that would later become the chapters of the Final Agreement. Victims were at the heart of political, economic, and social transformations envisioned in the negotiations. Negotiators invited victims to Havana to inform and assist the design of commitments related

to transitional justice. Moreover, civil society forums and groups were invited to actively participate in the negotiations as a means of assuring popular support for the agreements and creating conditions for territorial peacebuilding.

Throughout the 4 years of consultative negotiations, drafts of the agreement’s chapters were released to the public for the purposes of transparency. Those designing the accord incorporated gender, ethnic, and territorial approaches to commitments in all major issue areas in order to guarantee the rights of marginalized groups especially affected by the armed conflict. Although each chapter centers on a particular theme, they are interdependent – that is, the success of initiatives in one chapter often depends on the success of initiatives in other chapters. The following paragraphs provide summaries of the six chapters as they appear in the 2016 Final Agreement.

Chapter 1. A New Countryside: Comprehensive Rural Reform

Comprehensive Rural Reform (RRI) requires structural transformations in land management and investment for the purposes of improving socioeconomic conditions in rural areas and reverting historical inequities and marginalization that have fueled the armed conflict in Colombia. In order to eradicate rural poverty and improve the well-being of rural populations, RRI incorporates three main components: land access and use, Development Plans with a Territorial Focus (PDET), and National Plans for Comprehensive Rural Reform.

The first component includes commitments to democratize land access, especially for vulnerable communities such as ethnic groups and rural women. It creates a Land Fund for the distribution of 3 million hectares over 12 years, as well as special subsidies and credit lines to purchase land. Other measures include a Mass Formalization Plan for small- and medium-sized properties, mechanisms to resolve land ownership and use disputes, the creation of a new agrarian jurisdiction, and the multipurpose cadaster (or land survey) to update the information on rural properties. The accord also includes a few commitments

related to the closure of the agricultural frontier and the protection of special environmental areas.

The second components of RRI are the PDETs, whose purpose is to provide consolidated investment for the regions most affected by the armed conflict. In conjunction with territorial authorities, participatory forums in the territories will guarantee that community priorities are reflected in Action Plans for Regional Transformation (PATR). In addition, this component stipulates that local communities are to participate in the execution of small infrastructure projects and exercise oversight.

Finally, the third component of RRI is National Plans for improving access to public goods and services in rural areas. With the objective of overcoming poverty in rural areas, plans center on improving infrastructure, irrigation, healthcare, education, and housing, among other issues. They also include stimulus packages for agricultural production initiatives and technical assistance for cooperative economies, credits for income generation activities, as well as measures to formalize the labor market. Many of the initiatives contained in these plans are prioritized in PDET municipalities.

Overall, the RRI acknowledges the core role of small-scale family-run, community-based, and *campesino* economies in the development of the Colombian countryside. The protection and affirmative measures for women and ethnic communities in this process are also highlighted in this chapter, given the disproportionate impacts of violence they have suffered. These provisions included in this chapter are envisioned as key for territorial transformation and social inclusion that will revert structural issues underlying the armed conflict, especially of those who have existed on the fringes of development and have been most affected by the armed conflict.

Chapter 2. Political Participation: Democracy for Peacebuilding

The agreement's second chapter is guided by basic principles of democratic pluralism and social justice within the context of demobilization

and reconciliation. This chapter contains a wide range of topics, from protecting and empowering women, to providing organizational support for political parties, to modernizing electoral systems. It is organized into three main subsections: rights and security measures for political associations, mechanisms for participation, and democracy promotion.

The chapter's first subsection contains legislative and structural measures for improving political rights and security guarantees. First, a special commission of political parties and social organizations is to design a political opposition statute for congressional approval. In line with Article 112 of the Constitution, this statute should provide a regulatory framework for parties to oppose political agendas and for social organizations to express dissidence towards government policies. Second, the government is to create a Comprehensive Security System for Political Participation (SISEP) which includes an early warning system for monitoring perceived risks to human rights defenders and social movement leaders in rural territories.

The second subsection identifies specific mechanisms for enhancing democratic participation. First, it commits the government to drafting legislation guaranteeing free association and social movement rights, as well as peaceful mobilization and protest. Secondly, it outlines civic engagement initiatives for oversight and access to information, participatory budgeting, as well as community access radio, television, and other media. Thirdly, this subsection calls for a national-level Dialogue Council for recommending participatory legislation standards, national- and territorial-level Reconciliation and Coexistence Councils for training in nonviolent dialogue, and Territorial Planning Councils for participatory budgeting and development plans.

Finally, the third subsection promotes democratic participation at all levels of government. It includes specific measures for party formalization and financing, voter registration and access to polls, electoral transparency and reform, democracy training initiatives, as well as a cable channel for parties and movements to engage in peaceful, nondiscriminatory exchange of ideas. It also calls

for the creation of 16 special transitional peace districts (CTEP) allowing affected territories to have national-level representation in congress, as well as a transversal focus guaranteeing women equal representation in organizations, parties, councils, and programs.

Chapter 3. Ceasefire, Definitive End of Bilateral Hostilities, and Demobilization

The third chapter creates the security conditions to allow for the implementation of the other chapters in the accord. More specifically, it contains a series of measures to assure a bilateral ceasefire, demobilization of FARC-EP, and laying down of arms. The chapter also details reintegration and security measures for FARC-EP ex-combatants and creates mechanisms to address criminal organizations more generally.

The first section of Chapter 3 defines the terms for a bilateral ceasefire and definitive end to the hostilities between the Colombian Armed Forces (including both the Military and National Police) and the FARC-EP. It also outlines the process of ex-combatant relocation into temporary cantonment zones. As stipulated in the agreement, this process is to be supervised by a Tripartite Monitoring and Verification Mechanism made up of the National Government, FARC-EP representatives, and an unarmed United Nations political mission.

This chapter also contains details regarding the political and economic reintegration of FARC-EP members into civilian life. For political integration, this section contains measures for the FARC-EP organization to transition into a political party, guaranteeing them access to resources as well as five seats in both the Colombian House and Senate during two congressional sessions starting on July 20, 2018.

In terms of social and economic reintegration, the third chapter details a registration and accreditation procedure for FARC-EP ex-combatants. It states that the national government will provide a one-time “normalization” allowance for FARC-EP ex-combatants and monthly subsidies for 24 months, along with appropriate healthcare, education, and job training resources. In addition,

FARC-EP ex-combatants are to receive funds to implement collective or individual livelihood projects.

Finally, Chapter 3 includes security provisions for FARC-EP members as well as initiatives to combat criminal organizations that attack human rights advocates, social movements, or political associations. In order to do this, the agreement calls for the government to create specialized institutions and security programs, including new divisions in the Attorney General’s Office and National Police, a National Security Guarantees Commission, a Comprehensive Security System for Political Participation (SISEP) to protect FARC-EP ex-combatants and other vulnerable political actors, as well as new community protection plans.

Chapter 4. Solution to the Illicit Drugs Problem

The fourth chapter contains measures to prevent the cultivation of illicit use crops as well as the production and sale of illicit drugs which have fueled and financed the Colombian armed conflict for decades. This chapter contains comprehensive responses to these issues, such as a national plan for voluntary crop substitution, assistance for drug users, and strategies against organized crime involved in drug trafficking.

In order to generate voluntary crop substitution among farmers, the agreement introduces a National Comprehensive Program for the Substitution of Crops Used for Illicit Purposes (PNIS). This program requires a planning process to create collective livelihood solutions that will later be compiled into comprehensive community-based and municipal plans for substitution and alternative agrarian development. In this sense, PNIS is complementary to RRI (Chapter 1) in that the solution to the problem of illicit drugs requires overcoming rural poverty. Additionally, the prioritized PDET territories overlap with many of those affected by illicit use crops, meaning both initiatives must be coordinated. Finally, to support small-scale farmers, this chapter also commits to special judicial treatment for those who are or

have been involved in the cultivation of illicit use crops.

Chapter 4 also includes commitments related to public health and drug use prevention. It calls for the government to establish a National Program for Comprehensive Intervention on Illicit Drug Use as a high-level body charged with coordinating and overseeing a countrywide participatory review process of current policies addressing drug use. With the aim of improving treatment and rehabilitation care given to drug users, this chapter also contains a National Assistance System for Illicit Drug Users, including a special emphasis on gender issues.

Lastly, the fourth chapter incorporates commitments aimed at reducing the production and sale of narcotics. With regard to criminal policy, the government commits to strengthening the capacity of judicial institutions for investigation, prosecution, and punishment of crimes associated with illicit drug production and trafficking. As part of the commitment to stepping up the fight against organized crime, the chapter contains a strategy to seize assets from those convicted of drug trafficking, money laundering, and corruption.

Chapter 5. Agreement Regarding the Victims of the Conflict: Comprehensive System for Truth, Justice, Reparations, and Non-recurrence

The Comprehensive System for Truth, Justice, Reparations, and Non-Recurrence (SIVJRNR) contains both judicial mechanisms to investigate and sanction crimes committed in the context of the armed conflict and extrajudicial measures designed to clarify related events, search for people who have disappeared, and assure reparations for victims.

The SIVJRNR creates a judicial body called the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP). This body receives and reviews requests from FARC-EP ex-combatants and members of the military and police forces applying for amnesty or pardon for an action committed during the armed conflict. In exchange for complete and honest testimony of their actions, applicants will receive amnesty or abbreviated sanctions, which may include

reparations for their victims. If testimonies are proven to be incomplete, the JEP will investigate the evidence surrounding these cases and submit the individual to an adversarial trial.

The SIVJRNR also contains the Truth, Coexistence, and Non-Recurrence Commission, an extrajudicial body made up of eleven magistrates charged with procuring testimonies from victims and perpetrators of the armed conflict. These testimonies will be compiled in a final report for the clarification of the truth around the armed conflict.

In order to collect information on the dimensions of armed conflict victims, the SIVJRNR creates the Unit for the Search for Persons Deemed as Missing in the context of the armed conflict. This extrajudicial body will coordinate with existing search efforts to establish the universe of people disappeared during the armed conflict and, when possible, assure the dignified return of remains to family members of the disappeared.

Finally, Chapter 5 includes reparations and non-repetition measures. Reparations initiatives are based in large part on the existing system for Victims Reparations created in Colombia before the signing of the Final Accord. These measures include collective reparations, individual and collective land restitution programs, and psychosocial care, among others. Included as well are guarantees for non-repetition of the armed conflict, which include provisions for updating the National Human Rights Plan and for providing increasing protections for human rights leaders.

Chapter 6. Implementation, Verification, and Public Endorsement

The sixth and final chapter of the Final Agreement includes fundamental safeguards and monitoring measures for implementation of the accords. Its main contents include a joint Government – FARC-EP “Follow-up, Promotion, and Verification Commission” (CSIVI), an Ethnic Chapter designed to provide guarantees for indigenous peoples during implementation, and an international verification and accompaniment component. In addition to these features, the sixth chapter includes communication and

dissemination tools for promotion of the Agreement, as well as a referendum clause, subjecting the agreement to modification if necessary.

The primary monitoring mechanism for the Agreement is the CSIVI, a bilateral entity providing oversight, coordinated action, and verification. Internally made up of three representatives from the national government and three representatives of the FARC-EP, the CSIVI is the official site for conflict resolution at all stages of implementation. In order to facilitate the first 12 months of implementation, the CSIVI is to support priority legislation related to amnesty, transitory constitutional provisions, paramilitary organization dismantling, as well as victims and land restitution. Additionally, for the purposes of assisting policymaking decisions and transparency over time, the CSIVI is tasked with designing a comprehensive Implementation Framework Plan (PMI) that includes policy indicators and accord timelines to be revised annually.

A second major monitoring initiative in the sixth chapter is the Ethnic Chapter, which introduces international human rights conventions and specific measures to protect indigenous groups once the agreement is underway. In order to address the legacy of colonialism, discrimination, land dispossession, and armed violence affecting indigenous peoples in Colombia, this section calls for informed consultation procedures for each point of the agreement, with guaranteed representation of ethnic groups in land reforms, security and reincorporation procedures, as well as implementation monitoring.

Finally, among the major implementation mechanisms of the sixth chapter are the international verification and accompaniment components for the Final Agreement. These international components are designed to provide objective and transparent technical and material support for implementation. The international verification component is composed of two notables whose primary objective is to gather evidence from local organizations, as well as two major Colombian think tanks (CINEP and CERAC) and the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, which should draft and submit periodic verification reports to the international notables. With regard to international accompaniment, the

negotiating parties solicit 23 foreign governments and organizations to provide technical and material resources as well as objective periodic assessments of implementation for each major accord theme.

Referendum and Congressional Approval

Shortly after announcing the peace talks in 2012, President Santos decided that the ratification of the peace agreement required a plebiscite or referendum by popular vote. The announcement of the referendum towards the end of the negotiations initiated a political battle that occurred in parallel to the Havana peace talks (Echavarría and Hamed 2016).

Led by former President Uribe, critics of the Havana negotiations cast doubt on the real intentions of the FARC-EP to demobilize. Opposition to the affirmative gender considerations in the agreement was also virulent. Former Ombudsman Alejandro Ordoñez accused the negotiation teams in Havana of supporting a “gender ideology,” by which he meant a sexual revolution that undermined the heteronormative ideal of the family (Gómez-Suárez 2017). Evangelical Churches were instrumental in strengthening a public discourse that considered the peace agreement an affront to traditional religious teaching and good morals (Daşlı et al. 2018).

Despite the conservative tone among those who disapproved of the peace agreement, the “NO” movement was not monolithic. Diverse claims and demands were made in opposition to the agreement. For instance, some cited the absence of a complete inventory of the wealth and assets accrued by the guerrillas through illegal means not limited to the illicit drug trade. Others, such as victim associations, found the transitional justice system inadequate for attending reparation and reconciliation needs (Gómez-Suárez 2016). The criticisms were directed as much to the peace agreement as towards President Santos himself, who registered one of the lowest popularity rates in Latin America (Echavarría et al. 2019). Furthermore, investigations have alleged that the manager of the “NO” campaign, Juan Carlos

Vélez, propagated fake news in order to discredit the peace agreement (Gómez-Suárez 2017).

Those campaigning for the “YES” vote in the referendum were also heterogeneous. Those in favor of the agreement included Santos supporters but also a large number of social organizations advocating victims’ rights, LGBTQI groups, pacifists, as well as religious groups that interpreted the peace agreement as aligned with the moral teachings of the Church (Hernández 2019). The pedagogy required by the “YES” campaign to not only socialize but create ownership among the general population around the agreement, however, exceeded their capacity. The length of the text and an ineffective communications strategy failed in convincing the majority of the population (Gómez-Suárez 2017; Echavarría and Cremin 2019).

Divisions and polarization became evident when on Sunday, October 2, 2016, rejection of the peace agreement won by a slim margin over approval of the agreement, with a total of 50% versus 49%, respectively (Alvarez-Vanegas et al. 2016). After the initial shock of the news subsided, the movement in support of the agreement mobilized thousands of people around the country and globally. In a public announcement that may have won him the Nobel Peace Prize, President Santos and the government’s negotiation team invited the leaders of the “NO” movement to put their criticisms in writing and accompany negotiators in Havana (Echavarría and Hamed 2016). Over 6 weeks, negotiators and critics revised the controversial sections of the text, until finally, on November 24, 2016, a revised text was presented to the public and approved in Congress. Despite consensus among the opposition and congress around the final version of the agreement, similar levels of polarization have continued into the implementation phase.

Conclusion, Implementation, and Peacebuilding

Just as the design of the Final Agreement involved extensive negotiations and polarization, implementation requires coordination and trade-offs

among key stakeholders. For citizens, effects of the Final Agreement are felt in varying degrees of immediacy; for politicians, the agreement may represent a political boon or burden; and for technicians and evaluators, monitoring and evidence of the provisions are subject to different methodologies. Despite obstacles in implementation (Kroc Institute 2019), the agreement itself provides a new framework for building peace at the regional level, enriched by the local peacebuilding efforts that existed before 2016 and informing efforts that will continue afterwards.

Given its 15-year implementation period, the agreement requires planning procedures that assure commitments are kept over time. For these purposes, the Implementation Framework Plan translates the agreement’s commitments into public policy, with strategic and monitoring tasks that may improve continuity during presidential and congressional transitions. Nevertheless, securing resources and cooperation from domestic and international actors going forward is an evolving process, with multiple arenas and contested discussions around how implementation will be funded over time (Contraloría 2017).

Alongside these discussions, the agreement’s provisions have been implemented at varying rates. For example, demobilization and disarmament have occurred relatively rapidly in the first 2 years of implementation (United Nations 2017), while programs related to social reform are projected to take more than 10 years according to government planning documents (Departamento Nacional de Planeación 2018). Although this is in line with trends in other contexts, the proportion of non-security-related provisions in the Colombian Agreement is very high (about 90%), meaning that implementation will be characterized by the territorial nature of many commitments (Joshi et al. 2015). The future of implementation will require balancing regional development and civic participation initiatives while assuring progress in demobilization and reincorporation is not lost.

Despite relatively successful demobilization, security issues remain a major concern for human rights defenders and former combatants, threatening implementation of the agreement.

Various armed groups continue operations in Colombia and in some cases block territorial commitments from being fulfilled (Fundación Ideas para la Paz 2018). This phenomenon is not unique to Colombia – many countries with comprehensive peace agreements have seen violence committed by dissident groups after the signing of a peace accord (Darby 2001). Implementation itself, though, may help to address dissidence to some degree. Studies show that levels of recruitment to dissident groups increase where there is a generalized perception that the government is not fulfilling its implementation commitments (Darby 2001). In addition, empirical investigations indicate that countries reaching higher levels of implementation have a lower probability of conflicts with other armed groups in the future (Quinn et al. 2019).

The Colombian Peace Agreement has established new standards for comprehensive gender, ethnic, and territorial measures, setting high expectations for implementation as well. By achieving a comprehensive and timely implementation, Colombia will be able to demonstrate that it is an example not only in terms of peace negotiations but also in implementation, transformation, and peacebuilding.

Summary

In 2016, the Government of Colombia and the FARC-EP guerrilla signed the “Final Agreement to End the Conflict and Build a Sustainable and Lasting Peace” (Final Accord), resolving to conclude their decades-long violent confrontation, address the structural conditions that precipitated the conflict and ameliorate its damaging impact on society. Key lessons from past negotiations with guerrilla movements and paramilitary groups – such as a fixed agenda for negotiation and international facilitation and guarantors – were crucial for the success of the peace talks in Havana, Cuba. The Final Accord was drafted over a period of 4 years, and it incorporates unique approaches for addressing gender, ethnic, and territorial dimensions of the armed conflict, an example of intersectional peacebuilding. With

over 300 pages of text and hundreds of individual commitments, the Accord is organized into six chapters: comprehensive rural reform, political participation, end of the armed conflict, illicit drugs, transitional justice for victims, and implementation, monitoring, and verification. While each chapter contributes holistic solutions to entrenched socioeconomic, political, and legal problems underlying the history of violence in Colombia, translating these commitments into practice has been a challenging exercise in coordination among governmental agencies, civil society organizations, and international actors. Multi-party monitoring and verification mechanisms accompanying the Accord have gathered evidence showing that, in the first 3 years of implementation, demobilization has largely succeeded and elements of transitional justice have begun; however, important land reforms and socio-economic commitments will require additional concerted effort from the Colombian government and civil society, along with the support from the international community in the mid- and long term.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Female Combatants and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Human Dignity and Transitional Justice](#)
- ▶ [Measuring Peace](#)
- ▶ [Negotiation](#)
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Colonialism

► Post-Conflict Timor-Leste

Colonization

- ▶ Stalled Peacebuilding: Dealing with the Violence of Colonization and Its Legacy

Commemoration

- ▶ Memorials and Transitional Justice

Commemorations

- ▶ Post-Conflict Nation-Building

Common Security and Defence Policy

- ▶ European Union's Peace Missions and Operations, The

Communitarian Peacebuilding

- ▶ Local Peacebuilding

Community Self-Protection

- ▶ Unarmed Civilian Protection/Peacekeeping

Community-Based Organizations

- ▶ Grassroots Organizations and Peacebuilding

Comparative Peace Research

- ▶ Colombian Peace Agreement 2016

Complex Adaptive Systems

- ▶ Insights from Complexity Theory for Peace and Conflict Studies

Complexity

- ▶ Insights from Complexity Theory for Peace and Conflict Studies

Complexity Thinking

- ▶ Resilience and Peace

Compromise

- ▶ Art and Reconciliation

Conceptual Evolution of Peace Operations

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Synonyms

Peace observation; Peacebuilding; Peacekeeping; Statebuilding

Description/Definition

Peace operations have changed significantly over time, reflecting new challenges and initiatives to address threats to international peace and security. This essay traces the evolution of peace operation concepts, primarily from peace observation to peacekeeping to peacebuilding. This progression occurs from the early years of the League of Nations to contemporary times. For each concept, there is a specification of the key conceptual components and the variations (e.g., “robust” peacekeeping) within the same category. As changes occur, how the new concepts differ from, and how they are similar to, their predecessors are identified. The reasons for the modifications are covered, and these include innovations in strategy, new security contexts, and changing political realities in the organizations deploying the peace operations.

Introduction

Over time, there have been a variety of terms or labels to describe peace operations: peacekeeping, peace observation, peacebuilding, “robust” peacekeeping, and statebuilding to name but a few of the most common ones. Some of these are used interchangeably, and more often lumped under the rubric of peacekeeping, implying that they are all the same. This is misleading. In fact, the different terms used reflect some fundamental differences even as they share commonalities. The change in terminology is not merely semantical and reflects the evolution of how international organizations and other agents have responded to threats to international peace and security over the last century.

This essay addresses the changes in terminology for peace operations over time. For each of the key terms, there is an analysis of the central components that make up the concept and some discussion of how they differ from their predecessors and some of the reasons for those changes. Note, however, that the analysis below might imply a linear transformation from one conceptualization and associated practice to another. This

is not the case. Even as there have been shifts, for example, from peacekeeping to peacebuilding, the newer concept and practice incorporated elements of its predecessor. Furthermore, some older concepts persisted independently, in whole or in part, even as the modal practice reflected new conceptions of peace operations.

Peace Observation

Peace observation has its roots in the early twentieth century, corresponding with the creation of the League of Nations. Wainhouse (1966) lays out the conceptual elements of peace observation in the period following World War I. As is the case with later concepts of related ideas, peace observation is designed to “deter, discourage, prevent, or terminate threatened or actual hostilities” (1966: 2). This is a negative peace orientation (the absence of violence), as most conceptions of positive peace were largely unknown at the time (for a longer history, see Diehl 1994).

Peace observation stands in contrast to later kinds of peace operations in terms of composition. Observation teams initially did not consist of military units or soldiers, but rather individuals and staff appointed by international organization – the Secretary-General of the United Nations after 1945. As Wainhouse (1966) notes, the observer “team” could be a single individual assisted by a small staff. Thus, the size of the operation is not designed to have an impact on its effectiveness.

What do peace observation operations do? As the name suggests, the primary purpose is informational. Early peace observation efforts focused on fact-finding. For example, the Aaland Islands dispute between Sweden and Finland was the first instance under the League in which observers were dispatched in 1920 to gather information and make recommendations (which were ultimately accepted) on how to resolve the conflict. Article 12 of the League of Nations Covenant specifically mentions “enquiry” as an approach to peace as does Article 33 of the United Nations Charter. Fact-finding is also consistent with the conflict management efforts by regional organizations.

Even as fact-finding might be the core element of peace observation, it is not the only one in practice. As Wainhouse (1966) notes, there is great flexibility in how it is applied. Peace observation operations can and have included associated efforts at conciliation, mediation, and adjudication of disputes. Accordingly, the concept and practice can incorporate conflict *resolution* as well as conflict *management*. In a dispute between Poland and Germany over Upper Silesia, observers were sent to supervise a plebiscite in 1921 for the population living in the area. This foreshadows some future election supervision missions, outside of and under the rubric of peacekeeping, in later decades.

Peace observation includes some aspects that differentiate it from subsequent peacekeeping in terms of the principles of conduct. The operations involved considerably fewer and non-military personnel than would be the case under peacekeeping. Nevertheless, this evolved somewhat over time as national military forces were introduced to some operations and in the case of an operation sent to a dispute between Poland and Lithuania, the force numbered 1500. Peace observation did not operate strictly under the principle of host state consent, although cooperation among the disputants was expected and usually obtained. Neither was peace observation initially committed to staffing from states that had no political or strategic interest in the dispute; European states supplied observers to operations within that continent, even as their home states had deep political interests in the outcomes of the process. Nevertheless, the League observation operation in the Saar (internationally administered territory in the 1920s and 1930s) produced a series of recommendations from its commander, General John Brind, including one that personnel be drawn only from states without an interest in the conflict. The Saar operation also reflected the philosophy that use of military force would be minimal (only in self-defense) in monitoring a given area. In these ways, peace observation evolved in the direction of the fundamental pillars of peacekeeping (see discussion of “holy trinity” below) and thus cannot be considered a static concept.

Peace observation was practiced under the League of Nations and several Latin American organizations (e.g., Organization of American States, Inter-American Peace Committee). The United Nations continued peace observation in its early years, sending observers to Greece, Palestine, and other locations in the aftermath of World War II. Some of these efforts (e.g., the UN Truce Supervision Organization – UNTSO) are regarded as peacekeeping operations (and indeed the UN itself classifies these as such) as they had observation functions and many personnel were unarmed.

The term peace observation has largely, although not completely, fallen into disuse as other forms of peace operations assumed some of the functions. In addition, some of the initial elements of peace observation such as fact-finding are now handled by UN staff or special representatives appointed by the Secretary-General. Plebiscites, the focus on early peace observations, are relatively rare in contemporary times, but election supervision is common and carried out under the aegis of peacekeeping forces or international observers from various international organizations and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs).

Peacekeeping

Peacekeeping is often used as a blanket term for many kinds of peace operations, but it actually represents a distinct form; largely synonymous with peacekeeping are other phrases such as “Cold War peacekeeping,” “traditional peacekeeping,” and “old peacekeeping.” What are the defining features of peacekeeping and what makes it distinct from peace observation and peacebuilding? What accounts for the conceptual and practical shifts?

Before addressing these questions, one similarity remains: peacekeeping is designed to promote negative peace. That is, its purpose is to prevent the renewal of violence, and broader concerns with justice and other values are not part of its core. The conflict management focus is the priority, and, at best, it is hoped that conflict resolution

might occur in the managed environment created by the deployed peacekeeping operation. Despite the common purpose toward negative peace, peace operations underwent a conceptual shift as peacekeeping replaced peace observation.

In the Cold War context, the simplified form of peace observation became an anachronism. Threats to international peace and security were no longer minor territorial disagreements with little chance of expansion or escalation. Rather they were often the product of rivalries tied to the superpowers. Some of these had already escalated to war or had the great potential for escalation (e.g., Arab-Israeli conflict) and could have expanded significantly with outside intervention (e.g., Cyprus conflict). An observer team would not be sufficient to deter or prevent conflict, and any recommendations would not likely be accepted by the polarized UN Security Council. A new kind of peace operation would be necessary, even as some elements of peace observation remained.

Collective security provisions, including the use of military force, are provided for in the UN Charter, but Security Council stalemate meant that they would not reach fruition. The Suez Crisis in 1956 and the threat of war between Israel, Egypt, United Kingdom, and France provided a challenge for a new strategy different than peace observation and collective security. That came in the form of peacekeeping, a concept and approach that is largely credited to UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld and Canadian Foreign Minister Lester Pearson. Peacekeeping is notably different in several ways from observation and collective security. Peacekeepers were now soldiers from national armies rather than international civil servants as was characteristic of early peace observation missions. Most significantly, they did not merely monitor a given situation, but they were designed to be an interposition or buffer force between disputants. Furthermore, their role was not to make recommendations on how a conflict might be resolved, but rather to stabilize the situation so that separate diplomatic efforts might occur. Although peacekeeping was in some sense a military operation, it was quite different from a traditional one. Most obviously,

peacekeeping forces were lightly armed rather than equipped with advanced weaponry, and peacekeeping forces numbered in the several thousands at most rather than hundred thousands or more national armies. The major difference was the so-called holy trinity that defined peacekeeping operations.

The three core elements of the “holy trinity” concerned consent, impartiality, and minimum use of force (Bellamy et al. 2010). Consent meant that the host state(s) had to grant legal permission for a peace force to be deployed on its territory; cooperation from other states in the conflict, even if not hosting troops, was also needed. Thus, Egypt gave approval for the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF I) to be stationed in the Sinai after the Suez Crisis but later withdrew consent (and the peacekeeping force evacuated) prior to the Arab-Israeli 1967 war.

The principle of impartiality refers to the carrying out of mandate provisions in an evenhanded fashion. In practice, this might favor one actor over another, such as stopping the fighting when one side is losing, but peacekeepers ensure that the operation does not discriminate by doing a lesser job vis-à-vis one actor versus another. Peacekeepers also don’t affect the military balance of forces so that one side or the other is inherently advantaged as would be the case with a traditional military intervention. Impartiality is accomplished not only by mandate and soldier behavior but also by force composition. In contrast to early peace observation operations, states with clear national interests (neighbors, some major powers) were barred from contributing forces to the operation. The final part of the trinity is that peacekeepers use minimum levels of military force; traditionally, this was facilitated by only allowing use of force in self-defense. Such a restriction on the rules of engagement was consistent with the small and lightly armed force that constituted a peacekeeping operation.

The concept of peacekeeping presumed a new logic for preventing the renewal of conflict. Some of this stemmed from the context in which operations were deployed. Peace observation operations were more preventative, sent before serious armed conflict had occurred. Peacekeeping was

typically sent to conflicts following a cease-fire agreement; that is, some significant violence has already occurred, but the parties had agreed to a halt in fighting in conjunction with the peacekeeping deployment. Peacekeepers still operated on the basis of legitimacy that comes from international sanctioning, as the operation could not physically stop a determined combatant from restarting the war. The design and the empirical success of peacekeeping is predicated on logics other military compellence. As an interposition force, Fortna (2008) contends that peacekeepers make attacks more difficult, take away the element of surprise, and raise the international costs of aggression. Accepting peacekeepers can mitigate the security dilemma, signal mutual intentions for a peaceful resolution, and lessen the likelihood of accidents or minor engagements that could escalate.

Peacekeeping during the Cold War era generally followed these principles. Because of restrictive views of national sovereignty and Security Council political divisions, there were few peace operations authorized, and most were confined to interstate conflicts, for example, two operations (UNEF I and II) involved troops separating Israeli and Egyptian forces. New challenges to international peace and security, as well as changing political dynamics, have led peacekeeping to evolve into peacebuilding, even as the core mission of peacekeeping to limit violence has remained.

Peacebuilding

The end of the Cold War and thereafter mark some dramatic shifts in the way the international community conceptualized peace operations. One can think of this as an evolutionary process and one marked by less consensus than earlier formulations. The source of this transformation to what we now refer to as peacebuilding was a function of several influences. The prospect of interstate war significantly diminished, and thus the conventional model of peacekeeping no longer reflected the kinds of threats to peace and security that the international community faced. The rise

of civil or internal conflicts increased in the early 1990s, although this alone too does account for the change in the kinds of peace operations conducted; civil wars were not new, but the UN and other international organizations were now more willing to intervene in such conflicts with peace operations than in prior eras (Balas et al. 2012). There was also an increase in peace agreements to civil wars, in which the disputants requested peace operation assistance. This resulted in a reformulation of peace operation characteristics as well as what they were called upon to do.

A useful place to begin for detailing the peacebuilding concept is the definition laid out by UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali in his seminal *An Agenda for Peace* (1995). Peacebuilding is defined as “action to identify and support structures which will strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict.” There is still the primary concern for negative peace, and all conceptions accept this as an end, if not primary, goal. There is some disagreement, however, over what other elements should be part of peace building. Among many peacebuilding notions is a concern with removing the root causes of conflict rather than merely discouraging or preventing the violent engagement of the disputants. Minimalist conceptions expect conflict to occur, but desire to manage it peacefully. In contrast, the maximalist strategy promotes not merely management, but conflict resolution – that is, eliminating the “willingness” of parties to use violence. The various missions described below on what constitutes peacebuilding vary accordingly.

Peacebuilding also reflects the change in the context of peace operations. It is envisioned to occur in civil conflicts, rather than interstate ones; indeed, over 90% of post-Cold War operations were deployed to conflicts with an exclusive or significant civil conflict component (e.g., Congo). Traditional peacekeeping was usually sent to conflicts following a cease-fire, but prior to conflict settlement. Peacebuilding was increasingly sent to conflicts following a peace agreement and therefore its roles adapted accordingly (e.g., Sierra Leone conflict). There were also

instances in which peacebuilders encountered situations (e.g., Bosnian War) during ongoing fighting and therefore prior to an effective cease-fire.

Over time, peacebuilding has evolved to be further away from peacekeeping, most notably in the ways that it has modified the holy trinity. Consent concerns were comparatively easy in the context of interstate conflicts between two recognized government authorities. In the civil conflicts, who should give consent was less clear. Post-conflict situations often left competing actors exercising control over different parts of the country. In some cases of failed states (e.g., Somalia), there was no government authority to grant consent. Norms of sovereignty also evolved such that the international community was more willing to intervene in conflicts even with the opposition of the host government. Peacebuilding operations still preferred the cooperation of the warring parties, but consent was no longer an absolute requirement.

Impartiality was also subject to modification. UN resolutions prior to the authorization of peace operations in civil wars often now reflect biases in favor of the government or rebels in the conflict (Benson and Tucker 2019). This has downstream consequences for the kinds of peace mandates that are chosen. Some of the operations and associated missions also appear to favor overtly certain sides in a conflict (e.g., supporting the government in Mali against militant groups). This is not to say that impartiality has been abandoned (goals such as protecting civilians are impartial ones), but rather some elements of peacebuilding now relax that requirement.

Similar to the loosening of the other two elements of the holy trinity, the minimum use of force is no longer absolute. Since 1999, UN resolutions authorizing peace operations are done so under Chapter VII of the UN Charter to use military force (Howard and Dayal 2018). Peacebuilding operations have also become larger in terms of troop size with more advanced weaponry, a far cry from the unarmed observers in the infancy of peace operations. The rules of engagement have also changed, transforming some operations into what is referred to as “robust peacekeeping,” which involves the use of military

force, often permitting offensive rather than solely defensive actions with the consent of host state or major parties in the conflict. The UN distinguishes this from “peace enforcement” which is an authorized use of strategic rather than tactical use of military force and does not necessarily require consent. In either case, peacebuilding can now involve considerably more military actions than traditional peacekeeping.

As peacebuilding is more complex, there is more divergence on its essential conceptual and operational components. Jenkins (2013) classifies the divergence in the meanings of peacebuilding along four dimensions; within and across these categories, it is possible to understand the range of definitions used for the term. Peacebuilding practice reflects such a range.

The first dimension concerns the timing of peacebuilding. Although there are conceptions of preventive deployments and actions, peacebuilding in practice is almost always following conflict; hence, the term post-conflict peacebuilding is redundant for some. In the period following a settlement, there is a range of activities that are designed for short- versus longer-term effects at inhibiting conflict renewal. Some elements such as delivering humanitarian aid are more short term, whereas others are designed for longer term, such as promoting economic development and establishing the rule of law.

The goals of peacebuilding, the second dimension, have been open to more debate and criticism. The central goal of preventing conflict, noted above, did not change but the instrumental means of achieving it did. The so-called “liberal” peacebuilding model became the dominant one. In this conception, the rebuilding of states in the model of the West was the desirable end state and the one that was thought to ensure peace. Most notably, this is predicated on strengthening central state authority, and many of the activities noted next (e.g., strengthening rule of law, local security) were consistent with that goal; these are often referred to as “statebuilding,” which can be considered a subgroup of peacebuilding focusing on security. The liberal elements were evident in the strategies of promoting democratization and early elections as well as free market reforms, often at

the expense of economic stability and other values. The liberal model also relied on Western conceptions of human rights. This orientation privileges outside values and orientations as opposed to local organizations, needs, and logic (Autesserre 2014).

The other two dimensions of divergence – activities and agents of peacebuilding, respectively – are interconnected. Traditional peacekeeping was conceived as an activity carried out by soldiers, with limited support from the UN or other staff. Peacebuilding involves a broader set of actors, now encompassing other international organizations (e.g., World Bank), NGOs, and potentially state actors (Alger 2007). How one thinks about peacebuilding is related to which actors should be involved in what activities. The agents themselves have parochial ideas of what constitutes peacebuilding. In a survey of 24 organizations involved in peacebuilding, Barnett et al. (2007: 53) conclude that “organizations are likely to adopt a meaning of peacebuilding that is consistent with their already existing mandates, worldviews, and organizational interests.” Accordingly, the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) focuses primarily on the traditional peacekeeping aspect, whereas human rights organizations conceive of it in terms of protecting civilians and other human rights concerns. The World Bank is focused on post-conflict reconstruction, whereas the US Department of State sees peacebuilding largely in terms of stabilization.

The activity dimension of peacebuilding also represents variation. Diehl and Druckman (2018) identified 11 different missions that peace operations might perform (e.g., election supervision, protecting threatened population, promoting the rule of law). Looking at all UN operations since the end of World War II, they conclude that there is no single or even sets of profiles for peacebuilding or indeed peace operations in general; that is, there might be different conceptions of peacebuilding, but in practice there are many different combinations of activities that fall under the peacebuilding rubric. Nevertheless, they do report two relevant patterns for our understanding of peacebuilding. First, almost 80% of UN

operations include the cease-fire monitoring mission, indicating the traditional peacekeeping remains part of peacebuilding. Second, the number of missions mandated or performed by UN operations went from an average of 2.11 missions in the Cold War period (operations initially authorized before 1991) to 4.88 in post-Cold War operations (authorized in 1991 and thereafter) (Diehl and Druckman 2018). Thus, peacebuilding means performing more missions than before, even as there is not a unified collection of activities that is consistent across operations.

Despite the diversity in practice, Barnett et al. (2007) offer a typology of peacebuilding activities, sorting them into three categories: stability creation, restoration of state institutions, and addressing the socioeconomic dimensions of conflict. These are often carried out in sequence. First are security activities, such as disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) of combatants, designed to stabilize the situation and prevent renewal of violence. Second, and thereafter, priority is given to statebuilding in the form of rebuilding infrastructure and institutions, including the rule of law. The third category of activities has long-term goals achieved with long-term processes; encouraging economic development, respect for human rights, and building civil society are among the goals. As one moves from the first set of activities to the third, the role of the peace operation diminishes (or even disappears), and actions are assumed by other actions, such as NGOs and international organizations.

In 2016, the United Nations (2016) embedded the concept of “sustainable peace” within its definition of peacebuilding. Specifically, sustaining peace “. . .should be broadly understood as a goal and a process to build a common vision of a society, ensuring that the needs of all segments of the population are taken into account, which encompasses activities aimed at preventing the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict, addressing root causes, assisting parties to conflict to end hostilities, ensuring national reconciliation, and moving towards recovery, reconstruction and development. . .” Thus, the UN retains the immediate security goals of preventing armed conflict but also

emphasizes the long-term necessity of promoting positive peace. Although this raises some very difficult challenges, the ambitions and activities of contemporary peacebuilding stand in stark contrast to those of peace observation and reflect the tremendous conceptual and operational evolution that peace operations have undergone in a century.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Assessment of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Peace Operations, Principles, and Doctrine](#)

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Conciliation

- ▶ [Alternative Dispute Resolution](#)

Conciliation (see Reconciliation)

- ▶ [Search for Peace, the](#)

Conflict

- ▶ [Cameroon and the Anglophone Crisis](#)
- ▶ [Conflicts and Natural Disasters](#)
- ▶ [Different Layers of the Afghan Conflict](#)
- ▶ [Gender Justice and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Masculinity and Conflict](#)
- ▶ [Post-Conflict Timor-Leste](#)
- ▶ [Unintended Consequences of Peace Operations/Sexual Abuse and Exploitation by Peacekeepers](#)
- ▶ [Women's Organizations in Post-Conflict Contexts](#)

Conflict and Hunger

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Synonyms

[Famine](#); [Starvation](#); [War crimes](#)

Definition

Conflict and hunger are closely linked. Throughout history, conflict actors have leveraged food and targeted food systems as a tactic in war. More broadly, community, household and

individual food security can be undermined directly and indirectly by violent conflict. Recent trends indicate that conflict is the main driver of global food crises, while researchers are also paying increasing attention to the impact of hunger as a cause of violent conflict. However, while closely connected, the precise relationship between conflict and hunger varies greatly: not all violent conflicts result in the same severity of hunger; and no conflict affects food security uniformly across territories, communities, or even within households. Variation in the nature of violent conflicts and food systems and the interrelationship between the two determine the scale of conflict-driven food crises. This chapter considers the relationships between conflict and hunger, before turning to the strategies employed by peace and conflict actors to prevent, address and, in some cases, leverage these.

Introduction

‘Hunger’ – also referred to as undernourishment and food deprivation – refers to a condition in which a person’s dietary energy consumption is inadequate (FAO 2008, p. 2) and is typically a consequence of food insecurity. Food security is a multidimensional concept that depends on:

- Availability: food is produced to a required level.
- Accessibility: food is affordable, infrastructure exists to transport it to market, etc.
- Utilisation: food can be absorbed effectively, which is often determined by dietary, feeding and food preparation practices.
- Stability: predictability and reliability in each of the other conditions. (FAO 2006)

This multidimensionality is important, because it means that disruption to any one of these conditions by conflict – directly or indirectly – undermines food security.

From a global perspective, it is clear that both violent conflict and severe food insecurity are increasing. By almost any metric, the world is more insecure in 2020 than it was a decade ago.

Violent conflict is becoming both more prevalent and more complex. Today’s conflicts are often lower intensity in terms of casualty numbers but are highly fragmented, multi-actor, protracted crises (Pettersson et al. 2019; see “► [Peace Measuring Approaches](#)”). At the same time, hunger is growing. After decades of global progress in reducing hunger worldwide, this trend reversed in 2015 (FAO et al. 2019, p. 6). By 2019, an estimated 135 million people suffered from acute hunger (FSIN 2020).

Critically, growing insecurity and acute food crises are interlinked. Conflict and insecurity is the largest single driver of severe food insecurity worldwide and the main driver for almost 60% of people in food crisis (FSIN 2020). On average, the proportion of hungry people is almost three times as high in countries in conflict and protracted crisis than in other low-income contexts (FAO 2016, p. 14). The most severe food crises are also currently all concentrated in conflict-affected contexts, including four where the UN declared an imminent risk of famine in 2017: Yemen, South Sudan, Somalia and northeast Nigeria (United Nations 2017).

Almost all conflicts have an impact on some dimension of food security. Productive land can be destroyed and livestock killed, and people are often forced to flee their homes, abandoning fields, herds, storage facilities and inputs. Less directly, conflict can also disrupt markets, limit transport and long-distance trade and delay or severely restrict humanitarian access to populations in crisis. Lastly, wider societal transformation can take place as a result of conflict, and its impacts on food security and food systems affect hunger within the household, extended family and wider community. Over time, scholarship has increasingly recognised the multifaceted political, economic and social dimensions of food crises (Rangasami 1985). In so doing, research has systematically challenged the sometimes implicit assertion that hunger is an inevitable consequence of conflict or related crises (de Waal 2018).

This is also reflected in a parallel development in research, one that recognises that conflict’s precise impacts on hunger are highly context-

specific. Conflicts and food systems vary enormously across contexts, and the ways individuals, households and communities interact with both are also extremely diverse. Fundamentally, not all conflicts result in the same severity of hunger, nor is food insecurity produced through the same political, economic, or social mechanisms in different contexts. In the course of the same conflict, the impact over time, across territory and even within the same communities and households varies greatly, often conditioned by the precise dynamics of violence, the nature of food and market systems, the social dynamics that determine access to and control over those systems, and their interplay. A recent “revolution” in the collection of microlevel conflict data has taken place alongside significant advances in the collection and dissemination of finely disaggregated food security and nutrition data, contributing to improvements in the understanding of precise patterns and dynamics (Brück and d’Errico 2019, p. 169). In much the same way that the more granular study of the patterns and dynamics of conflict has revealed that war and are not mutually exclusive states, microlevel food security data reveals that hunger and starvation can co-exist with surplus food availability for a given location. (Brück and d’Errico 2019, p. 169; Koren *forthcoming*).

This discussion synthesises recent evidence from this growing field of research, considering both the ways in which conflict has been identified as a leading cause of hunger, and hunger has increasingly been explored as a driver of conflict. Lastly, it turns to the responses of peace and conflict actors in specific hunger- and conflict-affected contexts and on the global stage.

Conflict Causes Hunger

There is robust evidence that conflict causes hunger. In a cross-national, large-*n* study, Gates et al. (2012, p. 1717) find that a median intensity conflict increases the percentage of undernourished people in a country by 3.3% or in real terms, by approximately 300,000 people in a country with a population of 10 million. Beyond the immediate shock, several studies have found that the impacts

of conflict on food security and nutrition outcome are long-term, potentially irreversible and inter-generational, affecting populations’ health outcomes long after the cessation of conflict (Akresh et al. 2012; Currie and Vogl 2013). In spite of methodological challenges in how we measure conflict’s precise impacts on food security, separate from other considerations – such as income, state capacity and so on – that might drive both conflict and hunger (Martin-Shields and Stojetz 2019), there is nevertheless strong documentation of the devastating consequences of violent conflict for food security.

The use of food as a weapon of war is the most direct way conflict causes hunger (Messer and Cohen 2011). Throughout history, there have been numerous notable examples of conflict actors deliberately leveraging food in times of war, resulting in food shortage. Evidence of the use of siege warfare to restrict food and ensure shortage has been documented in antiquity (Garnsey 1993) and in more recent contexts from the “scorched earth” tactics of the US Civil War to the siege of Leningrad in the Second World War and the starvation of civilians in the Nigerian civil war in the 1960s (Lander and Vetharaniam Richards 2019, p. 678). More recently, legal and policy experts have maintained similar practices are being employed by conflict actors in Yemen, South Sudan and Syria (Starvation Accountability 2019).

But the starvation of civilians as a weapon of war, devastating as it is, is one of the several dimensions of conflict’s impacts on food security more widely. Beyond these deliberate strategies, broader impacts of conflict on hunger can also be seen. These include disruption to agricultural production through displacement; the destruction of productive land or re-orientation of productive land for non-agricultural use; and disruption to markets or market access (Messer et al. 1998). Conflict can also limit or entirely prevent humanitarian actors from reaching populations in need through generalised insecurity or attacks on humanitarian actors that result in suspension or full withdrawal of relief supplies (e.g., South Sudan NGO Forum 2018).

At the same time, scholarship emphasises that vulnerability to poverty is not synonymous with

vulnerability to violence (Justino 2009). In some contexts, wealth and assets – far from protecting individuals or buffering the impact of conflict shocks – may increase the risk of being targeted. For this reason, even where conflict does not directly result in the destruction of agricultural land, for example, households may choose to scale-down production in an effort to minimise risk (e.g., Paul et al. 2015) or adapt their livelihood strategies in ways that have long-term implications for resilience and future food security (Lecoutere et al. 2009). These dynamics are often compounded by the fact that agriculture is the mainstay of the economy in many conflict-affected contexts. In South Sudan, for example, where a long-running civil war has contributed to severe food insecurity, 95% of the population depend directly on agriculture (Elver 2017).

Less direct pathways, such as through disruption of support systems and mutual solidarity in conflict, can also severely undermine food security in certain circumstances (Rangasami 1985; Biong Deng 2010). Community ties are a key component of informal social safety nets. Because of this, the impact of crisis on the contraction of social obligations can have a devastating impact on mutual support and, through this, food security (de Waal 2018). Depending on the context, those already on the margins of social networks, such as the elderly, widowed, or people living with a disability or with a condition that may be stigmatised, can suffer disproportionately (Maxwell et al. 2017).

Given women and girls often carry particular responsibilities in relation to food collection, preparation and distribution within the household, and experience conflict differently from men and boys, the gendered impacts of conflict on each of the above dimensions of food insecurity are critical. Specific gendered practices which may emerge, or be exacerbated, in conflict, include men and boys in the household receiving more, better or earlier food than women and girls; increased levels of intimate partner violence in a context of wider social strain; and gendered violence through strategies like child marriage (Dowd 2018).

Recent years have seen a particular investment by humanitarian actors and donors in building the resilience of crisis-affected communities (see European Commission 2015; United Nations 2018). The aim of many of these initiatives is to reduce the impact of shocks and stressors, including violent conflict, on household and community-level food security, and support better and faster recovery. While robust evidence from initiatives in this field is still being generated, a key outcome to date mirrors the greater emphasis on granular data collection on conflict and food insecurity more widely: even within communities exhibiting relatively stable aggregative levels of food security, household food security varies greatly in response to shocks and stressors and is highly dynamic (Sturge et al. 2017, p. 26). A key area for future research, therefore, centres on understanding why some individuals, households and communities can better anticipate, adapt to and recover from conflict shocks and stressors than others, and to what extent this capacity can be effectively supported at scale by humanitarian and development actors.

Hunger Can Cause Conflict

The inverse relationship, between hunger and conflict, has also been a focus of growing research. Hunger has been identified as a contributing cause of conflict in a range of diverse contexts (Messer et al. 2001), typically associating limited food availability or accessibility with rising dissatisfaction and consequent social unrest. At the aggregate level, some scholars have linked resource scarcity with population growth and predicted a rise in violence (e.g., Homer-Dixon 1999). However, there is limited evidence of this coming to pass, and even less that this is linked to hunger specifically.

Food price volatility is a particular focus of research in this field, as both conflict and poverty become more concentrated in urban areas. There is some documentation of widespread unrest and rioting linked to food price volatility (Messer 2009). Other research has found that the impact of higher food prices in food-producing areas lowers

some forms of local conflict – such as conflict over control of territory – and raises others – including that over appropriating productive output (McGuirk and Burke 2017). Similarly, through the mechanism of international food aid contributing to an increased likelihood of conflict, some scholarship suggests an indirect relationship between food crises and conflict (Nunn and Qian 2014).

However, there is ongoing debate regarding the endogeneity of the hunger-conflict nexus (Martin-Shields and Stojetz 2019). The relationship can be particularly challenging to specify, as both the occurrence of conflict and the distribution of hunger within and across populations can have shared roots in historical and contemporary practices of political, economic, social marginalisation and exclusion (Cohen and Pinstup-Andersen 1999). Overall, there is still limited robust evidence of hunger specifically driving large-scale conflict and insecurity and far greater consensus on its interaction with wider social, political and economic factors as a contributor to insecurity. At the same time, critics have argued that efforts to cast hunger, or the wider poverty in which it typically occurs, as a cause of conflict, risk securitising populations in crisis. In doing so, these approaches may centre militaristic, security responses over and above development approaches that frame the right to food as an entitlement and governance issue (e.g., Alcock 2009; McConnon 2016; see “► [Security-Development Nexus in Peacebuilding](#)”).

Peace and Conflict Actors Respond

Research that focuses on the consequences of conflict for hunger, and vice versa, can appear at times to abstract these processes, such that peace and conflict actors’ specific actions are obscured. In understanding the mechanisms through which conflict and hunger are interlinked, and how these are addressed, resolved or sustained by policy and military responses, the actions of specific peace and conflict actors require attention.

Economically, while conflict’s impact on hunger is typically framed in terms of its detrimental

effect on wellbeing and development, it is important to note that some actors profit from conflict-driven hunger. War economies can be structured around sophisticated systems for hoarding and profiting from scarce food and the hunger it produces (e.g., Keen 1994, 1998) or the systematic predation and requisitioning of food supplies by armed actors (e.g., de Waal 1993; de Soysa et al. 1999; Pinaud 2014), including the diversion of food aid (e.g., McVeigh 2019). On the other hand, less coordinated and more opportunistic acts, such as looting of food warehouses (Mac Ginty 2004), can also be tied to wider instability in conflict.

Politically, some actors strategically leverage food systems, agricultural policy and food aid as strategic components of foreign policy. Sanctions or other restrictions on agricultural or food trade or aid either during active conflict, or in wider relations with adversaries, can also have a devastating effect on food security (DeRose et al. 1998). Related counterterrorism measures, which may be intended to restrict the actions of armed actors, can have secondary impacts on food security by limiting or preventing effective humanitarian response and access (e.g., Maxwell and Fitzpatrick 2012; Menkhous 2012). On the other hand, bilateral aid can also be leveraged as part of wider foreign policy, with the stated intention of relieving hunger. The US ‘Food for Peace’ initiative, for example, explicitly links international food assistance with both foreign policy and security (Wallerstein 1980).

At a global level, member states have developed a set of diplomatic and policy measures that seek to address the links between conflict and hunger. Humanitarian interventions or calls for action under the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) principle have referenced starvation in their justification (e.g., ICISS 2001, pp. 33, 69; van Voorhout 2014; see “► [R2P and Prevention](#)”). At the UN Security Council, country-specific resolutions on contexts as diverse as Bosnia and Herzegovina, Somalia and Syria have identified starvation of civilians as a concern for the Security Council. With a wider global focus, in May 2018, the Security Council unanimously passed Resolution 2417, specifically on conflict-induced food

insecurity. Resolution 2417 explicitly reiterates the prohibition on the starvation of civilians in war and firmly establishes food crises as not only a humanitarian and development concern, but also a pressing security concern firmly within the remit of the Security Council (Zappalà 2019).

A related set of responses concern states' recourse to international law as both a deterrent and as a means of pursuing accountability for starvation crimes and the violation of the right to food. In 1977, the Additional Protocols of the Geneva Conventions explicitly prohibited the deliberate starvation of civilians as a method of warfare. The Rome Statute first recognised starvation as a war crime in international armed conflicts in 2002, but it was not until 2019 that an amendment was passed criminalising starvation of civilians in non-international armed conflicts as well (Jordash et al. 2019; World Peace Foundation 2019).

Although these advances, both at the Security Council and in the field of international law, represent important milestones in enshrining the prohibition of starvation of civilians in conflict, and lay groundwork for future potential prosecutions, it remains to be seen whether the political will to implement and enforce these provisions will follow.

Summary

Conflict and hunger are closely interlinked, with conflict and insecurity identified as the key driver of severe hunger for almost three out of five people in food crisis today. However, neither conflict nor hunger is an inevitable outcome of the other. Conflicts vary enormously in their scale, intensity and specific interactions with food and market systems, producing highly differentiated impacts on food security across and within territories, communities and even households. At the same time, hunger is neither a direct nor automatic driver of violent conflict: the strongest evidence and consensus of this relationship concerns localised unrest and insecurity, with far less agreement on the role of hunger in driving large-scale conflict. Mirroring this diversity, peace

and conflict actors respond to both the obstacles and, for some, opportunities presented by conflict and hunger in different ways. Systematic predation of food supplies, the politicisation of food aid and profiteering in food crises are all documented alongside successive advancements in international law intended to prevent, and deliver accountability for, starvation as a method of war. Progress in reversing current trends in conflict-driven hunger will ultimately depend on advances at every level: responses at the household, community and national levels that are adapted to this diversity in conflict dynamics, livelihoods and resilience; and a shift in the political balance at the global level towards adherence to and enforcement of these key provisions of international law.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Peace Measuring Approaches](#)
- ▶ [R2P and Prevention](#)
- ▶ [Security-Development Nexus in Peacebuilding](#)

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Conflict Fieldwork

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Definition

Fieldwork that takes place against the backdrop of "conflict" carries with it many challenges and responsibilities and thus requires careful consideration. The difficulties associated with issues such as access and maintaining the primacy of guiding ethical principles in the fieldwork process take on greater significance when the site of inquiry is defined through its relationship to conflict. This chapter situates four key themes that the author considers of paramount importance when conducting a period of "conflict" fieldwork, namely, researcher positionality, the issue of time, maximizing the principle of "do no harm," and reclaiming ownership over impact. In so doing, the chapter seeks to encourage careful reflection from individuals and/or institutions which choose to include periods of time spent engaged in "conflict" research to ensure that greater attention is given to issues that are hitherto undervalued. The chapter concludes that ultimately fieldwork is a must for those interested in gaining a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the issues that are central to any conflict; however, the potential impact it can have on both the researched and researcher should be carefully evaluated.

Introduction

Those who have chosen to engage in fieldwork in areas of conflict or instability will inevitably have

spent time, privately or publicly, ruminating on the experience, critiquing mistakes, considering regrets, and reflecting on ways of “doing” it better. Shaffir and Stebbins (1991, p. 1) in their seminal work, *Experiencing Fieldwork*, have suggested that “Fieldwork must certainly rank with the more disagreeable activities that humanity has fashioned for itself. It is usually inconvenient. . . sometimes physically uncomfortable, frequently embarrassing, and to a degree, always tense.” When that fieldwork takes place against the backdrop of violent conflict, whether sustained or sporadic, the challenges are amplified, with issues relating to, inter alia, safety, ethics, positionality, and time, placed under deeper scrutiny.

The author’s first experience of doing “conflict fieldwork,” broadly defined, was in 2011 when engaged in doctoral research in the West Bank, Palestine, at a time when the “Arab Spring” uprisings were attempting to (re)shape the geopolitics of the Middle East, with the impact on Palestine far from certain. Armed with a rucksack, a night’s accommodation, a stack of unanswered emails, the “go ahead” from a university ethics committee, and a lamentable dose of naivety, the author sought to navigate a complex and fluid environment in pursuit of qualitative “data” to unpack the manner in which public commemorations across the region were being designed and manipulated by political elites. Since then, reflexively considering the craft of conducting research in areas that are characterized by violent conflict and publishing these reflections has been somewhat of a recurrent mode of academic practice, mainly in an effort to situate ongoing experiences (having worked in/on Palestine ever since) within a voluminous and expanding body of academic work. Far from engaging in academic navel-gazing, the intention has always been to use a privileged pedagogical platform to encourage others to greater critique their own rationale for doing “conflict fieldwork” (broadly defined) with a view to stimulating conversation and ensuring that others are better prepared than the author was.

Sluka (1990) has previously argued that research encompassing periods of time spent on fieldwork in unstable or volatile regions has largely been avoided due to the exaggeration of

associated dangers, coupled with the relative paucity of information available to guide those wishing to become engaged in the process. However, since his own pioneering work in Belfast, Northern Ireland, during the height of “the troubles,” a cursory glance at the “conflict fieldwork” genre to emerge since would suggest that researchers from across the disciplinary spectrum are choosing to conduct fieldwork in volatile settings, rather than musing on issues from afar. Crucially, those who do are more willing than ever to reflect critically on myriad issues that have occurred. Whereas such experiences were often unhelpfully shrouded in secrecy for fear of academic rebuke, the rapid increase in publication of personal reflection (Browne 2013; Browne and Moffett 2014; Cronin-Furman and Lake 2018) indicates that such reluctance to do so is being shunned.

In an increasingly warring and uncertain world, the need for research pertaining to conflict and violence and its impact on those who suffer most shows little sign of abating. When considered alongside the rapid neoliberalization of the modern-day university and the demands placed on researchers to ensure their work is “pioneering,” “impactful,” and “international,” those who focus on issues of conflict and violence are increasingly pushed to consider generating moments of “encounter” through work that involves an element of fieldwork, regardless of their preparedness or their capacity for doing so. Knott (2019, p. 5) has further argued that “There can also be a cache attached to dangerous research, and a fetishization of danger, in particular among graduate students who are incentivized to do more to stand out from their peers.” Such a need to differentiate, particularly among those whose primary focus is on researching violent conflict, shows little sign of abating as the academic job market continues to shrink. Moreover, as Cronin-Furman and Lake (2018, p. 611) have eloquently surmised:

Academics are rewarded professionally for first-hand insight and experience of the socio-political contexts that they are studying. With limited budgets and competitive tenure and promotion processes, environments that permit sensational or large-impact projects, which can be completed

quickly and at low cost, make appealing research sites

Research sites that encompass a period of time spent in areas defined as “conflict zones” would seemingly appear to match this description. However, what has previously been referenced to as a growing “fetishism” for such work (Browne and McBride 2015) brings with it significant challenges and opens up charges of bad research practice. And while fervently maintaining the position that fieldwork is a *must* for those who seek to truly understand the lived experience of those for whom conflict and violence are the norm, in order to ensure that the maxim of “do no harm” is afforded more than lip-service, greater appreciation of issues including researcher positionality, power dynamics, ethical responsibility, and participant safety must occur before a decision to embark upon such “fieldwork” is reached. As Dr. Robin Luckham, in his opening salvo to *Experiences in Researching Conflict & Violence*, notes:

Those who investigate violence must come to terms with the harm violence inflicts on bodies, identities, communities and social relationships. They should also reckon with the possibility that social inquiry itself can unleash powerful emotions, disturb fragile compromises and even bring tangible harm to those who participate. (Rivas and Browne 2018, p. x)

Here, the aim is to reflect on several issues pertaining to “doing” conflict fieldwork and to draw attention to the attendant difficulties, challenges, and responsibilities therein. While hoping to avoid a crippling dose of “jargon disease,” terminologies will be unpacked with reference to a burgeoning literature that speaks to issues concerning ethics, positionality, and researcher responsibility. These issues will be considered alongside personal reflections and the work of others who have engaged in “conflict fieldwork.” Critically, it is important to note that how these reflections are considered will differ greatly depending on a number of factors. Thus, readers will benefit in situating the voice of the author, from the outset, as being one of privilege (an issue considered in more detail below) – a white, European, middle-class, cis-gender, able-bodied man in secure employment. Resultantly these reflections cannot (nor should they) generate a

sense of universal applicability. They are personal reflections, situated alongside other scholarly contributions, on issues that the author considers worthy of greater appreciation when contemplating a period of “conflict fieldwork.” In addition, in speaking to an informed audience, there is no intention to generate a checklist of fieldwork “do” or “don’ts,” not least because every “conflict fieldwork” site differs greatly and seeking universality in terms of “best practice” is fruitless. Thus, the chapter ruminates on some of the more critical aspects of “doing” fieldwork in sites of conflict that the author has experienced while being in a number of conflict/transitional settings. The primary themes pertaining to the discussion below include positionality, sensitivity to unbalanced power dynamics, the importance of time spent, and reclaiming the concept of “impact.”

What Is “Conflict Fieldwork?”

Seeking a universal definition of what may constitute “conflict fieldwork” is a daunting task. The diverse range of international literature that transcends disciplinary boundaries, examining issues relating to the mechanics of “conflict fieldwork” and the reflections of those who consider themselves to be “conflict researchers,” when held at once, helps to set definitional parameters (see, e.g., Sriram et al. 2009; Kovats-Bernat 2002; Nilan 2002; Williams et al. 1992; Bell 2013; Sluka 1990; Nordstrom et al. 1995). Kovats-Bernat (2002) in reference to work conducted in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, chose the term “dangerous fields” rather than “conflict fieldwork” per se to define the location of his research. Others, such as researchers Alberti and Jenne (2019, p. 43), have opted to use the language of “challenging contexts,” noting that this includes “not only dangerous places where political violence is acute but also localities where researcher mobility is restricted by other variables, such as high crime rates, for instance.” They go on to argue that “Challenging contexts are also present where access is difficult in logistical terms,” with polarized political parties, far-right groups, etc., offered as examples.

In addition, terminologies such as “contexts of state fragility” (Cronin-Furman and Lake 2018, p. 611) have been used to define the spaces in which “conflict fieldwork” takes place. Therefore, if we accept the multifaceted definitions above, “conflict fieldwork,” however defined, need not be restricted to that which takes place in spaces where inter- and intrastate conflict, war, or ethnic violence is the norm. Rather than become obsessive in attempts to settle upon workable definitions, of greater merit is the deconstruction of what the literature considers to be the most critical aspects of “doing” conflict fieldwork. This is particularly the case when one accepts that:

Research fields characterized by ethnic conflict are highly politicized and may thus become ‘mine-fields’, necessitating thorough and continuous reflection on the researchers’ relationship to the field. Associated with this is the sense of unpredictability that characterizes the field and that forces researchers to navigate even more carefully. (Gerharz 2017, p. 2)

Referencing the work of Malejacq and Mukhopadhyay (2016), Knott (2019, p. 144) further notes the challenging nature of the “conflict fieldwork” environment in that it involves a diverse range of actors that span a “complex spectrum of violence, from victims, through combatants to perpetrators, whose competing perspectives and interests the researcher has to balance.” Thus, “conflict fieldwork” can include that which takes place in relatively sanitized spaces, but which involves a tapestry of actors who may be in conflict with one another and who can become potential research participants. For the purposes of the present context, the most accessible interpretation of “conflict fieldwork” is that which takes place in violent spaces defined by periods of sustained armed conflict and involving violent confrontation between inter- and intrastate actors. However, rather than becoming embroiled in the never-ending need for definitional certainty, what is worth emphasizing is the fact that choosing to engage in “conflict fieldwork” necessitates careful consideration of a wide range of potential risks and associated harms, not solely to those who inform the work that is being conducted (although, of course this is a priority), but also

harm to the researcher themselves (a hitherto underappreciated aspect of “doing” conflict fieldwork).

At this important juncture, it is worth noting that greater acceptance should be given to the view that not every “good” research proposal that includes a “conflict fieldwork” component necessarily ought to be carried out. If, upon balance, it appears that the logistical and ethical challenges associated with engaging in “conflict fieldwork” are significant, and that these then in turn outweigh the purported benefits for the communities for whom the research will ultimately be relevant, it is incumbent on researchers to be honest and transparent about the rationale for being a physical presence in what are fragile environments. “Conflict fieldwork” therefore requires constant, in-depth, and honest reflection of the aims and outcomes to be achieved beyond simply providing moments of intrigue or encounter for those keen on racking up air miles or collecting “exotic” visa stamps.

On the Issue of Positionality

Appreciating the impact – inadvertent or not – of one’s very presence in any given research site, particularly that which is characterized by persistent exposure to sustained levels of conflict, ought to be considered one of the paramount concerns when reflecting upon the decision to engage in “conflict fieldwork.” Issues such as, *inter alia*, gender, race, age, social class, religion, and how they impact upon the site of enquiry and help to (re)define the parameters of the relationship that develops between the researcher and those who inform their study are area that requires constant reappraisal as the research is ongoing (Kapoor 2004; Ortbals and Rincker 2009). Indeed, as Gerharz (2017, p. 2) has argued:

The challenge for researchers is to navigate the field by adjusting their position according to the ever-changing environment. What does this mean when we enter fields characterized by protracted conflict, where mutual mistrust, deep polarization, stereotyping, and exclusion shape society, more often than not along ethnic boundaries? Positioning becomes a much more intricate venture because it

implies not only that our relatedness in the field might determine our perspectives on the others and vice versa, but also that it might affect our findings.

This issue is particularly acute when the global north/south dichotomy is distinctly pronounced. In such instances, researchers who engage in “conflict fieldwork” should pay particular attention to the “presentation of self” (Goffman 1959) with the attendant need to be continually reassessing the issue of researcher positionality within a fluid and evolving research environment, such as in areas defined by violent conflict. Sensitivity to positions of privilege, it is hoped, can help foster better, more meaningful researcher-researched relationships. In addition, greater awareness and appreciation of one’s researcher privilege can aid in mitigating the methodological challenges that are often prohibitive when engaging in periods of “conflict fieldwork.” Browne and McBride (2015) have argued that, in this sense, appreciation of one’s own position can aid the bona fides of the researcher, which in turn can help to foster greater access to a broader base of respondents and generate more meaningful data sets. Therefore, the “art” of positioning when engaging in “conflict fieldwork” is an active process, one that involves continuous reflective practice on the part of researchers (Shinozaki 2012). While such a conclusion may seem self-explanatory, Chereni (2014, p. 2) notes that:

...The manner in which the researchers’ identities and positionalities unfold during fieldwork interactions has attracted little attention in social science scholarship. Consequently, existing fieldwork accounts provide few opportunities for sharing insights as to how researchers can potentially negotiate, enact and perform multiple identities during the relational space of fieldwork in order to facilitate access to data.

On the Importance of Time

In determining the importance of time in any proposal, particularly one that encompasses a period of “conflict fieldwork,” there are two specific issues that stand out. First is the question of deciding upon the appropriate time in which to

schedule a period of “conflict fieldwork,” and the second is that of deciding upon the duration of time one ought to spend engaged in the process. As noted above, questions can always be raised, depending on the site of inquiry and the nature of the work to be carried out, as to whether or not there is ever an appropriate time in which to embark upon a period of “conflict fieldwork.” However, researchers proposing “conflict fieldwork” should ultimately pay particular attention to assessing their own usefulness in being physically present in a given space, one defined by volatility and uncertainty, if they are of limited practical use to those impacted on the ground. In other words, when a conflict appears at its most intense, there is a stark difference between the erstwhile (and perhaps unskilled) “conflict fieldworker” and, for example, the humanitarian worker or conflict reporter. Ultimately, as with many of the issues raised in this chapter, there is no clear answer to this conundrum, other than to suggest that it should engender careful reflection and a weighing up of appropriateness of one’s physical presence in any chosen field versus a desire for gathering research data firsthand. Yet, such a view would be moot if the research in question is examining, for example, the immediate impact of conflict or violence on a specific population, or analysis of the weaponry being deployed during a conflict. The appropriate timing of the researcher’s presence in the field of inquiry may therefore be easy to determine. Thus, to summarize: any timing decision requires careful evaluation from afar, and decisions taken must not be determined, as is often the case, by project timelines submitted during the drafting process of grant applications.

A second issue pertaining to time concerns the amount of physical time spent present in a specific site of inquiry by those engaged in the “conflict fieldwork” process. Those who have been defined as the “over-researched” (Sukarieh and Tannock 2013), including vulnerable communities living in areas defined by violent conflict, have expressed frustration with constant and temporal exposure to researchers from university attaches, those who engage in often intrusive and insensitive extracting of personal reflections on their

lived experience, without taking meaningful time in which to generate a relationship. Anthropologists and sociologists will be accustomed to long periods of ethnographic study, involving deep immersion in “conflict fieldwork.” Other disciplines place less emphasis on “conflict fieldwork” that prioritize sustained periods of time spent in the data collection process. While the period of time spent engaged in “conflict fieldwork” is dependent on myriad factors, including methodological preference of the researcher, capacity for the researcher to be absent from home for long periods of time, and relief from other university tasks, it would be hard to argue against the view that longer periods of time spent in the field of inquiry will, at least on paper, aid in the likelihood of generating better, and more meaningful, researcher-researched relationships. Reflecting on the author’s own work with vulnerable communities living in Palestine and Northern Ireland, those living at the sharp edge of conflict often expressed skepticism of researchers they perceived to be “parachuting in” to conduct “conflict fieldwork” for short and determined periods of time. Browne and McBride (2015) therefore highlight that in order to generate bona fides in areas that are often hard to access – areas referred to as “politically sensitive” – researchers should spend more time “hanging out” (Geertz 1973) rather than immediately diving into the extractive research process. In their specific case, this “hanging out” required engaging in extracurricular activities (i.e., those activities that were not directly linked to the research) so as to break down barriers between researcher-researched and to “normalize” encounters. This sensitivity to time will thus help to ensure the generation of meaningful researcher-researched relationships and ultimately reduce power imbalances.

“Do No Harm”

As Fluehr-Lobban has suggested, it is nigh on impossible for researchers, or indeed their institutions, to predict, and therefore prevent, harm that may come to participants and researchers who engage in periods of “conflict fieldwork,” given the fluid nature of these fields of inquiry. That

being said, the core principle that informs all research studies must remain the maxim of “do no harm,” one that assumes even greater significance when the work in question involves a period of time engaged in “conflict fieldwork.” Those who have ever opted for a period of “conflict fieldwork” in their research design will be well versed, and potentially frustrated by, the language of university ethics committees or institutional review boards. There exists an extensive, interdisciplinary literature on ethical practice, which focuses on issues such as data security, data storage, confidentiality, and access. Often the language of this literature, and the language of the ethics committee boardroom, can appear blunt or detached, miles away from the reality of “doing” conflict fieldwork. There is thus a disconnect that can exist between thinking ethically and acting ethically, and this difference is often one that comes into direct collision in areas where “conflict fieldwork” takes place. The extent to which there exists a “hierarchy of concern,” i.e., whether it is the researcher, the researched, or the integrity of the institution which ultimately informs the decisions of the ethics committees/review boards is open to debate. However, “conflict fieldwork,” with its ever-evolving and fluid nature, can often result in the blurring of the lines of ethical practice, when the research is in full flow. This hitherto underappreciated aspect of doing “conflict fieldwork” is explained by Cronin-Furman and Lake (2018, p. 611), who have noted that:

Contexts of state fragility or violent conflict constitute permissive environments in which researchers can find themselves (usually unintentionally) skirting the edges of what would be considered responsible research practice elsewhere. Their incentive structures, as well as those of their research subjects and local partners, generate potentially exploitative dynamics.

Similarly, “conflict fieldwork” presents myriad instances, whereby researchers are faced with moral conundrums in “real time,” necessitating quick, “on the feet” thinking. In areas devastated by violent conflict, with the existence of multiple layers of victim, with diverse needs, researchers can find themselves gaining access to a wide variety of potentially vulnerable respondents. Subsequently, less experienced researchers may

inadvertently become in the position, whereby they engage highly vulnerable victims, intentionally or not, as participants in their research study, without appropriate due diligence. Given that aftercare for respondents is unlikely to be available in areas devastated by conflict, it is not unreasonable to question the appropriateness of engaging in any work that presents itself in a serendipitous way, if the necessary follow-up support and provisions have not been already factored in. As Cronin-Furman and Lake (2018, p. 607) eloquently summarize:

Qualitative researchers may find requests to interview victims or perpetrators of wartime violence granted with ease. Experimenters can coerce under-resourced NGOs to pursue interventions at odds with their organizational mandates. We posit that conflict contexts can constitute permissive environments in which researchers can engage in conduct that would be considered deeply problematic at home.

While there is a need to constantly be aware of one's ethical responsibilities when engaged in periods of "conflict fieldwork," Knott (2019, p. 140) has drawn attention to the fact that, leaving the field of inquiry, does not necessarily discharge one's ethical responsibility. Ethical issues often emerge as sites of inquiry evolve, which in turn requires the researcher to engage in a constant evaluation and reappraisal of the ethical soundness of their work. All of which leads to a return to the point offered above, not all "good" ideas necessarily make for "good," or in this case, "ethically sound" research projects.

Reclaiming "Impact"

As the institutional buzzword of the day in terms of the "value" that is placed upon our research, "impact" is increasingly driving researchers, including for the purposes of this chapter, "conflict fieldworkers" to factor into their research, fieldwork that engages with conflict affected communities, firsthand. And while not departing from the position adopted from the outset, namely, that such work is fruitful, necessary, and generative, it is vital that those who "do" such work reclaim the true meaning of the word "impact." Doing "conflict fieldwork" can have a profoundly negative

impact on the well-being – physical and mental – of those who choose to do so, an issue that remains under-researched and thus underappreciated. While we correctly point to the critical importance of ensuring that all harm to participants in any study is fully negated (where possible), of equal importance should be ensuring that researchers themselves are afforded equal protection against the harms that such work can bring about. To this end, greater support should be offered from research institutions, those who ultimately benefit from the value of the work produced, to ensure that they uphold their duty of care to the "fieldworker." International NGOs, including organs of the United Nations, recognize the deleterious impact of "being in the field" and factor in periods of "R&R" to ensure the well-being of staff. Research institutions, including universities, would do well to establish networks of support to ensure that those returning from periods of time spent on "conflict fieldwork" are able to cope with the processing of what can be, at times, traumatic experiences.

Summary

This brief examination of a number of key themes surrounding "conflict fieldwork" has sought to, firstly, define "conflict fieldwork," before discussing the critical importance of appreciating researcher positionality, to reflect critically on the importance of time, and to highlight the primacy of the "do no harm" principle. In so doing, it has situated the discussion around these key themes alongside emergent literature, in an effort to highlight wider thinking around the subject matter. While not wishing to diminish in any way the importance of "doing" fieldwork that takes place against the backdrop of conflict or instability, it has been the intention of the author to ask those who do to think more critically about their rationale for doing so, by being more attuned to their position of privilege and more sensitive to potential elements of bad practice that may have crept into their craft. "Conflict fieldwork" is a privilege, but one that carries with it great responsibility. As Brewer (2016, p. 2) has argued, research engagement in areas considered to be "dangerous fields"

requires adaptability, and thus the greatest trait to be learned is that of researcher flexibility, rather than blind conformity to ethical codes. Ultimately it is the researcher's capacity for being adaptable and sensitive to their presence in "conflict" environments that will be of most value when navigating periods of fieldwork in unstable or violent spaces.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Measuring Peace](#)
- ▶ [Peace Measuring Approaches](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding and Postcolonial Subject](#)
- ▶ [Reflexivity in the Study of Security and Conflict](#)

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Conflict in Sri Lanka

- ▶ [Liberal and Illiberal Peacebuilding in Sri Lanka](#)

Conflict Research

- ▶ [Reflexivity and Fieldwork in Feminist Peace Research](#)

Conflict Resolution

- ▶ [Consociationalism and Peace After Conflict](#)
- ▶ [Insights from Complexity Theory for Peace and Conflict Studies](#)
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Conflict Sensitive Journalism

- ▶ [Peace Journalism](#)

Conflict Transformation

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- ▶ [Theatre and Peacebuilding](#)

Conflict, Memory, and Memory Activism: Dealing with Difficult Pasts

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Synonyms

[Alternative commemorations](#); [Calendars](#);
[Contested pasts](#); [Counter memory](#); [Memory](#);
[Memory activism](#)

Description

This entry discusses the role of memory studies in the analysis of societies in and after conflict and in the study of processes of peacebuilding and peace formation (Richmond 2013) from below. It addresses the following questions: What are the ways in which the social organization of memory shape processes of post-conflict remembrance? What are the modes in which communities and groups preserve and remember the past, commemorate it, deny, or obliterate it? What is the role of memory activists and alternative commemorative events in processes of reconciliation? By discussing the dynamics of memory work and memory activism, and the tensions between state-sponsored and alternative counter-memories, this entry underlines the importance of the study of spaces of memory as an arena of political struggles. Memory regimes and mnemonic actors, state calendars, and commemorative events are all part of the social organization of memory, which shapes the politics of memory in and after conflict.

Introduction

In the aftermath of conflict, war, repressive authoritarian rule, or mass atrocities, while violence may have ended, and armed conflict may have ceased, conflicts over narratives and representations of the past often endure. The past then becomes a contested sphere, as social disputes may arise over memories, their social legitimization, and claims to “truth” (Jelin 2003). Once memories become the object of conflicts and struggles, even of “civil wars of memory” (Kuljić 2009), they involve various actors as they generate meanings of the past framed by the power relations in which their actions are embedded (Jelin 2003).

Around the globe, modes of remembering and forgetting after conflict have been a fertile ground for research. Different models for societies to deal with their violent pasts are at the heart of numerous contemporary studies and debates. The interlinked dynamics of remembering and

forgetting (Zerubavel 1995; Connerton 1989, 2009) can be traced in many cases, societies, and practices. To name only a few: from to the post-dictatorship Spanish pact of forgetting (Aguilar and Ramirez-Barat 2017), to politics of regret as in the case of Germany (Olick 2007), or to cultural amnesia regarding the history of slavery in the United States (Howard Ross 2018).

Maurice Halbwachs (1877–1945), the founding father of the field of memory studies, articulated in his landmark 1925 work *On Collective Memory* a number of underlying concepts concerning the collective dimensions of memory. These concepts are central to peace and conflict studies scholars' mnemonic explorations of the social shapes of the past. Memory, for Halbwachs, is first of all a matter of how minds work together in society (Olick et al. 2011). His sociological analysis links society to the individual precisely through memory (Aguilar 2002), giving the term "collective memory" unprecedented theoretical weight (Olick et al. 2011). Memory therefore is not just individual, nor is it just a binding activity for groups; it is their cultural inheritance, whether actively or passively maintained (as quoted in Olick 2007). As according to Halbwachs:

While the collective memory endures and draws strength from its base in a coherent body of people, it is individuals as group members who remember. There are as many collective memories as there are groups and institutions in a society. It is, of course individuals who remember, not groups or institutions, but these individuals, being located in a specific group context, draw on that context to remember or recreate the past. Hence, every collective memory requires the support of a group delimited in space and time. (Halbwachs 1992)

As such, the forms memory takes vary according to (its) social organization and to the groups to which any individual belongs (Olick et al. 2011). Equally significant is Halbwachs' assertion that memory is framed in the present as much as in the past and is variable rather than constant (Ibid.). Thus, the analysis of collective memories of past mass atrocities or injustices, of conflict and wars, and the study of commemorative rituals constructed around them are all crucial for deepening the theoretical and empirical

discussions in critical inquiries in peace and conflict studies.

The aim of this entry is to bring to the fore the role of social memory studies in the analysis of societies in and after conflict and in the study of processes of peacebuilding and peace formation (Richmond 2013) from below. It addresses the following questions: What are the ways in which the social organization of memory shape processes of post-conflict remembrance? What are the modes in which communities (and not only individuals) preserve and remember the past, commemorate it, deny, or obliterate it? What is the role of memory activists and alternative commemorative events in processes of reconciliation? By discussing the dynamics of memory work and memory activism, and the tensions between state-sponsored and alternative counter-memories in what unfolds, this entry underlines the importance of the study of spaces of memory as an arena of political struggles. Memory regimes and mnemonic actors, state calendars, and commemorative events are all part of the social organization of memory, which shapes the politics of memory (Kubik and Bernhard 2014) in and after conflict.

Calendars, Commemorative Events, and Mnemonic Battles

The second half of the twentieth century was marked by the appearance of a growing body of literature that explored the social construction of collective memory and the role of commemorative rituals and narratives in contemporary social life and their impact on the political sphere (Zerubavel 1995). What is often referred to as the "memory boom" (Winter 2001) raised fundamental questions for the field of memory studies: How do members of society remember? How is the meaning of the past constructed? Although Halbwachs pointed at the fluidity of collective memory, as memory scholar Yael Zerubavel noted, he did not address the question of *how* memory is transformed. According to her, "the concept of commemoration emerges as central to our understanding of the dynamic of memory

change” (Zerubavel 1995). Through commemorative rituals, such as the celebration of a communal festival, the participation in a memorial service, or the observance of a holiday, “groups create, articulate, and negotiate their shared memories of particular events” (Ibid.). It is the recurrence of commemorative performances and mnemonic rituals that contributes to an overall sense of continuity of collective memory. Thus, understanding commemoration is one way to gain insight into how societies deal with their violent past(s) or, even more broadly, with difficult pasts involving disputes, tensions, and conflict or trauma (Vinitzky-Seroussi 2009).

Commemoration, according to Schwartz (2001), is the tangible public presentation and articulation of collective memory and may include written texts (e.g., poems and eulogies), music (e.g., anthems and inspirational songs), icons, monuments, shrines, naming practices (e.g., streets), history books, museums, and mnemonic rituals. Each act of commemoration reproduces a *commemorative narrative*, a story about a particular past that provides a moral message for group members. Each commemoration reconstructs a specific segment of the past and is therefore fragmentary in nature. Yet, these commemorations together contribute to the formation of a *master commemorative narrative* that structures the collective memory (Zerubavel 1995). The master commemorative narrative focuses on the group’s distinct social identity, its historical development, and the formation of the nation. Hence, the power of collective memory does not lie in its accurate, systematic mapping of the past but in establishing basic images that articulate and reinforce a particular ideological stance in the present.

Another central element in the examination of the sociology of memory, and of commemorations of contested or difficult pasts, is the existence of social timeline(s) as constructed by mnemonic communities such as families, ethnic groups, and nations (Zerubavel 2003a, b; Irwin-Zarecka 1994). Examining calendars as “sites” of memory (Nora 1989) allows us to better grasp what such processes of the social organization of memory in fact entail, in particular as it

relates to the study of commemorative holidays and rituals. In his analysis of national calendars, Eviatar Zerubavel traced the institutionalization of commemorative holidays, which help establish an annual cycle of remembrance. According to him, “our social environments affect not only what we remember but also when we remember it” (Zerubavel 2003a). Such mnemonic “editing” of the group’s past may also imply mnemonic obliterations of entire populations, groups, or events (Zerubavel 2003b). This act of editing is crucial to the study of the shaping of memory in postwar societies and in processes of post-conflict transformation. In the aftermath of conflict, contested narratives, and memories about past perpetrators or victims, dates of victory and defeat, of mass war crimes and atrocities, can be marked on or omitted from the calendar.

As such, two forms of commemoration of difficult pasts include (1) multivocal commemoration (Wagner-Pacifici and Schwartz 1991, as quoted in Vinitzky-Seroussi 2009), likely to emerge in a consensual political culture, and (2) fragmented commemoration, likely to develop in a conflictual political setting (Vinitzky-Seroussi 2009). In cases as the latter, the commemoration of the past becomes a contested territory in which groups engaging in political conflict promote competing views of the past in order to gain control over the political center (Zerubavel 1995). The past is then openly contested, as rival parties (rival mnemonic communities) may engage in a conflict over its interpretation. Such mnemonic battles (Zerubavel 1995, 2003b) may involve entire groups and are often fought in public forums.

Memory Activism and Hashtag Memory Activism: Alternative Calendars and Alternative Commemorative Events

Spaces of disputes over the past, as discussed above, generate not only conflicts but also counter-memories and alternative calendars, which are here examined and discussed through the framework of memory activism. Counter-memory is essentially oppositional and stands in hostile and

subversive relation to collective memory (Zerubavel 1995). In this contested arena of competing views of the past, the emergence of alternative commemorative events and the creation of alternative calendars become vibrant fields for analysis (Fridman 2015). In the aftermath of conflict, memory activists engage in memory work, as they challenge hegemonic and state-sponsored memory and interpretation of the past – that is, the work of those who are “actively involved in the processes of symbolic transformation and elaboration of meanings of the past: human beings who ‘labor’ on and with memories of the past” (Jelin 2003). Often conceived in terms of a struggle “against oblivion” (Ibid.), against silence and denial, the demand is to remember as much as to remind, so as not to repeat.

Memory activism is activism oriented toward the past. It is a knowledge-based effort for consciousness-raising and political change undertaken outside the channels of the state (Gutman 2017). While the political motivation behind memory-activist initiatives may vary, this entry considers the works of memory activists aiming to advance peace and reconciliation. It underlines the work and mnemonic practices of memory activists in producing alternative and counter-memories and alternative knowledge of contested pasts in the context of critical peace and conflict studies.

This corresponds with discussions on the “local turn” and the focus on the local, which stands at the heart of the ongoing critique of the liberal peace project (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013; Richmond 2006). The study of “everyday peace” and “bottom-up peace” recognizes the agency and significance of actors at the sub-state level (Mac Ginty and Firchow 2016). Similarly, the study of alternative commemorative events as established and practiced by memory activists draws our attention to bottom-up actions, outside the channels of the state, and to the agency of actors engaged in the reinterpretation of the past as they put forward their mnemonic demands, especially in societies marked by denial and silencing of the past.

Memory activists use mnemonic practices and cultural repertoires as means for political ends

(Gutman 2017). Through local initiatives activists may discuss memories portrayed differently by the state and insist on commemorating crimes or atrocities that are otherwise erased. Various practices can be traced, from alternative commemorative events to the establishment of alternative commemorative rituals from the demand for a monument to be built or a plaque to be placed, to the production of educational materials to inform the public about the history of a difficult past. Such commemorative claims are often found in onsite actions, in places of past atrocities, in sites where mass crimes were committed or where concentration camps were established.

Onsite actions may be complemented by the use of online social platforms for commemoration. In recent years, in light of the “connective turn” in the digital age in memory studies (Hoskins 2018), new research has revealed the growth of online activism (Lievrouw 2011; Bennett and Segerberg 2012) and in particular online commemorations and online memory activism (Fridman and Ristić *forthcoming*; Fridman 2019). Tracing mnemonic practices such as hashtag memory activism allows us to focus on the ways in which technological change and innovation have nuanced, enriched, or otherwise affected remembrance. Hashtag memory activism refers to the online commemoration of a contested past on social media that entails the use of hashtags as a mnemonic practice. Hashtag memory activism can be employed as a mnemonic tactic that enables the creation of alternative platforms for remembrance, with the aim of sharing and disseminating alternative knowledge about a contested past among societies in and after conflict (Fridman 2019). New mnemonic rituals appear alongside older and more established ones, as commemorations expand beyond the local, to the transnational and online spheres of memory work (Watson and Chen 2016; Fridman and Ristić *forthcoming*; Tirosh 2018). As such, novel online memory affordances may contribute to establishing a culture of just memory that takes into consideration memory ethics and promotes the “duty to remember” the stories of the oppressed and marginalized (Margalit 2002; Ricoeur 1999 as quoted in Tirosh 2018).

Remembering the Wars of the 1990s: The Case of Serbia and the Post-Yugoslav Region

More than two decades after the beginning of the wars of the breakup of Yugoslavia (the wars of the 1990s), new memory regimes are in place in all the post-Yugoslav successor states. The order of memories in all the states that have emerged from the former Yugoslavia has been successfully narrowed, nationalized, and even purified (Kuljić 2009). Memory abuses were a common practice among politicians and intellectuals during the 1990s and continued to flourish in the decades that followed. Scholarly analyses and academic research have examined processes of remembering and forgetting the wars of the 1990s, of states of silence, denial, and responsibility-taking among victims and perpetrators of these conflicts as well as among their descendants (see Gordy 2013; Duhaček 2010; Kuljić 2008; Moll 2013; Plamberger 2016; Visoka 2016).

The wars of the 1990s are only a segment of a number of other issues in the region subject to conflicts over memories in recent decades. As such, the Second World War, the narrative of the people's liberation, the antifascist struggle, and the victory of the partisans, which were all part of the founding myths and the main source of legitimacy for post-Second World War Yugoslavia, are among the themes and issues being re-narrated, negated, and adjusted to fit new(er) narrative frameworks (Đureinović 2018). Processes of historical revisionism that began in the 1980s have continued well after the 1990s through rehabilitation processes enabled by new memory regimes and memory laws. In Serbia after 2000, "the battle for the truth about the Second World War is being fought on the level of most state institutions as well as in text books" (Stojanović 2011). As such, the socialist era turned out to be the ideal victim of the new interpretation of history in Serbia (Ibid.).

More broadly and as related to the memories of the wars of the 1990s, in the aftermath of socialist Yugoslavia, newly created state structures engaged in the trivialization of war crimes. Such processes conceptualized these

incomprehensible crimes as necessary defense and at the same time relativized, trivialized, and slowly sent them into oblivion (Kuljić 2009). The Yugoslav master commemorative narrative was replaced in each of the successor states with new national master commemorative narratives aimed at strengthening national identities. Instead of the former Yugoslav calendar, the new states' calendars were successfully narrowed and nationalized and indicated most of all the mnemonic editing and the obliteration of any critical perspectives toward the existence of Yugoslavia, the reasons and ways it came to its end, and the excessive use of violence and the perpetration of crimes during the wars in Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Kosovo. These mnemonic editing have shaped and continue to shape the collective memories and narratives of the wars of the 1990s. Even more so, they have hindered postwar reconciliation. New generations born after the wars have little access to critical knowledge about the 1990s, as they are subject to national and nationalistic mnemonic socializations that include mostly silence and denial of past wrongdoings. As noted by the Belgrade-based historian Dubravka Stojanović:

A number of steps were taken, which undoubtedly demonstrated to the public that the change was not just political but literally speaking, historical. From the change of street names, demolition of monuments to socialist heroes, to the change of state holidays and the ways in which past events were commemorated. (Stojanović 2011)

The new calendar of the Republic of Serbia reflects these trends as the ongoing social organization of memory continues to evolve yet remains fragmented. Post-Yugoslav, post-Milošević Serbia opted to place ideas, events, and symbols from the nineteenth century at the center of its new identity, discourses, calendar, and value systems (Petrović 2013). The Yugoslav master commemorative narrative was replaced with a new Serbian master commemorative narrative, intended to strengthen Serbian national identity. Almost none of the events of the wars of the breakup of Yugoslavia are marked on the official state calendar. Primarily, it is the memory of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization

(NATO) bombing and Serbian victimhood that are marked on the calendar and have been commemorated in official state-sponsored events since 2015. Other events, especially those concerning war crimes from this period, are buried under heavy silence. Anti-war groups have been attempting to break this silence since their inception in the early 1990s as the wars began. Likewise, memory activists have addressed this silence in their work after the ousting of Milošević in October 2000.

Memory activism in Serbia has emerged as a continuation of the anti-war activism of the 1990s through the post-2000 peace activism of the Women in Black. It can be traced through the analysis of rituals of annual alternative commemorations of crimes committed in the 1990s. The formation of alternative commemorative events established by the Women in Black, the first generation of memory activists in Serbia, joined by individuals and members of other groups, challenges the dominant representation of the wars of the breakup of Yugoslavia in Serbia (Fridman 2015, 2018). Following a decade of feminist activism against nationalism, militarism, and war, and against the regime of Slobodan Milošević (Papić 2002; Dević 1997; Fridman 2011), anti-war civil society groups in Serbia enhanced their engagement with the battle of interpretations of the recent wars.

The Women in Black activists, joined by activists from other civil society groups such as the Humanitarian Law Center (HLC), the Center for Cultural Decontamination (CZKD), the Helsinki Committee, the Youth Initiative for Human Rights (YIHR), and others, formed an alternative civic calendar through the commemoration of events and dates related to the wars of the 1990s. The main event and main alternative commemorative ritual have manifested itself in the July 10 annual commemoration of the victims of Srebrenica, in Belgrade (Fridman 2015), while other war events too have been commemorated over the years. To mention only a few, from the commemoration of the beginning of the siege of Sarajevo in 1992 on April 6, to the commemoration of the day of the end of the siege on Vukovar in 1991, on November 18. Street action in the form of silent

vigils, widely practiced already in the 1990s, commemorates and raises awareness of the innocent victims of the wars, regardless of their ethnicity, raising questions of responsibility, as part of their demand for peace and justice. Such street actions are well documented (Simić and Daly 2011; Fridman 2011, 2015) and were handed on to the next generation of memory activists, who came of age or were born after the conflicts, as a commemorative legacy.

As such, the legacies of the wars of the 1990s are at the heart of the civic engagement of the second generation of memory activists. Just like the activists of the first generation, they take part in alternative commemorative events as well as in the production of alternative knowledge and education of young people about their recent histories otherwise silenced in the public sphere. The prevailing representation and memories of the 1990s among young people in Serbia today are limited to the 1999 NATO bombing and then, more broadly, to the image of the 1990s as “abnormal years” (Fridman and Hercigonja 2017). The challenge of engaging with alternative knowledge about the wars of the 1990s stems from what Ivana Spasić (2002) articulated in her analysis of the politics of everyday life in Serbia: “Serbian responsibility in initiating the wars in former Yugoslavia is only sporadically identified; war crimes are still too often something that ‘has to be proven’ or ‘was done by all sides’.”

It is therefore imperative to study the generational shifts in memory activism while attending not only to mnemonic rituals and practices but also to mnemonic articulations and claims. In this case, the framing of the argumentation has changed, from “Not in My Name,” the Women in Black slogan since the early 1990s, to “Too Young to Remember, Determined Never to Forget” (Premladi da se sećamo, odlučni da nikada ne zaboravimo), the slogan of the younger generation of activists from the Youth Initiative for Human Rights (YIHR) (Fridman 2018). The YIHR alternative calendar, which they internally referred to as the bloody calendar (Krvavi kalendar), consists of dates of alternative commemorative events, some of which have been established already by the Women in Black, and

others that they have added subsequently, such as the commemoration of the 1995 Kapija massacre in Tuzla, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the 1999 Suva Reka massacre in Kosovo.

In their innovations, the second generation of memory activists has also added some new mnemonic practices to the silent vigils. Online commemorations and hashtag memory activism mark such innovative engagement. A number of hashtags have been prominent in the analysis of new mnemonic claims put forward by the activists. To name a few: #sedamhiljada (seven thousand), as related to the call for the commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the Srebrenica massacre, eventually banned by Belgrade authorities; #nisunasiheroji (not our heroes), as related to the demand of young memory activists in Serbia and in the region to treat returning ICTY convicts as war criminals rather than war heroes; and #whitearmbandday (#danbjelihtraka), an online transnational commemoration of crimes committed in Prijedor and the demand for a monument and the right to memory. The analysis of these new mnemonic practices and online commemorations allows for the examination of the circulation of memory from local to regional and transnational memory activism (Fridman and Ristić, [forthcoming](#)). They claim their struggle to be not only a national one but a regional one by using the same message and the same hashtag, in both online and onsite actions, throughout the post-Yugoslav region. As such, activists from other successor states of the former Yugoslavia often join forces, as a region of memory, in their actions onsite as well as online. Such cooperation among memory activists holds the potential for future processes of reconciliation and peacebuilding from below.

Summary

The study of commemorative events and memory politics in societies emerging from conflict and war contributes to a deeper understanding of processes of peace formation and peacebuilding from below. The analysis of mnemonic practices put forward by memory activists, and of the

establishment of alternative commemorative events (onsite and online), as well as alternative calendars, offers an analytical framework for the examination and understanding of processes of dealing with difficult pasts, as bottom-up processes, encompassing peacebuilding from below. Memory activism as a branch of peace activism centers around the agency of memory activists in forming commemorative platforms, as manifested in commemorative rituals in societies in and after conflict. As the empirical evidence in this entry shows, this framework offers definitions and tools, useful for critical inquiries in peace and conflict studies.

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Conflict, Peace, and Ontological Security

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Synonyms

[Freedom from anxiety](#); [Security of being](#); [Security of the self](#)

Definition/Description

Ontological security denotes the ability of actors to maintain their biographical continuity and a healthy sense of self. It is maintained through routines and stable relationships with significant others. When actors are ontologically secure, they do not pose fundamental questions related to existence, finitude, autobiography, and relations. This allows them to maintain cognitive control of their environment, go on with daily life, and have a sense of purposeful agency. Ontological security is unmade by critical situations, unpredictable events that catch actors off guard and rupture their routines. As a result of crises, actors cannot sustain their narratives about the self and others, which is generating debilitating anxiety. Although the concept of ontological security was coined by psychologists and initially developed by sociologists, it has

also travelled to International Relations (IR) where scholars have used to make sense of world politics, including peace and conflict.

Introduction

Ontological security is a basic need of actors for predictability of social order, stable relationships with others, and ability to maintain the narrative of the self. Ontological security is maintained through routines of daily life. When actors are ontologically secure, they have trust in the continuity of their social and material environments, ability to maintain a stable narrative of the self and others, and a sense of purposeful agency in the world. Over the past two decades, ontological security research in IR has grown considerably, and this chapter cannot do justice to the entirety of this research agenda (see also Mitzen and Larson 2017). The primary focus of this chapter is on how the pursuit of ontological security, by individual and collective actors, shapes conflict dynamics and peace processes. The chapter first gives a brief overview of the broader field of ontological security studies followed by a discussion of its central insights on peace and conflict.

Ontological Security Studies: Origins, Concepts, and Debates

The concept of ontological security was coined by psychiatrist Ronald David Laing (Laing 2010 [1960]) and was further developed in social-psychology (Erikson 1968). For R.D. Laing, an ontologically secure individual has a “sense of his presence in the world as a real, alive, whole, and, in a temporal sense, a continuous person” (Laing 2010: 39). On the contrary, an ontologically insecure person lacks this sense of internal or external permanence and is haunted by anxiety of engulfment, implosion, and petrification (Ibid: 39–65). According to Anthony Giddens, who imported the concept into sociology, ontological security is a “confidence that most human beings have in the continuity of their self-identity and in the constancy of the surrounding social and material environments of action” (Giddens 1991: 92).

To be ontologically secure, in his view, is to possess at the level of practical knowledge answers to fundamental questions of human existence. These questions concern *the nature of existence, the finitude of human life, the experience of others, and the continuity of self-identity* (Giddens 1991: 55). Habits of daily life and routinization of relationships with significant others emotionally inoculate agents from existential anxieties about the indeterminacy of human existence. As ontological security is maintained through habits and routines of daily life, ontological security is challenged, in Giddens' view, by the speed and breadth of change characteristic for high modernity (Giddens 1990, 1991).

The concept of ontological security was imported into IR in the 1990s (Wendt 1994; Huysmans 1998; McSweeney 1999) and soon after that theoretically and empirically developed into a budding research agenda (Kinnvall 2004, 2006; Mitzen 2006a; Steele 2008). Alexander Wendt made one of the earliest attempts to turn ontological security into an IR idiom (Wendt 1994). He argued that all states, as corporate actors, have four basic interests or motivations: (1) physical security defined as "differentiation from other actors"; (2) ontological security or "predictability in relationships to the world, which creates a desire for stable social identities"; (3) recognition; and (4) development (Ibid: 385).

The central assumption of ontological security studies has been the distinction between physical and ontological security. While physical security is denoting freedom from threats to physical integrity, ontological security is about maintaining stable self-other relationships (Huysmans 1998: 242). Physical security or "security as survival" is about freedom from fear of dangerous objects. Ontological security or "security as being" is about freedom from anxiety, which stems from the vulnerability of the self (Giddens 1991: 43–44; Rumelili 2015: 200). While fear and anxiety can come together, states often fend off anxieties by stabilizing their relationships with others, including their rivals or enemies (Huysmans 1998, 242, Mitzen 2006a). As a consequence, ontological security seeking can bring

calm to agents but can also lead to antagonism and conflict with others.

Ontological security in world politics is maintained through routines with significant others. These can be both cooperative routines such as diplomacy, special relationships, alliances, or security integration, *and* in this case, the pursuit of ontological security contributes to peace. However, ontological security can also be maintained through conflictual routines such as extremist violence, protracted conflicts, erection of security barriers, anti-migration policies, counter-secessionist violence, or denial of historical crimes. When this is the case, the pursuit of ontological security can be a driver of securitization, conflict, and war.

Ontological security is unmade by critical situations, unpredictable events that affect a large number of individuals, catch state agents off-guard, and disrupt their self-identities (Steele 2008: 12). Collective actors such as social groups, states (or a group of states) become ontologically insecure when critical situations rupture their routines hence overwhelming their discourse with fundamental questions (Ejdus 2018, 2020). As actors are unable to "bracket out" these questions, they burst into the public sphere hence piercing agents' protective cocoon resulting in anxiety, self-doubt, shame, guilt, and other incapacitating emotions resulting in a loss of purposeful agency.

Theoretical debates within ontological security studies have revolved around three questions. The first one is about the unit of analysis and the question of who is the ontological seeking entity. Some authors scale up the analysis and treat collective actors such as states (Wendt 1994, 1999; Mitzen 2006a; Steele 2008; Rumelili 2015; Subotić 2016, Ejdus 2018, 2020), alliances (Greve 2018), supranational organizations (Della Sala 2017), or bureaucracies (Steele 2017). Other scholars, although agreeing that collectives provide a framework for individual ontological security (Marlow 2002), keep the individual as the key unit of analysis (Abulof 2015; Krolkowski 2008; Kinnvall 2006; Roe 2008; Croft 2012a, b). To them, the individual is the only actor who is

seeking ontological security and should therefore be the focus of analysis.

The second debate is about agency/structure, and it boils down to the question of where the sources of ontological (in)security lie (Zarakol 2010). Some scholars zoom on ontological (in) security stemming from agents' social relationships (Mitzen 2006a). Building on relational sociology, Pratt takes this a step further and argues that a referent in ontological security is not the self but the social arrangement (Pratt 2017). Others focus on the introspective construction of biographical continuity through what Steele terms "the dialectics of the Self" (Steele 2008; 50; Ejodus 2020). The third group of scholars strike a middle ground and study social and introspective aspects of ontological insecurity as mutually constitutive (Zarakol 2010; 8; Kinnvall 2004).

The third debate has been about the relationship between ontological security and modernity. According to Anthony Giddens, the need for ontological security is a condition created by high modernity, a world "replete with risks and dangers" in which crisis is not merely an interruption but "a more or less continuous state of affairs" (Giddens 1991: 12). Some authors, drawing on Giddens, posit that the pursuit of ontological security in world politics is a feature of radical transformations brought about by contemporary processes such as globalization (Kinnvall 2004). Others, such as Zarakol, construe ontological security as a universal and trans-historic need of the individual and collective agents alike (Zarakol 2017). Historically, therefore, the modern state is only one among many institutional sources of ontological security. Ontological security providing polities varied through history and either relied on the predominance of secular or religious authority or merged the two.

In addition to these internal debates, ontological security studies in IR have also been subjected to a number of external critiques. In his more recent work, Richard Ned Lebow takes issue with an assumption, underpinning in his view much of the ontological security literature in IR, that collectives have one dominant identity narrative (Lebow 2016: 22–44). He also contests that

ontological security is one of the primary goals of individuals and/or states (Ibid: 29). Another prominent critique was penned by Chris Rossdale, who posits that by focusing on stability of self-identity narratives as a desired goal of actors, ontological security studies obscure and marginalize forms of progressive subjectivity which resists closure such as, for example, queer figurations or anti-militarist movements (Rossdale 2015). Similarly, Berenskoetter argues that ontological security literature is "trapped in the conservative bias" because it cannot account for emancipatory agency (Berenskoetter 2020).

Ontological Security and Conflict

The question of why states wage war has been one of the key issues preoccupying IR scholars (Waltz 1959). While realists focus on survival instincts of states, ontological security scholars stress that honor, self-esteem, and a healthy sense of self can be powerful a motivation to engage in war. As Lebow points out in his reading of Thucydides' *Peloponnesian War*, "[t]he Spartan decision for war was not motivated by concern for physical security but by ontological security: the need to defend Spartan values and identity" (Lebow 2008: 180). Similarly, Steele shows that neutral Belgium did not reject the German ultimatum in June 1914 to protect its cold-calculated material interests but rather to preserve its honor as a neutral state. By doing so, Belgium put its physical survival in harm's way for the sake of ontological security (Steele 2008).

The ontological security perspective can also provide a different take on why conflicts endure. Realists argue that security dilemmas are so persistent because of uncertainty in others' intentions (Herz 1950). Mitzen turns this argument around and posits that security dilemmas persist, because they are a source of certainty as states become attached to violent routines that drive security dilemmas hence stabilizing their identities (Mitzen 2006a). If states have a healthy basic trust, they will be able to reflect, learn, and eventually break free from the violent routines.

However, if they have a rigid basic trust, they might be permanently attached to routines that provide ontological security, despite their obvious physical harm, and hence locked in protracted conflicts.

The conflicts are exceptionally durable when the very master narrative about the conflict has become so ingrained in the national self that it survives despite partial desecuritizations. A case in point is the Arab-Israeli conflict which has over the past decades only partially desecuritized thanks to the series of peace agreements on the one side (with Egypt in 1979, with Jordan in 1994). The process was partial not only because the core Israeli-Palestinian conflict has not been solved but also because the wider conflict has expanded by including new securitizations such as the Iranian threat (Lupovici 2019). Another often studied case is Serbia and its perseverant opposition to Kosovo's independence, which was declared unilaterally in 2008. Serbia's counter-secessionist policy, primarily motivated by ontological rather than physical security needs, has been an obstacle to the normalization of relationships between Belgrade and Pristina (Ejdus and Subotić 2014; Subotić 2016; Ejdus 2018, 2020).

The pursuit of ontological security also drives the behavior of international organizations to engage as peace and security actors. Steele, for instance, has made a strong case that NATO intervened in Kosovo in 1999 to avoid shame over past inactions during genocides in Rwanda and Bosnia and Herzegovina (Steele 2008: 114–148). Cupać broadens this argument and posits that virtually all NATO's post-Cold War out-of-area interventions are attempts to fend off existential anxiety brought about by the disappearance of the Soviet threat as the foundational *raison d'être* of the Alliance (Cupać 2012). In other words, NATO's interventions in Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Horn of Africa, and Libya have all been deployed not to protect the material interests of the Alliance but rather as a part of its soul searching. Similarly, Mälksoo explains the recent turn of both NATO and the EU towards the issues of hybrid warfare, resilience, and strategic communication as a strategy of turning growing

anxieties over the vulnerability of the West into manageable and knowable threats (Mälksoo 2018).

The concept of ontological security has also been employed to make sense of contemporary geopolitical conflicts. Guzzini explains the post-Cold War "return of geopolitics" in Europe as an ontological security-driven replacement of post-ideological uncertainty ushered in by the end of bipolarity with the symbolic order well-known in the old continent (Guzzini 2012). While the EU had long resisted this geopolitical turn as a dangerous relic of a bygone era, it has recently adopted an increasingly geopolitical posture. Browning explains this policy return to historically known coordinates of geopolitical action as an attempt of the EU to calm anxieties generated by an increasingly assertive and self-confident Russia (Browning 2018a).

On the other hand, Russia's behavior has also been explained as being motivated by ontological rather than physical security needs. After a decade of failed and humiliating attempts to emulate the West in the 1990s, Russia under Putin is fending off its anxieties by engineering a hostile West into the constitutive part of Russia's identity (Hansen 2016). Achurina and Della Sala have depicted these two interlocking and mutually reinforcing anxieties as yet another example of an ontological security dilemma (Akchurina and Della Sala 2018). A case has also been made that other geopolitical conflicts, including the one between the USA and China over the South China Sea (Heritage and Lee 2020) and the one between China and Japan over the Senkaku Islands (Hwang and Frettingham 2018; Suzuki 2019) are also motivated by ontological security concerns.

Several scholars have used ontological security lenses to investigate terrorism. By disrupting the binaries of friend/enemy, inside/outside, civilian/military, etc., as Zarakol points out, terrorism undermines the ontological security of the Westphalian state (Zarakol 2011: 2315). One case in point is the 2013 Boston Marathon bombing. In contrast to 9/11, which was orchestrated by a foreign enemy, the Boston attack was home-grown. In other words, "strangers, both inside and outside of society," conducted it (Huysmans

1998: 241). As such, this attack endangered not only physical but also ontological security in the USA. By deciding to process the surviving attacker as a fully fledged citizen rather than an enemy combatant, the USA recovered its biographical continuity of a liberal society ruptured by 9/11 and its aftermath (Combes 2016: 13). Chan provides another example in his study of the Malaysian countering violent extremism strategy (Chan 2020). The rising numbers of Malaysians who joined ISIS ontologically challenged this predominantly Muslim state. To placate its anxiety, Malaysia undermined a counter-narrative strategy that interpreted the foreign fighters not as enemies but as correctable citizens who were misled into the wrong interpretation of Islam (Ibid: 8).

Finally, ontological security lenses open up a new avenue to study securitization more broadly. As we know from post-structural scholarship, physical securitization constructs objects of fear and provides stability of self/other narratives (Neumann 1999). Consequently, the question of “who we are” is inseparable from the question “whom we fear” (Campbell 1998: 73). Securitization of a social group constructs objects of fear, but it also provides a sense of identity for the endangered self. One case in point was the securitization of the British Muslims in the aftermath of 9/11 and 7/7 attacks, which made this community insecure but also provided a sense of stability for the redefined “new British Self” (Croft 2012b: 201).

Ontological Security and Peace

Conflict resolution improves physical security, but it can also bring about ontological insecurity. Desecuritization, or the process of the unmaking of objects of fear, indeed fosters peacebuilding. However, desecuritization’s unintended consequence may be what Rumelili calls “peace anxiety,” a state of unease stemming from the ideational destabilization created by conflict resolution (Rumelili 2015). The implosion of the Soviet Union, for example, brought an end to the Cold War but created a “crisis of representation”

in the USA, which embarked on a quest for a new antagonist (Campbell 1998). The 9/11 attacks and the ensuing Global War on Terrorism provided a replacement for the Soviet threat hence temporarily solving the representation crisis and stabilizing the US sense of self in the post-Cold War era.

An often studied case of “peace anxieties” is the peacebuilding process in the Northern Ireland, where the 1998 Good Friday Agreement brought to an end the longstanding armed conflict between Protestant unionists who wanted to stay inside the UK and Catholic nationalists who aimed to secede and join the Republic of Ireland. Since then, the advent of a more inclusive mode of politics has challenged the ontological insecurity of those who anchored their identities in the previously dominant friend-enemy ideology. However, it also destabilized those who endorsed the fragile civility as it continues to be undermined by lurking animosities (Cash 2017; also Kay 2012; Mitchell 2015).

In the aftermath of wars, states seeking recognition and a healthy sense of self are often unable to come to terms with their past crimes or crimes committed against their countries, which can undermine peacebuilding efforts. As a result, they securitize specific collective memories, a process whereby “our” version of history is seen as being under existential threat by “their” interpretation of the past. This process of “mnemonical securitization” leads to security dilemmas and eventual relapse into conflict (Mälksoo 2015). Zarakol studied ontological-security driven Turkey’s denial of the Armenian genocide or Japan’s unease to acknowledge its atrocities in World War Two (Zarakol 2010, 2011). States victimized during wars also tend to securitize their war memories, which can hamper reconciliation and breed security dilemmas, as is the case with the use of patriotic education about the War of Resistance against Japan (Gustafsson 2014).

The end of the Cold War generated ontological insecurity for post-communist states in Europe. All of a sudden, they were not only on the new path of becoming Western but also overwhelmed with feelings of inferiority vis-à-vis the West. To deal with this inferiority complex, they forged new state narratives and redefined their formative

collective memories. Part of this process across post-communist countries, as Subotić argues, was a redefinition of the Holocaust remembrance in which fascist crimes became communist ones practically overnight (Subotić 2018, 2019). Furthermore, international institutions involved in peacebuilding also engage in ontological security-driven memory politics. As Lea David has shown in Bosnia and Herzegovina's case, the international community, embodied in institutions such as the EU and the Office of the High Representative (OHR), securitized its interpretation of the war (1992–1995). This interpretation revolves around three essentialized categories of participants in the Bosnian War: victims, perpetrators, and bystanders. The international community did this for the sake of its own biographical continuity as a humanitarian intervener. Its hegemonic memory politics, however, has only cemented the grossly simplifying clear-cut division of all the parties into either victims or perpetrators and deepened ethnic divisions in the country (David 2019).

One way to overcome this situation when desecuritization of enemy constructs leads to anxiety is to change self-identity narratives (Rumelili 2015: 21). One case in point is Finland's evolving policy towards Russia over Karelia. This region, where the legends of Kalevala originated, was construed as the cradle of the Finnish nation since the nineteenth century (Browning and Joenniemi 2015). In World War Two, Finland lost the territory to the Soviet Union, which was a source of its ontological insecurity throughout the Cold War. However, Finland gradually came to terms with the loss of the territory as its post-Cold War identity evolved away from the nineteenth-century attachment to ethno-territorial claims towards the post-national conception in tune with the process of European integration (Ibid: 163–167).

Another example is West Germany, mirrored by the European Community writ large. In the aftermath of World War Two, it obtained a new sense of ontological security by turning its past into the most significant other (Rumelili 2018; also Wæver 1996). Moreover, post-war Western Germany renegotiated its identity as a civilian

power devoted to multilateralism, cooperation, trade, and strictly defensive posture of its armed forces firmly wedded to NATO (Berenskoetter and Giegerich 2010: 411; also Eberle and Handl 2020).

Ontological security is maintained through the routinization of relationships with significant others, not only enemies but also friends. Berenskoetter and Giegerich argue that as states need belonging and recognition, they obtain a healthy sense of self by making friends (Berenskoetter and Giegerich 2010: 422; see also Berenskoetter 2007). Accordingly, special relationships between states are also driven primarily by ontological security rather than material benefits. One case in point is the German-Israeli special relationship after the World War Two, characterized by the former's responsibility for the latter's security due to its role in the Holocaust (Oppermann and Hansel 2019). Moreover, Israel has managed over the years to exploit the German guilt by negotiating favorable deals, including the ones on reparations and arms sales, despite Germany's more significant economic and political clout (Ibid: 87).

Similarly, Chacko has used the ontological security perspective to make sense of recent attempts to forge a special relationship between the USA and India (Chacko 2014). In his view, the American discourse on the "rise of India" and US efforts to build a special relationship with the rising democratic power in Asia, alleviates some of the anxieties in Washington about the "rise of China." However, India's self-understanding as a restrained and peaceful power and its postcolonial mistrust of Western hegemony have made, in Chacko's view, the US efforts less likely to succeed.

In addition to consolidating friendly bilateral relations, ontological security also motivates states to engage in multilateral institutions around shared visions of international order (Berenskoetter and Giegerich 2010: 422). One example of how international institutions provide ontological security to its member states is the West's democratic security community embodied in NATO and the EU (Berenskoetter and Giegerich 2010; Greve 2018). Security-

community building has not only fostered a sense of collective identity, as the previous constructivist scholarship had assumed (Adler and Barnett 1998). It also pertains to the ontological security of its members by providing or depriving recognition of their distinctiveness (Greve 2017).

The EU is an exceptionally well-researched case of an international institution that can be a source of ontological security but also anxiety for its member states (Kinnvall et al. 2018). The EU is a source of a calm and healthy sense of self as an entity with a distinct self-identity as a post-national civilian power devoted to multilateralism and rules-based order (Mitzen 2006b) with its own set of foundational myths and narratives (Della Sala 2018) and ontological security-driven policies such as the European Neighborhood Policy (Johansson-Nogués 2018). However, it is also an “anxious security community” (Mitzen 2018) whose ontological security has been undermined by a succession of crisis most recently over migration (Della Sala 2017) or Brexit (Browning 2018b).

Finally, research has shown that authoritarian states also engage in regional cooperation to maintain their biographical continuity. Russia, for example, invests in the Eurasian Economic Union not only to gain particular material benefits but also to calm anxieties brought about by the collapse of the Soviet Union and to settle an identity question of “Russia’s place in the world” (Russo and Stoddard 2018). From the Moscow’s point of view, Eurasia is the Russian World and its sphere of interest (Akchurina and Della Sala 2018; see Kazharski 2020).

Summary

Over the past two decades, ontological security studies have grown into a novel research agenda lying at the intersection of IR, sociology, and psychology. The basic premise behind this growing body of knowledge is the distinction between physical security as “freedom from fear” and ontological security as “freedom from anxiety.” The concept of ontological security has been employed not only to critique the existing

approaches in IR and security studies but also to develop a set of new theoretical assumptions and use them to provide novel explanations of empirical puzzles. These insights have two fundamental implications for peace and conflict studies. First, by removing the objects of fear, peacebuilding processes improve physical security. However, they can also heighten anxiety as they also deconstruct enemy images which can be a source of self-identity and a glue that binds communities together. Second, by constructing objects of fear, securitization and conflict undermine physical security but they may also generate ontological security for parties whose healthy sense of self hinges on enemy images. Therefore, to be fully sustainable, peacebuilding and conflict resolution should also address ontological security concerns and engage in the reconstruction of identities of parties involved.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Conflict, Memory, and Memory Activism: Dealing with Difficult Pasts](#)
- ▶ [Culture and Conflict Resolution](#)
- ▶ [Identifying Stable Solutions to Conflicts](#)

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Conflicts and Natural Disasters

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Synonyms

Climate change; Conflict; Emergencies; Humanitarian assistance; Natural disasters; Resilience; Risk reduction; Triple nexus

Definition/Description

Scholarly, policy, and practitioner efforts to understand the nexus between conflicts and natural disasters and to seek integrated ways to address them abound. As both conflicts and natural disasters have been increasing in intensity and frequency worldwide, awareness has grown about the devastating and unsustainable human and financial costs. Increasing inequalities between and within countries exacerbate these consequences for those who can least afford them. This entry examines the various manifestations of the relationship between conflict and disaster, and the ways in which they intersect and interact.

Introduction

Worldwide, violent conflict is ubiquitous in terms of both numbers of conflicts and intensity of conflicts. Generally, it is more protracted, more intractable, and is driving some 80% of humanitarian response (Oxfam 2019, drawing on Uppsala Data Conflict Program). Displacement (including refugees and internally displaced) grew from 43.3 million in 2009 to 70.8 million in 2018, with some 85% of displaced people residing in the global South (UN Refugee Agency 2020). There is a growing convergence between conflict and fragile contexts, and poverty, where predictions are that by 2035, 85% of the world's extremely poor people will be living in these areas (OECD 2016).

To add further complexity, climate change is recognized as a “threat multiplier” as it impacts food security and livelihoods, human health, the habitability of coastal regions (where 80% of the world's population resides), and transboundary water resources. It also increases the frequency and intensity of many types of natural hazards. Further, climate change and other forms of disaster are fueling migration and increasing fragility in countries worldwide. They are also converging with numerous other risks (including conflict, displacement, economic crises, pandemics, and growing inequality) (Busby 2020).

The impacts of conflicts and disasters are greater for poor and marginalized communities and households, highlighting and reinforcing disparities. This is true even in more developed and relatively stable countries. Risks and vulnerabilities, on the one hand, and capacities and sources of resilience, on the other, are products of political and economic factors that affect access to material resources and information, social networks, and knowledge and skills. Around the world, Covid-19 has disproportionately impacted the poor and marginalized communities. Today's conflicts result in greater loss of life for civilians than combatants, and in disasters worldwide, women die four times more than men (Enarson 2018) and are at greater risk of sexual assault, domestic violence, displacement, being trafficked, and other threats to their security and well-being.

Over the past 40 years, a number of efforts have sought to understand the nexus between disaster and conflict and the implications for policy and practice. In the 1980s, awareness of the overlaps and gaps in assistance in conflicts and disasters resulted in the Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD) agenda, aimed at harmonizing humanitarian assistance in conflicts and disasters. A decade later, attention to the fact that humanitarian assistance often undermined, or did not effectively support development, resulted in a related agenda – the Relief to Development Continuum. In the early 2000s, work around the nexus has focused attention toward reducing vulnerabilities through disaster risk reduction approaches and developing capacities through building the resilience of institutions, communities, and households. Most recently, these approaches have evolved beyond reconstruction following conflicts and disasters, toward the need to “build back better” with an eye toward preventing future crises – both conflict and disasters.

A key challenge for policy and practice in addressing the conflict-disaster nexus comes with the varied perspectives, principles, approaches, and priorities of the different praxis communities focusing on disaster management/humanitarian aid community, development and conflict/ peacebuilding. For example,

international development practice (notably the UN) tends to work directly with governments and focus on building national capacity. In many conflict contexts, however, the state may be perceived as part and parcel of the problem, therefore organizations prefer to work with civil society actors. Humanitarian workers by focusing on the short-term objective of saving lives, sometimes undermine efforts by development organizations to achieve sustainability. Finally, international organizations tend to engage in bureaucratic stove piping, so that often even within a single organization there is little information sharing or coordination between the different departments (Brookings Institution 2010).

The past two decades have produced a growing body of scholarship focusing on the nexus between disaster and conflict, and there is a growing policy consensus about the institutional and operational imperative to harmonize approaches and shift from response and recovery toward sustainability, prevention, and preparedness.

Concepts

“Disasters” are not natural. However, hazards can be natural or they can be man-made. Natural hazards occur from physical phenomena caused either by rapid or slow onset events which can be geophysical, hydrological, climatological, meteorological, or biological. Technological or man-made hazards (complex emergencies/conflicts, famine, displacement, and industrial accidents) are events that are caused by humans and occur in or close to human settlements (HPG 2014). Disasters occur when natural hazards meet social, political, and economic conditions that create risks and vulnerabilities to societies, communities, and households. Disasters, therefore, are social phenomena (Enarson and Morrow 1998). The UN defines natural disasters as “the consequences of events triggered by natural hazards that overwhelm local response capacity and seriously affect the social and economic development of a region” (IASC 2011). This by definition links disaster with capacity to respond – and naturally links to the notion of fragility where institutions, structures, and social systems are challenged to respond effectively (IA 2015, p. 1).

Protracted, intractable conflicts generally persist over long periods of time with spirals of high intensity and low-intensity violence, and they are caused by deep-seated threats to the identity of different racial, ethnic, religious, partisan, and/or other groups in society. They are usually, but not always, the result of long-term marginalization and inequality, and the accompanying vulnerabilities and risks in the face of disasters and conflicts. The concept of Complex Humanitarian Emergency (CHE), in use since the 1990s, refers to the simultaneous crises of violent conflict and disasters, such as droughts, floods, and other natural hazards, and in contexts characterized by inaccessibility and insecurity (Schwoebel 1998).

Conflict-Disaster Nexus

Scholars, policy makers, and practitioners are in agreement that while there may not be a causal link between disaster and conflict and fragility, there are mutually reinforcing interactions. There is an interdependence of natural hazards and risks and vulnerabilities that have supported the approaches of risk reduction and fostering resilience to address conflict and disaster congruently (IA 2015; GFDRR 2015).

Conflict and Fragility Contributing to Disasters

Conflicts increase the possibility that natural hazards become disasters for a variety of reasons. Specifically, conflict increases vulnerability and risk by undermining the capacity of governments, civil society, communities, and households to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters. Conflicts tend to displace populations into areas that are exposed to natural hazards. Populations experiencing conflict have often already depleted their social and economic resources, and their physical and psychological health may already be precarious. In addition, governments have in most cases stretched their resources and capacities to provide social services and security. At the same time, some individuals, groups, and states benefit materially from conflicts at the expense of other groups. The new

and/or increased vulnerability of populations contribute to natural hazards becoming disasters (ODI 2013, p. 16). ADD SOURCES

Disasters Contributing to Conflict and Fragility

Disasters tend to contribute to conflict in various ways. They create conditions for fragility by undermining livelihoods, destroying institutions and infrastructure, placing tremendous strains on resources, and increasing competition for them. In short, they increase vulnerability – notably for those already vulnerable. Disasters fuel displacement and overstress fragile institutions – all of which can fuel grievances and undermine or erode the social contract (IA 2015).

Disasters can exacerbate both manifest and latent conflict. In every complex situation, numerous interactions exist, with disasters decreasing some conflict drivers while increasing others. Disasters can increase grievance by contributing to resource scarcity or by contributing to greater inequality as populations are differently affected. Grievances can also increase with the unequal distribution of humanitarian aid or unequal preventive and preparedness measures (ODI 2013; Homer Dixon and Blitt 1998; Olson and Gawronski 2003). Poor prevention, preparation, and responses to natural disasters can also fuel conflict by undermining government legitimacy and eroding the social contract between government and affected populations.

Disasters can contribute directly to conflict by creating political and/or economic opportunities for criminal and armed groups, or by advancing military objectives as troops are moved to support disaster response in conflict areas (ODI 2013, p. 10; IA 2015). Disasters can also cause people to join armed groups for economic reasons when their livelihoods have been destroyed (ODI 2013, p. 10; IA 2015).

Disaster Management as Contributor to Conflict

Decisions made by interveners at any phase of the disaster management cycle can unintentionally contribute to conflict or generate new conflicts. The commonly employed phases are response,

recovery, prevention, or preparedness, although there are as many variations as there are to the conflict management or conflict transformation cycle (Coetzee and Niekerk 2012).

Grievances tend to grow around resource scarcity and/or resource distribution, and the response of governments and international actors – where there is a real or perceived lack of fairness in the allocation of emergency aid (ODI 2013; Homer Dixon and Blitt 1998; Olson and Gawronski 2003). In ongoing conflicts, inequitable emergency aid can throw tinder on the flames of protracted conflicts. Inappropriate responses can increase vulnerabilities, exacerbate inequalities, undermine capacities, and/or unintentionally do harm, sometimes motivating people to resort to violence. The tyranny of the urgent often means that interveners do not take the time to understand the context sufficiently to be conflict-sensitive, and this can contribute to instability (International Alert 2015). Humanitarian assistance can inadvertently contribute to the conflict in the short term, the long term, or both, by not consciously factoring an awareness of what is driving conflict into the design and implementation of their work.

Disaster management tends to assume a functional state-society “social contract.” While this is the case in some fragile states, it is often not the case in conflict contexts, in which some individuals and groups may be denied social services and disaster assistance before and after disasters, due to their identities vis-a-vis the conflict. In addition, governments can also exacerbate postdisaster suffering by inhibiting aid on security grounds or appropriating humanitarian aid to support conflict objectives. Some governments and some nonstate actors refuse, delay, or complicate international help, fearing it will undermine sovereignty. Finally, humanitarian aid sometimes exacerbates conflicts when governments and/or nonstate actors appropriate it to further their war efforts.

Risk Reduction, Resilience, and the Triple Nexus

While risk reduction has been integral to thinking about disaster management for decades, conflict and fragility practitioners have also engaged the concept in recent years. The concepts of risk

reduction and resilience have arisen over the last two decades as a bridging focus of the disaster-conflict nexus. The hope is that building resilience of actors and systems will reduce risk. More recently, the nexus has expanded; peacebuilding has won its seat at the table in what is now referred to as the humanitarian- development- peacebuilding (HDP) “triple nexus” (Fanning and Fullwood-Thomas 2019).

Building on the history of humanitarian-development nexus, and the reinforcement of this through the movement for a “New Way of Working” (OCHA 2017) between relevant actors as agreed at the 2017 World Humanitarian Summit, in his 2016 inaugural speech the UN Secretary General António Guterres brought peace intentionally into the nexus (ICVA 2017). He underscored that “humanitarian response, sustainable development and sustaining peace are three sides of the same triangle” – that need to be brought together at the start of crisis to “support affected communities, address structural and economic impacts and help prevent a new spiral of fragility and instability.” The triple nexus gained operational traction in 2019 when the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development adopted a Recommendation on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus (OECD 2019).

Resilience is associated with the capacities of stakeholders at all levels to respond to, and adapt and recover from, shocks and stressors related to conflict, security, and crisis. While humanitarian assistance providers tend to focus on the more minimalist goals of resilience – “absorption” and “adaptation” – peacebuilders tend to gravitate toward the maximalist “transformation,” which involves capacity to “anticipate risk, respond creatively to conflict and crisis, and foster social, economic and political change in ways that may contribute to transforming the root causes of conflict” (McCandless and Simpson 2015, p. 3). While criticisms of resilience often suggest it can place a burden on vulnerable communities to be stronger in the face of transnational threats that could be prevented, the transformative lens counters these critiques. Resilience has also turned attention toward the capacities that exist and need to be supported within societies that are

situated within complex adaptive social systems (Ibid., p.4), which is central to considerations of capacity development and the sustainability of recovery and transformation efforts (Chandler 2014).

Rising awareness of the complexity and protracted nature of conflict and the intersections with disasters has led to the idea of the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) “triple nexus.” This nexus seeks to reduce the risks and vulnerabilities of people before, during, and after crisis (Oxfam 2019). It also emphasizes the need to “build back better,” by building and strengthening the resilience and sustainable communities and institutions, by addressing the sources of risk and vulnerability, and by focusing on prevention and preparedness. This nexus focus reinforces the varyingly unmet commitments to coherence and coordination of international and national policy makers and practitioners. It seeks to go farther than past efforts focused on programming, to change how aid is planned and financed. It will require reconceptualizing interventions, fundamental institutional changes, and the political will to collaborate in new ways across sectors and levels.

Empirical Examples

Examples illustrating the conflict-disaster nexus are numerous and diverse. While the climate-change-driven disaster-conflict causality continues to be studied, the case of Syria illustrates troubling areas of concern in relation to slow onset disaster spurred by climate change, and aggravated by unsustainable development. Syria experienced severe drought and displacement in its northeast region (its breadbasket) from 2006 to 2011. This was preceded and worsened by a long legacy of resource mismanagement, where government subsidies to farmers for water-intensive produce were granted and withdrawn, as inefficient and unsustainable irrigation techniques were promoted. As prices for agricultural inputs soared, a massive loss of livelihood drove farming communities to migrate to overcrowded cities. More than one million food-insecure people and rising

urban unemployment ensued, as the government failed to respond to the crisis, and rural discontent brewed (IA 2015, p. 2).

A massive earthquake in the Indian Ocean off the coast of Aceh in December 2004 triggered a series of tsunamis that reverberated from East Africa to SE Asia, and some 230,000 lost lives in 14 countries (Bauman et al. 2007). Following the tsunami in Sri Lanka and Aceh, Indonesia, the two countries, experiencing protracted internal conflicts at the time, have often been compared to illustrate how disaster can contribute to conflict on the one hand, and peace on the other.

In Sri Lanka, when the tsunami hit, the peace process was stalled, though the rebel Tamil Tigers (LTTE) held a strong position in their war with the government. Fearing that the LTTE would benefit from increased aid, the Sinhalese-dominated government blocked opportunities for the Tamil areas to receive aid, fuelling (legitimate) perceptions around disproportionate and discriminatory aid delivery. In addition, there were already conflict-displaced persons camps due to the conflict. International tsunami aid provided assistance only to the disaster-displaced camps. This too generated resentment. The combination fueled animosities between communities, and violent conflict reignited in 2006, leading to the government's victory against the LTTE in 2009.

Aceh, on the other hand, fared differently, despite that this is where the worst devastation took place. And the region was already a victim of severe uneven development, resource extraction that benefitted elites in the capital (in Java) rather than locals (in Sumatra), and intractable conflict. The response to the crisis was unprecedented initially involving international actors. Many viewed the extent of the crisis and the inflow of aid as an opportunity to “build back better” and, simultaneously, to end the 30 years conflict and begin a peace process (HPG 2013, 6; IA 2015, 4). The influx of aid money also offered incentive to the Free Aceh Movement or *Gerakan Aceh Merdeka* (GAM) rebel combatants – a chance to return to civilian life with associated economic opportunities (Bauman et al. 2007). In

addition, the huge international presence shined a light on the role of the central government in the conflict, with its attendant human rights violations. This was an embarrassment to the government, thus motivating them to engage in the peace process. The Memorandum of Understanding negotiated by the International Organization of Migration signed by government and rebel leaders in 2005 explicitly recognized the parties' conviction that a peaceful settlement would facilitate the sustainable rebuilding of Aceh.

COVID 19, now the most serious global pandemic the world has witnessed since the Spanish flu of 1918–1920, is revealing the fault lines of countries affected by conflict and fragility. Many of these countries already suffer from high levels of poverty and inequality. Patterns have been identified around authoritarian measures, abuses of emergency powers, and efforts to squash dissent and control populations, as well as perpetuate leaders' time in power – all of which is affecting the social cohesion of populations (OHCHR, Sheerin 2020; McCandless and Miller 2020).

It is now acknowledged that efforts to “flatten the curve” of COVID-19, focusing on lockdowns and social distancing, disproportionately and harmfully affect the vulnerable – not just within countries but across them. Conflict-affected and fragile states, particularly those in active war, but equally those with high levels of poverty and inequality and, related, hosting high-density living areas for their own citizens, displaced, and refugees, are especially at risk. In conflict-affected and fragile settings, institutions are often extremely weak, and health systems are poorly functioning, or they have been destroyed in war (Monnier and Mayar 2020).

In Yemen, the pandemic is devastating a country that experienced more than 5 years of relentless warfare that has destroyed most of the country's medical infrastructure. Categorized by the UN as one of the most severe humanitarian crises in the world, at least 80% of the population is reliant upon aid, and with high levels of poverty and malnutrition, deadly diseases become rampant (UN News 2019). World leaders, led by the

UN Secretary General Antonio Gutierrez, have called for a global ceasefire during the pandemic (UN News 2020). While some humanitarian ceasefires are taking place in some parts of the country, fierce fighting continues in others, fueling further displacement. The potential for such ceasefires to manifest lasting peace outcomes, in Yemen and elsewhere, depends on multiple factors and remains to be seen.

Conclusion

The empirical examples illustrate that the relationship between disasters and conflicts, while not causal, is intersectional, multidirectional, and compounding. Yemen, already one of the poorest countries in the world, is caught in an intractable war that has led to a devastating humanitarian crisis – all of which creates vulnerabilities that have contributed to its being severely impacted by COVID 19. Long-simmering low-intensity conflict in Syria was exacerbated by climate change-driven drought and unsustainable development policies leading to displacement and high-intensity conflict. The tsunami affected two conflict-riven countries – Aceh, Indonesia and Sri Lanka – but with differing results, contributing to peace in the former and aggravating conflict in the latter. With more frequent and severe natural hazards and an increasingly war-torn world, understanding the nexus of conflict and disaster, and identifying more efficient and effective ways to foster risk reduction and resilience, is critical.

The triple nexus, which adds peace to the humanitarian development nexus, offers promise for prevention and sustainability as it aims to address root causes. It embraces the challenge of viewing crises as opportunities for transformational change. It promotes “building back better” instead of reproducing the structures and systems that led to disaster and conflict in the first place, offering promise. “The rush to reconstruct ‘normalcy’ is difficult to resist but is manifestly a false start, as it is these routine political, economic, social, and gender arrangements that put people

in harm’s way. Disasters can reflect and promote the status quo, or, alternatively, realize a new vision of the future, which creatively integrates post-disaster rehabilitation, vulnerability and risk reduction, and sustainable development goals” (Enarson 2018).

Aid interventions at the nexus of conflict and disasters have moved from the short-term responses of relief and recovery, to the medium-term responses of prevention and preparedness, and the long-term approaches of risk reduction and resilience; yet, these are still primarily technical approaches. Rarely do these approaches hold promise for transformative prevention by addressing the root causes of both disasters and conflicts. In both contexts, as well as at their intersection, long-term prevention means addressing the political-economic root causes of vulnerability in both rich and poor countries, i.e., the unequal distribution of power and resources between groups, and the social, cultural, political, and economic root causes of climate change.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Intractable Conflict](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding–Development Nexus](#)
- ▶ [Security-Development Nexus in Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [United Nations Missions in Haiti](#)

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Consociationalism and Peace After Conflict

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Conflicts of De Facto States

- ▶ [International Organizations and Statehood Conflicts](#)
- ▶ [Statehood Conflicts](#)

Conflicts of Unrecognized States

- ▶ [International Organizations and Statehood Conflicts](#)
- ▶ [Statehood Conflicts](#)

Consequences

- ▶ [Peacebuilding Consequences](#)
- ▶ [Unintended Consequences of Peace Operations/Sexual Abuse and Exploitation by Peacekeepers](#)

Consociation

- ▶ [Consociationalism and Peace After Conflict](#)

Consociational Democracy

- ▶ [Ohrid Framework Agreement, The](#)

Synonyms

[Conflict resolution](#); [Consociation](#); [Gender](#); [Inclusion](#); [Minorities](#); [Peacebuilding](#); [Power-sharing](#)

Definition/Description

This chapter assesses consociational power-sharing as a mechanism to achieve both peace and democracy after conflict. In so doing, it explores the tensions that can arise in the practice of consociation between these twin purposes: conflict resolution and governance. The chapter presents the core theories of consociationalism and charts their development since the model was first conceptualized by Arend Lijphart in the 1960s. It presents the scholarly debates and controversies that surround the model in both theory and practice, including the extent to which it can foster integration in politics and society following conflict and its capacity to achieve broader inclusion beyond ethno-national groups, such as pertaining to gender. Finally, the chapter applies these arguments through comparative analysis of empirical case studies where consociation has been implemented, including Northern Ireland, North Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Burundi.

Introduction

In the field of peace and conflict, consociation is treated as a tool of conflict resolution on the one hand and a model for governing deeply divided societies on the other. In effect, it holds both functions (Noel 2005, p. ix). Consociation

essentially constitutes an agreement between parties to a conflict to end hostilities and share political power. With respect to the first of these purposes, *peacebuilding*, it boasts some success. Indeed, post-Cold War, consociational power-sharing has become the “model of choice” in international peacebuilding (Byrne and McCulloch 2012, p. 576), implemented in peace agreements from Northern Ireland to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo to Burundi, Iraq to Sudan. Yet, what of the second purpose: *democratic governance*? How has it fared in maintaining not just peace, but stability and democracy – or, even, “positive peace” (Galtung 1976)? Its performance on this score is not so easily measured and exceedingly more controversial. Indeed, some have argued that these twin functions – peace and governance – lie in tension with one another. The Dayton Peace Agreement that drew to a close the 1992–95 war in Bosnia and Herzegovina is often ironically considered an effective deal to end a brutal conflict, but a poor one to run a country thereafter (Keil and Kudlenko 2015, p. 471). This chapter will explore these tensions and critically assess consociational power-sharing as a mechanism for peace and post-conflict democracy. It will begin by unpacking the concept of consociationalism and its associated theories. It will thus present the scholarly debates surrounding the model. Finally, the chapter will assess these arguments through comparative analysis of empirical case studies of consociational states in different parts of the world.

Consociational Theory

The debate about democracy in deeply divided societies has run through political science since John Stuart Mill’s contention that democratic institutions require a country to have a level of national homogeneity (Mill 1861, p. 296). For Dutch political scientist Arend Lijphart, however, on the contrary, democracy *is* possible in a fragmented society – via *consociational democracy* (1977, p. 1). First theorized by Lijphart in the 1960s (1969), consociational democracy is a model for governing divided societies based on the principle of accommodating difference. It

works by recognizing the principal groups that exist in society and including the elite representatives of each group in a “power-sharing” government. Lijphart developed the concept of consociation in his seminal work *Democracy in Plural Societies* (1977) with reference to the historical Western European cases of Belgium, Netherlands, Switzerland, and Austria. His starting point was that in a divided society where fundamental political consensus is absent – not least concerning the legitimacy of the state – democracy cannot take the form of majoritarian rule with simple first-past-the-post elections. While the politics of “normal” societies can take the form of a “winner takes all” game, whereby a minimum winning coalition governs with the expectation that government and opposition will alternate over time – such as the Westminster model – in a divided society there can be no such assumption (Lijphart 1969, p. 30; Lijphart 1977, pp. 26–29); such a system would inevitably produce permanent majorities and minorities (Lijphart 1977, p. 28; Lijphart 1984, p. 22). To avoid undemocratic and unstable outcomes therefore, minorities require special protection within the political system. The model which can provide these guarantees, Lijphart argues, is “consociational democracy” (Lijphart 1969, 1977). Applied to conflict resolution, the logic of consociation is that in order for peace to be sustainable, it must be underpinned by democratic institutions that command legitimacy (Noel 2005, p. x). Founded on the principle of *inclusion*, of all groups to the conflict, it addresses a core underlying cause of conflict: exclusion.

Consociation is not a specific set of institutions, but rather a model that comprises four basic conditions: a *grand coalition* government comprising all significant groups; a *mutual veto* to protect groups’ vital interests; *proportionality* in group representation in public office and resources; and, *segmental autonomy* (Lijphart 1977, p. 25). Of these conditions, Lijphart (1977) stipulates grand coalition as the most important and defining one, which can assume the form of a governing coalition comprising members of the chief parties representing each of the salient groups in society in a parliamentary system or mechanisms such as sharing top

positions of president, prime minister and speaker in a presidential system (pp. 31, 35). The mutual veto provides an additional guarantee that minority rights will not be overridden by requiring a concurrent majority of each group on certain issues (Lijphart 1977, p. 37). The proportionality principle, meanwhile, ensures that each salient group is represented proportionally in public administration and resource allocation (Lijphart 1977, p. 38). This condition more or less assumes the presence of communal political parties that aggregate and represent group interests (Reilly 2006, p. 815). Finally, segmental autonomy allows for an element of self-rule for the group in areas of its own exclusive concern. This autonomy may be territorial, when segmental cleavages coincide with regional boundaries, as in federal arrangements (Lijphart 1977, p. 43), or non-territorial, such as autonomy in the realms of culture and education. A number of conditions have been identified as conducive to the success of consociation, including a balance of power in which groups are roughly equal in size; a relatively small country; some cross-cutting cleavages between the separate groups; some “overarching loyalties” among elites; the presence of parties which represent the main groups; and a tradition of elite accommodation (Lijphart 1977, pp. 55, 75, 81, 83, 99; Guelke 2012; Wolff 2003, p. 31).

John McGarry and Brendan O’Leary are the most prominent proponents of consociational democracy in contemporary political science. Having long advocated the model as a political solution to the Northern Ireland conflict, prior to and following its adoption through the 1998 Good Friday Agreement (McGarry and O’Leary 2006a, b, 2009), the scholars have significantly developed consociational theory and explored its application to other conflict zones, including Iraq and Cyprus (McGarry and O’Leary 2007; O’Leary 2012; McGarry 2017b; McGarry, 2021). McGarry and O’Leary (2009) present an ardent case for the model’s efficacy for the case of Northern Ireland, on the grounds of stability, fairness, and democracy (pp. 48–83). The scholars present themselves as “revisionist consociationalists,” putting forward a number of modifications to Lijphart’s model on the basis of the empirical evidence. These include the need to account for the role of

external actors in consociational settlements (such as the Republic of Ireland in the Northern Ireland conflict); recognizing the complexity of settlements; and the need to include provisions beyond the core institutions, such as agreements on prisoner release and police reform; the merits of the preferential electoral system of Single Transferable Vote (STV) proportional representation over the party list system as advocated by Lijphart; and recognition of the fact that grand coalition is not an essential condition of consociation (McGarry and O’Leary 2006a, p. 47, 58, 59, 61).

A number of scholars have further noted modifications necessary to consociational theory in light of the model’s real-world application. Guelke (2012), for example, observes that while in the past consociationalism was a model adopted internally by states to proactively hold themselves together, it has increasingly become a tool of *external* intervention imposed on conflict zones as a means of holding the state together, in the hope that a spirit of accommodation will develop post hoc. In this sense, Bell (2015, p. 12), McEvoy (2015), and McCulloch and McEvoy (2018) have underlined the importance of international actors in consociational settlements and in the operation of consociational systems. Indeed, Keil (2013) refers to post-war Bosnia and Herzegovina’s power-sharing system, discussed below, as an “internationally administered” multinational federation (p. 4).

Theoretical Innovations

In line with evolutions in its real-world usage, consociational theory has evolved considerably since its conception in the 1960s. Most notably, a typology has been developed to distinguish between two ideal types: predetermined or *corporate consociation*, and self-determined or *liberal consociation* (Lijphart 1991; McGarry and O’Leary 2006b, 2007, 2009; McCrudden and O’Leary 2013; McCulloch 2014a, b; Nagle 2011; Wolff 2010). This differentiation is based on whether the groups in society to share political power are *given*, in the peace agreement or constitution, as in corporate consociation, or decided through the political process, as in liberal consociation (McCulloch 2014a, p. 501; McCulloch 2014b, p. 18). In more recent consociational

theory a clear normative preference has emerged for the liberal form of power-sharing (McCulloch 2014a, p. 501; Wolff 2010, p. 7). In this sense, Lijphart (1991) distinguishes between “pre-determined” power-sharing in which the groups among whom power is shared are predefined in the constitution or other agreement, and “self-determined” power-sharing, in which these groups are determined through the democratic process proportional representation elections (pp. 67–69). In the latter system, “segments” are “. . . allowed to, and even encouraged, to emerge spontaneously – and hence to define themselves instead of being pre-defined” (Lijphart 1991, p. 68). Lijphart presents self-determined power-sharing as more democratic, in terms of inclusion and liberalism, as well as more flexible and dynamic, and hence durable. The model is less likely to produce exclusion of groups and individuals not represented in the political system and to marginalize smaller minorities (Lijphart 1991, pp. 71–72). Nor does it impose any identity on individuals, granting equal opportunities to groups other than those represented in the power-sharing system, including those that explicitly reject segmental categorization (Lijphart 1991, pp. 72–73). Self-determined power-sharing is also more adaptable to demographic shifts over time (Lijphart 1991, p. 73).

Coining the terms liberal and corporate consociation, McGarry and O’Leary (2007) likewise advocate the self-determined liberal variant over its pre-determined corporate alternative. While corporate consociation accommodates groups based on ascriptive criteria and assumes these groups to be relatively internally homogeneous with fixed external boundaries, liberal consociation recognizes whatever salient identity emerges organically in society, through free and fair elections. The scholars present the model as more liberally democratic, not forcing identities on individuals and hence striking a balance between group rights and individual rights (McGarry and O’Leary 2007, p. 675). Unlike its corporate counterpart, in this sense, liberal power-sharing does not privilege those identities recognized in the political system over those that are not, nor over shared, inter or trans group identities (McGarry and O’Leary 2007, p. 675). Indeed, McGarry

(2017c, p. 282) contends that it is even more likely to create political space for the latter identities than conventional majoritarian systems of executive formation. Being more flexible in adapting to shifts in demographics and identity over time, liberal power-sharing is also likely to be more stable and robust (McGarry and O’Leary 2007, p. 691). Nagle (2011) similarly argues that in excluding groups and individuals, corporate consociations are more likely to sow the seeds of future conflict and instability (pp. 166–167).

Corporate power-sharing features mechanisms like separate electoral rolls for communities, seats reserved for group representatives prior to elections (Nagle 2011, pp. 166–167). Liberal power-sharing, alternatively, leaves the question of who will share power largely in the hands of voters (McCulloch 2014a, p. 503). It may include rules like low thresholds for representatives to be eligible for cabinet positions, selecting cabinet members based on performance in elections and indirect veto rights (McCulloch 2014a, p. 503; McCulloch 2014b, p. 19). Human rights provisions, for both groups and individuals, also usually form a feature of liberal consociation (Wolff 2010).

While a preference for liberal over corporate forms of power-sharing is evident in the scholarship, in practice the majority of power-sharing systems adopted are corporate in nature. McCulloch (2014a) attributes this disjuncture to the context in which such deals are made, at the end of a conflict, when insecurity is high and elites are more likely to seek maximal guarantees for their group (p. 510). By the above criteria, power-sharing systems in Bosnia, Belgium, Burundi, South Tyrol, and Lebanon have been classed as corporate while those in Iraq, Malaysia, and Afghanistan have been labeled liberal. A number of further cases exhibit a “hybrid” form of power-sharing, combining corporate and liberal elements, including North Macedonia, Kenya, Switzerland, and Northern Ireland (McCulloch 2014a, p. 505). Indeed, in practice, many cases represent a mix of corporate and liberal features and even liberal arrangements can be subject to ethnicization, as further elaborated below.

Consociationalism and Its Critics

Consociationalism has been promoted as a leading institutional model for managing ethnically divided societies and enhancing peaceful political participation, as demonstrated. Nonetheless, consociational power-sharing has been subjected to critique and anti-consociational arguments are heated and widespread.

A first line of criticism deployed against the model is that consociationalism entrenches the power of ethnic-elites and deepens divisions within a post-conflict society by crystallizing the ethnic divide (Farry 2009). Critics argue that consociationalism promotes ethnic politics by protecting the power of ethno-national elites whose interests are institutionalized through power-sharing, vetoes and segmental autonomy (Aitken 2007); that is, in seeking to promote representative and democratic institutions, consociationalism may instead risk institutionalizing division. Consociationalism, it is further charged, provides little incentive for ethno-national elites to reach beyond their core and cooperate with other ethnic groups (Horowitz 2001). Instead, politicians continue to mobilize on an ethnic basis and thereby risk perpetuating ethnic division and politicize ethnic group divisions (Taylor 2006).

Another common objection to consociationalism is that it is prone to dysfunction. Critics accuse the model of failing its task of providing stable and functioning institutions; leading more often to political deadlock and an immobilized political system (Haddad 2009; Wilford 2009; Horowitz 2014). As Horowitz (2014) puts it: “consociational dispensation allows each participating group to block the claims and demands of other groups” (p. 12). Thus, when one or more ethnic groups view certain policies as endangering their communities’ interest, this policy is vetoed which may result in an inability to achieve legislative action. This type of stalemate is evident in the case of Lebanon, where governments have struggled to form, leaving the country without government for extended periods of time (including two and a half of the 13 years from 2005–2018) (The Economist 2018).

Indeed, when functioning, political deadlock has left the legislature unable to pass important policies, leading to the collapse of the unity government in 2011 (Nagle 2016).

Meanwhile, McCulloch suggests that “it hardly matters whether an institution is functional if it cannot be agreed” (McCulloch 2017, p. 8). Indeed, some scholars address the so-called “adoption problem” of consociationalism, that is, under what conditions can consociationalism be adopted? (Horowitz 2014). Horowitz (2014) argues that because of the divergent preferences of majority and minority groups in a divided society, it is difficult to obtain unanimity about the proper form of power-sharing arrangement. A related critique extends the adoption problem to the concept of “adoptability” (McGarry 2017a). While the adoption problem refers to consociational institutions being “put in place” (McGarry 2017a, p. 513), “adoptability” refers to the likelihood of consociational institutions being accepted by the main ethnic groups. McEvoy and Aboultaif (2020) conceptualize “weak adoptability” as “occurring when one or more groups have less than majority support for the deal” (2020, p. 4). Weak adoptability may create serious problems for implementation. In the case of Iraq, weak adoptability impacted power-sharing in a number of ways, not least by undermining the potential for cooperation. Kurds and Sunnis were politically marginalized during the constitution-drafting process in 2005, which provided space for Shiite elites to take control of the state (McEvoy and Aboultaif 2020). The lack of inter-communal cooperation led to increasing conflict and institutional dysfunction which was “borne out in the ratcheting up of contestation over several aspects of the constitution” (McEvoy and Aboultaif 2020, p. 13).

What’s more, Spears (2000) notes that “power-sharing agreements are difficult to arrive at, even more difficult to implement, and even when implemented, such agreements rarely stand the test of time” (p. 106). The point being that even if the problem of adaptability is overcome, critics underline that consociations risk becoming “entrenched as time passes, making it difficult to move to a more ‘normal’ (i.e. majoritarian)

politics” (Agarin and McCulloch 2020, p. 6). Referring to the problem as the “exit dilemma,” the idea is that “consociational institutions, once established, are sticky” (Horowitz 2014, p. 12) and that “it remains unclear how to initiate the transition to another political agreement without jeopardizing the gains of peace and stability” (McCulloch 2017, p. 4). Indeed, in a recent volume McCulloch and Keil discern three main tacks of debate about the efficacy of consociation: adoptability, functionality and ‘end-ability’ (McCulloch 2021, pp.2–3; Keil & McCulloch 2021, pp. 258–269).

Consociationalism may be a leading model for inclusion of ethno-political minorities, yet critics draw attention to its tendency to exclude identities and issues beyond the ethno-divide (Stojanović 2018; Agarin and McCulloch 2020). This central dilemma within consociationalism has been conceptualized as power-sharing’s “exclusion amid inclusion” dilemma (EAI): by prioritizing the main ethnic groups of a conflict, consociationalism indirectly excludes “Others” from the political sphere (Agarin et al. 2018). The catchall term “Others” is often used to describe citizens who do not identify with any of the main ethnic groups, including, but not limited to, women, sexual minorities, and ethnic or racial minorities. A particularly pertinent case of consociationalism’s exclusionary nature is that of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in which individuals who do not identify with one of the three “constituent peoples” – Bosniaks, Croats, and Serbs – or who do identify as such but reside in the entity for which these representatives are not designated, cannot run for the Presidency or become a member of the upper house of Parliament in which positions are reserved for these three groups (Milanovic 2010). By overlooking the diverse identities within a divided society and by failing to recognize cross-cutting cultural and social identities, it has been argued that consociationalism “risks implementing a very narrow conception of inclusion” (Agarin et al. 2018).

More recently, feminist scholarship has highlighted the problem of consociationalism’s gender blindness (Byrne and McCulloch 2012; Kennedy et al. 2016; Mackay and Murtagh

2019; McCulloch 2020). Some scholars argue that fundamental aspects of a conflict are left unresolved if the country fails to recognize salient identities other than ethno-national (Pierson and Thomson 2018). Though women are often excluded from peace negotiations, gender scholars argue that the inclusion of women in peace building is not just a “tool to encourage gender equality, but one fundamental to achieve peace” (Pierson and Thomson 2018, p. 103). This was particularly pertinent during the peace negotiations in Dayton to end the Bosnian War where not a single female representative of any of the conflict parties was present at the peace talks (Byrne and McCulloch 2012). As consociational peace agreements emphasize ethno-national identities, women can find themselves marginalized in the aftermath of conflict. As Deiana (2016) notes “women’s claims are repeatedly sidelined in favour of matters which are deemed of more vital interest in the quest for ‘peace’” (p. 109). Thus, in an insecure post-conflict environment, women who try to organize as political groups are often seen as a threat to both the power-sharing institutions and to ethno-national identities (Byrne and McCulloch 2012). Kennedy et al. (2016) conclude that “Consociationalism, in its lack of a full understanding of the gendered nature of conflict, does not fully address the inequalities and problems that need attention in a post- conflict setting and works to reinstate gendered processes of exclusion” (p. 630).

Some feminist scholars have pointed to fundamental contradictions between consociationalism and feminism at the theoretical level (Byrne and McCulloch 2012). Disjunctures have been observed in each perspective’s conception of identity (fixed in the case of consociation versus fluid in the case of feminism), the level of analysis with which each is concerned (elite versus grassroots), its primary normative concern (peace versus justice), and its conception of power (zero-sum versus positive sum) (Byrne and McCulloch 2017, p. 253; Mackay and Murtagh 2019). Nevertheless, attention has also been drawn to areas of potential overlap between consociation and feminism, not least their concern for the representation of underrepresented groups

and democratic inclusion of difference (Rebouche and Fearson 2005, 163). Scholars like Bell (2015) have even pointed to potential opportunities that power-sharing can render for gender equality, such as the implementation of gender quotas alongside ethnic quotas (Bell 2015). Indeed, Bell and McNicholl (2019) show a positive correlation between power-sharing institutions and the inclusion of such provisions for gender equality in peace agreements. In this way, Bell (2015) challenges the mantra that consociation is categorically “bad for women” and makes the pragmatic case for feminists to engage with the model.

Consociationalism in Practice

A brief overview of empirical consociational cases demonstrates some of the promises and limitations sketched out above. Real-world experience reveals the different forms that power-sharing can take, but also the greater fuzziness of the distinction between liberal and corporate types in reality. It also shows the problems with which the model is associated and some of the ways in which these issues might be addressed. This section provides not a comprehensive review of consociational cases, but an empirical illustration of some of consociation’s dynamics, as outlined in theory.

While corporate and liberal consociation constitute ideal types in theory, they manifest in more complex ways in practice. Corporate consociation can be seen in cases such as Bosnia, Burundi, and Lebanon. After the 1992–95 war in Bosnia, which left an estimated 100,000 people dead and 2.2 million displaced, US-led mediation facilitated a power-sharing deal. The 1995 Dayton Peace Agreement (DPA) designed, first and foremost, to end the violent conflict, but also to establish a blueprint for governance post-war (Bieber 2005). While effective in the immediate objective of violence cessation, the DPA prescribed a rigid form of corporate consociational power-sharing. The constitution, contained in an annex to the Agreement, established three “constituent” peoples – Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs (Bieber 2005). It mandated a three-member presidency to be

shared, on a rotating basis, between representatives of these three predetermined constituencies (McCulloch 2014a). Furthermore, seats in the upper house of the state parliament were reserved for representatives of each group (Bieber 2006). Dayton created a highly decentralized state made up of two sub-state federal entities: the Serb-majority Serb Republic (Republika Srpska) and the mixed Bosnian-Croat Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH), each of which was granted considerable territorial autonomy (Keil 2013). Power-sharing in BiH proceeds on an ethnic and territorial basis (Keil 2013, pp. 95–96), both directly between the three constituent peoples and indirectly via the entities. In this way, the three groups are apportioned various powers of self-government, extensive veto rights and proportional representation with ethnic quotas in place to guarantee representation at all levels of government (Belloni 2004). BiH also demonstrates the central role external actors can play in power-sharing (McEvoy and McCulloch 2018). The DPA established a central role for international actors in the state’s governance, most notably through the Office of the High Representative. The High Representative holds considerable legislative and executive powers, further bolstered in 1997, including the ability to impose laws and dismiss domestic political representatives (Bieber 2006, pp. 83–84). In this sense, BiH has been characterized as something of an internal protectorate (Kartsonaki 2016, pp. 502–503).

Burundi constitutes another notable example of corporate consociation, in which the constitution mandates power sharing between the main ethnic segments: Hutus and Tutsis as well as the Twa minority (which constitute 85%, 14%, and 1% of the population respectively) (McCulloch 2014a). The 2000 Arusha Accords which aimed to end a civil war fought between Hutu and Tutsi forces that began in 1993 gave way to a new constitution in 2005 that implemented a highly ethnicized power-sharing agreement. Under this deal, election candidates must designate as Hutu, Tutsi, or Twa and the government and National Assembly must include 60% Hutu and 40% Tutsi, while the national defense forces and the Senate must be split equally between the two ethnic

groups (Sullivan 2005; Lemarchand 2007). Furthermore, the two Vice Presidents must come from different ethnic groups (Vandeginste 2017). Yet, while power-sharing proceeds on a largely corporate, ethnic basis, rules are in place to prevent the formation of mono-ethnic parties. Parties are required to produce multiethnic electoral lists, whereby for every three candidates only two can be from the same group, failing which, a process of co-optation is triggered (McCulloch 2014b, p. 55). Furthermore, a 2003 law mandates that party memberships cannot be composed of more than 75% of one group, effectively *requiring* parties to be multi-ethnic to participate (Raffoul 2020, p. 11).

Lebanon likewise follows the corporate model. The country adopted certain power-sharing arrangements after the country gained independence in 1943, bringing an end to the French Mandate, before these structures ultimately collapsed and a civil war broke out in 1975 (Nagle 2016). The Ta'if Accord (1989) ended the war and restored consociationalism, attempting to address previous power-sharing failures (Nagle 2018). As part of a system of "confessionalism" a rigidly corporate consociational regime was imposed whereby the presidency is reserved for a Maronite Christian representative, while the posts of Prime Minister and Speaker of parliament are reserved for Sunni and Shiite representatives respectively (Haddad 2009). In order to ensure proportional representation, quotas are applied to cabinet, parliament, security forces, banking sectors, judiciary, and public administration (Bogaards 2017, p. 152; Seaver 2000).

Evidence from these power-sharing systems bears out some of the concerns outlined about corporate consociation. In Bosnia, the rigid form of consociationalism has been heavily criticized for its democratic failures, accused of institutionalizing division, dysfunction, and political stalemate. Indeed, its reform has been continuously on the agenda and pressed by the international community since the years proceeding Dayton. Bosnia's veto system, for example, has been heavily criticized for creating impasse in legislation, efficient governance, and progress. Indeed, in the 2006–10 legislative period it has been

estimated that only 30% of planned legislation was adopted (Bahtić-Kunrath 2011, p. 899; McCulloch 2014a, p. 507). The Dayton system also clearly illustrates the EAI dilemma, in which electoral rules exclude nonethnic minorities and risk further entrenching ethnic division (Keil and Bieber 2009). Indeed, the European Court of Human Rights has now ruled on three occasions (in 2009, 2014 and 2016) against the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the discrimination of these electoral rules against "others" (Stojanović 2018).

In Burundi, amid efforts to accommodate ethnic differences through power-sharing, the country has been marked by deep dysfunction, one-party dominance, and clientelism (McCulloch 2014a; Vandeginste 2017). The country has been engulfed in a deep political crisis since 2015, when the late President Pierre Nkurunziza announced his intentions to run for a third term, in contravention of the constitution. The move sparked widespread protests and political violence with hundreds of thousands of political leaders, activists, and civilians forced into exile (Féron 2020), giving way to a period of authoritarian rule that has seen significant human rights abuses and humanitarian crises (Human Rights Watch 2019).

Meanwhile, in Lebanon, ethnic divisions have arguably increased since the signing of the Ta'if Accords (Haddad 2009). Tensions have been exacerbated as Syria has gained increasing control over the Lebanese government, placing proxies in leading political positions (Nagle 2016) and granting veto powers to pro-Syrian majorities (Haddad 2009). Indeed, the country has for decades been beset by severe dysfunction (Nagle 2016). In October 2019, mass protests accusing the government of corruption and mismanagement swept across the country resulting in the resignation of Prime Minister Saad Hariri and continued political and economic crisis (Hubbard and Saad 2020). Current crisis aside, Lebanon's rigid quota rules also raise the EAI dilemma, denying actors beyond the prescribed ethnic groups recognition and positions of power in state institutions. These rules arguably socialize voters to a system of ethnic representation

(Howard 2012), in which Sunni citizens are represented by Sunni representatives, Shiite by Shiite, etc. Nagle (2018), furthermore, raises the far-reaching human rights implications of Lebanon's consociational system. Segmental autonomy, central to the state's consociational system, has seen "morality" issues devolved to religious leaders via 15 personal status laws which work to legitimize the oppression of women and sexual minorities (Nagle 2018, p. 1376). Deets and Skulte-Ouais (2020) also demonstrate something of a blockage in this system for civic movements and parties. Although civic movements have been on the rise in recent years amidst the protests and mass public frustration with the system, this growth failed to translate into significant civic electoral representation at the 2018 general election where the most important civic party Kulluna Watani only won a single seat (Deets and Skulte-Ouais 2020, p. 2).

More liberal forms of power-sharing are embodied by systems including Northern Ireland, North Macedonia (formerly the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), and Kosovo. In Macedonia, the country's independence from the former Yugoslavia in 1991 gave way to nearly a decade of severe interethnic tensions between the state's Macedonian and Albanian communities (Reka 2008). With intense mediation from international actors, the Ohrid Framework Agreement (OFA) was signed in 2001, bringing an end to an armed conflict between the ethnic Albanian National Liberation Army and the Macedonian security forces (Bieber 2005). While the OFA does not introduce formal consociational requirements, the Agreement led to constitutional provisions that include crucial elements of power-sharing (Bieber 2005). The constitution does not reference specific ethnic groups (Reka 2008), and largely consists of liberal consociational components. It advances the protection of non-majority communities, mainly via the double-majority voting principle, whereby majority support is needed from the minority community, on issues vital to minority communities (McEvoy 2015). Further, the majority vote functions as an "indirect veto" (McEvoy 2015). Veto rights are "restrictive," rather than "permissive," in McCulloch's

classification, only open for use in certain areas of decision making (McCulloch 2018, 741). Nevertheless, some corporate elements feature in this largely liberal system, including the Committee for Inter-Community Relations, which is made up of predetermined ethnic groups and designed to consider issues relevant for intercommunity relations and enable institutional dialogue among these different groups (Lyon 2012; McCulloch 2014a).

In Northern Ireland the 1998 Good Friday Agreement (GFA) was likewise largely based on liberal consociational principles. After some 30 years of conflict, the GFA established a devolved Northern Ireland Assembly and Executive where power would be shared by the main parties, as elected by the people: effectively, unionist and nationalist, though unspecified in the Agreement. In contrast to corporate consociation, the groups to share power are not predetermined, but decided by the electorate (McGarry and O'Leary 2009). Members of the Northern Ireland Assembly are elected under a proportional representation (PR) system through the Single Transferable Vote (STV) (McGarry and O'Leary 2009). Yet, while the GFA is largely liberal in nature, some corporate elements are present. For example, upon entrance to the Assembly the members are required to designate their national affiliation as "unionist," "nationalist," or "other" (McCulloch 2014a). Corporate components are further guaranteed through certain "key votes" in the Assembly which require either "parallel consent" – concurrent majorities among designated unionists and nationalists – or "weighted majority" – the support of at least 60% of members, including minimum 40% among nationalists and 40% among unionists (McCulloch 2014a). Notably, in these votes, the votes of "others" do not count on an equal basis (Evans and Tonge 2001, p. 115). Such votes can also be triggered by a "petition of concern" signed by 30 members – an effective community veto. In terms of executive power-sharing, the GFA establishes a First Minister and the Deputy First Minister who bear equal power. Since 2006 the co-premiers have been elected by the largest parties within the largest and second largest designations

in the Assembly (unionist, nationalist or other) (McEvoy 2015) – likely for the foreseeable future to ensure a unionist and nationalist in the top positions. The remainder of the ministerial posts is allocated in proportion to their strength in the Assembly through the d’Hondt method (O’Leary 2013). To accommodate communal autonomy, certain cultural, linguistic, and educational protections are granted by the GFA (O’Leary 1999), such as proportional public funding for Protestant and Catholic schools (Fontana 2017).

In Kosovo, some 8 years after the 1998–99 war between ethnic Albanian forces and government forces of the rump Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), the UN Office of the Special Envoy for Kosovo (UNOSEK) proposed a comprehensive proposal for the Kosovo Status Settlement (Baliqi 2018). The 2007 proposal contained some power-sharing arrangements that were later incorporated in the new Constitution of Kosovo, adopted in 2008, when Kosovo unilaterally declared its independence (Baliqi 2018). However, Bieber notes that the institutional mechanisms in Kosovo “...are primarily conceived as elements of minority rights’ protection rather than as a power-sharing arrangement *per se*” (2005, p. 99). Despite not following a rigid power-sharing arrangement, some consociational components are present. Representation is guaranteed through strict quotas where ten seats in the Assembly are reserved for the Serb minority, and ten for other minorities (Fort 2018). In order to benefit from the reserved seat, each party or candidate must declare their ethnicity prior to the election (Bieber 2005). While the Kosovo Constitution rejected formal territorial autonomy, a high degree of autonomy is granted at the local level in areas such as healthcare and education (Keil and Bieber 2009). Furthermore, the 2013 Brussels Agreement between Kosovo and Serbia granted considerable autonomy to the Serb minority (Landau 2017, pp. 448, pp. 453). Like BiH, the system entailed significant international involvement through UNOSEK, and subsequently the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX), established in 2007.

Comparison of liberal and corporate consociational systems proves problematic, given the number of variables at play in each case, and the fact that these ideal types do not exist so distinctly in practice. Yet, in the more liberal forms of power-sharing we can observe some evidence of the greater flexibility and inclusion advocated by proponents. Northern Ireland has seen significant progress towards peace and stability since 1998, not least in policing reform, through which the majority Protestant force in place during the conflict, the Royal Ulster Constabulary, was replaced by the Police Service of Northern Ireland in 2001, with an affirmative action recruitment policy to achieve more equal representation of Catholics in the force. Decommissioning of paramilitary weapons was also completed in 2005, while contentious policing and justice powers were transferred from London to the devolved administration in 2010 (O’Leary 2019, 24). Civic parties, beyond the main nationalist and unionist groupings, have also grown in number, size, and relevance since the signing of the peace agreement (Murtagh 2020). These “other” parties won 11 out of 90 seats in the Northern Ireland Assembly in the 2017 election and, since 1998, have increased their share of first preference votes from 8.2% to 13.2% (ark.ac.uk). Indeed, under the d’Hondt system, non-aligned parties, such as the Alliance, may take seats in the Executive, and have done so on several occasions since 2010 (Mitchell 2018). They may even assume the posts of First and Deputy First Minister, should they grow in size in the Assembly to such a level (McGarry and O’Leary 2009). Meanwhile, in North Macedonia a new civic alternative party Levica formed in 2016 against the backdrop of a political crisis (Piacentini 2019, 273). Furthermore, ethnic Macedonian party, the Social Democratic Union of Macedonia (SDSM), has since 2016 begun to directly appeal beyond its ethnic voter base to Albanian voters (Piacentini 2019, 277).

Yet, these liberal systems also demonstrate limitations with respect to stability, democracy, ethnic inclusion, and, indeed, broader inclusion. Shortcomings in the inclusion of ethnic minorities

have been highlighted in North Macedonia and Kosovo. In North Macedonia, Bieber argues that while the more liberal veto rules outlined may be seen as an advantage in terms of efficient governance – preventing “. . . blockage of the entire decision-making process. . .” (2005, p. 97) – they also limit minority communities’ political impact on important issues such as economic policy and infrastructure. Furthermore, in Kosovo, although the Constitution guarantees representation for minority communities in all public bodies and enterprises, these minorities remain underrepresented in public life (Bieber 2013). Studies show that, as of 2013, only 2% of employees at publicly owned enterprises were of non-majority community background and less than 7% of non-majority communities were represented in government institutions, despite the constitution mandating that at least 10% of position at central level are to be reserved for non-majority groups (The Office for Community Affairs 2013).

In Northern Ireland, despite the aforementioned progress, the power-sharing institutions have been beset by periodical instability, dysfunction, and polarization, necessitating a number of subsequent settlements and revisions, most notably the 2006 St Andrews Agreement. The institutions have been effectively suspended on five occasions, including two prolonged periods of non-functioning from 2002–2007 and 2017–2020. As shown, the system also features distinct corporate elements and these have been accused of marginalizing actors outside the nationalist-unionist frame, including civic parties and movements (Murtagh 2020). Furthermore, other identities and issues, including gender and LGBTQ rights, have arguably been subordinated to the ethno-national cleavage, with marriage equality and abortion rights only extended to Northern Ireland in 2019, and as a result of direct legislation from the UK Parliament during a period of power-sharing absence (Hayes and Nagle 2019; Thomson 2019).

How might the democratic deficits of consociation, such as the EAI dilemma, be addressed? In spite of these limitations, space has been carved out in consociational systems for other actors,

identities and issues, beyond the ethno-national divide, in various ways, in some cases, through provisions implemented post-agreement. On the issue of gender inclusion, for example, in their large-scale analysis of peace agreements using the PA-X database, Bell and McNicholl (2019) have demonstrated a correlation between power-sharing and several measures of gender inclusion. References to gender equality are about five times more likely to occur in a power-sharing agreement than an agreement that does not contain power-sharing provisions, while provisions for gender quotas are more than seven times more likely in power-sharing agreements (p. 9). Looking to cases at the liberal end of the consociational spectrum, in both North Macedonia and Kosovo gender quotas operate alongside minority quotas. In North Macedonia candidate quotas are in place to ensure that at least 40% of electoral lists must be of the less represented gender, with requirements for equal distribution in the list rankings (IDEA 2020). Kosovo goes even further: not only must 30% of electoral candidates be women, but 30% of seats in the Assembly are reserved for women (Potter 2018). Northern Ireland’s GFA was primarily framed in terms of national identity, yet it did contain provisions on gender, equality and nondiscrimination (Rebouche and Fearson 2005). The agreement did not mandate legislative gender quotas and until recently, women’s descriptive and substantive representation had been notably poor (Galligan 2013). Nevertheless, the former has increased dramatically since 2016, with women’s representation in the Northern Ireland Assembly reaching the 30% mark in 2017 and three of the five main parties led by women (Roberts 2017).

Indeed, even in rigidly corporate systems some space has been rendered for broader inclusion, beyond ethno-national groups. In terms of gender, Bosnia’s DPA does not include any reference to gender representation (Rebouche and Fearson 2005), yet, since its implementation several initiatives have been taken to advance gender equality, including the 2003 Law on Gender Equality, which mandated gender quotas, requiring political parties’ candidate lists to comprise at least one

third men and women (Rebouche and Fearson 2005) and the establishment of a government agency for Gender Equality in 2004 (Mackay and Murtagh 2019). Meanwhile, in Burundi, the constitution mandates that at least one-third of the members of the National Assembly are women (Lemarchand 2007). Nevertheless, while these gender provisions have improved women's parliamentary representation descriptively in these cases – their physical and numerical presence – advances in women's substantive representation – their power within governments, legislatures, and parties to shape political outcomes – have proven more elusive. Byrne and McCulloch (2012) show that political culture in Burundi remains highly patriarchal and women have been observed to have had limited influence in the state's political institutions and ability to shape policy (Mackay and Murtagh 2019, p. 33). Similarly, in Bosnia, in spite of quota rules in place, parties remain highly centralized and patriarchal and women's substantive power has been severely constrained (Byrne and McCulloch 2012). Thus, when it comes to gender equality under power-sharing, a gap can emerge between paper and practice, where legacies of violent conflict and political cultures based on ethno-national representation can compromise the realization of institutional provisions (Mackay and Murtagh 2019).

Summary

This chapter has examined the theory and practice of consociationalism. It set out by exploring the concept of consociation, as first developed by Arend Lijphart as a model for managing conflict and division in society through democratic institutions. It traced the development of the model since Lijphart's theorization and highlighted new theoretical considerations, such as the role of international actors and the distinction between liberal and corporate consociation, that have added new important dimensions to the power-sharing model. Surveying the literature, this chapter thus identified the core merits of this model, as well as its key limitations and unintended consequences. In turn, the chapter applied these debates

to real-world cases to illustrate how consociation manifests in practice, including in its more corporate and more liberal guises, and how these strengths and weaknesses bear out. In this way, the chapter exposed some of the gaps between consociationalism's theoretical objectives and its empirical realization. By addressing key critiques, such as the risk of institutionalizing division, dysfunction and deadlock, and "exclusion amid inclusion," this chapter has demonstrated some key empirical challenges of consociationalism.

In attempting to evaluate consociational power-sharing, a core difficulty is determining the criteria by which we should measure success. Particularly critical is the question of whether we are judging the model on its ability to create the conditions for sustainable peace – in the minimal sense of nonviolence – or on the more ambitious goal of creating conditions for efficient, fair and just governance. As the evidence presented above has indicated, consociation's performance in relation to the first purpose is more clear-cut and favorable in comparison to its faring on the second purpose. Yet, in assessing consociation's record on democracy, one's expectations must be tempered in light of the recent experience of conflict. This is not to suggest that outcomes short of democratic should be accepted or legitimized, but that the distance traveled from a state of violent conflict must be acknowledged and the potential alternatives borne in mind. Nevertheless, what is also clear is that any binary choice between stable peace and functional, just democracy in post-conflict places is a false one. Consociational power-sharing is necessary under certain conditions of communal division and conflict to avoid vastly unequal outcomes and collapse into political violence. Squaring the model with the principles of broader inclusion, justice and equality is no small challenge. Yet, as shown, there are means through which power-sharing can be made more inclusive. Indeed, this is imperative to the future of power-sharing. Inclusive power-sharing is a developing research agenda in consociational scholarship and one that has the potential to inform more just practice of power-sharing and outcomes that embody more positive and sustainable peace.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Census Politics in Deeply Divided Societies](#)
- ▶ [Independent Commissions and Peace Settlements](#)
- ▶ [LGBTQ Perspectives in Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Women’s Organizations in Post-conflict Contexts](#)

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Cultural Mobilization for Peace in Indonesia

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Introduction

This contribution provides empirical evidence for a conceptual chapter in this Encyclopedia, entitled ► [“Culture, Anthropology, and Ethnography in Peace Research”](#). The conceptual chapter argues for a broader understanding of peacebuilding as something growing from within and a long-term endeavor that does not stop once violence ended and (a superficial) “peace” has been established, without looking into issues of broader structural violence that often underlie the outbreak of physical violence. This contribution takes an anthropologically informed look at mainly local efforts to restore social relations and reintegrate society after mass violence in Maluku, Eastern Indonesia. Based on two decades of multisited and multi-temporal fieldwork, it analyzes a multiscalar peace process and explains why outside interventions are often not adopted or welcome or fail to create sustainable peace and how local mechanisms, their renegotiation or invention are much more powerful as they resonate with the affected people’s lifeworlds and identities and thus enable them to embody the peace process. A long-term engagement with a particular region in Indonesia allows the author to provide insights into the longevity of such dynamics that transformed into

broader struggles for social justice and to argue that in societies that underwent communal mass violence, the ideational divide only gradually dissolves, with minor incidents threatening to retrigger large-scale violence. This requires continuous investment in relationship-building and the proactive mobilization for peace that necessarily needs to be grounded in local societal dynamics and go beyond any fix-termed interventions.

This chapter first introduces the ethnographic setting and the conflict context. It then analyzes the cultural mobilization for peace in Maluku and its various challenges, thus informing and contributing to critical discussions on the local and cultural turns in peace and conflict studies as outlined in the conceptual chapter. In a next step, the chapter explores new spaces opened up for creative peacebuilding in Maluku that strive for a broader transformative social justice, enriched with specific examples from the area. It closes with a summary and some concluding reflections.

Conflict Context

The step-down of the authoritarian Suharto regime in 1998 was followed by various violent conflicts in different parts of Indonesia, with the Maluku conflict in Eastern Indonesia being one of the most protracted and bloodiest (1999–2004). Until the outbreak of mass violence, the Moluccan archipelago with an approximately half Christian, half Muslim population was praised for interreligious harmony in a majority Muslim country. (“Moluccan” or “Moluccas” and the Indonesian version “Maluku” are used interchangeably throughout this chapter.). The violence resulted in thousands of deaths, hundreds of thousands displaced people, and an ideologically and physically segregated society. The destruction of houses of worship, the involvement of radical jihadists from Java, and strategically spread rumors turned religion into the main dividing line. This, however, disregards the complexity of conflict dynamics and the less visible structural violence that was crucial for the emergence of the fighting, such as economic inequalities, the politicization of religion, the government’s

transmigration programs leading to demographic imbalances, the taking sides of security forces, and colonial and neo-colonial exploitation of natural resources and traditional alliance systems.

The Indonesian government did not allow for any outside military intervention or the deployment of UN peace forces in Maluku and was not willing to set up any well-established tools of transitional justice such as truth commissions (TCs) and law enforcement. It shifted the blame on the local population and set on increasing deployments of troops (some of them exacerbating the violence by taking sides) and implemented a civil emergency status in Maluku Province from 2000 until 2003. Right after its imposition, three villages were razed to the ground. During a conversation with the author in 2008, Ot Lawalata, head of the National Commission on Human Rights in Maluku at the time, came up with several reasons why law enforcement was difficult if not impossible (Bräuchler 2015, pp. 88–89): the enormous brain drain of legal sources during the mass violence, the neglect of formal law during the civil state of emergency, and the prevailing of collective perpetrators. Often victims did not dare to accuse the police or the military or to name perpetrators, either due to trauma or because they were worried about the fate of their families, still having to live with a neighbor perpetrator in the future. Christians on the islands of Kesui and Teor, for instance, did speak out about forced mass conversions, but did not get any legal support. Others do not want to reopen old wounds and therefore refrain from giving witness, as Lawalata added, or had no access to the formal justice system. Not trying to argue that all this should be taken as an excuse to bury the past or that masterminds behind the violence should not be brought to court, there is still doubt whether the enforcement of law on a broad scale or a TC would have been a solution to bring about peace and reconciliation in a place, where a major part of the population has been involved in the conflict one way or the other, thus blurring or dissolving the boundaries between victims and perpetrators. Various NGOs were founded during the conflict in order to provide advocacy and in 2005, the UNDP in cooperation with the government and universities in Yogyakarta and Ambon established a team

for an *Access to Justice Assessment* (Littik et al. 2005a, b, c, d). As a member jurist entrusted to the author, it produced hardly any concrete results. Despite the failure of formal law, Trisasonko (2003, pp. 93–94) still considers law enforcement important to enable the reestablishment of morality and solidarity in Moluccan society and to prevent future acts of revenge. For the moment, however, informal justice actors needed to take over such as religious leaders, traditional village heads, *adat* elders, or the traditional village parliaments that are meant to (re)enact customary law in Indonesia's decentralization era – with *adat* being a term for traditions and customary law.

There were hundreds of initiatives by a multitude of actors that attempted to provide emergency relief and offer programs, trainings, and workshops for different target groups to facilitate the rebuilding of bridges between the two religious communities (for an overview see Bräuchler 2015, chapter 3). There were initiatives by dozens of UN and other international organizations and NGOs, the Moluccan diaspora, the provincial government, academics, the media, local civil society, religious and *adat* organizations and leaders, and common people on the ground. The number of local NGOs rose from a handful before the conflict to more than 400, with each one of them wanting to get a share from national and international funding (compare the downsides of a NGO workshoping culture for peace in Liberia in Fuest 2010). Most of them vanished again once mass violence ended or even before, when the international community was not willing any longer to fund projects addressing religious difference.

Peace programs set up, organized, or supported by international organizations also faced criticism, such as a lack of coherence of and coordination between international agencies or INGOs and the government (Brown et al. 2005, p. 61). In addition, the selectivity of programs created inequalities not only within villages and between villages, but also between islands, Ambon, the island that hosts Maluku's capital, Ambon City, being the center of (I)NGO activity. With few exceptions, there was usually no time to really grapple with local traditional concepts, often imposing a Western notion of, for example,

reconciliation, democracy, and peace or unreflectedly adopting local concepts without considering their diverse interpretations and the consequences for cultural outsiders. International and local organizations also seemed to create something like a workshop culture that, rather counterproductively, fostered passivity, raised exaggerated expectancy, and prevented the multiplication effect of workshops that were sometimes seen as mere entertainment or something one had to attend; results and findings were often not socialized among the co-villagers. For a long time, such peace efforts were without apparent success, many were conducted without the support or even against the will of the Moluccan majority, and many considered to be elitist and counterproductive.

In contrast to the central government, the provincial and district governments tried to open-up space for gatherings and reconciliation events, but to not much avail. Only in 2002, after months of preparations underground by religious leaders and other civil society actors, did peace talks in Malino (Sulawesi), supported by the Moluccan governor and Jakarta ministers Jusuf Kalla and Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, result in a peace agreement that put at least an official end to the violence. Results were mixed: there was strong resistance, in particular among fundamentalist Islamic groups (see, e.g., Attaminy et al. 2002); the civil state of emergency was not lifted; the agreement put an end to mass violence, but was followed by occasional “terrorist acts” until 2004; the independent fact finding team that had been actioned after Malino never revealed “the truth” it found; no masterminds were brought to court; and corruption was common in the way villages were reconstructed and refugees were treated. More generally, the government took no measures to prevent, but rather fostered the territorial segregation of the two religious communities, which is extremely counterproductive to the reestablishment of social relations that need to be reenacted in daily life. By many Moluccans, the Malino agreement was seen as an elitist exercise, but still considered to be important as a starting point for a broader peace process and as proof that the central government finally took problems in Maluku seriously (Bräuchler 2015, pp. 90–93).

After Malino, the government kept on organizing peace safaris, interreligious visits, peace concerts, or the installation of a Peace Gong in Ambon City in 2009. Common people were not allowed to enter the square during the installation ceremony, which made it look like yet another elitist approach and a waste of money. According to the governor at the time, K.A. Ralahalu (2006, pp. 50–62), economic development, good leadership and governance, transparency, and good public service are crucial to reestablish people’s trust in the government. This also included the promotion of a politics of (religious) balance (*politik berimbang*), both with regard to filling the government bureaucracy and public offices (Pieris 2004, p. 78; Tomagola et al. 2008, p. 27).

From the very beginning of the conflict, there were voices from various strands of society reminding people of Moluccan traditions of brotherhood (*basudara* in Ambonese Malay) that were in place long before world religions had arrived in the area. The failure of many of the above listed measures, taken together with the disastrous effects of the instrumentalization of religion, drove people in Maluku to restrengthen, revive, and reconstruct culture and traditions as the common ground for reconciliation. They developed a narrative that blames outside provocateurs guilty of the unrests – something Mac Ginty (2014, p. 557) might call “blame deferral” – and countered this by developing a unifying Moluccan identity. As argued in more detail elsewhere, it was “the cultural dimension of peace” (Bräuchler 2015) that provided for the most efficient way for Moluccans to embody and sustainably engage in reconciliation. Cases like this very much informed a turn towards culture in peace and conflict studies more generally, as outlined in the author’s conceptual chapter in this Encyclopedia (see ► “Culture, Anthropology, and Ethnography in Peace Research”) (see also Bräuchler 2018).

Cultural Mobilization for Peace

Reflecting on the catastrophic effects of the instrumentalization of religion on their daily lives, the unreliability of the security forces and

the ineffectiveness or lack of government initiatives confirmed people in Maluku in their efforts to search for solutions within their own cultural setting. This rendered peacebuilding more sustainable, but also fostered exclusionary dynamics as outlined in the following section.

However, complex the actor landscape was, and no matter how many peace workshops were held by (I)NGOs, Moluccans claim that peace came about naturally, through local initiatives and traditional reconciliation mechanisms. In some cases this even resulted in a competition with each one claiming their initiative to be the key to peace. What people seem to embrace and remember, is what they themselves could easily identify with, what they could integrate into their everyday lives, and what helped them to return to their daily routines, thus embodying reconciliation and peace (see also various contributions in Millar 2018). The Moluccan conflict took place at the same time when laws on decentralization and local autonomy were passed in Indonesia in 1999 and implemented from 2001 onwards. The laws were trying to undo some of the past wrongs, among others unification policies that had oppressed local political structures and traditional governance. On the one hand, the violence massively delayed the new laws' implementation in Maluku. On the other hand, this new legal framework, together with an increasingly powerful global indigenous rights movement, so to speak legitimized the Moluccan efforts to restore peace through the revival of traditions. Traditions were considered to be neutral ground that both sides could identify with and that were integral parts of every Moluccan's daily life (besides religion), including traditional alliance systems that tie villages together irrespective of their religious affiliation (e.g., *pela* or *uli*) and traditional leadership (e.g., *raja*) (see, e.g., Bräuchler 2009a, c, 2011, 2015) – traditions that go beyond short-sighted peace interventions that only superficially engage with the local.

Many organizations and stakeholders involved in the broader peace process were sympathetic to such narratives. Ex-governor Ralahalu was convinced that outsiders used the conflict to break up the Moluccan *adat* federation. In its strategic planning post-Malino, the provincial government

officially promoted the empowering of culture as the right path to peace. It put emphasis on the Moluccan *siwalima* and *pela* philosophies in its programs and was keen on supporting ceremonies celebrating alliance systems and traditional leadership and supporting the set-up of a pan-Moluccan *raja* council as an effective interface between government and village people. (*Siwalima* philosophy implies that Moluccan society is made up of two parts, *siwa* (nine) and *lima* (five), that are both needed for and integral to a functioning society.). To (re)attract tourists and investors, Ralahalu catered for the publication of books and booklets that promote the successful implementation of regional autonomy as part of the reconciliation process and praise the beauty of the islands and their cultural and economic richness. According to Ralahalu (2006, p. xi, xxx), it was not religion but poverty, unemployment, and a declining national spirit that were at the root of the violence. In these publications, the revitalization of culture is depicted as social capital for development, with an emphasis on harmonious elements of Moluccan culture such as mutual help, respect for the ancestors, and harmonious living with the environment (Pemerintah Daerah Provinsi Maluku 2004; Ralahalu 2006). In their efforts to find more sustainable solutions to the conflict and foster social reintegration, the few international organizations that stayed on after mass violence had subsided, such as the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the UNDP, also started to link up to this trend and organized workshops on local wisdom and peace or culture festivals or initiated education programs based on Moluccan brotherhood philosophy. Reputable local NGOs with established programs in the field of human and cultural rights advocacy also supported the trend to restrengthen, revitalize, or reconstruct local traditions to meet postconflict requirements and empower Moluccans. Even the Interfaith Council established in 2004 for the promotion of interreligious exchange and understanding put great emphasis on the cultural dimension of reconciliation as an important means to consolidate peace and an essential foundation for the more general restoration of Moluccan society (Bräuchler 2014).

What is important to keep in mind is that people that have been entrenched in communal violence can usually not wait for outsiders to bring peace or have other preferences. They need to get back to their daily routines for survival and often the former enemy is very much part of this (Brewer et al. 2018; Mac Ginty 2014). Truth-telling “does not necessarily have the healing and liberating effects that proponents of transitional justice, coming from a Western cultural background, take for granted” (Boege 2019, p. 155, fn 81). Truth is not necessarily part of local efforts to restore social relations and daily routines as fingers would be pointing too close to home where neighbors have been fighting neighbors, as was the case in Maluku (Braithwaite et al. 2010; Bräuchler 2015). This shall certainly not imply that it is not important to search for and convict any masterminds behind the violence.

In response to the frequent failure of an international transitional justice toolkit (Bräuchler 2009b, p. 3), traditional justice was increasingly considered as a means to foster reconciliation. Traditional justice is not only “the lived reality of most people in developing countries, especially in rural areas” (Ubink and Rooij 2011, p. 2), but also often the only kind of justice mechanism left in the aftermath of genocide (e.g., Rwanda), repressive regimes (e.g., Uganda), in newly emerging states (e.g., East Timor), or after communal violence (e.g., Maluku). In contrast to mainstream transitional justice, the focus is not on prosecution and punishment, but on the restoration of social relations, societal reintegration, and “forward-looking distributive justice concerned with the socioeconomic needs of victims and their communities” (Boege 2019, p. 155). What is crucial in settings where tradition figures so prominently in peacebuilding is the extent to which local traditional structures, mechanisms, and norms are still intact and local actors and leaders are able to resist or subvert the liberal peace (Mac Ginty 2010, p. 402). This is an important issue in Maluku, both within the revival for peace efforts and for the implementation of decentralization, as both tend to ignore the disastrous effects that colonial and neo-colonial policies had on local “traditions” and what new “traditions”

this generated. However, in such contexts, the question is not primarily whether certain cultural elements have actually been invented or introduced from the outside in the (colonial) past (see e.g., Brigg 2008, pp. 35–39; Burns 2004), but whether and for what reason they are important to current negotiation processes.

The turn to tradition and culture presents many new challenges for local and international communities involved in peacebuilding – challenges that arise from the intrinsic nature of traditional justice mechanisms, but also from selection, adaptation, and social engineering processes involved, from the instrumentalization of “tradition” by insiders and outsiders, and from misinterpretations of ‘the local’ by the international peace and development discourse (Bräuchler and Naucke 2017, p. 430). In the following, some of these challenges will be addressed.

Some Challenges of the Turn to Culture

Analyzing the micropolitics of such an extremely charged social landscape (Theidon 2006, p. 436; 2007, p. 97) also involves uncovering local power structures and hierarchies and thus identifying the limits of the local-local’s reconciliatory potential (Bräuchler 2015, pp. 32–33). (Richmond (2011, p. 14) put forward the term “local-local” that suggests a deeper understanding of the local, to differentiate it from the international peace industry’s artificial concept of civil society and the local. For a critique, see Bräuchler’s conceptual chapter in this Encyclopedia (see ► [“Culture, Anthropology, and Ethnography in Peace Research”](#)). A focus on culture, no matter whether by outside or internal actors, often leads to its homogenization, with a focus on selected elements that have the potential to provide an integrative identity and mobilize former enemies to reconcile. Heterogeneity, social inequalities, and exclusion are often ignored or put aside (Leeuwen et al. 2019, p. 20; Lottholz 2017, p. 16). What also needs to be kept in mind is that decentralization laws often push local communities to essentialize their culture to fulfill the criteria that entitle them to claim their right to autonomy. In Maluku, the

revival of tradition was crucial in restoring social relations between former conflict parties, but it also triggered new or strengthened existing inequalities, not between the state and local people, but within the local context. A major issue is how *adat* (or its revival) can reintegrate an increasingly heterogeneous population. Many migrants (or their ancestors) hail from Buton in Sulawesi, a neighboring province of Maluku. Some of them had settled in Maluku several generations ago, but are still not considered citizens in *adat* terms (von Benda-Beckmann and Benda-Beckmann 2007, p. 23); they have no access to *adat* offices and, after the conflict, they were largely excluded from reconciliation processes. During the conflict, thousands of Butonese had to flee, with many returning once mass violence ceased and many finding the land they had worked on reoccupied by Moluccans (Adam 2009). As markets were destroyed and the economy in Maluku collapsed, many migrants in and around Ambon City also lost their means of subsistence (for more details see Bräuchler 2010, 2017a). This mismatch needs urgent attention. However, simply deconstructing and unmasking the essentialization and exclusionary effects of the revival of peace would overlook the broader political inequalities and gaps that triggered those identity politics in the first place and does not provide for a better understanding of such cultural claim-making (Trochimchuk 2011). Such concerns have only been partly included into broader efforts in Maluku to create a pan-Moluccan identity for the better integration of the diverse Moluccan society as key to the anticipation of future mass violence. Acknowledging such difficulties and challenges in bottom-up peacebuilding (McEvoy and McGregor 2008, pp. 9–10) and critically engaging with them is a first step in acknowledging that local agency is crucial for reconciliation and sustainable peace. As scholars and activists in Maluku stress, the shortcomings of existing *adat* law should not become an excuse to not foster its revitalization and refunctionalization (Tim Peneliti Pusat Kajian Konstitusi 2005–10; Titahelu 2005).

Generally, local academics and peace activists in Maluku are aware that a mere return to the past

will not do as that past is contested and colonial powers and Indonesian governments have done a good job in destroying any overarching sociopolitical structures in the area. As in the Solomon Islands, the revival of tradition are future-oriented (often political) acts that are “rooted . . . in shared historical experiences and ongoing political realities” (Akin 2013, p. 343) and that forward custom (or culture or *adat*) as a symbol of unity that helps to restore sociality and make diverse local societies join hands to fight colonial intruders, central governments, or other outside forces that triggered conflict (cf. Steur 2014). Various local actors in Maluku have suggested social engineering as a solution to the various dilemmas of the revival for peace (Bräuchler 2017b). To cope with the mass violence and reintegrate the whole of Moluccan society, it needed the scaling up of traditional justice institutions, including the strengthening and extension of traditional alliance systems and the creation of a pan-Moluccan *raja* council. Peace activists and academics are aware of the evolving character of *adat*. They take social engineering as a means to manage diversity and create a shared reality and collective representation for the whole (increasingly heterogeneous) population (Pariela and Soumokil 2003); to adapt and reinterpret local institutions to meet the requirements of a postconflict society and democratic representation, without losing identity and cultural heritage (Ajawaila 2005); or to empower the local population and even out drawbacks of customary law, such as the dominance of *adat* elites (Tim Peneliti Pusat Kajian Konstitusi 2005–10, pp. 194–196, 216; Titahelu 2005, pp. 44–45). These people are aware, for instance, that an unreflected revival of old traditions or feudal structures could foster exclusivism and exacerbate conflicts rather than solve them. Traditions to be revived are thus carefully and strategically selected and adapted, with some suggesting to extend the *pela* system so that it not only establishes strong interreligious ties between villages, but also between different ethnic groups, such as the Ambonese and the Butonese. Some of the Butonese whom the author spoke to actually think highly of cultural systems like *pela* that resonate with their own cultural

values, which could become an important entry point. As Ratuva (2003, p. 150) emphasized for Fiji, traditional models must not be imposed, but need to be negotiated between the different ethnic groups in order to work in such contexts. Similarly, Niklas Luhmann (1975) warned of putting the focus of legal procedures on finding true decisions, which fosters the illusionary idea of a truth independent of current powerholders (19–20); the aim is rather “legitimation by procedure” (197) that involves all affected people in the decision-making process. The diversity of voices and competing agendas in such settings should be taken as an important asset as they evidence that “community-based peace-work constitutes an important space for discussing visions on peace, justice and social transformation” (Leeuwen et al. 2019, p. 20). And here again, the idea is not to annihilate or depoliticize difference, but to try to understand difference and its continuous (re)construction (Brigg 2018, p. 2, 6).

It is important to keep in mind that such negotiations are part of everyday life, not only the result of extraordinary violence. Everyone who has followed an *adat* ceremony or ritual and the intensive internal discussions going on during preparation and follow-up can testify that *adat* is constantly contested from within and outside and the result of continuous negotiation processes, dynamics that keep *adat* alive and allow for its adaptation to changing circumstances. Such dynamics have further intensified in the Moluccan peace and decentralization processes and require critical reflection on established and emerging “social engineers,” their motivations and their specific embedding in the local context. It also needs critical reflection on how national political frameworks and regional politics have to be adapted to challenges at the local level. The revival of peace shall not become an excuse to delegate all responsibility to local communities. The government needs to support physical and moral reconstruction, but also the economic empowerment of people. As the coordinator of the repatriation ceremony of a group of refugees in Maluku warned, *adat* is important and necessary to enable collective reconciliation, but it cannot prevent individual feelings of revenge or

injustice coming to the surface again, for instance, due to unequal compensation after the conflict, unsolved land issues, or continuing economic and political injustices (Bräuchler 2009c, pp. 111–112). This also implies that peacebuilding needs to be seen as long-term efforts that not only strive for the end of violence and reconciliation, but for a broader social justice.

Creative Peacebuilding and Social Justice

Music and singing has returned . . . Songs are written, songs are sung. The story of the orang basudara is the story of friends singing songs to the heavens, singing songs to the blue sea, accompanied by waves dancing along the sands, singing about the coconut, clove and nutmeg trees, singing about mother, singing about young women, and singing about the peaceful coexistence of basudara. (Manuputty 2017, p. 296)

For Moluccans, it was important to restore social relations across religious boundaries as soon as possible due to their importance for all sectors of everyday life in villages and urban areas, from kinship ties and social life more generally, the economy, media, to education and politics. However, tensions at times still run high and many schoolchildren still go to separate schools (according to their religion). This is as much part of Moluccans’ everyday reality as the many efforts to maintain peace, in particular in Ambon City. Peace is still fragile and it needs constant efforts to not let minor incidents escalate and maintain awareness that peace can neither be imposed from the outside, nor come on its own, but needs continuous work. Moluccans need to cope with this “not as something extra-ordinary, but as part of everyday life” (Berents 2015, p. 194). Understandably, the government is keen to rebuild Maluku’s economy, but it should do so in a sustainable way that does not reproduce or create new inequalities and continue structural violence. In cases like Maluku, reconciliation needs to be conceptualized in a broader sense and it needs longer-term perspectives that go beyond fixed-term notions of peacebuilding. It

needs a focus on “more future-oriented aspects of justice (focusing on empowerment) [that] can enhance and reinforce the possibility of peace and non-occurrence of violence” (Szablewska and Bradley 2015, p. 283). Given that even Galtung’s (1969) notion of positive peace is formulated negatively as the absence of structural violence, we need to complement this with more positive approaches that put more emphasis on local agency. To foster positive change, we need to focus on both structures and collective and individual protagonists’ agency.

As Berents (2015, p. 195) argues, the “everyday is not merely ‘repetitive’ or ‘unconscious’, but holds the potential for solidarity, resistance and creativity . . . and . . . for small (but potentially radical) change,” which is very much due to the physical presence of people and their embodiment of the everyday, of relationships and everyday efforts for peace. Here, peace “is necessarily located, not only within and through the bodies of marginalised people, but in and through the terrains they occupy” (Berents 2015, p. 195). To pick an example that is relevant to the Moluccan case and that speaks to the introductory quote of this chapter section, arts-based peacebuilding is increasingly recognized as an effective tool to involve people affected by mass violence in transitional justice processes (Rush and Simic 2014). It opens space for identity groups to share cultural experiences, raise awareness about past suffering and, in Maluku, a joint *adat*, and engage in creative projects (Zelizer 2003). Through a variety of art forms that resonate with tradition, with youth culture, or both, one can better address the emotional legacies of war, provide talk about peace legitimacy on the ground, and give voice to those who are usually excluded from official peace talks (Premaratna and Bleiker 2016, pp. 82–83).

Young people were crucial in translating the peace project into a broader transformation process for social justice. Influential peace activists in Ambon City specifically reached out for the youth in their efforts to foster interreligious dialogue and open up space for communication. This is part of a larger thriving youth culture developing in “post-conflict” Maluku that is using arts as creative means to engage with Moluccan traditions and

the past, restore, build, or strengthen social relations and address continuing social injustices such as land grabbing or the overexploitation of natural resources through investors and governments at the expense of, for instance, indigenous people, and the lack of official spaces for dialogue. Such commitment and joining of hands took peacebuilding in Maluku to the next level and helped to socialize young people into everyday practices of peacebuilding (see also Brewer et al. 2018, p. 251). Such engagement does not necessarily need to be labeled “peacebuilding” (Pruitt 2011, p. 215), which is important as the author has encountered a certain fatigue among young people in Ambon City when their engagement and projects are only supported under such labels. It resulted in long-term engagement (as opposed to fixed-term interventions) that was responsive to the broader social and political context (McLeod et al. 2014, p. 37) and initiated transformation through performative justice (Bräuchler 2019). It is an argument for the normalization of peacebuilding or everyday peace and for the role of creativity and arts within these processes.

Many of today’s youth in Maluku were born during or after the violence. They have no memory of it and no memory of what it was like before the conflict when Muslim and Christian children played together across religious affiliations. They inherited stories of conflict and war and grew up in segregated environments. There is an urgent need to open up space and opportunities for young people to get together, intermingle with the older generation, and engage in the restoration of the Moluccan tradition of brother- and sisterhood and a struggle for broader social justice (Bräuchler 2019, p. 212). As one of the youth activists told the author, he and his friends aim to provoke Moluccans to peace through creativity. Such creative engagement in Maluku includes musical styles such as hip-hop, poetry, painting, graffiti, theatre, film-making, and photography. Contemporary art forms draw on traditional arts such as *kapata*, a traditional rhyming form and ritualistic oral tradition in Maluku; with their lyrics, texts, and narratives, they criticize, for instance, the falling into oblivion of *adat* – one of the reasons why violence was long-lasting – or

exploitative investment projects as a continuation of social inequality and injustice. Through such performances, artists and their audiences reclaim public spaces and turn them into performative sites of local struggle, resistance, the resignification of meaning, and the expression of collective feelings (Hobson 2006; Jamal and Hales 2016; Siddique et al. 2014). Such sites offer a stage for voices and experiences of marginalized people, for dialogue about past and ongoing violence, related social inequalities, and collective memory, and for an artistic engagement with the future and for social change (McLeod et al. 2014, p. 40; Shefik 2018, p. 333; Simic 2015, p. 253). Due to such potential, an increasing number of arts projects are designed for peacebuilding interventions more generally such as music therapy for children, joint folk arts exhibitions, or multicultural art workshops. These initiatives need to be carefully analyzed to prevent the arts becoming yet another investment strategy and tool of outside interveners (Bergh and Sloboda 2010, p. 6; Siddique et al. 2014, p. 127; Zelizer 2003, p. 10). Short-term projects can have positive effects, but they are less likely to produce sustainable outcomes; long-term personal and social change only happens when people actively participate on all levels in musical engagement that is embedded in their everyday lives (Bergh and Sloboda 2010, pp. 11–12). By engaging in “performative justice” Moluccan peace activists, artists and audiences can enact and embody such struggles in daily life and in public space (Bräuchler 2019). It makes “justice” accessible for the public through the arts’ “aesthetic appeal and the possible participatory nature” (Premaratna 2018, p. 2) and makes people engage with it, thus raising awareness (locally, but also nationally and internationally through strategic media use and networks), exerting pressure on the government and other influential groups and individuals, and envisioning another shared future.

Summary

This chapter could only provide snippets of a much larger picture. The idea was to present and

analyze some key ideas of ongoing dynamics of peacebuilding, reconciliation, and creative transformation in Maluku and link that to broader discourses in peace studies. Based on extended stretches of multisited and multitemporal fieldwork over two decades, the author was able to outline the longevity and the different phases and dimensions in the Moluccan peace process that all relate to each other, build on each other, and cannot be understood in isolation. The chapter tracked some of the unfolding spaces of creative peacebuilding in Maluku and analyzed their transformative potential. The rootedness of such engagement in people’s everyday lives and in local culture, values and societal dynamics, enables Moluccans to embody peace through their daily experiences. All this substantiates the need to conceptualize peacebuilding in a broader sense, to engage in longer-term research on peace processes to understand the intricacies and dynamics of societies that were affected by mass violence and try to find ways to restore and embody peaceful relations in everyday life, and to further promote a cultural turn in peace and conflict studies. It is an argument for trying to both develop and understand “peace from within” (see ► [“Culture, Anthropology, and Ethnography in Peace Research”](#), this Encyclopedia).

Cross-References

- [Culture, Anthropology, and Ethnography in Peace Research](#)

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Culture and Conflict Resolution

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Introduction

At its simplest, *culture* refers to socially inherited and learned ways of living shared by persons as members of social groups. “Groups” differ greatly in scale – from a family or clan to a nation-state – and overlap and intersect. Thus, for any one *person*, culture is never singular or monolithic. Persons “carry” multiple cultures, which overlap, intersect, and sometimes exist in tension with each other. Elements of culture, “cultural markers” such as customs, language, religion, race, ethnicity, or social class, are important sources of *social identity*, anchoring personal identity (psychological coherence and security), and demarcating

boundaries of group membership (Tajfel and Turner 1986).

Culture is connected to conflict, and conflict resolution, in four main ways. To some extent these call forth different approaches to analysis and different strategies for conflict resolution. Firstly, “socially inherited and learned ways of living” are not universal or identical across all societies or social groups, nor are they often perceived as equally legitimate, and the denial of legitimacy is one source of conflict. Secondly, social conflict is often expressed in the idiom of identity, around which individuals are motivated and groups mobilize. As this develops, identity-based groups contest with one another over resources, divergent interests, or deeply held values and beliefs (Korostelina 2007). Thirdly, communicational styles are to some extent patterned or shaped by culture, and cultural differences, especially sharp ones, can act as impedance to communication, affecting everything from relatively superficial etiquette to dynamics of negotiation and the mutual intelligibility of the parties’ key narratives about themselves – history and memory.

A fourth way in which culture and conflict are related happens when conflict becomes perduring, protracted, and deeply rooted in the fabric of social relations, economy, and the psychological lives of persons. This is likely to happen if the conflict, enduring through time, featured episodes of intense or mass violence, whose effects, transcending generations, are seared into historical narrative and individuals’ psyches (Volkan 1997).

Defining Culture

A more technical and analytically precise definition of culture than diffuse “ways of living” is called for:

“Culture consists of the derivatives of experience, more or less organized, learned or created by the individuals of a population, including those images or encodements and their interpretations (meanings) transmitted from past generations, from contemporaries, or formed by individuals themselves” (Schwartz 1992:324).

This definition, retaining the idea of social learning and inheritance, refines “ways of living” to make culture reflect individual experience in and of the world. More than passive social robots who inherit and learn, it grants to individuals the possibility of themselves creating culture out of lived experience, granting them agency. It orients culture toward cognition, perception (images), and interpretation – toward symbols and their meanings. To this cognitive-symbolic understanding of culture, two refinements are called for. Firstly, it is now understood that cognition is not separate from affect, emotions (Dalglish and Power 2015). Affective patterning is culturally constituted, and figures importantly in social conflict, particularly if violence and individual trauma are associated. Secondly, the collection – some sort of “system” – of images, perceptions, symbols, and interpretations, are not uniformly distributed in the population. Because individuals may be members of different social groups or collectivities (based on religion, language, ethnicity, class, and so on), and because each group is a potential “container” for some sort of culture, any complex society is likely to be “multicultural.” For example, an essential belief in one religious community, a proscription against eating pork or drinking alcohol, may be absent in another. Indeed, such differences serve as important boundary-maintaining mechanisms. In this way, culture is *socially distributed* in a population. Moreover, not all cognitions, symbols, or beliefs are internalized by individuals with the same affect or intensity. Even among members of a religious group, who share the understanding that pork or alcohol are forbidden, not everyone (always) abstains. Culture, in this way, is *psychologically distributed* in a population. This variance in beliefs (and behavior) can lead to intragroup conflict, as, for example, non-conforming coreligionists who can be excused of impiety, heterodoxy, or worse. What recognizing the social and psychological distributedness of culture means is that culture is never monolithic or homogenous. Recognizing its derivation from lived experience and individuals’ agency implies culture is never

changeless or timeless. These are misunderstandings of culture that are important to avoid (Avruch 1998).

There are four things to take away from the more technical definition of culture:

- In providing cognitive, affective, and symbolic frameworks for individuals, culture importantly shapes meaning and perception, up to and including “the way the world is.”
- In shaping meaning culture affects communication. This is most obvious with respect to language communities – speakers of mutually unintelligible languages will be severely handicapped in their ability to communicate, lacking an intermediary: a translator. (But “communication” means more than interlinguisticity.) This has implications for the practice of conflict resolution in “intercultural” settings.
- Culture is more or less shared – relatively more (though never perfectly) within linguistic/cognitive/perceptual communities or groups, relatively less (or barely at all) outside and between them.
- While fundamentally based on notions of sharedness, culture importantly points us to *difference*, to specific localities and collectivities in space and time, to situation, and to *context*. Such difference may exist within the microsociality of a family, given generational dynamics, and between the large-scale socialities of language, class, religion, or race.

Not so much a part of Schwartz’s technical definition but crucial for understanding social conflict is that culture provides a rich reservoir or archive of symbols, customs, metaphors, and presuppositions about “the way the world is,” which are available for absorption in the making of social identity and group solidarity (Ross 2007): “*They* eat pork and *we* don’t.”

History

Although the academic study of culture enjoys a long history in anthropology, and some other social sciences, when conceived as the study of

difference, it came to Peace and Conflict relatively late (Ramsbotham et al. 2016). Like gender, another source of difference, the idea of culture did not much figure in the academic disciplines or epistemologies that dominated earlier research in conflict and conflict resolution. International Relations was focused mainly on nation-states in an amoral (yet dangerous) international system. “The state” was conceived as a unitary actor, seeking to maximize its own security. The key variable defining difference among states was relative power. Power was conceived as the means to guarantee security, through outright domination or power-based alliances. Analyses of conflict from Economics substituted the individual for the state as the unitary actor, operating in an amoral market, seeking to maximize utility/profit. Game-theoretic approaches added rigor to modeling economic behavior, but by its nature these operated within formal and strictly delimited conceptions of “rules of the game.” Cultural analysis (and the study of history) teaches us, by contrast, that rules are subject to change “mid-game” – or that players coming from different cultures may not substantially share the same rules-of-the-game to begin with. For these reasons, while important for understanding bargaining and carried into analyses of higher-level negotiation, these game-theoretic or formalistic approaches “lost” culture – change, context, and difference – almost entirely (Schelling 1960; Raiffa 1982).

By the 1990s, Peace and Conflict opened up to other disciplines and epistemologies. Anthropologists brought culture into consideration (Avruch et al. 1991; Fry and Bjorkqvist 1997), and scholars and practitioners who worked in other cultural settings or came from outside Western Europe or North America began to work in the field (Abu-Nimer 2003; Lederach 1995). Conceptions of culture have broadened to highlight notions of *difference* and the contributions of indigenous knowledge to the field (Brigg 2008).

Intercultural Conflict and Conflict Resolution

One approach to elucidating how individuals from different cultures may bring different conceptions

of rules-of-the game is illustrated by scholars such as Hall (1977), who distinguished “high context” from “low context” patterning of communicational styles. Low context communicators encode meaning in unadorned and straightforward messaging: what you hear is what you get. High context communicators “bury” meaning in paralinguistic channels, such as tone, gesture, or allusion. In cultures where the preservation of “face” in encounters with others is important, high context communication predominates. When high context meets low context not only is meaning imperfectly communicated but the *affect* surrounding the encounter can damage the relationship. Low context may strike high context as arrogant and rude, devoid of social graces, and lacking in respect. High context comes across to low context as trafficking in ambiguity and indirection, at worse duplicitous, devious, and untrustworthy. If communication breaks down in the wake of a damaged relationship, the high context Other can be deemed “inscrutable.”

Another well-researched distinction is that between “individualist” vs. “collectivist” cultures (Triandis 1982). Individuals with a collectivist orientation are often high context communicators, concerned with preserving “face” and “smooth” relationships with others. Hofstede (1980) described other important dimensions of cultural patterning, contrasting cultures on dimensions of power distance (the degree of inequality in a social system, the importance of hierarchy); assertiveness vs. compliance; avoidance of uncertainty (or comfort with ambiguity – strong to weak); and orientation toward time (long term vs. short term).

The implication of all this is that when individuals from the same constellation of cultural patterning encounter each other, expectations of appropriate behavior and intentionality are consonant and communication can take place (whatever the outcome) relatively unimpeded. When parties from polar-opposite styles meet, in conflict or in negotiation aimed to resolve the conflict, layers of dissonance not only impede comprehension but the tenor or tone of the relationship itself can be compromised by the development of mutual disdain or distrust. Raymond Cohen (1997) has described this in detail in the context of diplomatic and other high-level negotiation. The effects

documented here are especially striking, since cosmopolitan and elite negotiators are presumably more immune to the effects of differing cultural styles than are “common folk.” Cohen argues they are not. One’s “native” cultures (socially inherited and learned early on) are deeply embedded.

Conflict Resolution and Cultural Difference

In moving from the analysis of conflict to the practice of conflict resolution, from theory to practice, a great deal of attention has been paid to the role of third-party intervention in the form of mediators, facilitators, leaders of dialogue, or problem-solving workshops. This is because in deep-rooted or intractable conflicts the parties themselves are unable to manage – counter-escalatory spirals, prevent or ameliorate violence – or resolve it. Negotiations break down or can never get started. A third party may be called on to act as intermediary, buffer, face-saver, and repository of enough “working trust” to get communication (re) started. Such third parties may come from within the opposing parties or groups, as respected elders or religious figures, but sometimes come from outside. The opposing parties may come from within the same culture or from different cultures. Indeed, such differences may be one of the reasons the negotiations have been unsuccessful. If the third parties are themselves “cultural outsiders,” then added layers of complexity are present. How do culturally outsider intervenors work in these situations – and how do they do so ethically (Avruch 2012)?

This is a question long faced by ethnographers working to understand cultures not their own, and to some extent the conflict resolution practitioner as cultural outsider needs to adopt “an ethnographic sensibility.” Avoid common misconceptions: Cultures are not fixed, monolithic, homogenous, immutable, deterministic of behavior, or uniformly distributed among groups or persons. Knowledge of such gross-grained distinctions as high/low context, etc., is a starting point, but it must be seasoned with a focus on situated individuals, *persons* localized in setting,

time, and space (Avruch and Black 1993). Context matters.

The work and practice of John Paul Lederach (1995) exemplifies this sensitivity to context. When acting as a third party in a cultural setting not his own, Lederach contrasts a *prescriptive* approach, where the third party acts as an outside expert who brings conflict resolution theory and skills to the role, to an *elicitive* one, and where the third party works with the cultural others to “mine” indigenous knowledge and skills: their understanding of what the conflict is about, and what existing, “traditional,” ways there are to resolve or manage it. Different situations may call for a different mix and result in a form of practice attentive to “the local” and characterized by assimilation and hybridity (Richmond 2011). Close attention to local definitions of “peace” can be found in current research investigating notions of “everyday indicators of peace” (EPIs). The lesson there is that indicators are often “hyper-local,” differing among culturally similar communities even in the same country, which may have experienced different levels of violence or trauma, which in turn governs different indicators for what, locally, “peace” is Fircchow (2018).

When one works as an outsider and third party, the focus on culture is about attention to context and communication. The *ethics* of such practice presupposes self-awareness and apposite humility. Whatever the depth of cultural knowledge the outsider possesses, the really indispensable thing is self-knowledge.

Violence and the Culture of Intractable Conflicts: Conflict as a Cultural System

Scholars in Peace and Conflict studies have identified a range of conflicts they call “intractable” (Azar 1990; Coleman 2000; Kriesberg et al. 1989). These are typically long-lasting, “passed down” through generations; have resisted efforts at resolution; and involve deeply held beliefs about core values deemed “nonnegotiable.” They are usually expressed in the idiom of social (and thus personal) identity (race, language, religion, ethnicity), and are sometimes perceived by

individuals as existential conflicts necessary to protect or preserve these identities. They are also usually characterized by histories of violence, often mutually inflicted. The “victims” of one episode are sometimes the victimizers or perpetrators, of another.

Culture plays a role here, particularly with respect to justifying violence against others. Galtung writes about “cultural violence,” defined as “those aspects of culture, the symbolic sphere of our existence – exemplified by religion and ideology, language and art . . . that can be used to justify or legitimize direct or structural violence” (Galtung 1990:291). More generally, intractable conflicts, over time, develop an entire cultural “edifice” that is self-sustaining, a culture of conflict. Bar-Tal defines this comprehensively as consisting of a “shared system of beliefs, values, emotions, symbols, norms, cultural products, institutions, and patterns of behavior. . . that reflects the conflict conditions and provide explanations, justifications, and objectives for the maintenance of the conflict” (Bar-Tal 2019:186). Other scholars have focused on the “systems” part of Bar-Tal’s definition. They argue that intractable conflicts come to be organized into complex and emergent, “dynamical systems” that are self-sustaining and reinforcing, sometimes distant from the original triggers (over incompatible goals or resource competition) that launched them. In dynamical systems terms, conflict resolution may entail the disruption or decentering of the strong conflict “attractors” in favor of more peaceful, or at least more benign, attractors usually inherent in the system (though weakly so) as well (Vallacher et al. 2010). In these approaches, “culture” as local context is refigured to a higher order concept, in effect “absorbed” into the dynamics of the conflict system, such that the *system* itself has become the defining and dominating context of the conflict.

Conclusion

Understanding culture is important for Peace and Conflict studies for the following reasons:

- Culture frames the contexts in which conflict occurs by indicating, among other things, what sorts of resources are subjects for competition or objects of dispute, often by postulating their high value or relative scarcity (honor, purity, capital, profits, etc.).
- Culture stipulates rules, sometimes precise but usually less so, for how conflicts should be pursued, including how to begin and when and how to end them.
- Culture provides individuals with cognitive, affective, perceptual, and symbolic frameworks for interpreting the behavior and motives of others and themselves.
- Culture affects communication.
- Culture links individual and collective identities, providing symbols (some of them deeply invested with emotion) that connect individuals to others “like them” while at the same time separating those individuals from “unlike others.” Culture defines social markers for constituting boundaries between collectivities (social groups). In this way culture gets implicated in ethnic, religious, nationalist, or other communal, “identity conflicts.”
- At the highest level of abstraction, in the case of protracted and intractable conflicts, culture becomes absorbed into the dynamics of the conflict system, such that one can speak of a “culture of conflict” (radically opposed to a “culture of peace”) and “conflict as a cultural system.”

Cross-References

- ▶ [Everyday Peace](#)
- ▶ [Negotiation](#)

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Culture, Anthropology, and Ethnography in Peace Research

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Introduction

Twenty-five years ago, Leslie Sponsel (1994) has convincingly argued for the mutual relevance of anthropology and peace studies. Given the local turn in peace and conflict studies and increasing efforts to locally root peace interventions, that connection becomes ever more relevant. This transformation process within the peace studies field requires closer attention to culture as a specifier of the local or as a context that greatly influences how concepts such as conflict, reconciliation, justice, and peace are locally defined, perceived, adopted, rejected, or not in place at all (Bräuchler 2015). There is an

increasing awareness and willingness within international relations (IR) – one of the dominant disciplines in peace and conflict studies – to embrace and include ethnographic methods into its peace research and intervention procedures (e.g., Mac Ginty 2010a; Millar 2014b; Richmond 2018b). However, simplified conceptualizations or instrumentalization of culture and the alienation of anthropological methods as new tools that help the peace industry to allegedly anchor their interventions in local realities turn out to be rather counterproductive. What the author has provocatively called a “cultural turn in peace research” (Bräuchler 2018b) was not meant to promote yet another turn in the field of peace studies and work but was an argument for the importance of cultural contextualization and mechanisms in all stages on the road to peace: from violence and efforts to end it, the restoration of social relations and the return to everyday routines, to addressing the structural violence underlying the conflict and struggles for broader social justice.

It is important to note from the outset that the idea is not to promote culture as the key to success as the complexity of contemporary conflict settings requires multiple perspectives and approaches and the joining of hands of multiple stakeholders, mediators, and disciplines. But culture needs to be considered as an important ingredient of all phases on the long journey from a situation that leads to violence to the tedious processes of paving the way to reconciliation and peace. Culture further specifies the local turn but also goes beyond narrow conceptualizations of “the local” as any culture – be it the culture of an ethnic community, the international peace industry, or youth culture – is relational and dynamic; culture is constantly under negotiation influenced by local, regional, national, and international levels. The chapter argues for a broader understanding of peacebuilding as something growing from within and a long-term endeavor that does not stop once violence ended and (a superficial) “peace” has been established, without looking into issues of broader structural violence that often underlie the outbreak of physical violence. Whereas this chapter puts forward theoretical and

conceptual reflections on the turn toward culture, another chapter on ► [“Cultural Mobilization for Peace in Indonesia”](#) in the case studies section of this Encyclopedia provides the empirical material to substantiate the argument in this chapter through an anthropologically informed look at mainly local efforts to restore social relations and reintegrate society after mass violence in Eastern Indonesia.

This chapter first provides a brief overview and discussion of the local and cultural turns in peace and conflict studies. It puts forward some definitions, explains key concepts used in this chapter, and identifies gaps in the critical peace literature. In a next step, it outlines the relevance of an anthropological approach in peace and conflict studies. The chapter closes with a brief summary and some concluding reflections.

The Local and Cultural Turns in Peace and Conflict Studies

The cultural turn implies the increasing importance peace studies as well as national and international peace organizations attribute to “culture,” “the local,” and “local ownership” for peacebuilding – which is the result of an envisaged paradigm shift within the field that has only half-heartedly and to a very limited extent been implemented so far (Bräuchler 2018b). Due to the frequent failure of the liberal peace paradigm that promotes democratization, law enforcement, and a liberal market for peace (e.g., Chandler 2010; Donais and Knorr 2013; Fanthorpe 2005), critical peace scholars pushed for a local turn and the idea that culture and local agency are key for sustainable peace (Lederach 1997). This can now be considered common ground in peace research (see, e.g., Debiel et al. 2016; Hughes et al. 2015; Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013; Schierenbeck 2015) but has not been able yet to seriously undermine the predominant liberal peace paradigm and change the field’s mind-set, which puts modeling over in-depth studies of empirical realities (Gleditsch et al. 2014; Lottholz 2017, p. 3; Millar 2018d, p. 4; Paffenholz 2015). “Local ownership,” “participation,” and “traditional justice”

have become keywords but are often not more than empty talk, with continuing interventionist talk that local civil society needs to be saved from its own incapacity (Richmond 2011, p. 94). In the end, these terms are inventions by the international development aid industry that serve to make agencies or businesses feel and look good (Gardner and Lewis 2015, p. 151) and to legitimize their interventions (Chopra and Hohe 2004; Mac Ginty 2010b). Being “local” has become a political resource and a subject of contestation (Donais 2009, p. 759; Kappler 2015, p. 882).

Such missing engagement with the complexities and dynamics of the local and culture is partly due to missing research and information on local sociocultural structures, lack of time for longer-term engagement and research, ethnographic realities on the ground rarely matching the abstract categories or normative dimensions of international peace paradigms, but also local notions of participation and governance that seem to be at odds with (democratic) ideas brought in from the outside (Bräuchler 2015, p. 37, 2018b, p. 18–21, 2019b). That lack of engagement with local complexity is highly counterproductive, given the heterogeneity of and the variety of interests and actors within the local, who are not always able or willing to participate and can also resist or reappropriate external initiatives (Debiel and Rinck 2016, p. 246; Hughes et al. 2015, p. 820). Rather than taking local agency seriously, such interventions often simply co-opt the local; essentialize, homogenize, or idealize culture; and are highly selective and mostly ignorant of broader historical, political, and sociocultural contexts (see, e.g., Anderl 2016; Bräuchler and Naucke 2017; Hirblinger and Simons 2015; Richmond 2009). Local initiatives and actors are usually seen as part of larger international intervention and aid programs, with peace and conflict scholars focusing on the interplay of the international and the local (see, e.g., Donais and Knorr 2013; Wanis-St. John 2013). Local people affected by mass violence thus continue to be reduced to victims or troublemakers, rather than active peacemakers with their own resources and cultural competence to draw on.

Responses to the Criticism of the Local Turn

Critical peace scholars have taken great effort to deal with the critique of the local turn. They came up with concepts such as the local-local as opposed to the international peace industry’s artificial concept of the local (Richmond 2011, p. 14) or apply established anthropological or social sciences concepts such as the everyday (Certeau 1984), hybridity (Bhabha 1995) or friction (Tsing 2005) to the peacebuilding discourse, trying to conceptually grasp the dynamics of peace processes on the ground (Björkdahl et al. 2016; Mac Ginty 2010b, 2014), with mixed results. The notion of hybrid peace was criticized as yet another excuse to soak up the local into hegemonic outside interventions to make them more efficient (e.g., Millar 2014a; Richmond 2015), thus ignoring the fact that peacebuilding that takes hybridity seriously does not produce quick outcomes (Kreikemeyer 2018). The local-local was dismissed as an illusionary attempt to grasp the “authentic” local that further essentializes the local and boundaries between locals and interveners (Finkenbusch 2016). And Brewer (2018, p. 211) and colleagues expose everyday life peacebuilding as conceived within the discipline of IR as being “reduced to the idea of local spaces and local practices” as opposed to the everyday in local people’s lives transcending all physical spaces.

As proposed by Galtung (1969) five decades ago, it is important to choose a broader perspective toward peacebuilding that not only includes the ending of violence and dealing with its immediate aftermath but also looks into less visible forms of violence that continue those structures and power relations that were, at least partly, responsible for the outbreak of violence. Ignoring the complexity of the local, universalist and interventionist approaches, however, rather reproduce power hierarchies and do little, if nothing to counter structural violence (Richmond 2018a, p. 11, 2018b, p. 227); they essentially fail in locally anchoring a peace they aim to introduce from the outside. The local is still identified and defined externally, with interventionist “participatory”

models preventing the inclusion of everyday local agency in all stages of the peace process (Julian et al. 2019). Such failure is detrimental as it is often everyday routines and needs that drive former enemies to reconcile for survival, for instance, through food exchange, the crossing of each other's territories, the reunification of families, or the restoration of working relations (see, e.g., Bräuchler 2015, p. 105–107; Nordstrom 1997, p. 98–99). All conflict and peace efforts take place within the context of people's everyday lives, and it is through everyday practices that peace and reconciliation need to be embodied if they want to be successful (for an empirical case study, see Bräuchler's chapter on the Moluccan conflict in the case studies section of this Encyclopedia, (for an empirical case study, see ► [“Cultural Mobilization for Peace in Indonesia”](#)).

The simplification and essentialization of culture and the local in peace interventions are in sharp contrast to changing conceptualizations within anthropology. At least since Fredrik Barth's *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries* (1969), anthropologists have moved away from an essentialist notion of culture and put the relational aspect of collective identities to the fore. In focus are no longer the outlining and description of difference but the analysis of processes of differentiation (Gupta and Ferguson 1992, p. 16) and contextualization with regard to power relations, global processes, practices, and political histories (Ortner 1995, p. 174). This is particularly interesting for peace research that shall look at negotiation processes between formerly warring parties but also between those affected by the conflict and outside interventionists. Contemporary anthropologists conceptualize culture as something that is processual and dynamic, constantly in the making, renegotiated and contested, from within and outside, but that is not random. In a similar vein has “locality” been reconceptualized in anthropology as a culturally constructed concept that can imply physically demarcated space as well as clusters of interactions and fields of relations that involve the local and the global (Gupta and Ferguson 1992, p. 8; Hastrup and Olwig 1997). The local constitutes a concrete context of practical

appropriation, interpretation, and transformation of sociocultural discourses, ideas, and practices that have their roots in global, regional, and local interests, traditions, and actors. So neither culture nor the local are essential givens (Bräuchler and Naucke 2017; Halbmayr and Karl 2012). Such moving away from fixed categories and separateness challenges “mainstream quantitative social science practice” (Brigg 2008, p. 48) and makes peace scholars even more hesitant to engage with it (see also Brigg 2010). To anticipate unwanted outcomes of a misconceptualized cultural turn also requires critical reflections on earlier manifestations of the cultural turn in anthropology and conflict and peace studies, in which culture and/or anthropological research have been instrumentalized and manipulated for the sake of colonialism, nation-building, “culturally sensitive” conflict resolution, genocide, and the war on terror (Bräuchler 2018b).

The Relevance of an Anthropological Approach

As mass violence and conflicts are often the outcome of structures of violence, societal transformations from conflict to peace, including the restoration of social relations and justice, are no isolated phenomena, neither in space nor in time, but multi-scalar processes. It is anthropology's role to promote an open and reflected notion and understanding of the local, tradition, and culture; raise awareness of their historicity, ambiguity, contestedness, flexibility, and their embeddedness in relational webs that go far beyond the specific conflict; and try to track the intricacies and dynamics of the transformation from conflict to peace and social justice through ethnographic field work (Bräuchler 2015, p. 182).

Despite long-lasting inclinations to ignore or be blind to cultural diversity, a cultural turn slowly starts taking effect in IR and peace studies (Bräuchler 2018b; Millar 2018a, p. 263; Valbjørn 2008). A few critical peace scholars recently started promoting anthropology as an important

partner in peace research (e.g., Mac Ginty 2015; Millar 2018b; Richmond 2018a, b), which opens up important venues for interdisciplinary dialogue and collaboration that are crucial to deal with the complexities of conflict and peace. Richmond (2018b, p. 221, 230) asked for the involvement of anthropology as the discipline “rescuing peacebuilding from neoliberal epistemological frameworks” and preventing mainstream IR’s projects “from verging into hegemonic illegitimacy,” and Millar has explored options of ethnographic peace research (e.g., Millar 2014b, 2018b). Being recent initiatives, they do not go far enough yet, which can put the emancipatory potential of the anthropological enterprise at risk. They either take anthropology as an auxiliary science (Finlay 2015); deal with the local only as part of larger international efforts and thus bracket out local peacemaking initiatives and local social engineering processes (Bräuchler 2018a, p. 23); or they reduce anthropology to the ethnographic method as yet another tool for the peace industry (Millar 2014b, p. 6) for data collection. The latter implies “an empiricist positivism for which anthropological research had been criticized on various occasions in the discipline’s controversial legacy” and that is supposed to confirm a universalist ontology, refine theories, and “make peacebuilding practices more effective” (Lottholz 2017, p. 6, 3). In that context, ethnography often simply implies working qualitatively (Millar 2018c, p. 6) or is reduced to fieldwork or participant observation and is made to adhere “to the protocols of positivist methodology” (Ingold 2014, p. 386–387, 384). Such reductionism also overlooks the interpretational skills required for thick description (Geertz 1993) – the interpretative observation and description of culturally contextualized social behavior – that can only be learned together with anthropological theory and concepts. Being out there is not intrinsically ethnographic, but it is rather the interpretation and judgment of these encounters that is based on “a retrospective conversion of the learning, remembering and note-taking” (Ingold 2014, p. 386). In that sense, theory, empirical detail, and methodology go hand in hand with each other (Bräuchler 2018a, p. 24; Ingold 2014, p. 393).

Whereas ethnography in these recent debates within IR seems to be seen as “a solution to the crisis of representation, as a way out of radical reflexivity and moral incertitude and a way into policy-relevant knowledge, cultural anthropology has come to accept critical ethnography as the brainchild of its disciplinary uncertainties” (Vrasti 2008, p. 296–297) and representation as an ongoing process that is constantly negotiated and challenged from within and outside. Accordingly, peace researchers have to learn how to bear uncertainty and how to hold “open an uncomfortable space, rather than trying to bring about an inevitably superficial and weak conformity to abstract principles formulated elsewhere” (Brown 2013, p. 143). In addition, anthropological research can also highlight the creativity and resolution finding ability of local actors, as shown in the author’s empirical chapter (for an empirical case study, see ► “Cultural Mobilization for Peace in Indonesia”), that should be recognized, respected, and supported through complementary peacebuilding – without reducing the local to yet another tool in the peace industry and without ignoring the share of local actors in the conflicts and the problems, limitations, or contradictions they face (Bräuchler and Naucke 2017, p. 428). Ethnographic research and anthropological conceptualizations can exactly do that, to reflect a “non-unitary and always dialogical, polyphonic and controversial” reality and complexity, and “not try to condense it” (Lottholz 2017, p. 11). What can also be learned from anthropology is the flexible (though not random) adaptation of methodology to rapidly changing fields and worlds, which requires multi-sited (Marcus 1995), multi-temporal (Dalsgaard 2013), and multi-scalar (Xiang 2013) field research, to grasp the complexities and dynamics of evolving peacescapes and their embeddedness in broader political changes (Bräuchler 2015: Introduction).

Issues of language and translation are rarely discussed in such appropriation of anthropological methods, with few exceptions (e.g., Millar 2018c, p. 10). As Mac Ginty (2016, p. 193) noted, the lack of language skills and knowledge of local codes of behavior or “epistemological limitations,” on top of security restrictions,

makes it extremely difficult for outsiders to get access to the local. But these outsiders have nonetheless the (material) power to define the local and thus seek to legitimize their interventions (Mac Ginty 2016, p. 197–198). It is for such reasons that the anthropological project and ethnographic research need to be long-term: to negotiate access, establish relationships of trust, and acknowledge local agency and the co-production of knowledge. The local and the cultural turns require another timeframe and the adoption of other concepts and principles that anthropology had developed a long while ago and that have recently been reinvented in peace studies, including the importance of context, the emic perspective, the researcher's self-reflectivity, relational identity concepts, and representational issues (see, e.g., Hirblinger and Simons 2015, p. 422; Kappler 2015, p. 876; Mac Ginty 2015, p. 848–852; Millar 2014b, p. 8; Schierenbeck 2015, p. 1031–1032).

Another important step forward is to dismiss the idea of anthropology and ethnographic research as apolitical and as resistant to the idea of social change and advocacy, which seems to prevail even among promoters of an ethnographic turn within IR (e.g., Millar 2018c; Richmond 2018b). Ethnographic research, just like culture, is always political. It is certainly true that many anthropologists have “developed a deep ambivalence towards policy and practice” “as a result of its association with colonialism, and its instrumentalization during wartime” (Millar 2018c, p. 7–8), and other reasons (Bräuchler 2018b). It is probably also true that many anthropologists are hesitant to be co-opted by a normative field such as IR. However, it is not true that anthropologists depict “the everyday as if it were in some way disassociated from the regressive or progressive possibilities of power, institutions, rights and needs-oriented policymakers” (Richmond 2018b, p. 229), that they “verge(s) on the purely descriptive” (230), or that they even only see “agency as if there were no structure with which it could tactically engage” (232). This chapter, the author's empirical studies, and other works by past and contemporary anthropologists can disprove this (On a side note, this author does believe that not all

research should actually be policy-oriented but that anthropologists also need to engage in long-term basic research that, nonetheless, is never apolitical). Anthropological research has always been highly political, just like the local agency that it is engaging with, looking at both structure and practice (Bräuchler 2020, see, e.g., Pierre Bourdieu's work). At least since Sol Tax's (1975) advancement of “action anthropology,” there is a strong tendency within anthropology to engage in research that does have an impact on the lived reality of people they work with, among others through engaging with policymaking, advocacy, or activism. The last decades, in particular after the writing culture debate that questioned the supposed claim to representation of ethnographies and put forward the idea of the co-production of ethnographic knowledge by researchers and research subjects and a strong need for reflection on the benefits of ethnographic work (Clifford and Marcus 1986), have seen a proliferation of various approaches: from action anthropology (Tax 1975) and activist research (Sillitoe 2015) to advocacy anthropology (Ballard and Banks 2003), engaged and engaging anthropology (Baer 2012; Beck and Maida 2013; Eriksen 2006; Sillitoe 2015), practicing and public anthropology (Borofsky 2000; Brondo 2010), or anthropological engagements within the fields of development, aid, health, and others (Strang 2009) and the promotion of collective and indigenous human rights. What also needs to be better reflected on is that it is not only outside interveners essentializing, harmonizing, or instrumentalizing culture, as illustrated in the empirical case study (for an empirical case study, see ► “[Cultural Mobilization for Peace in Indonesia](#)”) but also by local people for strategic reasons, so-called spokespersons, or intermediaries trying to mediate between the inside and the outside. This is yet another highly political issue with lots of potential to influence future policymaking. Culture is a strategic resource of a variety of actors whose background and individual motivations need to be taken into account and explored through critical ethnographic research (Bräuchler 2015, p. 37).

Summary and Concluding Reflections

This chapter argued for a broader notion of peacebuilding and a longer-term perspective in research on peace processes that provide a very different picture than if one would only look at a single phase individually and in isolation (Bräuchler 2019a). The requirement of a long-term engagement, unfortunately, is opposed to most funding policies. When international donors see the “post-conflict” peacebuilding phase over, funding sources for transitional justice initiatives usually dry up, which “sits uncomfortably with timescales for communities dealing with legacies of past violence and injustice that often cross multiple generations over decades and centuries” (Kent 2019, p. 195–196). The chapter is also an argument for the rootedness of peace processes and related dynamics and developments in people’s everyday experiences, cultures, and lives – an argument for an embodied peace. It is an argument for trying to both develop and understand peace from within and for interdisciplinary dialogue and collaboration, in particular between anthropology and IR, to acknowledge the complexity of the “ethnographic turn” within peace studies and respond to the shortcomings of its present implementation. Such dialogue and collaboration can enable a conceptual and methodological reorientation in peace and conflict studies and the provision of contextual knowledge that is required to grasp local notions of security and peace and to understand local reconciliation dynamics and their interlinkage with outside interventions. Despite possible shortcomings, advancements like the ones by Mac Ginty, Richmond, and Millar are welcome and should really put pressure on both sides to engage in more in-depth conceptual discussions and “to spur . . . methodological debates” (Millar 2018c, p. 17). IR needs to open up for collaboration and new concepts and learn from lessons learned from previous cultural turns and from the long-term anthropological engagement with “the local,” culture, and “the everyday.” Anthropologists need to think about how to more proactively enter the field of peace studies, how to make their work more accessible, and how to adapt their methodology in

order to “keep pace with an operational context” of the peace industry (Chopra and Hohe 2004, p. 298), without compromising on its core principles. Anthropological research is no panacea for conflict and war but needs to become a requisite part of any peace work and research.

Cross-Reference

- ▶ [Cultural Mobilization for Peace in Indonesia](#)

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Custom

► Sources of Peace in a Developing Island State

Cyber Conflict

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Synonyms

Cyber warfare; International humanitarian law; *ius ad bellum*; *ius in bello*; Self-defense

Definition/Description

The development of cyber capabilities among state and non-state actors, as well as the increase of cyber dependency has made cyber conflict a plausible reality and no longer a hypothetical example. There is a general agreement among scholars and states that the traditional concept of conflict as set out in the Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocol remains the same and is applicable to any new technological weapons and thus also applicable to cyberspace. However, the sophistication of cyber capabilities of states and the amplification of power of non-state actors in cyberspace have shifted the paradigms and blurred the lines of the clear delineation between international and non-international armed conflict and when the use of cyber capabilities triggers a conflict. As such the article will aim to provide some insight on when the use of cyber weapons by state actors can result in a conflict if the requisite cyber operation reaches the threshold of an armed attack. Given the technical capacities of some non-state actors to conduct dangerous cyber operations that can amount to armed attacks, the question arises if these attacks can trigger a conflict and how that conflict would be classified and lastly how do the Laws of Armed Conflict (LOAC) apply to cyber conflict particularly with regard to non-state actors and non-international armed conflicts.

Introduction

The technological developments in the recent years have resulted in an interconnectedness and cyber dependency like no time before, making the use of the Internet part of the daily life of billions of peoples across the world. As such issues related to the use of cyberspace have been subject of concern and discussion among states and scholars. It has been noted, however, that cyberspace is not a space at all (Graham 2011). Cyberspace is a multifaceted technology of interconnections composed of three layers: the virtual space of the electronic pathways and resident data including the Internet; the physical lawyer of computer systems, electronics, network cables, processors, controllers, and supporting infrastructure; and the people who are located under the authority of one or more states (US DoD 2010; Schreier 2015; Pri Metrica 2018). Cyberspace is therefore a man-made technology that connects people with one another as well as with other technologies, its impact is best shown by examples of computer-controlled power plants, computer-operated flight and airport control systems, and the massive popularity of online banking, both for private individuals and international companies (Kulesza 2009).

This interconnectedness of critical infrastructure like power, electricity, and financial systems with one another using cyberspace has resulted in easy, faster, and smarter services. Nowadays individuals can complete transactions across the world within a matter of seconds without having to be there physically. Unfortunately, one of the side effects of the development of the cyber domain is the increase, diversification, and sophistication of cyber threats. These cyber threats are manifested through different forms of activities that employ cyber capabilities aimed at achieving objectives in or through the use of cyberspace, and are referred to as cyber operations (Schmitt 2014a, b). Some are more lenient in the harm caused, i.e., cyber exploitation, a form of unauthorized access to computer or networks with the aim of collecting or stealing information but without deleting or corrupting it or causing damage to the system accessed (Roscini 2015;

Lin 2010). Whereas other forms such as cyber-crime, cyberattacks, and cyber warfare can have more severe consequences, the latter fall within the scope of interest of this paper. Some of the most popular forms of cyber weapons used in conducting cyber operations are denial-of-service (“DoS”) attacks, distributed denial-of-service (“DDoS”) attacks, the use of different malicious programs, and logic bombs (Roberts 2014). Although to this date there has not been a cyber operation that has resulted in such damage, there is no doubt that they are capable of shutting down nuclear centrifuges, air defense systems, electrical grids, derailing trains, or disrupting electricity supply and therefore pose a serious threat to national security (Hathaway et al. 2012; Couzigou 2018). Moreover, this shows that cyber operations are not restricted only within the virtual domain and can have effect on the physical space, thus implicating state sovereignty issues.

Though there has not been any public acknowledgment of the use of cyber operations with such high level of potential destruction, there are indications that the number of states developing such cyber capabilities is increasing (ICRC Report 2019), with approximately 140 nations that currently have active cyber weapons development programs (Schaap 2009). In addition, there is an increased threat of non-state actors possessing cyber capabilities that if used can cause severe damage. Recent events have demonstrated that non-state actors, with or without the sponsoring of affiliated states, have conducted numerous cyber operations ranging from purely ideological (i.e., attack on Estonia 2007), in support of a military conflict (i.e., Georgia 2008, Ukraine 2014), or as part of it (attacks by Hezbollah and Hamas), or in an autonomous manner (i.e., the attacks by Anonymous in 2012) (Ducheine 2015). However, there is a lot of confusion particularly with respect to the activities of non-state actors in the context of cyberspace since international law in general does not specifically regulate behavior of non-state actors leaving a lot of questions unanswered. The notorious distributed denial-of-service (DDoS) attacks on Estonia in 2007 accelerated much of the scholarly interest in identifying the legal framework

governing computer network operations (Henriksen 2015; Tikk et al. 2010). While there is no longer any serious debate as to whether international law applies to transborder cyber operations, the international community has been unable to achieve consensus on the precise application of many international law principles and rules that govern them (Schmitt 2017). One of the more serious attempts to do so has been the initiative of NATO in drafting of the *Tallinn Manual 2.0* on the International Law Applicable to Cyber Operations, as a “comprehensive analysis of how existing international law applies to cyberspace” (Tallinn Manual 2.0, 2017) preceded by the first version in 2013. The Manual, although only a compendium of rules and accompanying commentary, was intended by the drafters to be a useful starting point for analysis of operations in cyberspace (Schmitt 2017).

The Traditional Concept of Conflict and Challenges Imposed by the Use of New Cyber Weapons

In order to determine when the use of cyber weapons triggers a conflict, one must initially understand the traditional concept of conflict as it has been defined throughout centuries in customary international norms and codified in treaty law. It should be noted that in earlier literature, conflicts were mostly referred to as “war” which as set forth in the definition by Lassa Oppenheim was considered a contention solely between states through their armed forces (1906). Nowadays the term conflict is preferred over the term war since it is wider in scope (UK Ministry of Defence). In defining conflict, we turn to the Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocols which offer clear definitions of conflict and its delineation in international armed conflict and non-international or internal armed conflict. The Geneva Conventions codified the distinction between international and internal armed conflict. As regards the international armed conflict, the common Articles 2 and 3 which are the same for all four conventions provide that “the present Convention shall apply to all cases of declared war or of any other armed

conflict which may arise between two or more of the High Contracting Parties, even if the state of war is not recognized by one of them” (Geneva Conventions), and only minimum humanitarian protection is extended to internal armed conflicts (UK Ministry of Defence). The Additional Protocols I and II which were adopted in 1977 introduced changes, the most relevant of which are the ones set out in the Protocol II which stipulate that the Additional Protocol and hence the Law of Armed Conflict are applicable in the situations where there is an armed conflict of an internal nature between the governmental forces of one contracting party on one hand and dissident armed forces or other organized groups under a responsible command on the hand (Protocol II 1977). One additional requirement that has been considered to complicate matters particularly when attempting to apply it to cyberspace is the requirement that the organized armed groups must be in control of territory to enable them to conduct operations and to implement the protocol (Schmitt 2013; UK Ministry of Defence 2010).

Therefore, in order to be considered an international conflict, there are two main criteria that must be met: the conflict must be between states and, the cyber operation or attack must reach the threshold of an armed attack. While in the ‘physical’ world it is easy to determine when the two criteria are met, the use of cyberspace, due to its borderless nature and the anonymity possibilities it offers, has made it more difficult to identify and attribute the actions to a State and determine when a cyberattack is considered an armed attack in absence of physical damages. In addition, the amplification of power of non-state actors has challenged the application of the traditional concepts of international and non-international armed conflict. The reality that non-state actors can mount transborder attacks on a different territory from where they are located, begs the question whether and when non-state actors can conduct attacks that amount to armed attacks and how does the law of armed conflict apply to these new forms of cyber organized groups who are armed with computers and networks.

Can the Use of Cyber Weapons Trigger an International Armed Conflict?

Article 2(4) of the UN Charter famously provides that “all Members of the United Nations shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations” (Charter of the United Nations 1945). This indicates that there is a general prohibition from the use of force and there is no doubt that this principle reflects customary international law, as well as reached the status of *jus cogens* recognized by ICJ in its case law (*Nicaragua v. United States of America, Wall Advisory Opinion*). Article 51 of the UN Charter, on the other hand, provides that “nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations . . .” (Charter of the United Nations 1945, Simma et al. 2013). Self-defense thus clearly constitutes an exception to the general prohibition on the threat and use of force set out in Article 2(4) of the UN Charter of a customary international law character which gives states the lawful right to respond to an attack that meets the threshold of an armed attack (Dev 2015).

It should be noted that use of force and armed attack are standards that serve different normative purposes; thus, it is important to distinguish between them. The use of force standard is employed to determine whether a state has violated Article 2(4) of the UN Charter and its related customary international law prohibition, whereas the notion of “armed attack” is a standard used to determine whether the target state may respond to an act with a use of force without itself violating the prohibition of using force (Tallinn Manual 2.0).

The question as to whether the international law rules on self-defense apply to cyberattacks is much debated, as no explicit international law rules exist specifically applicable to self-defense in cyberspace and these norms predate the advent of cyber operations (Focarelli 2015). It should be noted though that the International Court of Justice (“ICJ”) has stated that Articles 2(4) and 51 of

the UN Charter, regarding the prohibition of the use of force and self-defense, respectively, apply to “any use of force, regardless of the weapons employed” (*Nuclear Weapons Advisory Opinion* 1996). Thus, the fact that these articles were adopted well before the Information Age does not necessarily prevent their application to cyber operations, and the applicability of such rules in the cyber contexts has been confirmed by various states and international organizations (Roscini 2015). The applicability of the self-defense regime was endorsed by the experts in the *Tallinn Manual*, who agreed that a state may exercise its inherent right to self-defense in case it becomes a target of a cyber operation that rises to the level of an armed attack (Tallinn Manual 2.0, Rule 71). Whether a cyber operation constitutes an armed attack depends on its scale and effects (Tallinn Manual 2.0, Rule 71). Therefore, the first issue addressed below is when does a cyber operation reach the threshold of an armed attack.

When Does a Cyberattack Meet the Threshold of an Armed Attack?

In order to determine when a cyber operation reaches the threshold of an armed attack, one must keep in mind that this discussion refers mainly to cyberattacks, as a form of politically motivated attacks aimed to disrupt, deny, or destroy information located in the computer or computer networks or destroy the computer networks themselves (Hathaway 2012). When such attack is directed toward critical infrastructure, the disrupting effects on computer systems will not only impede them from performing their work, but can also spill into the physical world and cause damages to the infrastructure whose functionality is dependent on such computer system, be that an airport tower control, an electric grid, or a power plant. Thus, other forms of cybercrime or cyber exploitation which do not have the requisite attributes to reach the threshold of use of force or armed attack are excluded from the discussion.

In assessing whether a cyberattack constitutes an armed attack, scholars have employed several approaches: under the instrument-based approach, a cyberattack cannot constitute an armed attack because it lacks the features of the traditional

kinetic weapon; according to the target-based approach, an attack can constitute an armed attack if it is directed toward a state’s critical infrastructure; the effect-based approach focuses on the effect of the attack and accordingly a cyber-attack can only amount to an armed attack if the effects are similar to the ones conducted by physical weapons, generally requiring that the attack causes physical damage of property or death; according to the sovereignty-based approach, a cyberattack results in an armed attack if it interferes with the state affairs that fall within its sovereign rights; and lastly the non-kinetic approach which suggests that a non-kinetic cyberattack amounts to an armed attack if it interferes with the rights of the victims to survival in a manner that is equivalent to the activities which are unquestionably considered as armed attacks under the UN Charter (Roberts 2014). However there is no clear answer as to which approach is the rightful one, and this question has been open to a vast discussion by scholars and international institutions who agree in some matters but not all of them.

In general, certain armed attack criteria are clear-cut, such as the fact that armed attacks are transborder in nature and that such qualification requires that the resulting harm or the harm that is intended reaches a certain threshold of severity (Schmitt 2017). The ICJ referred to armed attacks as the gravest forms of the use of force (Nicaragua judgment 1986) regardless of the weapons employed (*Nuclear Weapons Advisory Opinion* 1996) which indicates that the attack must at least amount to use of force and it is not confined solely to kinetic traditional weapons. Hence one of the key matters is whether the notion of armed attack, because of the term “armed,” necessarily involves the employment of “weapons”; however, it has been maintained that instead the critical factor is whether the effects of cyber operation, regardless of the weapons used, were analogous to those that would result from an action, otherwise qualifying as a kinetic armed attack (Tallinn Manual 2.0). Consequently, there is general agreement that if a cyberattack employs capabilities that cause or are reasonably likely to cause physical damage to property, loss of life or injury of

persons in a manner equivalent to kinetic attacks, through the alteration deletion or corruption of software or data, it would fall under the prohibition contained in Article 2(4) of the UN Charter; but there is disagreement whether disruptive cyber operations that do not physically damage them also amount to violation of Article 2(4) (Roscini 2015), thus amounting to an armed attack. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has taken the position that during an armed conflict interpreting the term attack, regardless of it being kinetic or cyber in nature, only to mean an operation that caused death or physical injury, leaving outside this scope a cyber operation that is aimed at making dysfunctional an essential civilian network such as banking or electricity, is a very restrictive interpretation of the notion of attack and would be difficult to reconcile with the purpose of international humanitarian law (ICRC 2019). Scholars maintain a similar view that disruptive cyber operations fall within scope of Article 2(4) when the effect of such disruption is significant enough to affect state security (Roscini 2015) or goes beyond mere inconvenience and cause significant disruption of essential services by rendering ineffective or unusable critical infrastructure that is essential for the conduct of daily life of peoples (Antolin-Jenkins 2005). Accordingly, a cyberattack amounts to an armed attack if the disruptive consequences reach a certain level of severity. Nevertheless, the response based on self-defense must meet the criteria of imminence, necessity, and proportionality; in addition to that as stated by the ICJ in order to meet the criteria of proportionality, it must also meet the requirements of the law of armed conflict, namely, the principles of humanitarian law (*Nuclear Weapons Advisory Opinion* 1996).

Non-state Actors Mounting Armed Attacks and the Effect on the Classification of Conflict

International law scholars and operational lawyers have struggled over the last decade to accommodate Law of Armed Conflict and the UN Charter system to asymmetric warfare waged by non-state

actors, including terrorist groups (Banks 2013). Situations in which a non-state actor conducts harmful cyber operations at the armed attack level of severity, against one state from another state's territory are legally more challenging. If the non-state actors are acting on behalf of a state than the rules of attribution would apply, the issue of whether acts of non-state actors can constitute armed attack absent involvement by a state is controversial. Traditionally, Article 51 and the customary international law of self-defense were characterized as applicable solely to armed attacks undertaken by one state against another, whereas violent acts by non-state actors fell within the law enforcement paradigm. The ICJ seems to have endorsed the view that self-defense is an interstate measure (Wall advisory opinion). Self-defense has also been recognized as a tool against a failure of the state to meet its due diligence obligations to prevent cross-border harmful action by private individuals or groups allegedly amounting to an armed attack for self-defense purposes (Roscini 2010).

However, there is nothing in the language of Article 51 that restricts armed attacks to attacks carried out by or on behalf of states, and it has been contended that the ICJ interpretation on this matter suggests that attribution to the state is only a precondition for the applicability of Article 51 of the UN Charter for resort to use of force against the state from whose territory the attack is launched and does not preclude use of force against the non-state actors (Trapp 2015). In practice several states in the territory of which harm was caused by criminal acts committed by private individuals or groups (rebels or alleged terrorists) from another state, invoked self-defense in cases where such acts were not attributable to this latter state (Focarelli 2015). Moreover, states have consistently asserted the right to respond forcibly to such attacks over many years (Cassese 2001; Moir 2010; Ruys and Verhoeven 2005). For example, the international community characterized the 9/11 attacks by Al Qaeda on the United States as an armed attack triggering the inherent right of self-defense following which, the US congress authorized the President to use all necessary and appropriate force against organizations, or

persons he determines either planned, authorized, committed, or aided the terrorist attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001, or states that harbored such organizations or persons (US AUMF 2001). A more recent example is that of the Israeli-Lebanese War in 2006 where most states apparently accepted Israel's contention that self-defense against Hezbollah was permitted, at least when the territorial state proves unable to prevent the attacks and even asks for assistance from the international community, although proportionality was highly questioned (Schmitt 2014a, b; Kammerhofer 2007).

The US operation in Afghanistan mainly targeting Al Qaeda, signaled the beginning of the emerging consensus that considers use of force specifically targeting non-state terrorist actors in response to armed attacks they launch from foreign territory, as a legitimate exercise of the right of self-defense (Trapp 2015). The shift was further reiterated with the approval of Resolution 1368 (2001) and Resolution 1373 (2001) where the UN Security Council affirmed the inherent right to self-defense without specifying whether the source of the armed attack had to be a state (UN SC Res. 1368 2001, UN SC Res. 1373 2001). Some argue that by now, it is reasonably clear and accepted that states enjoy a right to self-defense against attacks by non-state actors (Bethlehem 2012), a view adopted by a number of states led by the US example even with regard to cyberattacks (US DoD 2015). This is also the view supported by the majority of the International Group of Experts in the *Tallinn Manual* who concluded that state practice has established a right of self-defense in the face of cyber operations at the armed attack level by non-state actors acting without the involvement of a state, such as terrorist or rebel groups (Tallinn Manual 2.0).

As far as the classification of conflict, it should be noted that per the traditional view, the law of armed conflict has been limited to the territory and national airspace of the state in which the conflict is taking place. However, as the concept of self-defense being a legitimate resort against non-state actors residing in the territory of another state evolved, the differentiation between international and internal armed conflict became more blurred.

Some states and commentators now take the view that when defining the type of conflict the determinant factor is the status of the actors and not geography the example of the US conflict with Al-Qaeda shows that a non-international armed conflict may extend beyond the territorial borders of one state (Koh 2010). The use of cyberspace to launch armed attacks by non-state actors residing outside the territory of the target state, raises numerous complex issues regarding the geographical scope of the non-international armed conflict. Even in the context of cyberspace, the characterization of an armed conflict as international has been preserved for whenever there are hostilities which may include or be limited to cyber operations between two or more states, whereas a conflict is characterized as non-international whenever there is protracted armed violence which may include or be limited to cyber operations occurring between governmental armed forces and organized armed groups, or between such groups, under the condition that the confrontation reaches a certain minimum level of intensity and that parties have a minimum degree of organization. However the fact that the attack is conducted from outside the territory of the targeted state party to the conflict does not in itself make it an international conflict (Tallinn Manual 2.0).

While the arguments above focused partially on the definition of armed attack that would give rise to self-defense, it should be emphasized that the existence of an armed conflict goes beyond a one sole attack and requires that certain other preconditions be met such as the intensity of the hostilities and the degree of organization of the parties. These factors are particularly important in determining the existence of a non-international armed conflict using cyber means. In the *Tadic case*, the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia held that the intensity of hostilities and the degree of organization of the parties are crucial factors; thus a non-international armed conflict exists when there is extended and organized armed violence between armed groups within a state (Prosecutor v. Dusko Tadic 1999). As such, the first requirement is met in case of reoccurring attacks for an extended duration and

of the required severity, whereas with regard to the second requirement, it is considered that a group is “armed” if it has the capacity of undertaking cyberattacks and meets the requirement of “organized” if it is under an established command structure and can conduct sustained military operations, though the extent of organization does not have to reach the level of a conventional militarily disciplined unit (Prosecutor v. Limaj 2005). This requirement differentiates between two categories of non-state actors, the sporadic groups or entities, who may be acting together at a time but do not work under a degree of command and control and thus would fail to meet the threshold of organization, and organized armed groups. Consequentially, the law of armed conflict distinguishes between the two groups as regards the rights and responsibilities during an armed conflict. Schmitt argues that this classification will be further complicated in the future firstly because cyberattacks have potential to cause massive disruptions to essential providers without causing physical damage and secondly because these attacks can be launched by groups organized entirely online and not in control of physical territory or even by individuals with the required capacities (2013). As such there are already challenges on the application of the law of armed conflict to non-international cyber warfare, some of which are addressed below.

Challenges in Applying LOAC to Non-international Cyber Warfare

As elaborated above the development and the use of the new cyber capabilities to trigger or during armed conflict have posed many challenges to states and scholars. Difficulties in identification and attribution of cyberattacks create challenges particularly when applying LOAC rules to cyber warfare, which is also what makes them particularly relevant in the context of cyberspace. These rules are based on the cardinal principle of distinction which requires that the belligerents distinguish at all times between civilian population as protected category and the legitimate targets such as combatants, as well as distinguish

between civilian infrastructure and military objectives (ICRC 2019).

The *Tallinn Manual* reaffirmed clearly that lawful targets of a cyberattack may be “(a) members of the armed forces; (b) members of organized armed groups; (c) civilians, if and for such time as they take a direct part in hostilities; and (d) in an international armed conflict, participants in a *levee en masse*” (Tallinn Manual 2.0). Therefore, members of the armed groups who are party to a conflict would be legitimate targets since they fall within the definition of military objectives (Additional Protocol I), though this principle limits membership in organized armed groups to those individuals with “continuous combat functions” (ICRC 2009). The status of other individuals who are not members of the armed groups is dependent on the fact if they participated in the conduct of hostilities, as in principle these individuals are protected by civilian immunity; however, civilians lose their immunity if they participate directly in hostilities (Additional Protocol I). Therefore, in the cyberspace context as well, “civilians are not prohibited from directly participating in cyber operations amounting to hostilities, but forfeit their protection from attacks for such time as they so participate”; they do however retain their civilian status even if they engage in hostilities (Tallinn Manual 2.0). For this purpose, the principle of distinction which requires the parties to the conflict at all times distinguish between the civilian population and combatants, in both international and non-international armed conflict (Additional Protocol I), is essential in the context of cyberspace. The International Group of Experts agreed that this obligation also requires the parties to distinguish between military objectives and civilian objects despite the fact that Article 13 of Additional Protocol II was originally not meant to extend to civilian objects (ICRC 2015).

Nevertheless while the law is clear, applying these rules in practice is extremely difficult more so due to the fact that this requires not only accurate identification of the actors behind the attacks but also the technical attribution of such attack (Buchan 2016). This is made difficult due to the manner on which the system is designed through TCP/IP protocols and separate delivery of data

packets which make it extremely difficult to provide identification for the individual packets (Messerschmidt 2013). The application of the principle of distinction is made even more difficult due to the use of different anonymizing techniques such as Virtual Private Networks (VPNs), Onion Routers or Botnets where the attackers can hack into and corrupt hundreds of computers of civilian individuals around the world and use those computers to conduct the attacks during the hostilities. Under these circumstances in absence of clear visual signs, it would be extremely difficult to distinguish between actors that are participating in hostilities and thus legitimate targets as indicated above and civilians whose computers have been hijacked and used maliciously by organized groups and cannot be subject to attacks under the LOAC rules. As such the use of cyber capabilities that would aim to disable these Botnets and would potentially result in damage to the civilian infrastructure could also be considered to fall within the prohibition of not using weapons that are indiscriminate in nature (ICRC 2019). Moreover during military operations, it is imperative that all measures are undertaken to protect the civilian populations, to avoid or minimize the incidental harm, or disproportionate attacks which may result in the incidental loss of life or the destruction of the objects and infrastructure that is essential for the survival of the population (ICRC 2019).

Similarly, there are several applicable rules under LOAC that may impose difficulties in their application on the cyber context. One of the most challenging rules to this date has been the prohibition of acts of violence whose primary purpose is to spread terror among the civilian population (Additional Protocol I). The use of the Internet has amplified the possibilities of such news or threats reaching thousands if not millions of people with a click of a button. Social media companies are struggling with taking down content that aims to spread terror or promote violence among their users.

In addition one of the questions that has been a subject of discussion is the involvement of private contractors. The International Group of Experts in *Tallinn Manual* agreed that individual contractors

are civilians who may only be targeted based on their direct participation in the hostilities (Tallinn Manual 2.0). There are disagreements whether the contracted private company qualifies as an organized group belonging to a party (ICRC 2009), due to the view the contractual relationship would not be seen as a sufficient basis for regarding the company as belonging to a party; however, those members of the company directly participating in the hostilities may be attacked (Tallinn Manual 2.0). The applicable criteria for qualification of an act as direct participation that are set forth in the ICRC Interpretive Guidance are considered to be applicable in cyberspace as well (ICRC 2009). Nevertheless, a state that sponsors use of force by civilians may be placing those civilians outside the protections they enjoy under the law of armed conflict and may be undermining the principle of distinction between combatants and civilians (US Armed Force, 2010, Garamone 2016). Despite the legal consequences, there are many reasons to think states will be tempted to use civilians in the cyber context. First, civilians may possess technical expertise that governments do not. Second, by using civilians to carry out cyberattacks, states can mask their own involvement (Hathaway 2012). To date, more than once, states have enacted legislation empowering private security companies in the physical world to provide armed services (Ginkel, B. et. 2013). Security is thus – once more – no longer the exclusive domain of state actors (Ducheine). It does seem however that non-state actors continue to have more rights under the *ius in bello* regime.

Summary

Despite the initial confusion among scholars and states, there is no doubt that the traditional concepts of *ius ad bellum* and *ius in bello* still govern the use of force and armed conflict regardless of the changes on the capabilities and means by which operations are conducted. As it has been elaborated above, the traditional concepts of international and non-international armed conflict apply in principle despite the need for more sophisticated interpretations to accommodate for the developments in the

world of technology. Nevertheless there are issues with regard to the manner on how some norms apply to the new cyber domains that have sparked controversy among scholars such as the threshold that a cyberattack must reach to amount to an armed attack or the questions surrounding the mounting of armed attacks by non-state actors and the classification of conflict therein. As such while a lot of work has been done, there is yet extensive work to be done to clarify how these norms are applied in the cyberspace context or to adjust the norms in light of the technological developments if it is deemed necessary.

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Cyber Warfare

► Cyber Conflict

Cypriot Women in Peacebuilding

► Women and Peace Negotiations in Cyprus

Cyprus UNSCR 1325

► Women and Peace Negotiations in Cyprus

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Decentralization and Conflict Prevention

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Synonyms

[Ethnofederalism](#); [Fiscal decentralization](#); [Political decentralization](#); [Secessionism](#)

Definition

Decentralization commonly refers to the release of power and authority from central government to lower tiers of government to make them administratively and financially less dependent on the central government. Decentralization can take up fiscal, administrative, and political forms, it could be arranged symmetrically or asymmetrically at subnational level, and it can occur both in federal and non-federal states. Decentralization is widely endorsed by international organizations and policymakers to mitigate inter-ethnic conflicts and secessionist movements. The idea is that by giving groups and regional authorities the control

over their own political, social, and economic affairs, it is possible to undercut the conditions cultivating ethnic conflicts and secessionist tendencies. However, the theoretical and empirical studies fall short to verify if decentralization can indeed prevent conflicts. While some scholars argue that political decentralization or ethnofederalism can prevent conflicts and secessionist challenges, others argue that political decentralization can exacerbate such challenges. The mechanism between decentralization and conflict prevention is complex, and there remains many unknown in this relationship.

Introduction

Decentralization is widely endorsed by international organizations and policymakers to mitigate interethnic conflicts and secessionist movements. The idea is that by giving groups and regional authorities the control over their own political, social, and economic affairs, it is possible to undercut the conditions cultivating ethnic conflicts and secessionist tendencies (Rode et al. 2018; Cederman et al. 2015; Tranchant 2011; Sorens 2009; Brancati 2006; Lustick et al. 2004; Gurr 2000; Kaufman 1996; Lijphart 1996). In particular, political decentralization – the form of decentralization that grants decision-making autonomy to subnational groups and administrations – has been the primary objective of international missions in post-conflict countries such as Bosnia, Kosovo, and Iraq to create the conditions of peaceful transition.

However, a growing body of scholarly work contrarily argue that political decentralization intensifies ethnic conflicts and secessionism by empowering ethnic identities (Kymlicka 1998; Hardgrave 1994; Dikshit 1975), by producing discriminating legislations against ethnically and religiously identified minority groups (Suberu 1994; Lijphart et al. 1993; Horowitz 1991; Nordlinger 1972), and by supplying groups at the regional level with the resources to sustain and even to amplify the ethnic conflicts and secessionist efforts (Jenne et al. 2007; Snyder 2000; Bunce 1999; Leff 1999; Kymlicka 1998; Roeder 1991).

We can find empirical evidence to support both arguments. While political decentralization in Belgium, India, the UK, and Spain has been largely successful in preventing ethnic conflicts and perhaps lessening secessionist tendencies, in countries such as Nigeria, Iraq, Indonesia, and former Yugoslavia, political decentralization enhanced – if not led to – increased ethnic conflicts, secession, and dissolution (Brancati 2006).

The varying outcomes suggest that some underlying factors may be conditional on the success of decentralization policies in conflict prevention. Bermeo (2002) argues that political decentralization works best in wealthy countries, whereas the work of Saideman et al. (2002) suggests that political decentralization is more efficient in autocracies than in democracies. Among democratic countries, Brancati (2006) found that political decentralization does decrease the ethnic conflict and secessionism, but its effects can be undermined by the presence of regional parties. By the same token, Tranchant (2011) argue that decentralization can have a significant impact on reducing ethnic conflicts, but its impact is conditional on the nature and composition of ethnic groups in a specific region. Focusing on the institutional structure of decentralization, Rode et al. (2018) take these arguments further and suggest that more fiscally autonomous regions are indeed more likely to vote for secessionist parties, but their secessionist tendencies are highly dependent on whether fiscal decentralization across regions is based on symmetric or asymmetric arrangements.

It is clear that the mechanism between decentralization and conflict prevention is complex and there remains many unknown in this relationship. Therefore, the aim of this entry is not to explain why decentralization has been successful in preventing conflicts in some countries and not in others but to unpack the core conceptual and theoretical underpinnings that relay decentralization to conflict prevention. Building on the theories of decentralization and empirical evidence from country cases, the following section will address the questions of “how can decentralization prevent conflicts?”, “what do we know about the impact of decentralization on conflict prevention?”, and “which factors are important to

estimate the impact of decentralization in preventing conflicts?”

Pathways to Conflict Prevention Through Decentralization

Decentralization commonly refers to the release of power and authority from central government to lower tiers of government to make them administratively and financially less dependent on the central government. Political decentralization, meanwhile, signifies empowering citizens and/or their elected representatives in public decision-making. Political decentralization is often linked to federalism, but it is not exclusive for federal systems. When we look into the empirical cases, three factors appear to be highly relevant in the presumed relationship between decentralization and conflict prevention. These are (1) *economic development*, (2) *accommodation of minority identities*, and (3) *the institutions of decentralization*. Each of these arguments will be further elaborated below.

Economic Development

Economic development has been found as crucial in secessionist demands (Rode et al. 2018; Grossman and Lewis 2014; Sambanis and Milanovic 2014; Sorens 2012; Collier and Hoeffler 2006). Several authors note that economic development may reduce ethnic conflict (Miguel et al. 2004; Fearon and Laitin 2003; Lipset 1963); it can increase the capacity of state to suppress insurgencies (Fearon and Laitin 2003); it can also improve education and social welfare and thus make citizens less susceptible to follow extremist ideologies (Lipset 1963). However, if economic development is uneven across regions and groups, it may increase ethnic conflict and secessionism (Brancati 2006; Anderson 1983; Gellner 1983). The wealthy regions can demand secession to fight against unjust taxation or to reach an equitable tax treatment (Buchanan and Faith 1987). Differences in terms of access and control to natural resources can also affect the attitude toward secessionism (Gehring and Schneider 2016; Sorens 2012; Collier and

Hoeffler 2006). In regions with more control over natural resources, citizens' support toward secessionism might increase (Gehring and Schneider 2016).

Hence, controlling the national and subnational economic development appears to be a crucial condition to implement decentralization as a conflict prevention tool. Nonetheless, decentralization itself might have a heterogenous effect on the level of economic development. The empirical studies about the impact of decentralization on economic growth are divided into two groups in terms of their findings. The first group (see Akai and Sakata 2002; Thiessen 2003; Stansel 2005; Iimi 2005) verifies that decentralization has a statistically significant positive impact on economic growth. The second group (see Woller and Phillips 1998; Davoodi and Zou 1998; Zhang and Zou 1998; Xie et al. 1999; Jin and Zou 2005; Baskaran and Feld 2009; Rodriguez-Pose and Ezcurra 2011), on the contrary, rejects the impact of decentralization on economic growth with findings either statistically insignificant or negative under certain conditions. Contradictory outcomes also rest upon the differences in theoretical approaches and methodological designs. On the contrary, several authors argue that the success of decentralization is conditional on the economic development of subnational territories rather than the other way around (Tan 2019; Alonso and Andrews 2019; Lessman 2012). These groups of scholars argue that a certain level of socioeconomic development is imperative for the effective implementation of decentralization policies.

Accommodation of Minority Identities

Ethnic conflicts and secessionist movements can also be stemmed from conflicts over identity and interest, and granting decision-making power to ethnic minorities in a territorially defined area might provide a viable solution (Rode et al. 2018). Accommodation strategies toward secessionist challenges by granting autonomy over fiscal and political decisions can reduce territorially demarcated ethnic conflicts (Bermeo 2002; Horowitz 1985). Such conflicts might be mitigated if minority groups can pass the legislation to protect their identities and cultural heritage and have

more control over linguistic and educational policies (Erk and Anderson 2009; Brancati 2006). Bermeo (2002) even highlights that no violent separatist movement has ever succeeded in a federal democracy.

However, accommodation strategies could also signal weakness, reversing or mitigating the potential impact of decentralization on conflict prevention in multiple ways (Sorens 2009). First, Walter (2006) finds that governments that face multiple potential secessionist challenges are more likely to see the spread of secessionist challenges if they compromise with decentralization demands. Yet, an early decentralization before violence broke out might not create such a problem. Second, decentralization could empower indirectly the regional party systems and regional identities (Brancati 2006; Bunce 1999). Brancati (2006) found regional parties increase ethnic conflict and secessionism by reinforcing ethnic and regional identities, producing legislation that favors certain groups over others, and mobilizing groups to engage in ethnic conflict and secessionism. Third, the legislative and bureaucratic structures established by territorial self-governance or enhanced federalism can potentially be used to make secession a viable and legitimate political choice in the future (Rode et al. 2018). Fourth, decentralization does not reduce secession risk if regional minorities fear the central government will abrogate autonomy in the future (Lake and Rothchild 1996). Fifth, regional autonomy could improve the political and military capability of potential secessionist insurgents, encouraging the armed conflicts and secessionist mobilization (Sorens 2009).

In a study comparing the impact of decentralization strategies with or without the recognition of minority status, Basta (2018) found that when central government decentralizes power to minority regions without the recognition of minority national status, they pave the way to a less contentious political dynamic. In this case, support for secessionist parties may grow but remains less widespread in the alternative of decentralizing with symbolic recognition of the minority group. When the extension of territorial autonomy is combined with formal symbolic recognition, it

paves the way to open political opposition by a segment of majority political community, rescinding autonomies or lowering the prospect of further decentralization (Sorens 2009), in turn, and stimulates secessionist sentiment among members of the minority community. On the contrary, Tranchant (2011) found that if a minority group has a local majority or concentrated in one region, it is efficiently deterred from using violence, whereas groups lacking a local majority are more likely to increase their initial levels of protest and rebellion in the case of decentralization.

Institutions of Decentralization

With institutions of decentralization, I refer to the sociopolitical organizations, norms, regulations, and operating procedures that shape the structures of decentralization. Several authors noted that the formation of these institutions can be crucial to understand the mechanism between decentralization and conflict prevention (Rode et al. 2018; Sorens 2016; Anderson 2015; Bakke 2015; Lecours 2011; Hale 2004; Anderson 2004).

One body of literature focuses on the impact of intergovernmental fiscal arrangement and fiscal federalism on mitigating secessionist conflicts (see Sorens 2012, 2016; Brancati 2006). The findings of these studies do not suggest that fiscal autonomy impacts the share of secessionist votes but countries with significant secessionist parties to be more likely to decentralize. Brancati (2006) reports that political and fiscal decentralization reduces the secessionist conflicts but empowers the voting base of the secessionist parties, whereas Sorens (2012) does not find any significant relationship between the fiscal devolution and electoral success of secessionist parties. In a later study, looking in the cases with a robust form of fiscal federalism, Sorens (2016) suggests that preventing secession through fiscal federalism may require fiscally deleterious institutions, which can hamstring regional tax collection and permit regional protectionism against goods and labor if challenged by secessionist policies.

Another way of looking at the institutions of decentralization is that whether decentralization is symmetrically or asymmetrically arranged at the subnational level. The former refers to a system

where constituting units of a federal system or subnational regional units in a non-federal country have the same constitutional rights and obligations, whereas in the latter some special rights are granted for some subnational units. For instance, Spain is a quintessential case of asymmetric decentralization system in a non-federal state. According to McGarry (2007) and Benedikter (2007), asymmetric arrangements are highly effective to accommodate ethnic secessionist challenges. Lustick et al. (2004) confirm with a simulation study that secessionist challenges can effectively be mitigated by semiautonomous institutions. Sorens (2016) also suggests that selectively decentralizing certain political powers such as education, cultural policies, and environment can be used to mitigate regional secessionist movements.

However, some authors refused the idea of asymmetric decentralization as an effective accommodation strategy for secessionist challenges. Hale (2004) argues that asymmetrical arrangements along ethnic lines are particularly unstable if regions have a single dominant group and concentrated minority groups enjoy unusually high levels of autonomy. The models developed by Congleton (2006) and Zuber (2011) also show that communities with special fiscal autonomy can compete much more effectively than other regions creating a system that is politically unstable. Similarly, Rode et al. (2018) report that asymmetric territorial self-governance seems to cause much stronger incentives to vote for secessionist movements, while the association is small in fiscally more symmetric arrangements.

Last but not the least, the subnational polities in Europe are empowered with the EU integration process, and secessionism has taken a different meaning compared to other parts of the world (Bremberg 2020; Keating 2019; Bauböck 2019). Some scholars argued that the “post-sovereign” political system of the EU (Keating 2001) created the conditions of accommodating subnational identities and group interests under the supranational framework of the EU institutions. However, the cases with Scotland and Catalonia showed that EU institutions did not cease secessionist challenges. The studies show that support for Scottish

and Catalan independence has increased throughout the years instead of decreasing (Bremberg 2020). Some authors suggest that the EU has made small states and as such as regional secessionism more “viable” because the EU provides a large market and a common currency as well as enhanced cooperation on foreign and security policy (Bremberg 2020; Laible 2008; Jolly 2007).

Nevertheless, the institutions of the EU have been less than anything but supportive secessionism when secessionism was put as a political strategy by Catalonia and Scotland. The former president of the European Commission, Romano Prodi, stated that any part of an EU member state that becomes an independent state would need to reapply for EU membership (Piris 2017). Given the veto rights of the member states on the EU membership applications, this creates secessionism as a largely unviable strategy. Some scholars have challenged the legal implications of the “Prodi doctrine” arguing if the European integration is treated as part of the federalist reading, then secessionism should be understood “as a move to change the status or affiliation of a territory within a wider constellation of polities” (Bauböck 2019). However, the former European Commission presidents, José Manuel Barroso and Jean-Claude Juncker, have stated on numerous occasions that the “Prodi doctrine” still applies (Bremberg 2020).

Summary

Anderson (2015) states that ethnofederal systems have failed in contexts where no institutional alternatives could possibly have succeeded and, in the majority of cases, ethnofederalism has succeeded where other institutional forms have demonstrably failed. The literature shows that decentralization can prevent violent conflicts, but it is difficult to argue that decentralization puts an end to the secessionist challenges. Decentralization, especially decentralization through ethnic ascriptions, often evolves with the centripetal forces of dissolution even if it can cease hot conflicts. Empirical and theoretical studies shed light on some factors which can help us to better

understand the underlying mechanics of the relationship. In this entry, three salient factors, economic development, accommodation of minority identities, and the role of institutions, have been elaborated. However, the current research is far from elucidating this complex relationship, and more empirical research is needed to confirm or reject theoretical expectations.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Balkanization](#)
- ▶ [Identifying Stable Solutions to Conflicts](#)
- ▶ [Secession and Self-Determination](#)

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Decolonisation

► [International Peace Architecture, Blockages, and Counter-Peace](#)

Deconstruction in International Interventions

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Synonyms

[Humanitarian interventions](#); [International interventions](#); [Liberal interventionism](#); [Military interventions](#); [Western interventions](#)

Definition

Deconstruction, or as Derrida calls it “intervention,” “de-totalizes self-enclosed totalities by placing them face to face with their internal differentiation” enabling us to see the partiality of the partial, to show that no absolute reading is possible (Derrida 2005). Even though Derrida himself never dealt with international interventions directly, this entry suggests how his works on deconstruction offer ways for a fundamental critique of international interventions. Concretely, four main ways to use deconstruction for a

fundamental critique of international interventions are suggested.

Introduction

The early 1990s witnessed an increase in Western-led interventions deployed abroad by the EU, the UN, the USA, and other international organizations making interventions and international missions the iconic model to end intra- and interstate wars, regime/system changes, ethnic and religious conflicts, etc. Interventions for democracy promotion and/or peacebuilding were spread among others to Namibia, Angola, Mozambique, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala, Cambodia, East Timor, and former Yugoslavia, under the paradigmatic Western-democratic project, focusing primarily on human rights, rule of law, and democracy. The nature, scope, and format of these interventions are still debated on grounds of motives, legitimacy, and geopolitics. The conflicts in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, and Syria during the past two decades have made international interventions less of an obvious choice. For instance, whereas in 1994, the academic discourse has been adamant about a potential intervention in Somalia (1993) or Rwanda (1994), the academic discourse since the outbreak of the civil war in Syria (2011 onwards) has been adamant over nonintervention in Syria.

How do we explain international interventions with deconstruction? How do we make sense of a switch in narratives pro or against international interventions? This entry explains the notion of deconstruction as conceptualized by Jacques Derrida to analyze international interventions. The works of Derrida have dealt with matters that are inherently political including his critique to Western metaphysics (Derrida 1974), Western democracy (Derrida in Borradori 2003), and the role of Europe in the world (Derrida 1992). An Algerian Jew who developed his intellectual thinking in Paris, Derrida called himself a European philosopher, was genuinely interested in the European logos and wanted to leave a mark in European philosophy. One of the few cases, when Derrida

engaged with international interventions, is when he cosigned a letter with Jürgen Habermas in 2003 pledging the nations of Europe to forge their European identity and to formulate a common foreign policy to serve as a counterweight to US global power (Habermas and Derrida 2003). Written in the wake of mass demonstrations around the world against the intervention in Iraq, both philosophers urged the European political community – including the EU – to take responsibility for global peace, international law and justice, and principles that seem to have been abandoned by the US government at that time. Central to this letter is the underlying message of the “responsibility” of the “European memory” that has to be the “locomotive” of change. Even though most of his works were written at a period when international interventions and discussions around them were central in Western/European political philosophy (1930–2004), Derrida is incidentally rather poor in his analysis related to international interventions. Nonetheless, as this entry will argue, deconstruction, as one of his most iconic works, has a lot of potential for a critical interrogation of international interventions.

Deconstruction

Deconstruction, or as Derrida calls it “intervention,” “de-totalizes self-enclosed totalities by placing them face to face with their internal differentiation” enabling us to see the partiality of the partial, to show that no absolute reading is possible (Derrida 2005). In his seminal work, *Of Grammatology*, Derrida mentions deconstruction not as a demolition but rather as a desegmentation of all significations. Deconstructing, he argues, is a two-step process: first, the reversal and displacement of binary opposites to uncover and interrogate the violent hierarchies imposed on both and second, the general displacement of the system by moving toward the irruptive emergence of a new “concept” – one that could never be included in the previous regime (Derrida 1972). These new concepts are what Derrida, in turn, calls undecidables: “faulty lines in an apparently impregnable text” or points at which the text disrupts itself

(idem). The undecidables are never fully present or absent; they rather reside within. In other words, to deconstruct is to interrogate text: concepts, meanings, processes, and events to expose their inherent instability and erasure. The text, in turn, guides deconstruction through what it tries to hide and what it says and also through the symptoms it manifests (Derrida 2005).

A distinctive element in Derrida’s deconstruction is that in all conversations, there’s a hidden patterning of power. For Derrida, power is not the name of something we possess in and of itself; rather it emerges out of social situations. Granted, most poststructuralist works share the same tenet in that they interrogate, de-essentialize, and problematize power relations emanating from text. For instance, Michel Foucault’s genealogies examine historical practices and how power is exercised at various levels through their change and development (Foucault 2001). Jean Baudrillard insists on tracing and problematizing the negation of power in text and how the very negation or simulation of power is a form of power (Baudrillard 1994). What Derrida does with deconstruction is seeking out the binaries – inherent in text – and then overturning and displacing them by finding the “undecidables” that destabilize what seems a coherent text. To that end, Derrida’s deconstruction is a relentless quest for interrogating the partiality of the partial and the assumed common sense and expose their meanings to erasure. By text, Derrida does not only refer to the spoken or the written word. Text includes a wider array of discursive encounters including built space, architecture, body language, and arts, among others.

Deconstruction, along with other works of Derrida, was originally used in literary studies and gradually crept in into humanities and social sciences. Until the late 2000s, the works of Derrida were not a usual suspect in international relations. This constellation has however changed as deconstruction has been widely elaborated in IR (Weldes 1999; Zehfuss 2009; Vaughan-Williams 2015; Campbell 1998), EU foreign policy (Bulley 2009), and even EU external relations (Cebeci 2012; Musliu 2017; Fanoulis and Musliu 2018).

Because it is not a straightforward method, or a methodically defined analytical tool commonly found in political science and international relations, deconstruction has been described and delineated in different forms when used in social sciences. For instance, some insist that deconstruction is essentially political and that it is a method for uncovering the oppressed others beneath phallogocentric discourse (Phiddian 1997). In such optics, deconstruction is used as a hermeneutic of suspicion and as an instrument for unpicking the structures and rhetoric of racism, patriarchy, class, etc. Relatedly, scholars such as Ahn see deconstruction as an act of hospitality, which means the welcoming of the other both in a personal and public level – raising this way sociopolitical questions about refugees, immigrants, foreign languages, etc. (Ahn 2015). Others insist on deconstruction as a powerful conceptual tool for radical social and political critique (Dickens 1990).

Deconstructing International Interventions

This section underlines four main ways to critically analyze international interventions with and through deconstruction. The four are neither exhaustive nor chronological in any way. Rather, they should be read in conversation with one another.

One way is to interrogate the topic of inquiry. Critical in this case are the following questions: How do we delineate interventions? Are they tangible or concrete encounters like airstrikes, military, or humanitarian interventions? What about other non-tangible yet structural forms of interventions from “core” to “periphery”? By exposing “interventions” of its well-defined meaning and putting it under erasure, deconstruction urges us to think of interventions as a larger set of encounters, relations, and infrastructures of market, in addition to humanitarian and military operations, airstrike campaigns, responsibility to protect, embargoes, diplomatic or economic sanctions, structural funds and programs, or combinations of them. Relatedly, what makes interventions “international”? Is there a difference

to the “internationality” of the UN, EU, and NATO interventions? Is there a difference between Western-led and international interventions, or are the two synonyms? Is there a difference to international interventions in Kosovo (1999), Iraq (2003), and Libya (2011)?

A second way is to interrogate the genealogy of international interventions. Etymologically, intervention implies an intentional encounter or contact to remedy a crisis. Presumably, after solving the problem, the intervener retreats, and the actors in question revert back to their original stage. Even though this may be the case for certain medical interventions, international interventions (be them economic, financial, military, or otherwise) tend not to be as straightforward. A central question, in this case becomes: when did the international intervention in Iraq in 2003 start? With deconstruction, we are urged to think of the previous interventions and noninterventions in the Middle East throughout history that rendered Iraq into a particular state that can be intervened in 2003 and then again in 2014. In other words, international interventions do not take place upon encounter; rather they are a result of a set of power relations constructed and maintained throughout time. At the same time, international interventions do not end – the intervener does not retreat – at the end of the encounter. Rather than being a separate act, an intervention is a continuation and/or an interruption in a trajectory of a set of relations.

Third and relatedly, intervention suggests an act that is technical, bureaucratic, and by extension, devoid of otherwise inherent ideological and/or political motivations. In the face of interethnic/religious conflicts, international interventions take place against a general pattern, but not against specific cases of conflict. As such, they are presented as historical. The practice of international interventions in and from democracies has indicated that interventions (military, civilian, financial, developmental, or else) come with a set of historical, political, ideological, and civilizational baggage. To that end, we should take the inherent baggage of international intervention as a starting point of an intellectual inquiry through which we should look at power relations, rather than finding in and of itself. For instance, deconstructing Western metaphysics and how

they informed Western-led intervention in Kosovo (NATO, UN, and EU since 1999 onwards), it was argued how “democracy, rule of law, and human rights” have become the new holy trinity for Western structures to export around the world (Musliu 2017). In this case, the local Albanians and Serbs in Kosovo are first pathologized as intrinsically conflict-prone and thus unable and unfit to properly solve disputes. As a result, an intervention from a third party becomes not only legitimate but also imperative. Second and by extension, Kosovo is in turn objectified into an experiment site to test “best international and/or European practices” (Musliu 2017).

Finally, in order to critically understand international interventions one needs to unravel the relationship between the intervener and the intervened and the power relations emanating from them. Central in this point is Derrida’s take on deconstruction as a way to tackle binary opposites in Western metaphysics. For him, Western metaphysics are based on the binary opposites of good versus bad, rationality versus spirituality, nature versus culture, etc. These binaries do not have a peaceful coexistence. They are violent hierarchies wherein one always has supremacy over the other. The rhetoric around international interventions by its sponsors (both in policy and academia) is largely based on clear binaries: democracy versus dictatorship, rule of law and order versus chaos and anarchy, civilized versus uncivilized, and sustainable states versus weak states or failed states. In these binaries, the first terms are accorded primacy, whereas the second terms are represented as weaker. International interventions have been called upon, invoked and legitimized in order to transmit the first terms to areas and populations in need. To that end, in the trajectory of Western interventions abroad, we have seen calls to Christianize, civilize, develop, pacify, democratize, and Europeanize others. Areas of conflict – the intervened – have in turn been downgraded into structures in need for intervention.

Summary

Even though Derrida himself never dealt with international interventions directly, in this entry,

I suggested how his works on deconstruction offer ways for a fundamental critique of international interventions. First is interrogating the topic of inquiry and problematizing the nature of international interventions. Are they tangible or concrete encounters like military or humanitarian interventions? What about nonintervention or decisions not to intervene? Second is to interrogate the genealogy of an intervention. The task here is to trace the intervention beyond an official/ceremonial date and to unravel sets of relations and power dimensions that make an international intervention an intelligible act. A third way is to politicize and historicize an act of international intervention and unravel its seemingly technical and bureaucratic act that is contingent (primarily) to decisionmaking or hierarchies in international law. A final way is to problematize who becomes an intelligible intervener and how particular areas, hemispheres, or “peripheries” are rendered as sites for intervention.

Cross-References

- ▶ [International Interventions](#)
- ▶ [Liberal Interventionism](#)

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Democratic Peace

► Liberal Peace in Peace Operations

Democratization in Postconflict Western Balkans

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Definition

Democratization in the Western Balkans, the countries of former Yugoslavia (Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro,

Kosovo, and North Macedonia) and Albania followed the end of Communism in Central and Eastern Europe but were shaped by the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the absence of Soviet control in the region. Instead, fragile and contested states, and several wars and conflicts during the 1990s delayed and effected democracy across the region. Democracies are still fragile and exposed to fragile statehood, weak institutions, and authoritarianism.

Democracy, Southeastern Europe, former Yugoslavia, Postwar reconstruction, EU Integration

The End of Communism and Wars and Conflicts in the Western Balkans

The countries of former Yugoslavia and Albania have all been affected by varying degrees of conflict during the post-Communist period. The scale of violence and its impact varies, however, greatly. Slovenia only experienced a brief conflict with the Yugoslav army in June–July 1991, with limited effects on society and the institutions. North Macedonia saw an insurrection of the National Liberation Army, an Albanian group, against the state in 2001. The conflict, although not large in scale, re-shaped the institutions of the country and had a more significant impact on the democratization of the country. The civil war in Albania in 1997 was closely linked to collapse of state institutions. Whereas this conflict had no ethnic dimension, it has contributed to the enduring polarization of the political environment.

The most serious conflicts affected Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992–1995), Croatia (1991–1995), and Kosovo (1998–1995), all of which experienced large scale wars, including high death tolls, forced displacement, and war crimes. In particular in Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina, the postwar institutions were the result of the war and the postconflict peace settlements. In Croatia, the war ended in 1995 with a victory of the Croatian army and a brief peaceful integration (until 1997) of Eastern Slavonia into the state. Serbia and Montenegro were subject to NATO aerial bombardment in 1999 and the armed forces,

as well as paramilitary and police units, actively participated in the wars in Croatia, Bosnia, and Kosovo and committed serious war crimes in all wars. Serbia and Montenegro were also shaped by the experience of war, as the governments were involved in the war in Croatia and Bosnia and the Kosovo war directly affected both countries (the joint state ended in 2006 when Montenegro declared independence) (Baker 2015; Gagnon 2004).

The period between 1991 and 2001 was shaped by state collapse and war. Democratization during and prior to the conflict was severely curtailed by this context. While multiparty elections have been held in all the countries of former Yugoslavia since 1990 and in Albanian since 1991, during the 1990s, they were mostly not free and fair. Only Slovenia was able to hold fair and competitive elections. Otherwise, the parties that won the first elections in 1990 have been able to retain power for most of the decade. In Serbia and Montenegro, these were former branches of the Yugoslav League of Communists that became the Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS) of Slobodan Milošević and the Democratic Party of Socialists (DPS) in Montenegro, dominated by Milo Djukanović. They ruled with authoritarian control and on a nationalist platform. Similarly, in North Macedonia, the reformed Communists (SDSM) retained power until 1998, however without a strong nationalist agenda. In Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, anti-Communist nationalist parties won elections, often incorporating Communist nomenclature and retaining power through a combination of nationalism and clientelism. The Croat Democratic Union (HDZ) dominated until 2000 in Croatia under the leadership of Franjo Tuđman (Dolenec 2013). Its sister party with the same name has dominated the Croat vote in Bosnia since. The other nationalist parties, the Muslim/Bosniak Party of Democratic Actions (SDA) of Alija Izetbegović and the Serb Democratic Party (SDS) with Radovan Karadžić as the most prominent figures, became the dominant parties within their relative community. The wars brought with them a considerable restriction of civil liberties and democracy. In Croatia and Serbia, the wars led to nationalist polarization, with

government critics marginalized and described as traitors. Liberal and moderate opposition parties, such as the Democratic Party in Serbia or the Socialdemocratic Party (SDP) in Croatia, came under considerable pressure by the ruling party and the state. In Bosnia, the war reduced space for political pluralism. In particular the territories held by Bosnian Serb and Croat forces allowed for little political pluralism. In Kosovo, under tight Serbian control until 1999, the emerging Kosovo Albanian political parties, in particular the dominant Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) led by Ibrahim Rugova, could only operate underground and boycotted all Serbian and Yugoslav elections in the 1990s. Albania experienced the emergence of a two-party system with the moderately reformed Communist party, renamed Socialist Party (SP), dominated by Fatos Nano, in power until 1992 and again after the civil war in 1997/8, and the center-right Democratic Party of Sali Berisha in power between 1992 and 1997, in an increasingly authoritarian fashion.

Postconflict Democratization

Only the end of the wars and conflicts opened space for a second wave of democratization in the late 1990s. In Croatia and Serbia, the incumbents lost power in 2000. Tuđman died and his party was defeated in parliamentary and presidential elections in 2000. This brought to power an opposition coalition dominated by the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and a shift to more pluralist politics, away from the conservative and authoritarian nationalism of the 1990s. In Serbia, Slobodan Milošević was defeated in presidential elections in September 2000, when he failed to concede, strikes and mass protests forced him and his ruling coalition out of office (Bunce and Wolchik 2011). In Albania, Berisha was toppled during the civil war that was triggered by the collapse of pyramid schemes, tacitly endorsed by the ruling party, and the increasing authoritarianism of Berisha. In North Macedonia, the conservative Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization-Party for Macedonian National Unity (VMRO-DPMNE) came to power in

1998. This alternation of power did not democratize the country substantially and Albanians, a large minority, continued to be included in government, but remained marginal in the public and political sphere. In Bosnia, the nationalist parties retained their dominant position, even if a more moderate coalition briefly held power in country in the early 2000s. Challengers were also ethnonational parties, not challenging the highly divided and ethnically polarized party system. In Kosovo, a multiparty system only emerged after the 1999 war during the international protectorate that replaced Serbian rule. The parties emerged either from the peaceful resistance of the 1990s, such as LDK or the Kosovo Liberation Army, the Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK), and the Alliance for the Future of Kosovo (AAK). The first elections were held in 2001 and also include parties representing the Serb and other minorities.

The region's political systems can be divided into majoritarian parliamentary democracies, based on a relatively centralized system of government, including Croatia, Albania, Montenegro, and Serbia. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, and North Macedonia have varying degrees of power-sharing systems and decentralization. The most rigid consociational system is in Bosnia and Herzegovina, based on a weak central government, two entities, the predominantly Serb Republika Srpska and the largely Bosniak and Croat Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which in turn is divided into ten cantons with high level of autonomy, and the autonomous district of Brčko. In addition to territorial decentralization, there are strong features of consociationalism that protect ethnonational interests through quotas and vetoes. North Macedonia and Kosovo also have elements of power-sharing, including limited veto powers, grand government coalitions, and a high level of group rights, but neither have intermediate territorial units. Instead, decentralization took place, empowering municipalities. In the other countries, there are minority parties, sometimes benefiting from special electoral rules, as in Serbia, Croatia, and Montenegro, but these are generally small and marginal, even if at times included in ruling coalition.

In Kosovo and Bosnia, international actors had an important role. Kosovo was a full protectorate until the 2008 declaration of independence with the final authority held by UNMIK, the UN Mission in Kosovo. The parliament and government were granted only limited, if increasing, competences and were subject to international scrutiny. After independence, a transitional international presence continued to wield formal powers over Kosovo's institutions until 2012 (Visoka 2017). In Bosnia, the internationally appointed High Representative and his office were able (since 1997) to dismiss officials and impose key decisions, making Bosnia a de facto protectorate for around decade. This weakened as the international missions scaled down their interventionist approach around 2006 (Bieber 2006). The international missions became integral parts of the political systems with parties campaigning against their presence, such as the Self-Determination Movement in Kosovo, and nationalist parties, such as the Alliance of Independent Socialdemocrats (SNSD) in Bosnia's Republika Srpska.

The Legacies of Conflicts

The legacy of wars has profoundly shaped the democratization of the countries of the Western Balkans. In Kosovo, Bosnia, and North Macedonia, the political system as such is the product of the conflicts, including the different power-sharing mechanisms. In the other countries, democratization has been delayed due to the wars and their impact on the postwar political system and democratization. While the key parties in power during the 1990s and wars lost in Serbia and Croatia in 2000, they remained important political parties. In Croatia, the HDZ returned to power in 2003 (until 2011 returning to power in 2015), whereas in Serbia, the SPS became a junior coalition partner in 2008. The dominant Progressive Party (SNS) emerged in 2008 out of the far-right nationalist Serb Radical Party (SRS) that had been partner to the Milošević regime (Konitzer 2011). The SNS took power in 2012 and increasingly consolidated its position since.

The first postwar decade has been characterized by cautious efforts to confront the past, largely driven by external pressure, in particular through cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY). In addition, the political system reformed, establishing independent institutions and in light of the prospect of European integration engaged in legal and institutional transformation. These changes were met with considerable resistance in terms of institutional opposition and nepotism, as well as strong political parties challenging these changes. A high level of political polarization and the contested past has resulted in party systems that are only formally characterized by the conventional European model of political parties. Grand coalitions between center-left and right have been rare, and the ideological differentiation mostly follows difference over the past and the competition for power, rather than differences on economic issues or over the role of the state (Boduszyński 2010).

None of the countries that experienced conflict in the 1990s have been able to establish consolidated democracies. In some cases, there has been considerable democratic backsliding, in particular in Serbia under Aleksandar Vučić's rule since 2012, in North Macedonia under the rule of Nikola Gruevski (2006–2016), and in Republika Srpska under the dominance of Milorad Dodik since 2006. Elsewhere, either one-party dominance, as in Montenegro, or a high level of party polarization and alternation in power, as in Albania, prevented democratic consolidation. State capture characterizes all political systems, with often narrow interest groups, centered on ruling political parties controlling state resources, often illegally, to retain power and control state resources for their own benefit. Formally, the countries have moved towards EU and NATO membership, with Croatia joining the EU in 2013, and Albania, North Macedonia, and Croatia members of NATO. Yet, the Euro Atlantic integration that began in the early 2000s has been slow and has encountered substantial resistance (Bieber 2020).

Summary

Postconflict democratization thus remains fragile in the Western Balkans. While the recurrence of conflict has become unlikely through a series of peace agreements and the close economic and political links with the EU, democracies are fragile and often shaped by both weak institutions and limited commitment to liberal democracy by ruling elites. In addition, the postwar countries of Bosnia and Kosovo are also contested states, where not all citizens accept the existence of the state. In Bosnia, a significant section of Serbs and Croats seek either secession or de-facto self-rule and in Kosovo, many Serbs seek to be part of Serbia. This has weakened democracy. In Bosnia, the continuous polarization over the nature of the state has led to ethnocracy with nondemocratic parties retaining power through evoking the ethnic card. In Kosovo, the unresolved relations with Serbia have held the external consolidation of the country back and restricted its ability to establish its full authority in the territories of the North, populated mostly by Serbs and closely linked to Serbia. Key controversies are the role of power-sharing institutions in delaying or obstructing democratization, the impact of international state- and institution-building, and the role and causes of nationalism (Belloni 2020; Günay and Dzhić 2016).

Thus, while the wars and conflicts in the Western Balkans largely ended at the end of the 1990s, their legacies shape political competition, regional relations, and democratization, mostly in the countries the worst effected by war. This has resulted in the emergence of competitive authoritarian and hybrid regimes, rather than liberal democracies. In addition, postwar power sharing is often contested and reproduces high level of ethnopolitical antagonism (Bieber et al. 2018).

Cross-References

- ▶ [Consociationalism and Peace after Conflict](#)
- ▶ [Ethnic Conflict in North Macedonia](#)
- ▶ [Ohrid Framework Agreement, The](#)
- ▶ [Transitional Justice in Croatia](#)

- ▶ [UN Missions in Ex-Yugoslavia](#)
- ▶ [United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo \(UNMIK\)](#)

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Demographic Dividend

- ▶ [Youth Bulge and Conflict](#)

Demographic Gift

- ▶ [Youth Bulge and Conflict](#)

Demographic Window

- ▶ [Youth Bulge and Conflict](#)

Denial

- ▶ [Silence and Peacebuilding](#)

Development

- ▶ [Maoist Conflict in India](#)

Development = Economic Growth

- ▶ [Peacebuilding–Development Nexus](#)

Developmental Peace

- ▶ [Asian Approaches to Peace](#)

Dialogue

- ▶ [Peace and Feminist Foreign Policy](#)

Diasporas in Peace and Conflict

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Synonyms

[Migration](#); [Refugees](#); [Transnationalism](#); [Expats](#); [Spoilers](#); [Non-state actors](#)

Definition/Description

Armed conflicts do not only generate migration but are also influenced by migrants. “Diaspora” has emerged as a popular term of self-identification as well as academic analysis. It is widely recognized that diaspora groups and individuals are important actors in global politics, including in relation to armed conflicts and post-conflict reconstruction processes. Diaspora refers broadly to those people who live outside of what they see as their homeland and who continue to be concerned about the developments “back home.” A diaspora is, however, not a static and objective category, but is better understood as a consciousness and set of practices that are mobilized. The desire to engage in homeland politics is often particularly acute when there is insecurity and war there, and when the diaspora itself is a result of forced displacement. The diaspora label embraces a hugely diverse group of people and activities, which can contribute to conflict and peace in many different ways, including within the group itself. Some diaspora groups and individuals provide economic support to armed actors, others return to take up arms themselves, and yet others engage in political campaigns, canvass for human rights, take initiatives towards dialogue, invest in postwar reconstruction, or initiate projects towards transitional justice, reconciliation, and memorialization. In a globalized world, transnational forces such as diasporas are essential to understand if we wish to grasp nuanced dynamics of peace and conflict.

Introduction

Diasporas have become ubiquitous in our societies in the same way as migration (Levitt and Schiller 2006; Levitt and Jaworsky 2007; Bauböck and Faist 2010). A vibrant research agenda on diasporas considers them beyond simple identification, while empirically, individuals continue to be assigned to diasporas for better or worse. Still others consider diaspora belonging as a badge of honor. Political circumstances in home and host countries lead to diaspora actors being

victimized, valorized, targeted, or simply ignored. Transnational advocacy movements by and with diaspora actors dominate discussions about peace and conflict processes, including post-conflict reconstruction and transitional justice. The field of diaspora studies remains multidisciplinary and manifold, whether by virtue of definitional discussions, incorporation of diaspora into a multitude of literatures and topics, their role in transnational processes including home and host country influences, and finally, considerations about the role of diaspora in peace and conflict processes.

The aim of this chapter is to provide an overview of the trends and debates around diasporas in peace and conflict literature. Rather than provide an exhaustive examination, we seek to provide a broad perspective, highlighting some of the important developments of this field, present key examples representative of diaspora’s engagement in peace and conflict processes, as well as to chart the potential of diaspora in peace and conflict in the future. The first section explains what diasporas are and showcases briefly how they can be studied and defined. It also establishes their importance in world politics. The sections thereafter focus on different aspects of the peace and conflict process in which diasporas have and continue to play vital roles: we discuss how diaspora actors may fuel homeland conflicts, how they engage in peace work, and the roles they play in postwar reconstruction and reconciliation. We aim to incorporate more classic texts and examples from recent literature within each of these sections in order to highlight the wide range of scholarship focused on this topic. The penultimate section draws attention to how homeland conflicts and repression play out in the diaspora itself. The concluding section provides additional avenues to further explore diasporas in peace and conflict.

Diasporas

The term diaspora is derived from the Greek verb “*speirein*” which signifies spreading and scattering, dispersing and the preposition *dia* – from one end to the other. This etymological explanation of what diasporas are provides a worthwhile starting

point – that of movement – key to understanding diaspora. While scholars have traditionally understood this movement to be the result of collective trauma, this generally encompasses only those groups who result from forced migration (Safran 1991). Ultimately it also categorizes populations rather than examining them in relation to time, to identities and ideas being formed from within these populations, the potential for contention among them, and the fact that diasporas are not necessarily always tied to a nation state or a bounded group (Sheffer 2006), but experience belonging, and more importantly, mobilize these feelings, in different ways. Diasporas have been increasingly incorporated into research agendas that focused on transnationalism and transnational migration (Vertovec 1999; Faist 2010; Levitt and Schiller 2006; Bauböck and Faist 2010). The interest led Brubaker (2005) to famously criticize the “proliferation” of diaspora to the point the term had become so diluted that it was difficult to use it analytically. This reflects both the continued interest in and challenges of researching diaspora on a multidisciplinary international level.

Moving beyond ideal type categorizations of diaspora, which were often focused on descriptive studies tracing a diaspora’s understanding of its own identity and orientation towards the homeland, diasporas are today understood in somewhat different terms. A social movements perspective (Sokefeld 2006) that recognizes the importance of fluidity among diaspora, including the fact that it is composed of many different individuals that are by no means homogenous, much like any other population, provides a worthwhile lens into examining diaspora mobilization (Feron 2013). This allows for the examination of mobilization processes in terms of transnational advocacy and the analysis of claims made by diasporic agents in the name of the group or in response to particular events or developments, in multiple locations and on multiple levels (Keck and Sikkink 1998; Lyons and Mandaville 2012). The relevance of diaspora actors in world politics and their influence can have different results and can thus be both stabilizing or destabilizing, especially during important points in peace and conflict processes (Smith and Stares 2007; Shain 2002). Thus,

understanding how a diaspora identity is mobilized rather than simply considering them as passive groups with connections to multiple localities, becomes key to creating different opportunities for peace processes to develop. At the same time, this perspective also recognizes that diasporas make conflict analysis and frameworks more complicated, especially in settings where the homelands are contested in one way or another (Koinova 2021). Their embeddedness in different states and localities, as well as their transnational nature make diasporas an ever more relevant actor in the study of world politics, in a multitude of potential roles, including as entrepreneurs, brokers, spoilers, and facilitators (Brinkerhoff 2011; Koinova 2021). The following sections will examine some of these in more detail, providing both a review of the existing literature and empirical examples.

Diaspora Involvement in Armed Conflicts

Much of the scholarly and policy discussion on diasporas and conflict has taken its point of departure in a dichotomous understanding of diasporas as either fueling conflicts or contributing to peace. Terrorist attacks in the United States and Europe carried out by individuals with a diasporic background have further fed stereotypes of migrants as security threats and instigators of conflict. Early academic interventions on diasporas and homeland conflicts focused on the ways in which diaspora actors promote polarization and war. Benedict Anderson (1992) made the argument that people in the diaspora become “long-distant nationalists” and that they can afford to take hard-line and uncompromising stances in their homeland conflicts as they do not experience the direct consequences of war. A much-cited study by Collier and Hoeffler found a correlation between the risk of return to war after a peace settlement and the proportion of the population that had migrated to the United States. This was largely due to financial support to armed groups from people in the diaspora who “preserved their own hatreds” even after a peace agreement (Collier and Hoeffler 2001: 10).

One prominent example of a conflict where the diaspora has supported an armed struggle is the 1983–2009 civil war between the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the Sri Lankan government (see Liberal and Illiberal Peacebuilding in Sri Lanka). A large, conflict-generated Tamil diaspora provided crucial financial resources to the LTTE, which had a well-developed international network. Diaspora contributions were both voluntary and forced. Apart from direct support to the LTTE's war for an independent Tamil state, the diaspora also provided humanitarian assistance through organizations closely linked to the LTTE (Orjuela 2008). The Irish diaspora in the United States similarly played an active role in supporting the armed struggle of the Irish Republican Army (IRA) for a reunification of Ireland (Charlton 1979), while Somali diaspora remittances have enabled the armament of militant groups in the home country (Horst 2008). In some cases, such as Kosovo in the 1990s, individuals have returned from the diaspora to take up arms (Adamson 2006). More recently, terrorist networks like Al-Qaeda, the Islamic State and Al-Shabab have recruited internationally, including among diaspora members.

Diasporas also mobilize to carry out political work in support of armed struggles. The Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora, for instance, organized mass demonstrations and engaged with policy makers to raise awareness about the plight of the Tamil minority in Sri Lanka and canvass support for the Tamil cause (Orjuela 2008). Such political campaigning and mobilization of protests in the host country can be a feasible way to influence the developments in the homeland through what Keck and Sikkink (1998) have called the boomerang effect, i.e., pressure put on otherwise unresponsive governments through other governments and international players. Moreover, with the expansion of dual citizenship and voting rights for citizens residing abroad, diaspora communities have become important supporters of political leaders in the homeland (Lyons and Mandaville 2012). Their sometimes crucial contributions to election campaigns and to certain leaders' rise to or upholding of power may reinforce homeland

cleavages and conflicts while continuing to redefine how transnational citizenship is utilized and reinforced (Brand 2014).

Media – including social media – is another means through which diaspora actors may amplify or fuel conflicts and divides in the homeland. For instance, although Somali diaspora media has provided space for empathy and encouraged humanitarian aid, it has also served to reproduce the dynamics of the conflict by pushing polarization and silencing marginalized groups (Osman 2017). In the beginning of the 1990s, Bosnian and Herzegovinian diaspora actors formed a community online, connecting transnationally to foster diplomacy and reinforce state institutions throughout the war by collecting relevant news items, aggregating information, and connecting individuals (Hasic and Karabegovic 2020). More recently, digital communication technologies have been utilized by diaspora groups in an effort to expose human rights abuses during the ongoing conflict in Syria (Stokke and Wiebelhaus-Brahm 2019; Tenove 2019).

Diasporas and Peacework

The notion of diasporas as war-mongers and security risks have been challenged by scholars and practitioners who emphasize their role in supporting peace. If diaspora actors are important players in the homeland – through their remittances, support to political and armed actors, media production, humanitarian assistance, advocacy work, and mobilization of protests – they can also influence homeland developments in more peaceful ways (Brinkerhoff 2011). One large-N study recently found external support from the diaspora to be positively associated with the adoption of nonviolent tactics by rebel groups. In fact, diaspora support was, according to that study, more crucial than the support by foreign states for instigating shifts towards peaceful tactics (Petrova 2019). Various case studies have illustrated in more detail how diaspora actors can lend support to peacemaking efforts. Irish American organizations and individuals, for instance, played an important role supporting the Northern

Ireland peace process that led to the 1998 Good Friday Agreement, through their close connections to power-holders in the United States and their shift from supporting the armed struggle to instead canvassing for a negotiated peace (Cochrane 2007, see *The Troubles: The Northern Ireland Conflict*). Diaspora actors were also key in bringing together different actors in order to set up the Haitian Truth Commission (Hoogenboom and Quinn 2011).

The peace process between Colombia's government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARC) 2012–2016 illustrates how the diaspora can be activated to take part in peacemaking efforts. Public hearings were held in several European cities in parallel to the negotiations in Habana, and the diaspora organized victim associations and women's groups to provide input to the process. The inclusion of diaspora actors in the peace process, however, also encountered some challenges. These include a sense of mistrust between diaspora communities and local civil society, and the difficulty of establishing procedures to appoint diaspora representatives in formal bodies related to the peace process (Flamtermesky et al. 2019, see *Colombian Peace Agreement 2016*).

To include not only the warring parties but also civil society representatives in a peace process is considered important for the legitimacy of both the process itself and its outcome (Paffenholz 2014, see also *Civil Society Inclusion in Peace Mediation*). In a globalized world, relevant civil society actors may not only reside in the war-affected country, but around the globe. How diaspora actors participate in peace processes vary widely, however. In some cases, the warring parties themselves are represented by individuals based in the diaspora, such as in the peace negotiations between Sri Lanka's government and the LTTE in 2002–2003 and in the Aceh-Indonesia peace process of 2005 (Mitsch 2013). The warring parties may also informally or formally consult diaspora members along the way, and diaspora actors in some cases mobilize public demonstrations or engage in advocacy with the aim of influencing and supporting a peaceful resolution of the armed

conflict (Baser 2017). Political campaigns by diaspora groups for peace, human rights, and humanitarian efforts are not, however, always perceived by others as peacemaking. What leads to peace, and how, tends to be a question which is fiercely contested during an ongoing conflict, and the long-term effects of diaspora peace efforts – and of the peace process itself – are very difficult to predict. Also after a conflict has ended, peacebuilding efforts continue to be contested. Transitional justice efforts initiated by diaspora actors often take place at multiple levels beyond the homeland with differing results (Koinova and Karabegovic 2019).

The positionality of diaspora groups, as actors residing outside of the country where the war is raging, may give them some advantages as peace-promoting actors, for instance the relative safety to engage in peace activism provided by the host country, and the access some diaspora actors may have to influential state actors and/or international governmental and non-governmental organizations. Moreover, spaces far from the war can be used for dialogue efforts at various levels – between top leaders or persons close to them, or between lower-level leaders or “ordinary people” who harbor prejudices about those from the other side of the conflict divide (see Lyons 2004; Tint et al. 2014; Orjuela 2017). Cultural or sports events for diaspora groups may also provide opportunities for meetings across conflict divides (Karabegovic 2018). Especially young people, who have grown up outside of their parents' homeland may be more ready to engage with the war-affected country in ways that are less influenced by cemented conflict divides. Their embeddedness in (at least) two societies may give them certain advantages as peacebuilding actors (see *Youth and Peacebuilding*).

Finally, it has been noted that the flourishing diaspora-based media landscape is not only a source of polarization and conflict promotion. Brinkerhoff (2009), in her study of how diaspora communities use the internet, shows how diaspora individuals often use modern communication technology to create organizations and communities that promote hybrid identities, encourage

solidarity, and help them integrate in the society where they live. The global reach of digital media implies that initiatives taken in the diaspora to reframe homeland conflicts can contribute to reshaping the view of the conflict also in the homeland. Moreover, the expansion of social media has in some cases challenged established power relations and traditional ideas of who gets to speak about the conflict. For instance, women from South Sudan have made use of social media to become “influencers” who comment on conflict and humanitarian crisis in their home country (Bashri 2017, see Civil Wars in Sudan and South Sudan).

Postwar Reconstruction and Reconciliation

Scholars working on the migration development nexus (Faist et al. 2011; Brinkerhoff 2012; Geiger and Pecoud 2013) have acknowledged the relevance of public policy approaches especially focused on diasporas that are supposed to fuel development. This has often translated to encouraging diaspora investments in homelands recovering or attempting to rebuild after conflict. Alternatively, mechanisms promoting knowledge transfer are meant to encourage the influx of social remittances between diasporas and local populations, both in an effort to address development issues and to aid in reconstruction processes, as these are often considered to go hand in hand. This literature addresses the question of reconstruction from a largely economic lens. Over the last decade, such initiatives have also been supported by international organizations working with home states that are unwilling or unable to provide and support such programs, all in an effort to translate diaspora engagement into sustainable post-conflict economic recovery. While the mythical return to the homeland remains a lofty idea for many diaspora individuals, such programs have also been rather successful at encouraging return, particularly for individuals willing to start a business or to invest back into their home countries upon returning. Gamlen (2014, 2019) has

mapped the increase of diaspora governance by homeland countries over time, demonstrating the homeland states’ recognition of this diaspora potential.

Beyond development in terms of post-conflict reconstruction, the role of diaspora in transitional justice processes, along with other non-state actors, has more recently been incorporated into broader debates (Wiebelhaus-Brahm 2016; Koinova and Karabegovic 2019). The intersection of diaspora and transitional justice scholarship provides scholars and peace practitioners a particular lens through which to study the influence of diaspora mobilization, representing a diversifying trend in transitional justice scholarship of considering different actors. Diasporas have demonstrated their role in memorialization, truth-seeking, and accountability processes, taking part on multiple levels, by mobilizing others in the homeland or the host countries, or lobbying other actors to take appropriate actions (Baser 2017; Koinova and Karabegovic 2017; Orjuela 2018).

This is particularly the case for diaspora members who, by virtue of forced migration due to conflict, find themselves living outside of the borders of their homelands, and present strong grievance claims in relation to their post-conflict homelands related to transitional justice. Research on memorialization processes, focused on both more recent as well as more historical commemoration activities, provides multiple empirical examples of diaspora engagement with homelands such as Armenia, Cambodia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sri Lanka, and Rwanda. The ways in which diaspora members align themselves to differing homeland narratives, or even create their own diasporic narratives in order to mobilize other members, demonstrate not only the diaspora’s engagement in transitional justice but also the malleability and complexity of reconciliation processes. In the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, diaspora actors have partnered with actors in multiple localities to forward localized grievance claims as well as larger commemorative processes (Karabegovic 2019; see Transitional Justice in Bosnia and Herzegovina).

Conflicts in New Spaces

The diaspora itself – not only its impact on the homeland – has also become a focus for peace and conflict researchers and practitioners, who recognize that conflicts are continued, reproduced, and/or transformed in places outside the homeland. Literature on “imported” or “transported” conflicts has drawn attention to how conflict dynamics in home countries are paralleled by similar conflict patterns in the diaspora, but also to how conflicts take new forms when played out in new contexts (Féron 2013; Baser 2015a). Supporters of different sides of a homeland conflict sometimes confront each other when organizing demonstrations and counter-demonstrations in public spaces, or when participating in conferences or social media discussions. In some instances, “transported” conflicts have taken the form of vandalism or physical attacks, as has been the case between Turks and Kurds in Europe (Baser 2015b). The continuation of conflict can also be manifested in awkward silences or avoidance of diaspora members belonging to “the other side” (Monahan et al. 2014; Orjuela 2017). A concern for diaspora groups is also how traumatic experiences of conflict may be “inherited” by subsequent generations and affect the well-being also of persons who did not themselves experience violence (Hirsch 2008; Sangalang and Vang 2017).

In the wake of globalization, governments have increasingly reached out to “their” diasporas, attempting to engage them as agents of development and/or well-placed allies in the war they wage (Koinova and Tsourapas 2018). However, the same governments often see diaspora critics, and those in the diaspora who are on the “wrong side” in the conflict, as a threat that needs to be controlled and repressed. It has become increasingly clear that fleeing a country does not always mean that one is on a safe distance from the country’s repressive regime. In fact, authoritarian governments target who they see as “traitors” or “security threats” in the diaspora through a number of repressive tactics, including threats, surveillance, withholding of administrative services and even direct physical assaults or assassinations.

These state attempts aim to control their diaspora populations throughout a number of migration processes, including return policies (Tsourapas 2020). Critics can also be efficiently silenced by threats or attacks against relatives and friends who reside in the home country (Moss 2016; Glasius 2018). Also, non-state groups sometimes attempt to control the diaspora through repressive strategies (Adamson 2020).

As conflicts and oppression extend across borders, peace and conflict researchers need to look not only in, but also beyond, a particular war-affected country when they seek to understand conflict dynamics and peace efforts. Foreign policy and diplomacy scholarship offers the potential for further engagement with diasporas.

Concluding Remarks

As we have demonstrated throughout this chapter, diasporas are involved, engaged, and can be incorporated into every facet of peace and conflict processes. Their influence is contextualized based on their positionalities, their relationship to those in power, and the levels of contention they feel towards peace and conflict related events in their homelands. It would be negligible to consider them as a monolithic actor, or even to consider their role without contextualizing the settings of their homelands and host countries, which are also ever-changing. For certain groups, conflicts become imported to their new homelands, while for others, repression continues regardless of the fact they are abroad. Still others attempt to influence peace and conflict processes at a distance, while others return in an effort to speed up post-conflict reconstruction processes.

Academic work on diaspora has developed exponentially over the last few decades and will likely continue to be shaped both by empirical realities and the explanatory potential they introduce to a variety of peace and conflict related processes including diplomacy, democratization, foreign policy, and statebuilding. At the same time, the engagement of home states in an effort to instrumentalize its diaspora

actors in a variety of ways has recently also gained more prominence, especially in authoritarian contexts. Scholarship on the policies of countries of settlement, whether through deradicalization, development, or other means, will likely increase in the near future as these policies become more evident empirically. Thus, the ways in which diaspora act on their agency and utilize it in order to mold homeland and host country processes in the future will only gain both theoretical and comparative perspectives, especially in post-conflict terms. Diaspora engagement with more topical issues in peace and conflict related to socioeconomic justice and natural resource management preservation will largely determine the role of diasporas in peace and conflict in the near future, including collaboration with international organizations and institutions beyond home and host states. Moreover, considering that reconciliation processes are slow, windy, the interest, participation, and influence of diaspora actors from the second and third generation will continue to draw the attention of scholars and policy makers.

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Different Layers of the Afghan Conflict

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Definition/Description

This entry offers a general overview of the current Afghan conflict. It explores the different dynamics of the conflict, national, regional, and international. It glances at the proxy nature of the conflict during the cold war, the civil war, and the global war on terrorism. It also examines various political attempts of peacemaking in Afghanistan from National Reconciliation Policy introduced in 1987, the peace agreements in 1990s to end the civil war, the Afghan Peace and Reintegration Program, and the current US-Taliban Agreement, highlighting some of the gaps in the current Afghan peace process from a peace and conflict studies perspective.

Synonyms

Afghanistan; Agreements; Ceasefire; Cold War; Conflict; Jihad; Negotiations; Peace; Terrorism; Transitional Justice; Trauma; UN; War

Introduction

The year 2020 marks 41 years of conflict in Afghanistan. The current Afghan conflict is a by-product of changes in the sociopolitical structures that was exasperated by the Cold War and regional geopolitical rivalries that led to the civil war, Talibanization of the country, and the War on Terror. The birth of the republic in 1973 put an end to the monarchy rule (Dixit 2000). It was the start of national reforms in further modernizing the country that would alienate the religious Islamic groups (Roy 2001). The creation of the Republic also shifted the symmetry of Cold War relationships with the two superpowers, that is, the Soviet Union (USSR) and the United States (USA), plus the regional countries. In 1978, Afghanistan witnessed another coup d'état in which the first President of Afghanistan, Mohammed Daoud Khan was murdered along with his family members and the power was transferred to the leftist groups in Afghanistan (Giustozzi 2000).

The People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) took power and introduced land, education, and cultural reforms that were rebuffed by the people. The Afghan invasion of the Soviet Union further antagonized the common Afghans against the government and made the fertile Jihad grounds expand (Roy 2001, pp. 47–48). It is at this juncture that Afghanistan gets heavily embroiled into the proxy Cold War geopolitics, with USSR supporting the Afghan government and having its troops in the country while the USA supported the government opposition groups named freedom fighters or Mujahideen, based out of Pakistan. The other regional country that hosted Shia and other Jihadi groups in opposition to the government was Iran (Najibullah 2017).

In 1985, with the change of leadership in the USSR, introduction of policies such as

Perestroika (*Prestroika* in literal term means restructuring. In this context, it was referred to a political and economic restructuring initiated by Premier M. Gorbachev) influenced the political course of events in Afghanistan. In 1986, PDPA changed leadership and introduced the National Reconciliation Policy (NRP) to end the eight-year-long conflict and ensure the successful withdrawal of the Soviet troops. Afghanistan first attempt in contemporary peacebuilding is embedded in NRP. The government of Afghanistan cooperated closely with the United Nations in implementing the resolution 45/12 and the 5-point peace plan to find a durable solution to the Afghan conflict (Najibullah 2017, pp. 48–49). However, the plan did not reach fruition and in April 1992, the government fell in the hands of Mujahideen and the civil war broke out throughout Afghanistan (Rubin 1995).

In 1993, a new group by the name of Taliban surfaced in Kandahar which took power in September 1996 and enforced a strict, draconian, Sharia-based rule (Rashid 2002). Post events of 9/11, the link between Taliban, Al-Qaeda, and Pakistan become more apparent to the world (Rubin 2013, p. 352). In 1998, after the Al-Qaeda bombings of US embassies in Tanzania and Kenya, in retaliation, the Clinton administration bombed the Al-Qaeda bases in Afghanistan (Rubin 2013, p. 349). The 9/11 fall of twin towers compelled the US administration to take action, and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) was launched on October 7, 2001, as part of the Global War on Terrorism and focused in eliminating Al-Qaeda and Taliban (Ibid, pp. 349–350).

The OEF's two main objectives were significant for Afghanistan: (1) elimination of terror groups responsible for the fall of the twin towers from Afghanistan and ensuring that such attacks are avoided in the future, and (2) regime change, that is, removal of the Taliban government or rule. Two months after the OEF, Germany hosted an International Conference on Afghanistan and established the foundations of the current governing structures and institutions in the country. The Conference hosted prominent Mujahideen groups that the USA had formerly supported in the Cold War to replace the Taliban (Ibid).

Meanwhile, the Taliban leadership found shelter in Pakistan. The Bonn Agreement also encompassed the establishment of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) that allowed many allied militaries (Allied militaries here refer to the military of countries that allied with the USA in the global war on terrorism) to serve in Afghanistan under the banner of Global War on Terror. The UN Security Council passed resolution 1386 to establish ISAF.

Since 2002, Afghanistan went through institutional and nation-building processes, that is, it has held four national elections, created military and police force, included women into political institutions such as the parliament, exercised freedom of speech, established procedures for economic growth; however, the progress has come with many shortcomings. (The article ► [Statebuilding in Afghanistan: Inertia and Ambiguity](#) captures the efforts and challenges of post 9/11 in fighting terrorism and building a state.) Peacebuilding instruments such as transitional justice and disarmament demobilization and reintegration (DDR) were undermined (Human Dignity and Transitional Justice emphasizes how transitional justice puts the victims and human being centerstage for they have equal and inherent value, which was not the case in Afghanistan post 2001) after the Bonn Agreement (Hakimi & Suhrke). ISAF's warfare with the Taliban as a "terrorist" group that was enlisted in the UN, creation of Provincial Reconstruction Teams that comprised of both military and civilians across the country, rampant corruption, lack of rule of law at local levels (Wimpelmann 2013), and Pakistan's continued covert support in hosting both Al-Qaeda and the Taliban were factors that contributed to escalating and fueling the conflict until now.

The Afghan Peace Process

Since the start of the conflict in Afghanistan, there have been many trials in bringing peace and finding political stability in the country. One of the first attempts in developing a policy and strategy for reconciliation was at the peak of the Cold War rivalry in Afghanistan. In 1987, the Najibullah

administration under the National Reconciliation Policy (NRP) cooperated closely with the UN to find a political solution to the Afghan conflict (Najibullah 2017). In 1992, when the civil war broke out amidst warring Mujahideen factions, peace agreements between the factions were signed in Peshawar and Saudi Arabia but without much success to end the fighting till the Taliban took over in September 1996 (Semple 2009).

Post-2001, (The article ► [Statebuilding in Afghanistan: Inertia and Ambiguity](#) captures the efforts and challenges of post 9/11 in fighting terrorism and building a state) with the passage of time, it became apparent that ISAF was faced with firm resistance by the Taliban resurgence and that the foreign forces had to re-strategize their engagement in Afghanistan. Campaigns such as winning “hearts and minds” to restructuring modes of operation from ceasing PRT to establishing Resolute Support Mission and allowing Afghans military take charge of the battleground were proving difficult to win the war against the Taliban that was sheltered and supported in neighboring Pakistan.

Reconciliation and peacebuilding gained momentum under the Obama administration after 2009 when there was a recognition in the USA as well as among the allies of war on terror that they will not win the war militarily and hence have to pursue a political route to find a solution to the Afghan conflict (Woodward 2010). In 2010, under President Karzai administration the Afghan government embarked upon the Peace and Reintegration Program.

The goal of the APRP is to promote peace through a political approach. It will encourage regional and international cooperation, will create the political and judicial conditions for peace and reconciliation, and will encourage combatant foot soldiers, commanders and leaders previously siding with armed opposition and extremist groups to renounce violence and terrorism, and to join a constructive process of reintegration and peace. (Najibullah 2011, p. 34)

While the USA and its allies were establishing contacts with the Taliban in 2011 to negotiate, militarily there was a surge in several soldiers to keep the pressure and bring the Taliban groups on the negotiation table. However, by end of 2013,

the efforts to meet APRP goals had failed (Graham-Harrison and Robert 2013) and the allied countries shifted focus toward signing bilateral security agreements which led to the 2014 signing of the US-Afghan bilateral security agreement, allowing the USA to maintain bases in Afghanistan, support the Afghan security forces in combat technically and monetarily.

In 2017, the USA established contact in renegotiating with the Taliban (Ackerman 2018) to find a political solution to the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan, recognizing that current presence of the foreign troops is not a sustainable approach. Since September 2018, the US Secretary of State appointed Mr. Zalmay Khalilzad as the special envoy for peace and reconciliation (Hussainkhail 2018), whose mandate has been to strike a deal with the Taliban on four points: (1) withdrawal of foreign troops; (2) guarantee that there will not be any other terrorist attacks from the Afghan soil; (3) ceasefire; and (4) intra-Afghan dialogue (Bijlert and Ruttig 2019). In February 2020, the months of negotiations resulted in the US-Taliban Agreement (State Govt, 2020) that was signed in Doha. Concurrently, the US and the Afghan government made a joint declaration (State Govt, 2020) in bringing peace to Afghanistan. (► [Peace Agreement](#) chapter illustrates the different types of agreement and the nature of agreements that exist worldwide; it can be deduced according to this article that the US-Taliban agreement is not a peace agreement for violence and bloodshed has not ceased.) The two documents are correlated in determining the future steps of peacemaking in the country (Thurial B 2020).

Different Layers of the Afghan Conflict

The current “Afghan Peace Process” has been unique when it comes to peacemaking. Mr. Khalilzad who is negotiating and mediating with the anti-government groups, in this case, the Taliban is part of the US administration, which is a stakeholder in the Afghan conflict since the Cold War. In other words, the current Afghan Peace Process is initiated by the same superpower that brought about regime change in removing the

Taliban post 9/11 and did not support the NRP. The past 20 months of negotiations have not been inclusive or transparent. For example, while the USA has been negotiating with the Taliban, the government of Afghanistan has been left out of the negotiations (Mashal 2019) and not included in the process except briefings by the Special Envoy. The Taliban refused to meet face to face with the Afghan government and insisted that they will talk to the US government representatives. Despite signing the agreement on February 29, 2020, the Taliban still refused to negotiate directly with the Afghan government delegation (Guardian, 2020) in March 2020.

It must be noted that when the negotiations with the Taliban started, one of the four points of the US Special Envoy for Peace and Reconciliation mandate was a ceasefire. However, just before signing the US-Taliban agreement, the terminology changed from ceasefire to reduction in violence (Nikzad 2019) raising speculations for continued bloodshed and further mistrust in the process of peacemaking among the Afghans. Indeed, the bloodshed has continued, and innocent lives are lost, according to the Office of the National Security Council (ONSC), June 2020 has been the deadliest week in 19 years of the conflict since the fall of the Taliban in 2001 (Kabul Now 2020).

Lack of information flow from negotiators to the government officials and from the government to the civil society and common Afghans has created a sense of mistrust around the peace process. When the US-Taliban agreement was signed, the complete document was not made public as the annexes were kept secret (Editorial Board 2020). The process lacks instruments of peacebuilding such as transitional justice, truth commission, role and voices of women and victims of the war, rule of law, human rights including women rights, and national mechanisms and strategy to develop a holistic process that would consider different layers of the conflict from international, regional players to the national. (Please refer to ► [Transitional Justice and Peacebuilding](#) for importance of these factors for peacebuilding.)

The Afghan conflict has become a multilayered conflict with a multitude of division lines. The Afghan conflict has a global aspect in which

NATO, the USA, and its allies in War on Terrorism are major stakeholders. At the regional level, countries such as Russia, China, Pakistan, Iran, India, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and UAE interests are in sharp contrast with each other when it comes to Afghanistan (Samad 2020). At the national level, the dividing lines are determined by ethnicity, language, religious groupings of Shia and Sunnis, city versus rural dwellers, and political ideologies and affiliation while the peace process has become yet again an opportunity for obtaining power rather than peace itself.

Since 2001, despite the UN efforts in taking steps toward transitional justice and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration failed to reach fruition because the Afghan leaders were more interested in safeguarding their positions of power than bringing closure to the atrocities of human rights and war crimes since the 1970s. The Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission had written a report on the war crimes and abuse of human rights that were not made public up until today. The amnesty declared in 2007 in the Afghan parliament was the end of pursuing justice in Afghanistan (Hakimi and Suhrke 2013, p. 210). The lack of instruments for transitional justice or victim's presence in the negotiations additionally creates an atmosphere that the peace process will repeat the mistakes of the Bonn Agreement in which distribution of power is the priority (Adili and Hossaini 2020) rather than establishing mechanisms for sustainable reconciliation that could include people's voice and demands especially that of the victims and the most vulnerable groups of the society. (The article on ► [Roles of Victims in Peacebuilding](#) highlights how in the past two decades the role of victims has been transformed into active peacebuilders.) Instruments such as reparation, truth, and justice are left to be discussed in intra-Afghan dialogue. The emphasis by international players has been on the withdrawal and reduction of violence, while at the national level for Afghan polity the central focus to move ahead toward Intra-Afghan dialogue is based on rearranging and redistribution of power.

Meanwhile, the bloodshed continues in Afghanistan amidst all warring parties and

intergenerational traumas of war loom over the fabric of society. Increased level of crimes in the capital and other cities, illicit drug business, the high number of drug abusers, sexual exploitation of women and children, poverty, and unemployment are all repercussions of a protracted, multidimensional, and multilayered conflict that has gripped the soul of the Afghan society.

Conclusion

The Afghan conflict started as an ideological conflict between Islamic and leftist political groups, both of which were used by the superpowers in the Cold War. The West and Pakistan instrumentalized Jihad as a political tool to defeat the Soviet Union in Afghanistan. However, the conflict during the civil war was redefined along ethnic lines and later during the Taliban, another layer was added that of Shia and Sunni delineation. Since 2001, additional layers of conflict include the divide between city and rural areas and elite versus the common Afghan. Encapsulated like an onion, the national cracks and divisive factors of the past 40 years of conflict are layered with the global and regional realpolitik. The narrative of the Afghan conflict is evolving with time, highlighting that the historical events have been frozen in time as traumas in memory of a war-torn nation that needs years of healing.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Human Dignity and Transitional Justice](#)
- ▶ [Peace Agreement](#)
- ▶ [Roles of Victims in Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Statebuilding in Afghanistan: Inertia and Ambiguity](#)
- ▶ [Transitional Justice and Peacebuilding](#)

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Digital Peace

- ▶ [Future Peace: Digital Innovations and the International Peace Architecture](#)

Digital Technologies

- ▶ [Future Peace: Digital Innovations and the International Peace Architecture](#)

Dignification

- ▶ [Human Dignity and Transitional Justice](#)

Diplomacy

- ▶ [Search for Peace, the](#)

Disarmament

- ▶ [Humanitarian Disarmament and the Era of Disarmament Without Disarmament](#)

Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR)

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Definition/Description

Disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) programs deal with ex-combatants during or after armed conflict, in order to reduce violence and underpin a peace process. They start with individuals voluntarily handing over their arms, followed by some basic demobilization to establish their civilian status. Participants are then offered a choice of returning to education, or (for adults) vocational training so they can establish a livelihood. One of the aims is to reduce the risk of returning to the armed groups which may have provided income, identity, and status. Success is never straightforward (or easy to measure). Reintegration is an open-ended social and economic process, taking place in the community. Some ex-combatants do indeed end up working at what they trained for, benefiting from education, finding a new role, and putting the past behind them. Ex-combatants may face stigma, trauma, and suspicion, especially where communities feel the former fighters are being “rewarded” while civilians miss out. Women face additional stigma, and may

not be as well served by DDR. Some do not enroll in order to avoid being identified as an ex-combatant. Specific initiatives for children may involve more psychosocial support and engagement with the community. DDR is just one element in the wider project of moving from war to peace, and interacts with the other parts. It can contribute to the wider peace process, or have a negative impact. Ownership and buy-in are important for success, as reintegration is ultimately a long-term process where ex-combatants and communities are the most important actors.

Introduction

As a cease-fire or settlement of an armed conflict come into view, the question of what would happen with the combatants after war becomes important. They may become spoilers, or a source of instability. They could have a role in reaffirming – or undermining – a peace process, especially when it comes to transitional justice and security sector reform. They may move on to join different armed groups, destabilizing the region as well their own country. Of course, some of the combatants did not join willingly in the first place, or may have been recruited as children. DDR programs have emerged as a set of projects and processes which aim to deal with ex-combatants, in support of the ultimate goal of ensuring that they and their society do not return to armed conflict.

Those designing and funding DDR may primarily be international actors, such as the United Nations and other multilateral bodies, with all the issues of ownership and participation which come with that. “Local” (i.e., national) actors may have clearly defined roles around consultation and implementation, but less power than those who control resources. Some processes, however, involve much greater national ownership and indeed design, such as reintegration in Colombia where details of the program were spelt out in the negotiated peace agreement.

History and Role of DDR

Early examples of DDR include those in Namibia, Mozambique, and Angola in the early 1990s.

Some of the better-known cases (with most of the activities running for several years from 2002) are Liberia, where more than 100,000 fighters joined the program, and its neighbor Sierra Leone. A program in the Democratic Republic of Congo has gone through several phases, as the conflict involving many actors has continued to evolve. There is in fact no guarantee that DDR can secure the peace on its own, even if perfectly run, and it can wax and wane in line with the fortunes of the underlying peace process it is meant to sustain. Like many of the dynamics in conflict and peacebuilding, there is a complex, nonlinear relationship between DDR and the other elements. So many of the factors interact with each other. The causal model is sometimes more like an ecosystem, which requires systems thinking and complexity theory to understand it, rather than a giant piece of clockwork with a mechanistic connection between inputs and outputs. This is one of the reasons why a holistic, integrated approach is required in designing and implementing programs (Berdal and Ucko 2009; Muggah 2006; Colletta and Muggah 2009).

DDR can be placed under the umbrella of peacebuilding, as it is part of the toolbox used to prevent a return to armed conflict, with an idea of reshaping part of a post-war society. Other elements would include security sector reform, resettlement of displaced people, economic reconstruction, rule of law, and governance reforms. The debates over liberal peacebuilding have highlighted the issues of whose political and economic model is used, and the power dynamic when strong international actors set the agenda and control resources. These are reflected in the appropriateness and sustainability of DDR programs with a fast-tracked, top-down approach as opposed to those with a more participatory approach (Dzinesa 2006). Although these things are hard to quantify, there is evidence from Sierra Leone and Liberia that ex-combatants who had a more participatory experience had better outcomes in terms of livelihood, employment, and relationships with the community (Kilroy 2014). It is important to remember that dismissing liberal peacebuilding does not remove the very real challenges, it

simply removes some actors from the scene. Combatants will still be faced with questions about how to survive in a post-war society – as will the wider community – whether or not there are any initiatives to facilitate that transition.

DDR can be seen in narrow or broad terms. A narrow approach is focused on immediate security and stabilization (which may be very real concerns). The aim can be caricatured as “get them off the streets and keep them busy.” A broader view takes a longer and more systemic perspective, by considering how DDR relates to social and economic recovery generally. The challenges are real, given that the vocational training may not lead to jobs when the ex-combatants try to make their way in a war-shattered economy. The UN definition of reintegration spells out some of these connections:

Reintegration is the process by which ex-combatants acquire civilian status and gain sustainable employment and income. Reintegration is essentially a social and economic process with an open timeframe, primarily taking place in communities at the local level. It is part of the general development of a country and a national responsibility, and often necessitates long-term external assistance. (UN Secretary-General 2006: p. 8)

Rebuilding Relationships

While the guns and ammunition being handed in are tangible and quantifiable, it is important not to put them at the center of the concept. While they are indeed an important factor, and reducing the number of weapons can change the conflict dynamic, a DDR process never manages to collect all the weapons. This is not in any case a useful measure in itself of a DDR program, as the process is about much more than guns (Subedi 2014). It involves facilitating the remaking of relationships, which is a much larger task, and putting the social contract up for debate in a post-war society (Özderdem 2012; Bowd and Özderdem 2013). Reintegration interacts with other important factors such as identity, stigma, trauma, gender relations, reconciliation, and transitional justice (McMullin 2013; Cutter Patel 2009; Basini 2013; Oppenheim and Söderström 2017). Despite the effort to break the bonds between former commanders and

combatants, the relationships between and within these groups can be complex and enduring (Utas 2005, 2012). They range in nature from exploitation to welfare or economic activities, which may in fact offer a better chance of livelihoods than trades for which they received vocational training (Themnér 2012).

Another relevant factor is the role of social capital, involving trust, networks, and norms which help groups to achieve things which they could not do as individuals. DDR is in fact involved in building, transforming, and (sometimes) undermining this social capital, which is itself an essential part of a society’s ability to recover from war and enhance nonviolent ways of dealing with conflict (Leff 2008; Bowd 2011; Nussio and Oppenheim 2014; Kilroy and Basini 2018). One of the ways in which it interacts with social capital is the sense in which ex-combatants enter a “deal” when handing over their weapons: they expect benefits like education or training, and if these are not delivered in line with their expectations, there can be a sense of betrayal. For both communities and ex-combatants, there is a particular window of opportunity when trust can be established or undermined, before conclusions are drawn about how things really work – whatever about the promises (Kreutz and Nussio 2019; Kaplan and Nussio 2015).

Two groups with particular needs have faced different experiences of DDR. Women and men deal with specific challenges during peace and war, and also during reintegration. A gendered analysis is therefore important. Some women face greater stigma, and may avoid the programs in order to avoid being identified as an ex-combatant. Their economic and social opportunities are also different, as are their post-war networks (Coulter 2008; Jennings 2009; Luna 2019; Specht 2006). They have not always been catered for well in DDR, if gender was not fully brought into the planning or consultation. Children, meanwhile, are usually diverted into a parallel program, which is focused on education and engagement with the communities where they will settle. These can be much more substantial in terms of psycho-social support, family tracing, and benefits for the communities which receive them.

Does It Work?

Measuring success for the longer-term outcomes for ex-combatants is difficult, given the number of other variables involved, whatever about assessing the impact on the wider peace process. The limited number of studies have provided mixed results, with little positive impact seen in Sierra Leone according to the measures used (Humphreys and Weinstein 2007). However, significantly better outcomes were seen in Liberia, for those who took part in the program (Pugel 2007). Some of the pressures affecting DDR include the need for a large number of disparate actors, each with their own agendas, capacities, and organizational culture; pressure from donors for early tangible outputs and confidence-building results; corruption and poor administration; and general insecurity, population movement, and limited infrastructure. A significant development has been the growth of professional training courses on different aspects of DDR, and the agreement by a number of UN agencies on a comprehensive set of standards which have been revised and added to since their publication (Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS) 2006).

Summary

Like any tool, DDR can be used in ways which are more or less appropriate. It does not guarantee a perfect solution, but then ignoring thousands of combatants (many of whom did not choose to join an armed group) does not guarantee solutions either. Ownership and buy-in is important for success, as are coherence with the many other actions and initiatives needed for post-war recovery. Ultimately it is the combatants, the communities, and the society which make reintegration happen or not – a long-term process which DDR programs can facilitate if they are run well.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Colombian Peace Agreement 2016](#)
- ▶ [Female Combatants and Peacebuilding](#)

- ▶ [Gender Justice and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Local Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding–Development Nexus](#)
- ▶ [Post-Conflict Nation-building](#)
- ▶ [Sierra Leone](#)
- ▶ [Social Capital and Peace](#)
- ▶ [Transitional Justice and Peacebuilding](#)

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Discrimination

- ▶ [Ethnic Conflict in North Macedonia](#)

Disintegration

- ▶ [Balkanization](#)
- ▶ [Moldova-Transnistria Conflict](#)
- ▶ [Troubles, The: The Northern Ireland Conflict](#)

Dispute Resolution

- ▶ [Alternative Dispute Resolution](#)

Distributive Negotiation

- ▶ [Negotiation](#)

Disunity

- ▶ [Balkanization](#)
- ▶ [Troubles, The: The Northern Ireland Conflict](#)

Diversity

- ▶ [Civil Wars in Sudan and South Sudan](#)

Divided Cities

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Synonyms

[Contested cities](#); [Frontier cities](#); [Polarized cities](#); [Postwar cities](#)

Definition

Divided cities are cities that have recently experienced war, no longer do, but are stuck in transitions to peace because the conflict over their political system and future status continues between the previously warring parties. Notable examples are Belfast (Northern Ireland), Jerusalem (Israel-Palestine), and Nicosia (Cyprus).

Introduction

Divided cities are hardly new war and peace phenomena. Prominent cases like Belfast, Jerusalem, and Nicosia –i.e., cities that have experienced war, no longer do, but are stuck in transitions to peace – are longstanding (Gusic 2019). Yet what is novel about divided cities is that they are increasingly causing problems for people living in them, for the cities themselves, and for the wider war-to-peace transitions they often are central in. This entry has five parts. It first explores why divided cities have become topical, then problematizes the labels used to define them, elaborates on their core conceptual aspects, and reflects upon their potentials and problems. It ends with a summary.

Divided Cities in an Ever-Urbanizing World

Divided cities have become topical for several reasons. One is the rapidly growing centrality of cities. While cities always have been vital to society, they are more central than ever before *and* growing in importance with an unprecedented speed (Brenner 2014). Cities are economic hubs that drive global growth, stand for disproportionate amounts of GDP output, and link regional economies (Sassen 2002). More than half of humanity lives in cities while the future population growth will be almost exclusively urban, thereby expanding the world's urban population from today's 55% to 68% in 2050 and 85% in 2100 (OECD 2015; United Nations 2019). Cities are also the location of universities and tertiary hospitals, of instruments of governing, of protests and

riots, and of progress in arts, politics, and science (Brenner 2014). This trend has made cities highly strategic resources in winning war and securing peace. It is today hard to imagine territorial entities being viable without the materiality of cities – as economic hubs, political centers, and infrastructural nodes – or having legitimacy without the symbolism of cities – as sites of civilization, politics, and culture (Beall et al. 2013; Patel and Burkle 2012). The result is that divided cities have become more important to hold and less acceptable to lose, effectively making Albanian-Serb conflict lines more entrenched in Mitrovica than elsewhere in Kosovo, Belfast the flashpoint of Catholic-Protestant violence in Northern Ireland, and control over Jerusalem an existential issue in Israel-Palestine.

Urbanization of war is another reason why divided cities have become topical. The just-mentioned centrality of cities often leads conflict parties to concentrate war efforts to key urban sites, thereby making cities like Aleppo, Marawi, and Sarajevo major frontiers in wider conflicts (Gaffikin and Morrissey 2011; Graham 2010; Pullan 2011). The economic centrality of cities also makes them vital to war economics, with the ability to fight often dependent on controlling cities (Beall et al. 2013). This economic potency is even more elevated in war as cities often become nodes of criminal activities and entry-points of aid (Hills 2009). Since many contemporary wars are identity-based, cities are also targeted as both symbols of heterogeneous coexistence and actual sites of intergroup mixing (Ristic 2014; Yassin 2010). The predominance of intrastate and asymmetric wars exposes cities even more since urban sites help insurgents level the playing field – e.g., by providing them with illicit revenues or easy refuge amongst civilians (Elfversson et al. 2019). This inability to separate civilians from insurgents additionally makes cities notoriously hard to conquer, effectively making urban warfare entrenched (Beall et al. 2013). It is thus not by accident that Aleppo took so long to fall or that both Mostar and Beirut were divided rather than seized during their respective wars. Urbanization of war has thus made the circumstances in which cities become divided increasingly common.

Divided, Contested, or Postwar Cities?

Cities like Jerusalem, Mostar, and Nicosia belong to the same category of cities because they have experienced war, no longer do, but are stuck in transitions to peace (cf. Bollens 2012; Calame and Charlesworth 2009; Gusic 2019). Yet these cities are often studied under different labels, which makes their conceptual core imprecise, confuses outsiders who may not realize that the same cities are studied, and keeps compatible studies isolated since they study “different” cities. It is therefore important to elaborate on these labels, reflect upon the implications, strengths, and weaknesses of each, but also assert that research under these labels tends to be compatible. Below the most common labels are covered: divided, contested, and postwar.

Divided cities is the most common label used to depict cities such as Jerusalem and Mostar. Its principal advantage is that almost everybody “knows” what is alluded to when one refers to these cities as divided. They were namely divided by the preceding war and still tend to function apart (Björkdahl and Strömbom 2015; Calame and Charlesworth 2009; Carabelli 2018). This directness, however, is also its main disadvantage. The reason is that every city is divided according to some axis, effectively making the term “divided” imprecise since it is unclear both what kind of divisions are alluded to and what kind of cities are singled out (Gaffikin and Morrissey 2011). This disadvantage is made evident by the fact that research on divided cities often focuses on cities without recent experience of war and/or examines divisions according to class or political preference.

The label contested cities is more precise whilst also being commonsensical. Cities such as Sarajevo and Nicosia are contested in terms of how they are to be socio-politically ordered, both regarding the composition of their political systems and regarding which political entities they belong to (Hepburn 2004; Pullan and Baillie 2013; Rokem and Boano 2018). Yet the term “contested” is not without its ambiguities. Cities can be contested without the conflict being about the political system or territorial belonging, like

contestation between squatters and property owners or between security forces and criminal organizations. Cities can also be contested *without* recent experience of war, as made evident by the fact that research on contested cities sometimes includes cities such as Brussels and Montreal.

This problem of imprecision in divided and contested is often amended through the prefix “ethnationally [divided/contested cities]” (see Allegra et al. 2012; Gaffikin and Morrissey 2011) – which both narrows down possible cases and captures common conflict lines. Yet this prefix is problematic. It travels badly since conflict lines do not have to be ethnonational, but can be religious like in Bagdad or ideological like in Berlin during the Cold War. It also fuels simplistic explanations since these cities rarely are ethnationally divided/contested only – e.g., while conflict lines in Belfast do run along a “Catholic-Protestant” axis, class-based and intragroup tensions also exist (Murtagh and Shirlow 2006). This prefix also does little to exclude cities without recent experiences of war.

The label postwar cities is much more precise since it captures the core of what makes these cities stand out: they have experienced war, no longer do, but are stuck in transitions to peace because they continue to be disputed along conflict lines of war (Bou Akar 2018; Gusic 2019; Sawalha 2010). This label thus escapes the problem of both contested and divided as it never focuses on general divisions and contestations only while excluding cities without recent experiences of war. Yet it faces problems of its own, the most substantive of which is that the term “postwar” is not univocally used to depict still ongoing war-to-peace transitions but also settings that are recovering from war without being fundamentally disputed.

These different labels thus differ in precision, implication, and problems. Within the context of war and peace, however, research focusing on these cities tend to be compatible. No matter what label is used, researchers tend to include the same cases whilst focusing on similar research problem(s). For reasons of readability, the reminder of this chapter will use the label “divided

cities”, but in doing so it will also refer to research on contested and postwar cities.

The Conceptual Core of Divided Cities

Divided cities have two conceptual “building blocks”: they are cities and they are stuck in war-to-peace transitions. While there is not one undisputed definition of cities, they are often theorized as constituted by (1) heterogeneity, (2) density, and (3) openness and permeability. This means that cities consists of heterogeneous elements of people, institutions, ideas, and so on that exist in unescapable proximity and have access to multiple contact points such as streets and squares in which they can meet. Added to this internal constitution is that cities also are central within their wider contexts (Hall 1999; Lefebvre 1996; Wirth 1964). Cities are additionally often theorized as functioning through (1) mixing, (2) conflict, (3) accommodation, (4) creativity, and (5) fragmentation. This means that cities mix heterogeneous elements together, the result of which is conflict over everything from housing and employment to political direction; mutual accommodation since coexistence in the same city is impossible without it; creation of new identities, innovative services, and hybrid political movements; and fragmentation of city life since the complexity of cities mean that their heterogeneous elements often exist side-by-side rather than together (Amin and Thrift 2002; Hall 1999; Sennett 1991).

The definition of incomplete war-to-peace transitions is not undisputed either. In broad brushstrokes, it nevertheless implies that the political entities in question have experienced war, no longer do, but are yet to transition to peace because the conflict over them continues – i.e., there is no consensus regarding their political system and/or future status while the return to war is not unimaginable (Davenport et al. 2018; Mac Ginty 2006; Wallensteen 2015).

The Common Features of Divided Cities

When combining these two conceptual building blocks, divided cities emerge as cities that have

experienced war, no longer do, but are yet to transition to peace because the conflict over their political system and future status continues. This continuation of conflict manifests itself in multiple ways. A prominent feature of divided cities is different forms of parallelism. Institutional parallelism is one example. While its nature and extent differs – stretching from complete separation of Nicosia’s city administration(s) between two competing states (Calame and Charlesworth 2009) to informal parallelism within Mostar’s “united” administration where Bosniaks control the eastern and Croats the western part of the city (Björkdahl and Gusic 2013) – the principal modus operandi are that antagonistic groups try to govern themselves without influence from “the [enemy] other.” The result is everything from overlapping security forces that compete over the same territory to duplication of social services in the sense that they operate in “our” part of the city only – e.g., in Beirut different armed groups constantly struggle over strategic sites while Mostar has two garage disposal services that focus on the eastern *or* western part of the city. Residential parallelism is also common, meaning that people live in homogenous clusters and have little to no contact with “the other.” These clusters can be scattered across the city with group dominance changing from street to street – like it does in Belfast (Murtagh and Shirlow 2006) – or exist as large blocks – like Albanians who mostly live on the south side of Mitrovica’s Ibar river while Serbs mostly live on the north side (Gusic 2019). Educational parallelism is also prevalent in divided cities. This means that student bodies are segregated, education systems are divided, and curricula are incompatible and biased to the point of propaganda (Hromadžić 2008). Infrastructural parallelism, while less common, also tends to exist in divided cities. It manifests itself in duplication of everything from electricity grids, water supplies, and sewage systems to public transport and roads. This means that while different city parts are technically side-by-side, they function like different cities as electricity outages or water supply problems tend to only affect one side of the city (Calame and Charlesworth 2009; Gaffikin and Morrissey 2011).

Another prevalent feature of divided cities is that people end up living as “intimate enemies” (Bollens 1999, 8). The density and mixing of cities means that stable demarcation lines separating antagonists are much harder to establish in urban settings than elsewhere. The result is that people in divided cities are forced to constantly engage with “the other.” This often leads to clashes, tensions, and violence becoming both routinized and omnipresent in everyday life (Pullan and Baillie 2013). Examples are when stones are thrown at “their” school busses in Belfast for driving through “our” areas or when youth in Mitrovica engage in fights along ethnonational lines on or around the bridges over Ibar. Had the different antagonists in each city not lived so close to one another, these everyday clashes would not have been as frequent.

Divided cities also tend to become securitized. The difficulty to establish stable demarcation lines combined with intimate enmity often means that everything which is “ours” is seen as vulnerable (Bollens 2012). Few parts of divided cities are therefore unaffected by the continuation of conflict; instead almost every square meter – from power plants and major employers to streets and buildings – is claimed and protected through defensive architecture, paramilitary patrols, and everyday intimidation. The few excepted parts that remain “mixed” are in turn attacked because they are either seen as opportunities to get the upper hand by securing more territory and/or symbols of coexistence that undermine arguments for division (Sassen 2013).

The omnipresence of macroconflicts in everyday life is also prevalent. Conflict is in many ways integral to how cities function – without it heterogeneity or creativity would not exist either. Yet divided cities tend to transform everyday conflicts inherent to cities into principled and toxic “us and them” conflicts that cannot be compromised over. This means that seemingly mundane microissues – such as the widening of streets, renovation of water pipes, or business permits – all become about group survival (Silver 2010). Examples include constant struggles over where to locate healthcare facilities or community centers in Belfast, over the number of religious venues in

Mostar, and over the construction of residential areas in Jerusalem.

Divided cities lastly tend to become built apart since impenetrable delineation towards “the other side” is seen as instrumental to both protect the in-group and cement city ownership. One common strategy to achieve this is to construct walls, barricades, fences, buffer zones, and checkpoints. An (in)famous example is the Green Line, a demilitarized buffer zone that was created decades ago, still is patrolled by UN peacekeepers, and almost completely separates Greeks and Turks in Nicosia. Belfast’s peacewalls are almost as notorious. Erected in the beginning of war to keep Catholics and Protestants apart, they are today longer and higher than ever and effectively sever the connections between adjacent city areas. This is because people can only go “over there” through gates that are limited in number, usually far away, and irregularly open (Calame and Charlesworth 2009; Murtagh and Shirlow 2006). Yet many other divided cities also have defensive architecture that materially and/or symbolically keeps people separated. Barricades have over the years been erected by Serbs in Mitrovica determined to keep both Albanians and the Kosovar state out (Gusic 2019), Jerusalem is filled with walls and checkpoints intended to protect Israelis and control Palestinians (Rokem and Boano 2018), and Beirut is still dissected by defensive lines between Christians, Shias, and Sunnis between whom renewed war is not unthinkable (Bou Akar 2018).

The Effects on Citizens, the Cities Themselves, and the Wider Conflict Settings

The effects of these common features are often severe. Citizens in divided cities are often exposed to quite high levels of violence, have their rights to healthcare or employment denied, and are unable to access all city parts. Belfast has merely 20% of the Northern Irish population but attracts 40% of its violence. The city is also where dissident paramilitaries have concentrated attacks in the aftermath of the Brexit vote (Gaffikin and Morrissey 2006, 879). The socio-political modus operandi in Mostar is almost entirely ethnonational in nature, meaning that group belonging and loyalty is key

for accessing jobs and services while genuine needs, legislated rights, or qualification matter far less. Nicosia in turn is so securitized and built apart that people can only cross to “the other side” by foot and via double checkpoints where ID cards must be shown and access always can be denied (Calame and Charlesworth 2009). Citizens in these cities also tend to live divided and politicized lives with little everyday interaction with “them.” Part of the explanation is that people do not want to interact. Yet part of it is also that noncontact is encouraged while mixing is discouraged in the sense that people can get beaten up if coming “here” as well as excluded if socializing with “them.” Examples include intimidation by the infamous “Bridge Watchers” in Mitrovica and paramilitary activity in Beirut (Bou Akar 2018; Gusic 2019).

Divided cities themselves hardly escape problems either. Division in almost all segments of life means that everything in these cities – like city councils or healthcare systems – is much more ineffective and expensive than necessary (Kliot and Mansfeld 1999). This is illustrated by the fact that Beirut has numerous security services, Mitrovica has two country codes, and Mostar has two (ethnonationally coded) universities. Parallelism, securitization, and defensive architecture also lead divided cities to be much more homogenous, closed, and impermeable while experiencing far less mixing and accommodation. The effect is that these cities become starkly fragmented and paralyzed when it comes to infrastructure projects, economic development, and anti-corruption measures (Silver 2010; Yassin 2010). Divided cities also tend to underperform economically since few companies are willing to accept arbitrary rule of law, deadlocked politics, or reoccurring violence. Parallelism, securitization, and omnipresence of conflict in turn undermine the internal economic dynamics of cities in the sense that people stop trading with “the other side” because of fear, intimidation, or zero-sum politics (Sassen 2013).

The wider contexts of divided cities also tend to be impacted by them. The fact that conflict continues more uninterruptedly and intensely in divided cities means that they often become the

primary fault lines of wider conflicts, the major hinders in wider peace processes, and the most volatile flashpoints of renewed violence. Tensions between the different sides can be found across Lebanon, yet the preparations for “the war yet to come” are nevertheless concentrating to frontiers in Beirut (Bou Akar 2018, 8). Illegal settlements, continued violence, refugee return, and the “security barrier” are concrete and everyday problems that affect almost everyone across Israel-Palestine. Yet the right to Jerusalem still constitutes one of the most significant hinders to peace (Bollens 1999). Mitrovica in turn is where violent events have highest potency to generate Kosovo-wide tensions since both Albanians and Serbs see the city as imperative to control (Gusic 2019).

Potentials and Problems of Divided Cities in War and Peace

Some wider key points about divided cities are important to emphasize. The first point is that divided cities lose most of their ability to foster coexistence between previously warring groups. This constructive potential stems from how cities are constituted and function. Aspects such as heterogeneity and mixing are often argued to give cities ability to transcend societal divides, bridge communities, and stimulate coexistence (Amin and Thrift 2002; Lefebvre 1996; Sassen 2013). This also stretches to divided cities, which consist of different previously warring groups that are densely located, have permeability between them, and mix with each other. This can generate reconciliation as people are both able and forced to regularly meet “the other” (Bollens 1999; Gusic 2019). Divided cities also have almost indivisible assets and shared problems – like water supplies, sewer systems, and social services – that are best addressed together. This need for cooperation has the potential to create shared socio-political rule (Gaffikin and Morrissey 2011; Rokem and Boano 2018). The centrality of divided cities lastly means that what happens in them will spread beyond them. If divided cities then happen to stimulate coexistence and shared socio-political rule, these dynamics might have spill-over effects

to wider conflict settings (Bollens 2012). War-to-peace transitions, however, tend to undermine the aspects of cities which give them constructive potential (Sassen 2013). People clustering, attending segregated schools, and avoiding “the other” leads divided cities to mostly consist of homogenous parts. Defensive architecture, fear, and securitization in turn undermine permeability and remove contact points in which “the other” can be encountered. Divided cities also tend to undermine mixing and accommodation, both by removing the preconditions of mixing (e.g., heterogeneity or openness and permeability) and by making mixing and accommodation something that is best avoided. The results are that people are much less able to meet each other (Björkdahl and Strömbom 2015; Sassen 2013). The same applies to citywide cooperation. The tendency of all issues to become about the macro-conflict makes almost all compromises with “the other” highly controversial in divided cities. Parallelism also means that there are far less indivisible assets and shared problems in divided cities over which compromise is needed. This weakened ability to both bring people together and create cooperation through shared socio-political rule also has wider effects; instead of becoming models for peaceful coexistence, divided cities often become symbols of how coexistence is impossible (Calame and Charlesworth 2009).

The second point, however, is that divided cities nevertheless retain some ability to foster coexistence between previously warring groups (Bollens 2012; Gusic 2019; Pullan and Baillie 2013). It is hard to make all city parts utterly homogenous as this would require dynamics such as clustering or securitization to be both omnipresent and unopposed. Since this is rarely the case, most divided cities retain some heterogeneity. Openness and permeability are likewise difficult to destroy. While divided cities may lose many contact points, it is hard to close them down completely. Removing the ability to move between what contact points still remain is equally hard since it would require different city parts to become hermetically sealed from each other. Mixing also tends to continue. Mixing in divided cities is undermined both by the removal of its

preconditions and by rendering it something best avoided. Yet divided cities always retain some heterogeneity while rarely becoming completely closed down and impermeable. It is moreover all but impossible to convince, threaten, or force *everyone* to not interact with “them.” The incompleteness of both dynamics means that some people in divided cities still mix (Bollens 2012; Rokem and Boano 2018). This continued existence of heterogeneity, openness and permeability, and mixing – in combination with density (which makes antagonists live close to one another) and fragmentation (which allows progressives to establish a presence there) – makes divided cities able to foster coexistence between previously warring groups. While this rarely is the case, such an outcome does not diminish the *potential* of divided cities. There are not many “political entities where ‘the other’ can be met with such ease, where people are as heterogeneous, and where cooperation is that common” as in divided cities (Gusic 2019, 263). Jerusalem may be the issue that no one wants to compromise over, yet it still holds and attracts multitudes of different people, making it perhaps the place in Israel-Palestine where mixing is most likely (Rokem and Boano 2018). Kirkuk both concentrates and generates violence. Yet Kirkuk’s density – as well as its disputed status – also means that there are few places in Iraq in which people can and do engage “the other” as much (O’Driscoll 2018). Mostar lastly often lives up to its entrenched reputation. Yet there is parallelly no major city in Bosnia-Herzegovina as heterogeneous as Mostar (Carabelli 2018).

The third point is that continued divisions – especially among “ordinary” people – often have less to do with group-based animosities or post-war struggles than with indirect effects of conflict (Gusic 2019). Built environment is one example. Divided cities are often materially divided through defensive architecture that “made sense” and was supported at the time of construction. Yet since built environment is long-lasting (Massey 2005), the peacewalls in Belfast and the Green Line in Nicosia still continue to separate people, even if the levels of violence that once spurred these walls and this line are long

gone (Bollens 2012; Calame and Charlesworth 2009). The routinization of division is another example. Residential clustering, educational segregation, and institutional separation all divide everyday life of people in divided cities – e.g., into north/south in Nicosia or east/west in Jerusalem. Not necessarily because people are actively trying to avoid “the other,” but because it is more convenient to live near family and friends, attend the closest school, and go to the local restaurant. If these aspects of everyday life are located in parallel worlds, which in divided cities they tend to be, division becomes routinized rather than actively pursued (Boal 1996). Another example is commanders-turned-politicians who often retain and/or gain control over employment opportunities or welfare provisions. This creates patron-client relationships between politicians who want to uphold group-based division and citizens who just want to secure everyday socioeconomic survival. The result is that people uphold divisions because they do not want to become unemployed or be denied healthcare, not because they despise “the other” (Gusic 2019).

These observations lead into the final point, which is that once cities become divided they tend to stay divided. The reason in that divisions often are self-reinforcing. An alternative reading of the just mentioned examples is that they are extremely hard to break out from. Belfast’s peacewalls are difficult to move across while the current political situation means their immanent removal is unlikely. The result is that most people are forced to continue living parallel everyday lives since walls cannot be ignored or forgotten (Murtagh and Shirlow 2006). The rather complete division of Greek and Turkish everyday life since 1974 means that noncontact with “them” is the only thing most people in Nicosia have known. The result is that people continue living apart since even if one wants to, engaging with “them” takes more time and effort than most have (Calame and Charlesworth 2009). The almost complete control Mostar’s ethnonational elites have over the employment market in turn means that socioeconomic survival *and* coexistence with “them” is an unattainable combination for most (Gusic 2019).

Concluding Summary

Divided cities are thus cities that have recently experienced war, no longer do, but are yet to transition to peace because the conflict over their political system and future status continues between the previously warring parties. While principal cases such as Belfast, Jerusalem, or Nicosia are longstanding phenomena within war and peace, rapidly increasing centrality of cities combined with urbanization of war is making divided cities increasingly topical in wider conflicts across the world.

These cities tend to share certain common features due to the continuity of conflict they experience. They often suffer from different forms of parallelism, from heavy securitization, from “intimate enmity” between previous neighbors, from macroconflicts becoming part of everyday life, and from divisive walls, buffer zones, and checkpoints. These commonalities often produce negative effects for citizens who are denied rights and exposed to violence, for cities themselves who often function either parallelly or poorly, and for wider conflict settings whose peace processes often are stalled. One long-term consequence of these commonalities and negative effects is that divided cities lose much of their ability to foster coexistence between people. This constructive potential, however, is never truly lost and often remains an underutilized feature of divided cities.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Balkanization](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding and Spatial Transformation](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding: Utopia and Reality](#)
- ▶ [Search for Peace, the](#)
- ▶ [Urban Peacebuilding](#)

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Divided Societies

- ▶ [Reconciliation in Northern Ireland](#)
-

Division

- ▶ [Balkanization](#)
 - ▶ [Moldova-Transnistria Conflict](#)
 - ▶ [Troubles, The: The Northern Ireland Conflict](#)
-

DR Congo: Local and International Peacebuilders' Interaction

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Peacebuilding · Local peace · Democratic Republic of Congo

Introduction¹

The way local and international peacebuilders interact in a given conflict context is a crucial factor for understanding the success or failure of their efforts. However, most scholars have focused on either the local or the international side of the interaction.² Authors focusing on *local* peacebuilders usually concentrate on civil society and its role in peacebuilding (e.g., Kanol 2010; Paffenholz 2010; Pouligny 2005). They

assess different local peace initiatives and show that they can make an important contribution to peace (Call and Cook 2003; Haider 2009; Prendergast and Plumb 2002; Van Tongeren et al. 1999, 2005). However, they do not always provide an in-depth analysis of how these different local efforts interact with international peacebuilding programs. If they do, the focus is often limited to reflections on how international peacebuilders can best support local initiatives and less on how local peacebuilders can contribute to improving international programs (Donais 2012; Hoksbergen 2005). Other authors focus on *international* peacebuilders. As Call and Cook (2003) state, peace scholars often take for granted to focus on international actors as the latter are assumed to have the lead in addressing conflict-affected contexts. This does not mean that they completely overlook local actors, but they rarely consider local actors as *peacebuilders* in their own right. Rather they focus on how international peacebuilders interact with the local population more broadly. This risks portraying local actors as “objects” rather than “subjects” of peacebuilding. In contrast to these previous studies, this entry underlines the importance of understanding the interaction between local and international peacebuilders as a central factor influencing the effectiveness of efforts to address armed conflicts. It first defines key terms and provides a review of the literature on local and international peacebuilders. It then presents insights from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) illustrating the importance of analyzing the interaction between local and international peacebuilders to understand the success or failure of their efforts.

Definitions

Peacebuilding

Galtung (1975) coined the term “peacebuilding” in a groundbreaking essay entitled “Three Approaches to Peace: Peacekeeping, Peacemaking and Peacebuilding” in 1975. Yet, the term only made its entry into policy in 1992, when former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali

¹This entry heavily draws on the book *Partners for Peace: The Interaction between Local and International Peacebuilding Actors*; see Hellmüller (2018).

²Ibrahim Abdi and Mason (2019) and Van Leeuwen (2009) provide noteworthy exceptions focusing directly on the interaction between local and international peacebuilders.

defined it in his *An Agenda for Peace* as “action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace” (Boutros-Ghali 1992). Since then, peacebuilding has come to involve a wide range of activities such as establishing security, socioeconomic foundations, and a new political framework as well as promoting reconciliation and justice (Barnett et al. 2007, pp. 49–50; Chetail 2009, p. 8; Smith 2004, p. 27).³ International organizations, bilateral donors, and NGOs have integrated these different activities into their policies and programs (Goetschel and Hagmann 2009, p. 56). While international peacebuilding has become prominent in policy-making and practice, in every conflict context, there are manifold local actors who build peace, for instance, by mediating in local conflicts, sensitizing for peaceful values, bringing people together in joint activities, helping communities to engage with the past, or creating local peace structures (Abo Naser et al. 2016; Hellmüller 2018; Mac Ginty 2008b; Van Tongeren et al. 2005). Such local peacebuilding initiatives have attracted increased scholarly interest since the so-called local turn in peace research (Mac Ginty and Richmond) (see ► “Everyday Peace”, ► “Local Peacebuilding”, ► “Peace Infrastructures”).

Local and International Peacebuilders

The categories of local and international peacebuilders are heterogeneous (Belloni 2012, p. 23; Kappler 2015, pp. 875–877; Nagelhus Schia and Karlsrud 2012, p. 16). As Millar (2014, p. 32) puts it, they are “placeholders for what are more complicated collections of actors with varying interests and levels of influence.”⁴ Therefore, the labels “local” and “international”

³Barnett et al. (2007) define peacebuilding along three dimensions: stability creation, restoration of state institutions, and socioeconomic dimensions. Similarly, Chetail (2009) cites security, socioeconomic recovery, and democracy as components of peacebuilding. Smith (2004) adds reconciliation as one of the main activities of peacebuilding.

⁴He refers to the terms “local” and “global,” but his statement is arguably also valid for the categories of “local” and “international.”

do not imply a hermetically distinct and homogeneous nature. Rather, identities are fluid, multiple, and dynamic. This calls for open definitions that leave enough space for context-specific nuances. Against this background, local peacebuilders are defined as actors that engage in peacebuilding and have a majority of national staff, their headquarters is in the conflict context, and they operate at the sub-national level. International peacebuilders are defined as actors that engage in peacebuilding and have at least some expatriates on staff in their country office (most of the time in the higher echelons of the organizational chart), their headquarters is outside of a given conflict context, and they are active in several conflict contexts. In the identification of whether these local and international actors are engaged in peacebuilding, it is advisable to explore whether they are known in the population for pursuing activities that are locally defined as building peace and whether they refer to themselves or are referred to by others as active in these activities. The form they take can vary from a few individuals working together in a loose association to a fully institutionalized and officially registered organization.

State of the Literature: Local and International Peacebuilding

While peacekeeping developed during the Cold War, what became known as international peacebuilding is largely a child of the post-Cold War years. With the unblocking of the UN Security Council, the numbers of UN missions in the world increased markedly. Between 1988 and 1992, 14 new operational missions were set up (Sabaratnam 2011, p. 15). Over roughly the same period of time (1988–1993), the number of peacekeepers in the field increased from 10,000 to an estimated 70,000, and the budget rose from approximately US\$ 400,000 in 1990 to US\$ 3.7 billion in 1993 (Fetherston and Nordstrom 1995, p. 100). This period was marked by a strong enthusiasm for liberalism. While the bipolar competition during the Cold War had rendered it impossible for the UN or other actors to promote

any system as a “model” of domestic governance, this changed with the domination of liberalism (Paris 2004, p. 15). The ultimate objective of international peacebuilding became the promotion of liberal democratic governance (Barnett 2006; Bellamy and Williams 2004; Paris 2004; Richmond 2004b; Zahar 2012; Zaum 2012). Such liberal peacebuilding denotes “the promotion of democracy, market-based economic reforms and a range of other institutions associated with ‘modern’ states as a driving force for building ‘peace’” (Newman et al. 2009, p. 3). The design of UN missions mirrored this liberal approach as they were henceforth mandated to promote democratic elections and market liberalization (Newman et al. 2009; Von Billerbeck 2016). This was exemplified in UN mission deployments to Angola (1988–1991 and 1991–1995), El Salvador (1991–1995), Cambodia (1991–1993), and Mozambique (1992–1994) (Chetail 2009, p. 12; Ottawa 2003, p. 314; Paris 2011, p. 33).

At the same time, state failure came to be considered one of the main reasons for armed conflicts (Newman et al. 2009, p. 9). Threats were no longer seen as coming from powerful, but from “weak” states. Conflict theories increasingly saw state weakness as a cause for the outbreak or continuation of a conflict. Publications such as “Saving Failed States” (Helman and Ratner 1992) or “Coming Anarchy” (Kaplan 1994) contributed to “a belief in a world that was, outside the West, subject to deep disorder and spinning further adrift from the state authority and order of the Cold War era” (Sabaratnam 2011, pp. 17–18). The framing of states as failed implied that the adequate response was to “fix” them by improving their governance capacities (Paris and Sisk 2007, pp. 2–3). Thereby, statebuilding became the main objective of peacebuilding (Donais 2012, p. 23; Jabri 2010, p. 53; Paris and Sisk 2007, pp. 2–3; Roberts 2008, p. 539). This meant that interventions had to become comprehensive as “all aspects of the state, society, and economy [were] to be rebuilt around liberal principles” (Barnett 2006, p. 88). This extension of peacebuilding mandates reached its zenith in the international transitional administrations of Cambodia (1992–1993), Bosnia-Herzegovina

(1995–2002), and East Timor (1999–2002) with the UN exercising governmental power (Bellamy 2010, p. 194; Chesterman 2007, p. 5; Zaum 2006, p. 455) (see ► “Post-Conflict Nation-Building”, ► “Post-Conflict Elections”).

With these extended roles of international actors in peacebuilding, the right balance between support and imposition became a key question in policy, practice, and research. Critiques became vocal about a “lack of the local” in international peacebuilding (Donais 2009a, 2012; Mac Ginty 2008a, 2011b; Mac Ginty and Richmond; Richmond 2009; Richmond and Mitchell 2012). They concerned the conceptualization, implementation, and outcomes of international peacebuilding in terms of its interaction with local ideas, contexts, and actors. First, authors questioned the *conceptualization* of peacebuilding as liberal. They highlighted that international peacebuilding was based on an assumption of liberalism as a universal norm, which does not necessarily hold in each context. As such, these critiques asserted that international peacebuilding was conceptualized without taking into account local definitions of peace (Bellamy 2010, p. 194; Jabri 2010, p. 55; Paris 2002, p. 638; Richmond 2004a, p. 141; Sending 2009, p. 5; Tadjbakhsh 2010, p. 125). The second strand of critiques questioned the *implementation* of international peacebuilding. They criticized the top-down approach that imposed a template of reforms on host populations, ignored the needs of those it supposedly sought to assist, and overlooked local capacities for peacebuilding. Thus, this second strand of critiques asserted that international peacebuilding was implemented without taking into account local needs and capacities (Begby and Burgess 2009, p. 92; Chandler 2010, p. 1; Mac Ginty 2008a, p. 145). Third, authors criticized international peacebuilding for not reaching its intended *outcomes* as it left most countries in a situation of “no war, no peace” (Mac Ginty 2006, p. 3) or with a “facade democracy” (Chandler 2010, p. 14). Authors showed that liberalism could be conflict-inducing by opening up societies to competition, legitimizing the very elites who caused the conflict in the first place, and

exacerbating economic inequalities. These critiques thus asserted that the outcome of international peacebuilding was more often a fragile elite peace than a locally owned peace (Barnett 2006, p. 89; Bellamy 2004, p. 31, 2010, p. 194; Tadjbakhsh 2010, pp. 124–125; Zahar 2012, p. 76).

In response to these critiques, two concepts were proposed in policy, practice, and research. Among policy-makers and practitioners, the concept of local ownership became central. It denotes the idea that local actors should own peacebuilding initiatives as this will ensure their sustainability (Donais 2012; Pouligny 2009; Reich 2006). Yet, while an important step away from externally imposed peacebuilding programs, the very idea retained a bias toward international actors. This is because the idea that local actors are supposed to own internationally conceived programs still presupposes that international actors retain most decision-making power in the design of programs (Donais 2009b, 2012; Hansen 2008; Pouligny 2009; Reich 2006). If, in turn, local ownership is defined as putting local actors in the driving seat to design and implement peacebuilding programs, the term “ownership” loses its significance, as it would be more aptly called local “leadership” (Hellmüller 2014). In research, the concept of hybridity was introduced to assess the interaction between local and international identities, interests, and actors (Mac Ginty 2010, 2011a, c; Richmond 2012; Richmond and Mitchell 2012; Tadjbakhsh 2011). It had an *a priori* more symmetric conception of the relationship between local and international actors. On the one hand, it warned against both a romanticization of everything “local” and a vilification of the “international” (Donais 2012; Lidén et al. 2009; Mac Ginty and Richmond). On the other hand, it steered away from portraying local actors as passive recipients of peacebuilding programs, but demonstrated how they actively shaped and reshaped them (Mac Ginty 2011b; Richmond and Mitchell 2012; Zaum 2012). Yet, it did not manage to fully overcome the bias toward international actors. First, authors still analyzed local actors predominantly in their *re*-action to the “international,” for instance, how they resisted,

adapted, or provided alternatives to international programs. This ignored local actions that were not predicated by international ones. Second, while pointing to the fluidity of the terms “local” and “international,” authors often assigned pre-determined attributes to them, supposing the international side to be “liberal” and “powerful” and local actors as a distinct “other” with less power, but “agency” (Heathershaw 2013, pp. 277, 280).

An analysis of the interaction between local and international *peacebuilders* can help overcome these two issues. First, it puts the focus on *peacebuilders* on both the local and international sides. Thereby, it does not only assess local peacebuilders in their *re*-action to international ones, but analyzes their own empirical reality and the actions they undertake in accordance with their own logic. Second, taking the subjective realities of local and international peacebuilders as main object of analysis shows how their perceptions shape their inter-subjective relationship. This allows for a framework in which roles and characteristics of actors are fluid and not pre-determined. An example of such an analysis is given in the following case study of the DRC.

Case Study: Democratic Republic of Congo (1999–2014)⁵

The DRC has been the theater of brutal warfare for almost three decades and has since 1999 hosted one of the biggest peacekeeping missions, the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in Congo (MONUSCO, earlier MONUC). The DRC has attracted vast scholarly interest. Authors have provided historical accounts of the armed conflicts in the DRC (e.g., Clark 2002; Nest et al. 2006; Prunier 2008; Reyntjens 2009; Turner 2007), the national peace process (e.g.,

⁵The information is based on 120 in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with a total of 195 persons as well as numerous informal discussions and participant observations carried out between March 2011 and March 2014 in Ituri in northeastern DRC and in the capital city Kinshasa.

Carayannis 2009; Reyntjens 2007; Rogier 2004), and the international response to the war (e.g., Autesserre 2009, 2010; Tull 2009; Vircoulon 2005a). When analyzing the armed conflict in the DRC, several scholarly contributions as well as policy reports place emphasis on the co-production of violence assessing how regional, national, and local conflict issues reinforced each other. This was especially the case in the northeastern province (formally district) of Ituri where escalating violence threatened to put the entire national peace process at risk (Van Woudenberg 2004; Veit 2010; Vircoulon 2005b; Vlassenroot and Raeymaekers 2004). Indeed, the causes of the periodic cycles of violence in Ituri were often not *distinctively* regional, national, or local, but *interconnected* at all these levels. This rendered cooperation between local and international peacebuilders crucial, as they had complementary perceptions and priorities.

Perceptions of the Armed Conflict and Peacebuilding Priorities

Local and international peacebuilders perceived the armed conflict in different ways. The perceptions of local peacebuilders in Ituri derived from their own experience as they had lived through the conflict. They were part of the social, political, and economic system that was afflicted by the war, and their perceptions resulted not only from their identity as peacebuilders, but also from their identity as Iturians who had experienced the conflict. Interviewees located the origins of the conflict in a localized land conflict that opposed the two main ethnic groups in the area. They recounted how quickly it spread throughout Ituri and ethnically polarized the entire population. The day a militia group attacked a village, all those who were not part of the militia's ethnic group were killed or fled, and the others often joined the attackers. This experience directly influenced local peacebuilders' definition of peace. They described it in relational terms as *social cohesion*, defined as reconciliation between ethnic groups and the absence of land conflicts. More concretely, it meant sharing community goods, being on good terms with neighbors, going to the same market, and eating, drinking, talking,

and praying together. One important aspect often mentioned, probably because it was so restricted during the war, was that peace meant being able to move freely again and going to the fields and markets without fear of attack or rape. Security was also an important aspect of peace: the security to sleep peacefully, not to be harassed, to be able to conduct activities, and to live without conflicts, militias, and arms. Security was seen as being contingent upon better relations between ethnic groups. Social cohesion was thus perceived as a guarantee of non-recurrence as it provided a structure of mutual assurance that fighting would not erupt again. Therefore, most local peacebuilders implemented programs that aimed at strengthening social cohesion, such as creating local networks, mediating in local conflicts, conducting sensitization activities, involving communities in joint activities, engaging communities with the past, and creating local peacebuilding structures.

International peacebuilders, in turn, had not lived through the conflict and had thus conceptually based, rather than empirically based, perceptions of it. Their priorities were influenced by the theory of "state failure" mentioned above (Dunn 2003, p. 5; Turner 2007, pp. 180–183). The DRC figured prominently in many publications on failed or weak states, and most explanations of the conflict referred to the breakdown of state authority and its impaired sovereignty (Dunn 2003; Von Einsiedel 2005). This framing was mirrored in international priorities because their response to the perceived state failure was to engage in *statebuilding* by promoting the state's monopoly on the legitimate use of force and its legal-rational authority (De Heredia 2012; Eriksen 2009; Lemarchand 2001). This was reflected in two measures: disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) and elections. These tools have three main advantages from an international peacebuilder's perspective. First, they provide a standard set of measures for which a toolkit is readily available, as they are implemented in different contexts. Second, they provide clearly measurable and visible milestones in contrast to other peacebuilding activities whose results will only be visible in the long term. Third, they are useful as an exit strategy. DDR aims to

restore the state's monopoly on the legitimate use of force after which international actors no longer need to provide security. Elections put in place a supposedly legitimate government that can exert authority.

The Interaction Between Local and International Peacebuilders

The above shows how perceptions differed between local and international peacebuilders in Ituri and how it influenced their peacebuilding priorities: While local peacebuilders focused on social cohesion, international peacebuilders engaged in statebuilding. Both priorities were needed as violence in DRC was co-produced by aspects at the local, national, and regional level. Thus, local and international peacebuilders complemented each other. Yet, their interaction was hampered by divergent perceptions of resources, capacities, and legitimacy.

Regarding resources, the financial resources that international actors usually put into conflict contexts are substantial and allow, for example, for the provision of social services, the holding of elections, the reform of different state sectors, or the conduct of trainings and reintegration programs for ex-combatants. The fact that international actors typically hold the "purse strings" and local actors are on the lookout for donor money is said to give the former substantial power over the latter (Donais 2012, p. 71; Van Brabant 2010, p. 8). International peacebuilders in Ituri defined resources in financial terms and saw local peacebuilders as donor dependent. Many international actors felt that local actors used them as mere channels of funding and that they had developed an attitude of expectations toward them. Local peacebuilders, in turn, did not perceive resources merely in financial terms, but also in the ability to achieve a longer-term impact. They underlined their low start-up costs, as they did not need to import expensive outside expertise, their ability to implement projects without convoluted bureaucratic procedures, and their low infrastructural costs due to their modest offices. In contrast, they mentioned that international actors had much higher costs and spent a lot of money on aspects other than the concrete

project activities, such as visibility purposes. Aware of the commonly made accusation that they only worked for peace because it was a lucrative business, many local peacebuilders underlined that they had started implementing peacebuilding programs before international donors had arrived in Ituri. They said that it was a logical redefinition of priorities: If someone had an organization working on development or education, they could not continue their work during the war, so they needed to address peacebuilding issues first.

A second reason for the lack of cooperation between local and international peacebuilders in Ituri was the way they perceived capacities. In particular, they had differing views on what counts as information and what counts as knowledge and, thus, capacity. The Oxford dictionary defines information as "facts provided or learned about something or someone" and knowledge as "awareness or familiarity gained by experience of a fact or situation." Information is factual and thus verifiable or falsifiable. Knowledge is an already verified belief and connects fragments of information. It is thus a capacity, which is the ability to do or understand something. When asked about their capacities, most international peacebuilders mentioned their thematic knowledge on issues related to peacebuilding. At the same time, they portrayed local peacebuilders' context knowledge as information, rather than knowledge. This was illustrated by the fact that when inviting local peacebuilders to share their context knowledge, international actors often talked about "consultations" conducted under the rationale of gathering *information*. This also implied that local actors were seen as in need of capacity-building to acquire the thematic knowledge held by international actors. As such, knowledge exchange was not portrayed as an experience of mutual learning, but as one actor receiving and the other one providing it. There was, for instance, never a discussion about holding a workshop conducted *by* local actors *for* international actors doing capacity-building on the Iturian context. Thus, while international peacebuilders saw local knowledge as useful to guide the implementation of their own programs, their treatment of it as information

meant that they rarely used it to define peacebuilding priorities in the first place. Local peacebuilders, in turn, considered what they knew about the context to be knowledge and therefore a capacity that international peacebuilders lacked. They were not generally opposed to receiving capacity-building, but they saw their own needs in the realm of managerial, rather than thematic, capacities. As such, local peacebuilders would have wished for training on financial or human resources management or on strategies to increase their eligibility for international funding.

A third reason for the lack of cooperation between local and international peacebuilders in Ituri was that they had different perceptions of legitimacy. Local and international peacebuilders differed in their definition of the social system within which they evaluated legitimacy. International actors usually referred to the outside social system of donors when talking about both their own and local peacebuilders' legitimacy. With regard to their own legitimacy, the outside orientation led to pressure to show results, as donors needed to be informed about the advancement of the projects they funded (Autesserre 2014, pp. 209–214; Bächtold et al. 2013, p. 6). With regard to local peacebuilders' legitimacy, international actors considered those actors as legitimate who were efficient according to their standards. This meant that they preferred partners who had already worked with international actors in the past, who knew the procedures, and who spoke their language (Verkoren and Van Leeuwen 2014, p. 109). Local peacebuilders, in turn, defined legitimacy with reference to the inside social system. They considered their own legitimacy as deriving from their status as insiders in the communities who knew the local languages, culture, and customs. This inside orientation also influenced the way they perceived international peacebuilders' legitimacy. Like the latter, they based this assessment on efficiency, but defined it mainly in relation to the outcomes of international peacebuilding programs. While generally appreciative of the international presence, local peacebuilders perceived them as reacting slowly due to cumbersome procedures and sometimes doubted the concrete impact they had on the

ground. The view that international programs were evaluated against outside standards furthered these impressions. For instance, local peacebuilders criticized the fact that most of the consultants hired to conduct evaluation visits were international, rather than local, actors indicating against whose standards achievements were measured.

Obstacles to Building Sustainable Peace

The above shows how the different perceptions of resources, capacities, and legitimacy influenced the cooperation between local and international peacebuilders in DRC. This had three main consequences that influenced the effectiveness of their peacebuilding efforts.

The first was that international peacebuilders devised their strategies without involving local peacebuilders. This is shown in the fact that they interacted differently with their international than with their local counterparts. International actors often exchanged information more frequently with other international peacebuilders than with local peacebuilders. Indeed, although international organizations in Ituri were functionally different and ranged from humanitarian to peacebuilding to development and human rights organizations, they often created their own forums for interaction (see also Smirl 2008, p. 243). Coordination with local peacebuilders was less tight, as international actors framed it in terms of “capacity-building” or “consultations” and as an act of “good will” from their side instead of an exchange between equal partners. Because of the lack of cooperation and therefore exclusion of local actors in international strategy-making, international peacebuilders neglected the importance of fostering social cohesion in the initial stages of their engagement until 2006. Indeed, with their focus being on statebuilding, they overlooked social cohesion with regard to both reconciliation between ethnic groups and the resolution of land conflicts. Regarding the first, international actors did not substantively complement local reconciliation initiatives in their support to structures at the national level, nor did they further strengthen them at the local level. For instance, the national peace agreement (2002/2003) foresaw a

Truth and Reconciliation Commission, but it never functioned and was locally perceived as failure or remained unknown altogether (Davis and Hayner 2009, p. 22). Moreover, despite the fact that the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued its four first arrest warrants on leaders of militias active in Ituri, it did not promote reconciliation at the local level (Borello 2004, p. 30; Davis and Hayner 2009, p. 27). Indeed, there were only a few international programs that directly focused on supporting local reconciliation efforts (Samset and Madore 2006). At the same time, international actors also overlooked land conflicts in the initial years of their engagement (Vircoulon 2010). They framed land conflicts only as a consequence of the war linked to the return of internally displaced persons and refugees, but not as connected to its outbreak. However, the conflicts related to returnees were just one form of land conflicts among many others, such as conflicts around the right of usage and delimitation of lands or property conflicts (Mongo et al. 2009, p. 6; RCN Justice & Démocratie 2009, p. 9). However, these types of land conflicts – although locally perceived as one of the main causes of the conflict – remained largely absent in international peacebuilders' initial strategy.

The second consequence of impaired cooperation was that international peacebuilders included local peacebuilders only in the project implementation phase, which left them very little room for adaptation of international statebuilding programs to local priorities. In that role, local peacebuilders highlighted the local aspects of DDR and elections. Several local peacebuilders acted as implementing partners of international organizations for DDR programs and rendered them more locally relevant in three ways (Rouw and Willems 2010, p. 40). First, they helped include communities thereby reducing skepticism toward international DDR programs, which were often seen as giving disproportional benefits to belligerents. Second, they saw DDR as a long-term process and focused on reintegration, being the aspect that international peacebuilders neglected in the beginning. They criticized the lists of weapons collected and demobilized combatants as success

measurements for DDR programs and lobbied for longer DDR programs and a shift of focus away from numbers toward the social processes involved in DDR. Third, local peacebuilders underlined the importance of an approach to security that not only focused on the police and the army, which were sometimes considered as predatory rather than protective actors from a local perspective, but also on community alertness and awareness of local perceptions of security. Regarding elections, local peacebuilders equally played an important role in adapting international projects in the implementation phase. First, they conducted sensitization and information campaigns on voter registration and citizenship to support the national electoral process. Seeking to bring the electoral process closer to the people, they shared information about candidates and sensitized people about the meaning, purpose, and importance of voting. Second, they included customary authority structures in their activities and attempted to build bridges between the customary and the official governance systems. Third, they sought to foster trust between the government and the broader population. For instance, they invited authorities to community gatherings to promote exchanges between them and local communities. This shows that local peacebuilders played an important role in adapting international statebuilding programs. Yet, they were only able to conduct marginal adaptations as they were only involved in the implementation phase and not in strategy-making.

The third consequence of the hampered cooperation was a lack of coordination leading to duplication of efforts. After the elections in 2006 that ended the transitional period, international peacebuilders adapted their focus to include social cohesion. This was due to a realization that social cohesion was needed to prevent the conflict from erupting again and the increased criticism in research and policy on the lack of the local in liberal peacebuilding. While being an important change, international peacebuilders started to intervene directly at the local level by implementing social cohesion projects, rather than addressing its national aspects or working

with local peacebuilders on already existing local initiatives. Thereby, they often duplicated and crowded out ongoing local activities. Local peacebuilders recounted that some international actors behaved as if social cohesion activities had not existed before and that they did not value their previous work. For instance, they engaged in land conflict mappings or the creation of local networks that duplicated already ongoing efforts by local peacebuilders. Moreover, the fact that international peacebuilders often came with substantial resources distorted local incentive structures and crowded out local organizations. Local peacebuilders regularly lost their influence once international organizations arrived, for instance, because the latter could pay per diems for attendance at workshops. Therefore, they started to encounter difficulties in having communities participate in workshops without being compensated.

This meant that while local and international peacebuilding programs changed over the long term with local actors adapting international statebuilding programs to local perspectives and international actors increasingly taking up the priority of social cohesion, they still only partially responded to the war with its multilayered issues. On the one hand, social cohesion programs lacked a necessary complement at the national level in the form of a functioning transitional justice process. On the other hand, statebuilding programs were of limited local relevance as local peacebuilders could only marginally adapt them in the implementation phase. This left important gaps in the peacebuilding response to the armed conflict in the DRC. Even after the end of widespread violence, relationships between different ethnic groups remain easily ignitable and land conflicts insufficiently addressed while the state still lacks the monopoly on the use of force as well as popularly legitimized authority. While both local and international peacebuilders had relevant programs, their efforts ultimately remained insufficient because they addressed the multilayered conflict issues in a partial manner. This left a fragile peace in Ituri with violence that continues to erupt until today.

Conclusions

In contrast to previous studies that focus on either local or international peacebuilders, this entry underlines the importance of understanding the interaction between them as a central factor influencing the effectiveness of efforts to address multilayered armed conflicts. It presented insights from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) illustrating that local and international peacebuilders often have different perceptions on a given armed conflict and related peacebuilding priorities. Therefore, cooperation between them plays a crucial role in addressing a conflict in a comprehensive manner. Yet, their interaction is often hampered leading to partial responses to multilayered conflicts leaving situations of a fragile peace. Understanding the obstacles to improved cooperation is thus crucial in making peacebuilding more effective.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Everyday Peace](#)
- ▶ [Local Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Peace Infrastructures](#)
- ▶ [Post-Conflict Elections](#)
- ▶ [Post-Conflict Nation-Building](#)

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Drawing

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Emancipatory

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Emancipatory Peace

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Synonyms

[Critical theory](#); [Emancipation](#); [Liberalism](#); [Peace](#); [Realism](#)

Description

Emancipatory peace describes a form of peace process that does more than provide basic security, but one that also advances rights, justice and sustainability and removes direct or indirect violence.

Introduction

There has been frequent reference to the concept of an ‘emancipatory peace’ in the critical academic literature on peace and conflict studies (see Richmond 2005; Nunes 2012; Booth 1991). Terms such as ‘emancipation’ and, its relative, ‘social justice’ are widely used in leftist and postcolonial theoretical literature and were perhaps common parlance in previous political eras in the previous two centuries (see Marx 1963). According to Rupert’s (2009) reading of Marx (1963, p. 54), “[p]olitical Emancipation” entails equal status of individual citizens in relation to the state, equality before the law, regardless of religion, property, or other “private” characteristics of individual persons. . . Political Emancipation represents real, historical progress’. The state is necessary in order to rescue the individual from a position in a fixed hierarchy (such as under feudalism). Liberal versions argue that civil society is necessary in order to enable the individual to achieve self-determination in relation to but also given the power of the state. Autonomy and agency are based upon the concept of the emancipated subject, liberated from oppression perhaps by democratic revolution or liberal intervention: processes of emancipation are therefore connected to security (Booth 1991), development, rights, peacebuilding, and state-building as well as, more recently, to the broader question of global justice (Arendt 1993; Sen 2000; Berlin 2004; Foucault 1982; Pieterse 1992; Rancière 2009). A debate has also begun pertaining to emancipation from modern forms of capitalism and technology (Duffield 2018, pp. 153–154; Howard 2015, p. xix; K.N.C. 2018; Monshipouri and Mokhtari 2016, p. 290).

It has become common in the critical, liberal, and mainstream literatures to claim or intimate that political emancipation is inherently violent because it must be connected to forms of intervention, risking vanguardism, or retrogressive social activism. Intervention is normally driven by actors and organisations with their own interests that lack local knowledge, accountability, and sensitivity and therefore create new ethical risks, as well as new opportunities for domination. After the emergence of territorial sovereignty and nationalism and its failure as a peaceful system of organisation, it has been inevitable that a liberal or neoliberal system of intervention would be refined, which would regulate political behaviour to maintain the status quo or refine it slowly in the interests of a balance between hegemonic power and sociopolitical claims. In other words, emancipation and intervention are related. Imperialism, statism, internationalism, and globalisation have all witnessed these pressures and phenomena. There is now pressure to abandon emancipation, to place structural forces or the natural, post-human world above the human, and to govern within the formers’ constraints (Chandler 2018, p. 21).

In the past it was clear what emancipation meant in the context of feudalism, slavery, imperialism, discrimination, a class system, nuclear weapons, and racism. Now it is less clear in the context of advanced capitalism and its technological links, whether democratic or authoritarian: resilience, autonomy, or intervention, and domination. Indeed, since literatures and approaches critiquing old-fashioned imperialism and racism have become widely sanctioned, if not censored in mainstream thought, debates on the possibility of emancipation have faded from view, being displaced by postcolonial approaches to sovereign autonomy, liberal notions of rights and governmentality, or neoliberal notions of self-help, resilience, and capital. Yet, this indicates a tendency to ignore important concepts that capture elemental dynamics of politics in peace and war, in particular foregrounding the claims, agency, rights, and societal interests of the subaltern, which is more traditionally the subject of power relations (Spivak 1988). Social forms of

legitimacy have become obscured as a result. This raises the question of how the subaltern describes emancipation and social justice under contemporary, twenty-first-century conditions.

Emancipation in General Theoretical Usage

Scholars often refer to emancipation as if it were self-explanatory for both liberals and Marxists, north or south. In historical terms, emancipation has spanned issues of war in the nineteenth century, slavery also in that century, oppressive forms of work as the industrial revolution gathered pace throughout the said century, the expansion of voting rights from the nineteenth to the twentieth century, as well as the demand for gender equality, and the related reframing of the state towards an enabling, welfare state. It has also implied decolonisation, as well as ending arms races.

In practice and in mainstream liberal theory, emancipation tends to refer to the capacity of individuals to free themselves and for leadership to shape and improve social, economic, and political behaviour for a subaltern group. It has had religious and ideological overtones and has been associated also with revolutionary action. It is a vanguardist concept, depending on actors with direct, normative, and institutional power, emancipating the weak through ideas or force from poverty, injustice, war, slavery, or discrimination. This is in contradiction, however, to the underlying sense that emancipation of the weak has to occur according to subaltern demands and expectations.

In vanguardist terms, whether liberal or Marxist, emancipation occurs according to the preferences, norms, or ideology of the strong. In realist terms, it occurs as a side effect and alignment of power and interests. In liberal terms, it arises through individual action which shapes institutions. In Marxist terms, collective action is revolutionary. In other words, emancipation depends on the powerless confronting (or deploying) some of the most powerful instruments of international relations as well as geopolitical or geo-economic structural conditions, for example, predatory

elites and states, extractive and fleeting global capital, geography, and resource distribution. Thus, conceptually emancipation is founded upon a serious contradiction, and many critical scholars equate it with the often violent history of enlightenment epistemology, whether Marxist or liberal, and Western hegemony [see as example Spivak (1988)]. The terms emancipation and social justice have been used to conceptually camouflage force and domination rather than, say, expand understandings of rights and equality from a subaltern perspective and thus need to be reclaimed. Rawls (1985) realised this to a degree with his work on justice and inequality.

The contemporary context raises the question of how the subaltern would describe emancipation and social justice under contemporary, networked, scalar, and increasingly 'digital' (Chandler 2018, p. 159) conditions.

Various Approaches to Emancipatory Peace

The main categories of theory across international relations (IR) and social sciences or humanities in general produce different approaches to emancipation. History and philosophy provide a grounding for the range of such debates.

Historical and Philosophically Informed Versions of Emancipatory Peace

A philosophical and historical version of an emancipatory peace would aim at the goal of an ever more sophisticated form of the 'good life' connected to the 'greater good' and the political systems required to realise this for society, the state, and the international community. Political philosophy has concerned itself with how this might be achieved at each level of analysis offering a different set of debates and different core objectives and methods. From the 'greatest good for the greatest many' to various forms of utilitarianism, liberalism, idealism, and utopianism, the debate has focused on the nature of the individual, society, belief, the nature of the state, and the possibility and potential of international law and world government (Chimni 2007). Some argue

that this should be achieved via an elite vanguard of enlightened actors – Plato’s philosopher king or Aristotle’s aristocracy – or even more conservative notions of national leaders working ruthlessly for the national interest. Others argue that limited or broad democracy is required, even if this slows the process of emancipation. The subsequent literatures on cosmopolitanism and global justice probably offer the most sophisticated notion of emancipation within the framework of liberalism. In addition, these have been some post-liberal and postcolonial refinements (Gray 1993; Comaroff and Comaroff 2012; Prashad 2012).

A Realist Version of Emancipatory Peace

In contrast to such broad perspectives, a realist version of emancipation foregrounds geopolitical (and to some degree related geo-economic) power either through the state, the empire, or control of the global economy (Wood 2005). This is what emancipation targets in revolutionary mode, driven by subaltern claims for justice and sustainability over nationalism and territoriality. Basic geopolitical stability, meaning a balance of power between states and empires, is offered by realism as the ethical basis for and the agent of any possible, very limited emancipation. There is also the possibility that an imperial order will arise to reflect hegemony, however. A realist perspective means that a counter-revolutionary approach will actually restrain social and revolutionary movements in order to preserve older power structures. Compromise may emerge through the clash of interests between society and state, or between states, producing at best a negative peace meaning at least emancipation from direct violence (but not cultural, structural, or environmental violence) (Galtung 1969).

Later versions of neorealism and offensive realism highlight a concern with economic power and threats and do not extend their treatment of emancipation any further. This is partly because realism tends to assume that upsetting power structures is more dangerous than the status quo and that expanding subaltern rights would thus be counterproductive. Thus, a realist version would revolve around a victor’s peace where states establish a stable balance of power and

where actors liberate themselves from oppression, in order to claim autonomy but without upsetting that balance of power. The post-1945 world offers a good example, in that the USA-backed order appeared relatively stable and allowed for human rights to be claimed by subaltern actors. In doing so the US maintained interests and increased their autonomy as well as their hegemony over others (Mearsheimer 2001; Williams 2005). Thus, emancipation was restrained by nationality and territorial boundaries, as previously by the extent of empire, and systems of inclusion and exclusion, perhaps mitigated by balancing activity. Imperialism and racial hierarchies delineate the stratifications or gradations of emancipation, with the imperialists in the highest plane and subjects below, order according to power. Emancipation rests on an accrual of national power, and the sacrifices this demands, and thus the domination of others in order to extract value and power. Herder and Mazzini have already made this intellectual journey, as well as Morgenthau and others (Lebow 2003). In modernity it elevates Anglo-Saxon and Western interests and naturalises them, carrying dangerous undertones of multiple exclusions in terms of nationality and race, whereby emancipation is achieved. Perhaps Schmitt put this paradox in its starkest form (Schmitt 1996 [1932]).

However, in the twenty-first century, it has increasingly been more difficult to see emancipation in purely Western, northern, or Eurocentric terms, either because of the rise of the emerging powers or the expanding claims from the global south, which have been quick to identify and reject new practices they equate with colonialism (Wallerstein 1974; Nkrumah 1965). These dynamics were on view during the US invasion of Iraq and afterwards (Dodge 2005; Allawi 2007).

A Social Version of Emancipatory Peace

Moving to a body of theory that engages more with lived experiences rather than abstract thought or power, a social version of emancipation foregrounds the social needs of society, making politics and economics subservient to these, and consolidates them in a legal and constitutional

framework. Drawing on Marx, and in combination with liberal internationalism, it foregrounds economic and class relations as well as gender or identity rather than power (Laclau 2001 [1985]). The tools of emancipation are either the state or a social welfare system, as well as commensurate international systems. The social perspective aims to produce a social consensus, which is as wide as possible in order to prove that its legitimacy transcends that of elites. Social and international justice is its aim, based upon solidarity, rights, and the equality of citizens connected inevitably to the state, however. As soon as it is scaled up beyond the state, familiar problems of imperialism arise. In the past the aim of such a version was to amass centralised bureaucratic power in order to coordinate social peace and oversee equality and progress, either bounded by the state or connected to the international. Of course, such centralised government risked authoritarianism and inefficiency, this being the main argument of Hayek (1994 [1944]) against socialist experiments in the twentieth century. However, the aim of a social version of emancipation in contemporary contexts is to make the common needs of society the fulcrum around which political, economic, and cultural activity revolve, to mitigate elite predation, and to hold back the developmental or militaristic aims of vanguardist authoritarians. Hayek's argument that free markets made a better job of achieving these goals has been at the expense of widening inequality driven by power relations, which although relative has produced political risks. Thus, socialism and social engagements with emancipation (and social justice) offer slow progress, heavily dependent upon a benign elite, with a basic level of equality. However, it cannot compete with the 'creative destruction' and its pace in capitalist states, creating a range of dangerous internal and external tensions (as might be seen with the fate of former Yugoslavia). Nevertheless, capitalist states also proved to be unstable if inequality and international competition and their social effects are not mitigated, meaning a balance between the two is required (Honneth 2015). Eventually, a social democratic and Keynesian version emerged from such debates and positions, post-World War II (WWII), partly

to balance the conflicting positions of realism, liberalism, and Marxism (Steger 1997).

A Liberal Version of Emancipatory Peace

A liberal version of emancipation has come to be based upon the achievement of human rights and democracy, with as few constraints as possible from power, religion, the state, or economics. It is aimed at liberation from oppressive power, the overweening state, and geopolitics through the adoption of both liberal norms and free trade, following the argumentation of early liberalism such as Locke (1988 [1689]) and Paine (2000 [1791]). It requires a democratic system and a rule of law, both of which point to the need for material capacity and equality under a republican system (Doyle 1986). The onus is on normative agreement, universality, and implementation through constitutions and law. Trade, trusteeship, and intervention are necessary stimulants (Fukuyama 1989). The tools of emancipation range from liberal forms of intervention (imperial, humanitarian, peacebuilding, development) to the constitutional framework of the state and the nature of international order. In its social democratic forms, liberal emancipation threatened the power of established elites and simultaneously required a strong state with high taxation in order to redistribute. Material rights were thus connected to human rights. Its cosmopolitan variant pointed to the universality of such rights and the need for an international community or law-abiding states and set of governmental institutions.

This version of emancipation was heavily diluted by the emergence of a neoliberal version in the 1980s, which placed economic development within a globalised free market above – or at least as a route to – human rights and the other liberal institutions, expecting that economic development would ultimately lead to the achievement of better rights (Boas and Gans-Morse 2009; Harvey 2005). Legal equality superseded material equality, replacing material rights with more abstract versions. This has had the effect of reducing the challenge that human rights aimed at conservative forms of political and economic power to a discursive challenge, which has

allowed material inequality to deepen (Brown 2015). This has ultimately undermined donors' and international organisations' legitimacy, leading to resurgent nationalism (Barber 2016; Trump's world: The new nationalism 2016): the very dynamic it was supposed to end.

Perhaps the most concrete version of emancipation draws its inspiration from liberal internationalist and later critical thinking. It would require the establishment of a common normative world community (probably in federal form), capable of extending solidarity and material improvement around the world. Its underlying theorisation spans the work of Kant, Marx, and more recent cosmopolitan thinkers including Habermas, Beck, Falk, and others such as Kaldor, Held, and Linklater (Kant 2003 [1795]; Archibugi and Held 1995; Archibugi 2008; Falk 1995; Habermas 2001; Beck 1999; Linklater 1998). It is commonly thought of in global social democratic terms, as outlined by David Held (1995). It points to the Scandinavian model of a state writ large, though regional and international organisations, but exercising far greater political control over global capital, and in which intervention occurs based upon wide consensus for peace. Citizens will become liberal and share the commons, and a global social contract would be formed between citizens, social democracies, and regional or international organisations. The UN system would be the basis for an emerging global federation of sorts, reflecting global social democracy, in which common values could be discerned despite the existence of difference. It would draw its intellectual and practical heritage from the rise of the West and the post-war settlements of the twentieth century, though it would not see itself as Eurocentric. It would be facilitated by global trade but under the political control of the 'good state' (Lawler 2005) and good international architecture.

The liberal peace framework was soon seen as too selective in its approach to emancipation, partly because its ontological proposals about norms, institutions, states, structures, and agency were more indebted to Eurocentrism, sovereignty, statism, and capitalism that they often admitted.

A Postcolonial Version of Emancipatory Peace

A post- and anti-colonial version of emancipation would mean placing the most marginalised actors in international relations claims into a historical context and into the contemporary conditions of distributive justice. This may relate to justice for various forms of colonialism and political self-determination (Smith 1999). This would require major structural reform of the international system and global governance, far beyond that already attempted by the defunct UN Trusteeship Council and or UN General Assembly treaties on civil, political, minority, and indigenous rights. It would mean that former colonial subjects could be compensated for the ills of colonialism and the inequalities brought about by the evolution of global capitalism and related forms of empire. It would require global agreement and global institutions (see, e.g. Gonzalez 2017).

Herein lies a problem that Marx, Trotsky, and Lenin were familiar with: how to cause existing powerful actors or moribund institutions to dismantle themselves and how to remove them if they would not [cutting off the king's head, as Foucault (1980) famously noted]? How may we achieve this 'reform' without using violence or undermining the legitimacy of the new international order to come? This was a problem that Fanon (1963 [1961]) and other anti-colonial thinkers (see also Memmi 2006) 'solved' through accepting the use of violence to dismount injustice and achieve self-determination, also mirrored by a UN convention in the 1960s (United Nations, General Assembly 1960). All of these roads led to often violent forms of statehood (state formation), however. The self-determination and independence movements of the twentieth century, the emergence of the Non-Aligned Movement, the debates at the Bandung Conference, and, after, the 1970s attempt at the New International Economic Order were all designed to try to reform the systems that placed the emerging liberal peace and its close attachment to the Western political and economic model, and thus the material well-being of the people of the global north, above those of the newly independent countries in the global south (Acharya 2014a, b). By the 2000s, the Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa (BRICS),

and in particular the rise of China, suggested that global order was evening out somewhat, yet at the same time economic inequality was growing. Postcolonial notions of emancipation indicate that this continues to relate to the injustices that global capital propagated, connected to former colonial practices and systems (Davis and Todd 2017, p. 763).

Post-Liberalism and Emancipatory Peace

This discussion points in different directions, one of which is towards a post-liberal version of emancipation. As posited under liberalism (ascribed to human rights, democracy, rule of law, and development or capitalism), it is Eurocentric, limited in material capacity, which undermines human rights and the legal equality it offers, as well as its failing to deliver services or prosperity (Gray 1993). It also begins to touch upon issues relating to the global commons (Ostrom 1990). The liberal version has overseen a major expansion of rights and prosperity, but positionality and national identity to a large degree still determine both. The liberal international architecture only offers discursive emancipation relative to existing power relations. A post-liberal version takes the postcolonial, gendered, and environmental critiques of liberalism and capitalism and attempts to understand what emancipation would look like during the transitional phase from liberalism into a more varied and multiple international system (Gray 1993). It attempts to transcend the history of Eurocentrism and imagine peace in the context of equality and the environment rather than nationally in the context of free capital and inequality (relating to identity, gender, and class) as under the modern advanced capitalist liberal state. Post-liberalism offers a form of emancipation mediated by the old hegemony of the liberal west and alternative claims and actors now emerging. It envisions an agonistic form of mediation and does not determine an outcome – other than a more sophisticated process of emancipation than before (Gray 1993). One step along this process always uncovers more power relations and injustices, however, meaning that rights will have to be expanded, in the context of the commons and the

Anthropocene (Gonzalez 2017; Davis and Todd 2017, p. 763). The theoretical debates are divided between those who believe that post-liberalism means an abandonment of the state's ability to enforce and expand human rights to the vagaries of global governance and those who argue that more locally legitimate forms of political authority, from the local to the global scales, are emerging in the transition after liberalism (Ikenberry 2011). The problem with post-liberal versions of emancipation is that liberal and neoliberal hegemony refuse to give up power, ultimately undermining the limited progress it might offer.

Post-Structural Contributions

Connolly (2017, p. 4) has characterised an entangled humanism, which provides a new perspective on the planetary condition and in the context of political swarming. He refers to Foucault's 'technology of the self' and more recent engagements with 'micropolitics' to point to the new intersection that is emerging between postcolonial ecology, similar understandings emerging from the 'old capitalist centres', and the earth sciences. This represents an attempt to reposition politics (Connolly 2017, p. 12), moving beyond the older exemplars of social democracy and liberal international architecture as being the basis for the emancipation of labour and rights-bearing citizens. This pushes any discussion of emancipation away from a sole connection with ideology and international architecture, capitalism, or the state, towards a new planetary understanding of the 'good life' produced by entangled humanism in its Anthropocenic context (Connolly 2017, p. 13). It points to a much more expanded version of rights that has emerged from slavery, labour relations, class, gender, and capital or war. Expanded rights need to pinpoint the workings of power and to proceed from there: the point is to identify inequalities and mitigate them (Foucault 1978 [1976]). Both abstract and material equality are required: politics, economics, law, and institutions thus redistribute resources in order to achieve a sustainable, relational, networked, and mobile order, based upon relative equality and a sustainable ecological situation, which is apparent throughout each scale of analysis – local, state,

and international. The objective of emancipatory peace is to liberate society or the individual from powerful predation via and through peace processes and peacebuilding connected to transversal and transnational networks, multiple agencies, and creative forms of resistance.

Global Justice and the Anthropocene

A global justice version of emancipatory peace follows closely on from such logic, proposing both a historical and distributive dimension to restitution and justice in post-conflict transitions. It places a lot of weight on the idea that individuals require and can attain justice and emancipation in relation to historical, political, economic, and social wrongs and contemporary inequalities (Pogge 2001). This may be achieved through the assistance of both civil society and international organisations and, in particular, domestic law and constitutional refinements, as well as international legal organisations, which act as a check and balance on the state or hegemony in favour of the citizen (Sen 2009). As the debates developed, it began to encompass custom and memory, as well as questions associated to the commons, trauma, and rights, in a philosophical, historical, and legal tradition, as well as the building up and further strengthening of international and state architecture. What is crucial about it, however, is the clear connection between war and global questions, thus pushing beyond older notions of sovereignty and agency and opening up issues relating to inequality and historical violence across time and space and in the context more recently of the Anthropocene (Gonzalez 2017). The placing of any act of violence into its broader context is very important in terms of developing a sustainable approach, but it is also unmanageable in terms of the sheer scale of the enterprise. Hence, its distillation into a range of international legal processes is often couched within the relatively limited framework of the international defence of basic human rights and national authority (Miller 2008; Young 2006). That the Anthropocene itself may be indicative of the inequality and injustice of industrial modernity has rarely been considered in mainstream literatures (Davis and Todd 2017).

Emancipation has traditionally been mainly focused on human oppression by other humans, the negative effects of the tyrannous state or imperialism, communism, and capitalism. The geopolitical and structural conditions have generally been seen as immutable but also exacerbated by human extraction. These were seen as the sum of human conflict, in the context of geopolitical and economic constraints, and a major debate has centred on whether violence may be used to achieve emancipation (Hewlett 2016). In the current era, the non-human world has entered the equation. Furthermore, as the concept of the commons has expanded its relationship with the development of human industrial activity, it has become clear that environmental degradation has become a factor in oppression.

Recent work on the Anthropocene as well as on 'new materialism' thus provides a deepened understanding of what contemporary emancipatory peace involves. Colonialism, industrialisation, the Cold War, and the emergence of global capital have all had their impact on the environment connecting old and new structures of power (Gonzalez 2017). It points to the problem of deeper structures rooted in the politics of resource use and distribution, something that Marx raised of course, but pointed not just to inequality and injustice but also the finite nature of these constraining resources. The Anthropocene itself is the product of unjust power structures (Gonzalez 2017). This temporal aspect relates to how political systems treat the environment but also accentuates questions of fairness in the use of resources across generations. This also raises crucial questions about how humans, societies, and states interact with the global commons and the environment. Justice, emancipation, politics, society, and economy thus have to be reconfigured for a complex world of intensifying environmental fragility. Thus, a key issue for contemporary emancipation relates to a broad range of relational dynamics, across generations, time, space, and networks, rather than its traditional focus on power and resistance. It points to a framework of sustainability after any revolutionary action.

Implications for an Emancipatory Peace

To draw together the different strands in the evolution relationship between peace and emancipatory critiques, a number of arguments remain pertinent to contemporary versions. In the colonial era, emancipation was clearly aimed at self-determination, as Fanon (1963 [1961]) argued, and the question was which methods were permissible, and whether violence could be applied against imperialism. In the Cold War era, emancipation was aimed at achieving human rights and democracy against communism or authoritarianism. It was also often concerned about matters of disarmament and Third World development. Or it was aimed against US or northern domination and capitalism, and there was much discussion about forms of resistance available to oppressed societies (non-violent in particular) (Roberts and Ash 2009). This was all to be contained within the dominant political vehicle of the state, softened by global governance and the liberal international architecture, with its focus on free trade and human rights. A lot of the academic literature using the term during the early post-Cold War tended to be leftist in orientation, sparking a focus on inequality, including questions of gender and on self-determination, was still concerned about global and social solidarity and how this might be built into an international system, such as the UN system.

In these different phases, emancipation began to align with matters of peace and conflict in a way that previously, when it was connected to economic and social hierarchies to do with race, ownership, and voting rights, in the state, empire, and the global economy, it was not. The idea of a peace agreement, peace processes, and ways of making peace began to align with the problem of emancipation in the emergent state and in the regional and international architecture. Through these mechanisms and processes, peace began to be connected to Marxist, critical, cosmopolitan, feminist, and postcolonial discussions about progress, liberation, the expansion of subaltern rights, and identifying and navigating around blockages erected by power to prevent equality or attacks on hierarchy.

In terms of historical evolution, emancipation was physical, social, political, and economic, and the process of balancing social and international claims or expanded rights through states and international institutions and law eventually became its main paradigms. This balance was to work against predatory economic, social, military, and political structures – from slavery to authoritarianism or inequality. However, the delegation of emancipation to the state, within UN doctrinal development (such as with human rights or minority rights), or development, the market and capital in the neoliberal era after the end of the Cold War pointed to a need for new understandings of emancipation. These new understandings would have to start from the premise that a peace settlement required structural change to deal with the causal factors of war, such as domination, inequality, territorialism and nationalism, and concurrent breakdowns of constitutional and regional political systems. All of these problems were associated with the state, meaning that anchoring emancipation to the state indicating significant subaltern social or international capacity was needed to achieve progress, where the state was paradoxically both the obstacle and provider of emancipation.

Thus, it is often pointed out that sovereignty or world government may be a tool of social justice, but it may also be an obstacle to it from the subaltern's perspective, just as global capital may contradict or support aspects of the international peacebuilding architecture's work. Hence, from a subaltern perspective peace may be attached to self-determination and expanded rights, but the state is more often than not an unambiguous vehicle for these goals. Therefore, it is more likely that peace attached to a notion of global justice in particular may not use the proxy of the 'international community' or the state as the main framework for understanding progressive order but instead may tend to adopt the positionality of the subaltern subject, engaging with social agency and power from below along its relationalities and networks. The state and international community thus are subcontractors for a broad concept of emancipatory peace, via hybridity, equality, and sustainability and drawing as it must on the work

of post- and anti-colonial thinkers such as Fanon (Gibson 2003; Chabal 1983). This points to the need to reconcile the need for autonomy for subjects of past oppression or deprivation, the conservative requirement for a balanced structure, and the need for a progressive, interventionary vanguard with the power, skills, and resources to dismantle and replace the power structures of domination.

The contemporary relationship of peace with emancipation could follow either a hegemonic or a subaltern script. It could follow the hegemonic scripts including the interests and norms of the USA, EU, or China perhaps (see, e.g. Ginsburg 2010). Or it could follow a postcolonial, post-liberal script, following the path of General Assembly conventions in the 1960s; the Non-Aligned Movement and NEIO in the 1970s (United Nations, General Assembly 2018); the expansion of rights starting with the Helsinki Accords in the mid-1970s (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe 1975) and in the 1990s; the Agendas for Peace, Democratisation, and Development (Boutros-Ghali 1992); the High-Level Panel Reports and R2P in the 2000s (International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty 2001; High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change 2004; United Nations, General Assembly 2005); and debates about sustainability in the 2010s, such as the 'Sustaining Peace' agenda (United Nations, General Assembly, Security Council 2018; United Nations, General Assembly 2015).

These scripts were rarely identical, though, in the 1990s era of human rights and democracy, there began to be some convergence (though these may not have gone far enough for social actors and may have gone too far for many existing elites). For this reason, emancipation's connection with peace seems to have taken the current path of either sustainability (requiring historical, distributive, gender, and environmental justice) or resilience (based upon self-help and subsistence) in the most reason phase.

Since the end of the Cold War, emancipation was initially aimed at democratisation, human rights, and development within the state, balanced with autonomy and self-determination. As liberal

peace shifted into neoliberal peace, with the onset of the 2000s, emancipation was increasingly linked implicitly with capitalism by the USA (as in Iraq and Afghanistan) rather than human rights as the UN preferred, supported by Western interventionism, neoliberal globalisation, and new technologies, including for communication and transport. Subaltern responses continued to equate emancipation, on the other hand, with more complex stances to Western interventionism (both supporting elements that dismantled oppressive regimes and rejecting elements that undermined their political aspirations), capitalism and environmental degradation, and unequal resource distribution.

By the 2000s, with the resurgence of neoliberal and westernised attempts to engage in global stabilisation (through development, peacebuilding, state-building, humanitarianism, and new forms of global governance), a new postcolonial context emerged with questions arising about the unbalanced global economy, Western and US-led intervention in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the lack of involvement in Syria (see, e.g. Mishraj 2012).

This has reframed how emancipation is understood, indicating the need to more fully implement science-led understandings [e.g. in UN doctrine leading up to 'Sustainable Peace' (United Nations, General Assembly, Security Council 2018, para. 6) and 'Pathways to Peace' (United Nations, World Bank 2018) approaches] and to deal with the blockages caused by public reason, related to territorial sovereignty, the reluctance to engage with historical and distributive (global) justice question, and sustainability in practice terms within the state-system format.

In critical praxis it was now generally assumed as being based on meeting expanding rights and needs and respecting identity of subaltern subjects, all in an empathetic way. In particular, it foregrounded political claims from the global south, conflict-affected, and developmental societies (historically as well as in the contemporary global political economy). Equality, historical, and distributive justice, within the state and across the globe, became an often unspoken assumption, connecting peace with conceptions of global

justice (increasingly postcolonial rather than liberal conceptions) (Kohn 2013, p. 190; Dallmayr 2003; Nagel 2005; Nussbaum 2000; Pogge 2008; Fraser 2010). It is thought to offer care and the prospect of a wide-ranging peace dividend. It highlights sustainability across generations, spaces, and modes of life, pointing to the newer concept of ‘planetary justice’ (Dryzek 2019, p. 67).

Thus, emancipation may be understood partly as a liberal political concept made possible by a contract between the subaltern and the state or international institutions and hegemony. It is certainly Eurocentric. It assumes individuals have a range of rights, duties, responsibilities, and agencies by virtue of their existence, which they can achieve either through their own agency or with centralised governmental or external assistance. They are able to mobilise for self-emancipation or are emancipated by intervening powers. It assumes that equality is a global and domestic public good, and emancipation is the process by which some approximation of this can be achieved. However, it carries with it a strong sense that both direct and structural violence will be dealt with through solidarity and networked agency and that subaltern voices will determine its nature, which will ultimately be progressive in terms of social justice. As with such political theory, there is a strong idealist strand in this type of thinking, which connects with a number of other debates: post-structuralism, post-colonialism, and anti-colonialism. In this vein it may be seen as connected to multiple forms of representation, social justice, and social democracy, as well as to self-determination. Deep structural hierarchies as well as environmental matters are sometimes referred to. Realists assume that basic security is the first step, but to develop further is unlikely and fraught with difficulty because security rests upon power, making emancipation a utopian goal. Marxist, liberal, and critical thinking indicate, however, that the Arendtian axiom of the expansion of rights is a stronger logic for emancipation (drawing on Arendt 1951; DeGooyer et al. 2018, p. 4; Moyn 2018, p. 68), meaning they travel from security, representation, and development to justice and sustainability,

albeit agonistically. This points more to hybrid arrangements of emancipatory peace.

Thus, the concept of emancipatory peace assumes progress beyond the negative peace entailed in a diplomatic peace agreement, at least partly determined by power [as with the Camp David Accords between Egypt and Israel in the late 1970s (Princen 1991)] towards a positive peace [perhaps as might be seen with the post-settlement Northern Ireland environment (Cox et al. 2006)] and further to more hybrid forms of peace (see, e.g. Richmond 2011), opening up issues of global justice and sustainability. This linear path means that emancipation implies that any peace agreement between warring parties, which takes on the additional status of a constitutional framework or a normative prescription for social and state behaviour henceforth, must include a social dimension and justice dimension, which spans environmental, intergenerational, and material forms. Thus, it becomes rapidly overloaded, even though few resources are available. Without a local scale, and social positionality, able to identify oppressive forms and sources of power and inform interventionary praxis, legitimate authority for both the state and the peace is soon lost. Without the capacity for international actors to support peace through the enablement of subaltern agency and the reform of governance in line with political claims made transversally, emancipation cannot be achieved. The peace will be a victor’s peace or represent hegemonic or elite interests.

Identifying what structures of power there are opens up the emancipatory process of responding, ultimately to reconfigure power relations. This requires an *international-intersectional* perspective on subaltern political claims in order to establish a peace praxis driven by evening out a wide range of inequalities – race, class, and gender – on a local to international transversal scale. So far, the main theories of peace and conflict studies or IR have not addressed peace at this level of complexity or scale: victor’s, liberal, conflict management, resolution, or transformation versions of peace have tended to be limited to social or state-level interactions. This has meant the complex transmission of conflict across networks is

not addressed. As Kant wrote (2003 [1795]), in a universal community, wrongs committed in one place are felt everywhere (Archibugi 1992). These complex interactions would need to be finely arranged in order to lead to a sustainable balance across difference [see the UN's recent Sustaining Peace agenda for this direction of thought (United Nations, General Assembly, Security Council 2018; United Nations, General Assembly 2015)]. Ultimately, this points to a continual expansion of rights, from domestic and localised matters of insecurity to the state and its constitutional framework and from international governance as in the liberal peace to longer-term intergenerational issues of justice and sustainability.

Putting all of this together, this indicates the following dimensions need to be considered. For Marxists emancipation requires a resolution of class conflict, which requires a dismantling of the whole structure of national and global political economy, which is designed by the powerful to otherwise preserve the vestiges of aristocracy. Its ownership would have to pass into the hands of the general population, and private property would tend to also be redistributed, because property, land, and other material resources are the basis of power: emancipation has to be about material equality, which then reflected in law and institutions, as well as norms. For liberals, it requires human rights, a social contract, and free trade to balance the powers that exist in society, state, and markets, recognising that rights, trade, and property within an enabling state and economy are the main determinants of emancipation. For realists, it requires a stable balance of power between nation-states, and ultimately emancipation arises through a mutually assured system of destruction. For constructivists, emancipation relates to how the interplay of identity leads to the formation of institutions designed to deal with political claims against oppressive or unjust forms of power, following a similar line to liberal thought. Along with critical theorists, liberal and constructivist thought also points to how an international architecture of institutions, law, and economic, political and military tools may be used to

respond to such claims, where they undermine the notion of a cosmopolitan world community. This is why liberal notions of emancipation ultimately become top-down constructions, following a similar logic to critical, liberal, and structural notions of governance in domestic political settings. For feminists, emancipation requires gender equality and an understanding of the subtle and deep shifts in power relations this requires, as well as some historical recognition of injustice. Increasingly, many radical movements point to historical, distributive, and environmental forms of justice as essential components of emancipatory thought. Feminism adds an empathetic element to this understanding, relating not merely to material knowledge but also to identity and related class issues (Sylvester 2002).

This points to a far more relational framework, between people but also between issues, highlighting, for example, social and technological linkages with the environment, as well as the economy with social equality (Qin 2006). For anarchists, emancipation means far less government and far more personal autonomy. For environmentalists, emancipation means action to make resource use sustainable. For critical theorists, it aims at the creation of a cosmopolitan global community based upon functional or ideationally constructed common goals or, alternatively, the global mediation of difference across time and space into a more egalitarian material framework of politics. For postcolonialists, emancipation means removing direction and hidden forms of external domination and gaining autonomy as far as structural power relations might allow. For post-structuralists, emancipation refers to the removal of boundaries and binaries and anything in fact that prevents the individual from determining their own selves at any moment, freely and within an ethos of equalitarianism.

Critical positions, drawing on Marx, would see emancipation as being understood in Balibar (Balibar 2014) terms, more or less, as starting from a subaltern positionality in order to represent and balance rights, material equality, environmental sustainability, identity, culture, and norms

through social and transversal consensus, law, institutions, the state, and regional and international institutions ('equa-liberty'). This has implications for deep, structural reform, basically confirming the positions of the global justice literatures, if not extending them (Porta et al. 2007).

The rethinking of the concept of emancipation along the lines of equa-liberty (Balibar 2014) will require a continual push by all agents against blockages in order to achieve progress in the theory and practice of global justice. This would be organised around post-liberal versions of sovereignty, legislative justice, and contractual international law, all within a multilateral, multi-vertical, and scalar umbrella pointing to hybrid peace: heterotopias emerging from critical agency and civil societies (Foucault and Miskowiec 1986 [1984]).

However, there are clearly contradictions in these possible interpretations. In essence, the dismantling of existing power structures in favour of global justice represents the epistemological and methodological aims of an emancipatory peace from a radical perspective, whereas, from a liberal or neoliberal perspective, it is the maintenance and expansion of core, elite structures that are necessary to produce a trickle-down or norm cascade (Finnemore and Sikkink 2002; Sunstein 1996). The latter liberal view may be justified on the grounds of what is possible and expedient, whereas the former critical approach is justified on the grounds of longer-term understandings of the conditions of a sustainable peace. The latter requires an acceptance that ontologically a positive form of hybrid peace is possible (given the acute differences in global populations' cultures and positionalities), that deep structures do not mitigate against such a peace, and that politics, economics, society, and culture are both 'resolvable' and transformational terrains of human interaction.

Glacially slow, and contested at every turn, this evolution is now becoming an empirical and intellectual schematic, which can be described, whilst at the same time comprising discursive and structural power, which simultaneously shapes

subjectivity, often in favour of hegemony. This is probably why narratives about emancipation in history tend to favour the interpretation of elites (e.g. 'Whig history') rather than the subaltern actors, who were probably most dominant in the discursive and material struggle and resistance necessary to produce reform. In the end, this offers the tantalising possibility that emancipation can only be spoken by the local or networked subaltern, despite their positionality and weakness (and actually because of it). Elites may ignore emancipatory speech, as it is normally aimed against them, or they may claim it and adopt it. Defining and acting upon emancipatory discourse requires an alignment of the subaltern and power, neither of which are static, however.

This poses something of a problem for post-structuralist thought, which is predicated against any alignment of powers and is pro-difference. On the other hand, it supports the positions of critical theorists and Marxists, who seek global agreement in cosmopolitan or solidarist form. So, if emancipation can only be found in the fragmentation of power as Mouffe, Laclau, Balibar, and others argue (see, e.g. Mouffe 2013, p. 84), then where would the revolutionary agency come from necessary to break down existing power frameworks? Conversely, if power must be aligned across actors and scales for emancipation to become possible according to liberal thought, how do we make power accountable to the weaker rather than the stronger members of society, the state, and the international? These are old questions only partly answered by political liberalism, postcolonialism, post-structuralism, and other theories that engage with rights, checks and balances, equality, and sustainability.

Many thinkers engaged with the potential and problems of the global commons tend to point to the salience of direct forms of democracy in order to produce new forms of emancipation. First, subaltern positionalities identify the problems, power relations, and structures, often connecting resistance with the everyday and the international. Next, local knowledge offers an alternative perspective on what might be done about them.

Micro-solidarities and scalar networks have create new ways of creating such processes and achieving such goals in an age of increased social mobilisation and capacities at the social and transnational levels. The logic of the commons tends to focus on inclusiveness, sustainability, and justice, across time and space. This points to new scalar forms of governance, norms, and claims for rights in both legal and material terms, starting from contextual positionalities.

If such claims were socialised, environmentalised, empathised, pluralised, and equalised in an intergenerational perspective, it would become possible to refresh the concept of emancipation for general contemporary use in a more global setting, where the local is far more prominent than ever before. However, the advent of digital governmentality as part of a broader digital shift in IR (Owen 2015) means that emancipation has taken on a new contradiction. This is between the liberatory aspects of new technologies, networks, communications, transport, mobility, and knowledge that could achieve this (Lipschutz 2005) and the capacity of such technologies to be used for control to rescue those older power structures associated with nationalism, geopolitics, or geo-economics. Digital governmentality is closely aligned to colonial and industrial stratifications of peace, as well as to those adopted under liberalism and globalisation within the Anthropocene (Davis and Todd 2017; Owen 2015).

Even so, one clear meaning of emancipation which can be agreed on is that it is connected to the identification of systems of domination by those they oppress, and their dismantling and replacing either by external actors or their subjects. According to my analysis, it requires two positionalities working in tandem: the subaltern and the vanguard, configuring power relations between intervenors and the subaltern, which must inevitably be based upon trust and communication in difficult circumstances. The sides must agree for this to be included in any peace agreement or new constitutional order. More problematically, opponents who benefit from existing power relations must also agree.

Summary

Herein lie five important prerequisites for the rethinking of emancipation for the twenty-first century:

1. A definition which is politically progressive and materially plausible, sustainable across generations.
2. It gathers local and national democratic majorities as well as appeals to the international community in terms of its institutions and the transnational/transversal sets of international actors.
3. Existing national and international systems can be utilised and improved in order to deliver emancipation commensurate with the claims of the subaltern in political, social, and economic areas.
4. Alterity and expanded rights, global justice, networks, mobility, sustainability, and the commons provide the context for this rethinking of emancipation, connected with the current shift from an 'analogue' to 'digital' world.
5. A new layer of thinking and practice/governance needs to be brought into being to deal with emancipation in the new digital conditions.

This evolution begins to connect new forms of emancipation with debates about global justice, operating in connection to networks, mobility, relationality, and sustainability, across time, space, and structure.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Culture and Conflict Resolution](#)
- ▶ [Liberal Peacebuilding in a Transitional International Order](#)
- ▶ [Peace and Political Unsettlement](#)
- ▶ [Peace Infrastructures](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding and Postcolonial Subject](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding and Korean Civil Society](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding: Utopia and Reality](#)
- ▶ [Phenomenological Peace](#)

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Ethnic Conflict

- ▶ [Ethnic Conflict in North Macedonia](#)
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Ethnic Conflict in North Macedonia

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Synonyms

[Discrimination](#); [Ethnic conflict](#); [Minority rights](#); [North Macedonia](#); [Violence](#)

Definition

Ethnic tensions in the Republic of North Macedonia have been a fixture of its political and social life since the country was part of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and after its independence in 1991 to the present day. (This article uses the new constitutional name of North Macedonia resulting from the so-called Prespa agreement and the subsequent constitutional changes in 2019. The name “Macedonia” is used when referred to in original quotations.) The first issue for the new republic became the inclusiveness of the state and who belonged to it, which put the ethnic Macedonians and ethnic Albanians particularly at odds, the former as the majority community and the latter as the largest non-majority community. The political tensions of the 1990s and the inability to resolve them were the main cause behind the 2001 ethnic conflict between the Macedonian state and the ethnically Albanian guerrilla group, the National Liberation Army. The conflict claimed 250 lives, while more than 140,000 persons became refugees or internally displaced persons. Since 2001, North Macedonia has been relatively peaceful with political disagreements being resolved through democratic means. However, in 2015, there was a brief weekend conflict which proved that ethnic narratives are still among the main tropes of tension in the country. It also showed that things had advanced since 2001 as the conflict did not gain support from the ethnic Macedonians or ethnic Albanians, demonstrating a new political and social landscape where ethnicity is still important, but does not hold the same potential for mobilization that it used to hold.

State-Building in Multiethnic Societies

The Republic of North Macedonia gained its independence from Yugoslavia in 1991 relatively peacefully, since it did not result with or cause a war, as was the case with other countries which broke off from former Yugoslavia. Hence, North Macedonia is not often associated with conflict; however, conflicts have been present in the

country and have oftentimes determined the course that it has taken toward state-building. North Macedonia is home to numerous ethnic communities including the ethnic Macedonian, Albanian, Turkish, Bosnian, Romani, and others. However, of these, the ethnic Macedonian is the majority community, which also claims the ownership of the state and the status of “titular nation.” (Titular nation or constituent peoples, i.e., ethnic majority. Ethnic groups that do not belong to the titular nation are ethnic minorities. In Yugoslavia, the members of the titular nations, such as the Macedonians, would fall under the category of “narod” (people), whereas the ethnic minorities, such as the Albanians, were “narodnosti” (nationalities).) In the context of such a multiethnic society, the sense of ownership in the state has been the main bone of contention and internal conflict since the republic was established in 1945 and after its independence in 1991. The Yugoslav context also matters when exploring conflict in contemporary North Macedonia, as it established the framework of statehood and nationhood even after independence. As Shaw and Štiks (2013) argue, “[t]he complex system of titular nations, nationalities and minorities applicable in Tito’s Yugoslavia was replaced with an equally complex system of multiple and overlapping citizenship regimes privileging often the dominant ethnic group” (p. 2). In Yugoslavia, two categories had existed, namely, the category of the constituent *narod* or nation which in the case of North Macedonia was the ethnic Macedonians and other the other *narodnosti* or nationalities which in the country context were the ethnic Albanians. After independence, the category of *narod* persisted, while the category of *narodnosti* did not, and was instead replaced by *malcinstvo* or minority (Brown 2000, pp. 128–129) which constituted a downgrade particularly for the Albanian community which had previously been recognized as a *narodnosti* with cultural and political rights (Spaskovska 2010, p. 7). The non-majority ethnic communities after independence “argued that all Macedonian citizens – whether ethnically Macedonian, Albanian, Turkish, Serb, Rom, Vlach, or Egyptian – should enjoy equal status” (Brown 2000, pp. 128–129). However, as was the case

with other states succeeding Yugoslavia, North Macedonia’s citizenship regime, too, became ethnoculturally selective (Džankić 2015, p. 30).

The Constitution of the new state clearly delineated that the country was the “national state of the Macedonian people, in which full equality as citizens and permanent co-existence with the Macedonian people is provided for Albanians, Turks, Vlachs, Romanians and other nationalities living in the Republic of Macedonia” (Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia, Preamble 1991). This followed a pattern which Štiks (2006) identifies resulting from the dissolution of Yugoslavia, namely, that the “new legislation introduced in the successor states in most cases offered privileged status to members of the majority ethnic group regardless of their place of residence” (p. 484). Still, North Macedonia had to ensure minority rights for the different ethnic communities living within its borders in order to have its independent status recognized by the Badinter Arbitration Committee which was established in 1991 to offer advice and criteria on the recognition of the states dissolving from Yugoslavia (Džankić 2015, p. 61). The Committee had recommended that “the Republics must afford the members of those minorities and ethnic groups all the human rights and fundamental freedoms recognized in international law, including, where appropriate, the right to choose their nationality” (Pellet 1992, p. 184 as quoted in Džankić 2015, p. 61). North Macedonia effectively had satisfied these conditions, along with Slovenia, and therefore was deemed by the Badinter Committee to have fulfilled the criteria for recognition in January 1992 (Brown 2000, p. 122). Indeed, Spaskovska (2010) notes that the minority protection legal framework in North Macedonia postindependence offered the highest protections in the region (p. 7).

Disparities in the inclusion of then non-majority communities in the country, however, were present and were largely left unaddressed with the formation of the new state. This led to a turbulent first decade since:

the 1990s [in] North Macedonia [were] shaped by the unresolved and tense relationship between Macedonian and Albanians within the country [...]

The policy toward Albanians was a messy combination of inclusion (participating in the ruling coalition since 1991) and exclusion (in higher education and language rights). (Bieber 2020, p. 54)

Indeed, Albanian political parties were included in the governing coalitions since the first government, and they were also part of the parliament. However, Albanian political parties were unsatisfied by the state of affairs which led them to boycott and use other political methods of mobilization. This was due to the fact that they considered from the outset that the new Constitution and policies were rendering Albanians as second-class citizens (Štiks 2006, p. 490; Spaskovska 2010, p. 10). Notably, Albanians boycotted the referendum for the country's independence in 1991 as well as the first census of the independent state (Spaskovska 2010, p. 9). Instead, they organized a referendum on autonomy in 1992 (Spaskovska 2010; Brown 2003, p. 33), which, although significant since it was voted on by 99% of ethnic Albanian voters (Iseni 2013, pp. 181–182), was not acted upon but used as leverage by Albanian political parties to demand more rights. The Albanians' main complaints were the issue of education and employment, as well as the preamble of the Constitution which led to the boycott (Spaskovska 2010, p. 9). While the new constitution guaranteed education in the mother tongue for primary and secondary school, it did not provide for university education. State employment was also very low for Albanians, as low as 7% in state institutions (Bieber 2004, p. 116). The low level was not only the result of direct discrimination by the state (Bieber 2004; Brunnbauer 2004), but it was still largely affected by it and further contributed to a low inclusion of Albanians and other ethnic communities in state structures.

In addition to these real problems that the Albanian community faced, the Macedonian state was also excluding them and others from the narrative of the state. As Brunnbauer's (2003) analysis of the historiography of North Macedonia in the early years of its independence shows, the new state tried to develop a narrative that focused on the Macedonians, disregarding other narratives. The difference of narratives

of what North Macedonia was and represented was very important, as they show a crucial point of contention. Namely, while for ethnic Macedonians the state was "theirs" or a state of the ethnic Macedonians, where other communities also lived, for "Albanians, Macedonia is a multicultural country and Albanians as a cultural and political community, are a component of it" (Iseni 2013, p. 176). This context is very important in understanding the conflict in North Macedonia, as it cannot be understood without considering the systemic discrimination and stratification of society. As Brunnbauer (2004) succinctly argues:

it is not so much these ethnic differences themselves which created the conflict—although they were a source of stereotypes and mutual misperceptions. It was the Macedonian state's lack of understanding and insensitivity to these differences, which politicized them and made them contentious. (p. 367)

Indeed, this lack of understanding can be seen in the violence and contention that preceded the 2001 ethnic conflict which marked an escalation of violence which did not erupt into a war, thanks to the signing of the Ohrid Framework Agreement (see the chapter "► [Ohrid Framework Agreement, The](#)," this volume).

Ethnic Disparities and the Precursors to Ethnic Conflict

Violence and ethnic conflict on a smaller scale were not unusual in North Macedonia, and they were precursors to the ethnic conflict which lasted for half a year in early 2001. These moments of violence during the 1990s resulted in mutual lack of trust between the ethnic Macedonians and Albanians and particularly between the Albanians and the state as such. In 1992, there was the Bit Pazar incident where "police exchanged fire with Albanian protesters, [which] created anxiety among Macedonians in Skopje" (Brown 2003, p. 33) and left four people dead (Brown 2000, p. 128). Furthermore, as Brown (2003) argues, certain "elements in the Albanian community consistently advocated the use of more radical forms of political action, and from 1992 onward

Macedonia saw sporadic violence between ethnic Albanians and police” (p. 245). The next moment of violence happened in 1994, when a group of Albanian intellectuals decided to establish a university in Tetovo that would provide teaching in the Albanian language. The state responded with police violence, as the educational establishment was declared illegal and violence ensued. During the clash, one person died, 20 people were injured (Brown 2000, p. 130), while the rector of the university was imprisoned (Iseni 2013, p. 183). In response to the violence and indicative of the double narratives that dominate the public sphere of North Macedonia, the “Macedonian government emphasized the university’s illegality, while Albanian politicians emphasized police violence” (Brown 2000, p. 130). Despite the violence the university kept working by “being funded through a volunteer tax paid by Albanians both within and outside the country” (Iseni 2013, p. 183) though still illegal and conducting its teaching and activities from private homes.

The establishment of the university was the first act of contention which directly sought to change or react to the lack of legal or institutional provisions for Albanians in the country and which sought to respond to the vision of a mono-ethnic state. The second occurred in Gostivar in 1997, and it involved the use of national symbols and local autonomy, another issue of contention and political disagreement between the ethnic Macedonian and Albanian parties. In 1997, Rufe Osmani was elected mayor of the city after which:

the city council decided that it would fly the flags of the Turkish and Albanian communities alongside the Macedonian flag. Although this was technically legal, Macedonian law anachronistically insisted that the community’s flag bear the Yugoslav red star. Osmani was arrested because the flags on Gostivar city hall did not contain the star. This provoked widespread violent protests and harsh police responses. Osmani was jailed for 13 years, later reduces to seven on appeal. (Bellamy 2002, p. 125)

These two incidents already formed a strong background for the armed conflict in 2001 and the demands that the Albanians would make in the negotiations to end the conflict. As

Brown (2000) notes, with these two incidents “[o]stensibly at stake were rights to higher education and issues of local autonomy; both incidents were fraught with wider significance” (p. 130).

The contentious and violent activities continued. Ethnic Macedonians organized contentious acts as well, as was the case with the 1997 student movement in Skopje which mobilized and organized a strike against the proposal to reintroduce the Albanian language at the Faculty of Pedagogy (Bieber 2020, p. 54). During the protests, students “chanted slogans such as ‘gas chambers for Albanians’” (Iseni 2013, p. 183). This made the governing party push for a harder stance against Albanian demands, as the strikes were organized by the youth of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization-Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity (VMRO DPMNE), who were then an opposition party with a nationalist ideology. In 1998, several bomb explosions occurred at urban centers for which police arrested “Albanian students with suspected links to the Kosovo Liberation Army” (Brown 2000, p. 128).

The first decade of the independent state thus displayed a volatile political balance. North Macedonia was very much a divided society, as Brown (2000) notes “[s]ome commentators go so far as to suggest that an ‘apartheid’ mentality persists, evoking as evidence the apparent and unthinking racism towards Albanians expressed by Macedonians in everyday settings” (p. 132). Indeed, various scholars and surveys highlight that Albanians were generally considered by the ethnic Macedonians to be more backward and unable to integrate well in the system (Džankić 2015; Brown 2000). The political positions of the ethnic Macedonian parties and the Albanian parties often seemed irreconcilable as they derived from two different stand points, the ethnic Macedonians fearing the lack of loyalty of Albanians to the state and the Albanians believing the state had still not done its share in encouraging their ownership of the state. Still, as a result of contention, “modest attempts at accommodation with the Albanian minority prevented a conflict until 2001” (Bieber and Keil 2009, p. 343). The practice of grand coalitions, which included

Albanian parties, postponed or assuaged harsher conflict. However, as Bieber and Keil (2009) point out, the conflict in North Macedonia happened despite the established practice of grand coalitions for nearly 10 years due to:

the inability or unwillingness of the majority-Macedonian parties to address the demands of the Albanian parties, as well as the emergence of an Albanian guerilla force [which] led to a situation where the participation of Albanian parties in government was no longer enough to address the needs of the Albanians of Macedonia. (pp. 350–351)

The end of the 1990s was marked by various bombings and attacks on judges and officials, marking also the initial apparitions of the National Liberation Army. It is an unfortunate moment of history that the demands that the Albanian parties had been making for the first decade since the country's independence were ultimately reached through a violent conflict lasting 6 months in 2001.

The 2001 Interethnic Conflict and the Peace Agreement

The 2001 interethnic conflict between the Macedonian state and the National Liberation Army (NLA) started in January 22 with an attack on a police station, after which the NLA announced its presence through a fax message sent from Germany to the BBC (Bellamy 2002, p. 132). The initial tone was more secessionist in nature; however, this was changed in the following months with the NLA issuing a "statement insisting that, 'we want to improve the rights of our people who are facing discrimination at the hands of the [Macedonians]', implying that it was joint ownership of rather than freedom from the Macedonian state that was demanded" (Bellamy 2002, p. 132). Indeed, the agenda of the NLA was predominantly a response to the unfulfilled rights that had been sought at the political level. For instance, one of the main disputes that was utilized as a justification by the NLA was the lack of an Albanian language university and the lack of economic equality and employment (Bellamy 2002, pp. 125–126). The issue of ownership of

the state is also an imperative component which is in line with the political narrative, as the then leader of the largest Albanian party in North Macedonia, Arben Xhaferi, declared that the 2001 conflict would be explained as "as ethnic competition: to whom does the state belong? Macedonians want to create the state as their own ethnic property. Albanians deny this, and thus we have conflict" (Bellamy 2002, p. 124). It took several months of fighting for this dispute to reach the negotiating table and to halt the hostilities.

Initially, the NLA was denounced not only by the ethnic Macedonian parties but also by ethnic Albanian parties who considered it a "terrorist organization" (Iseni 2013, p. 184). In addition, the organization itself was not very centralized or sharing in one common agenda. The NLA was made of various people of differing backgrounds including people who thought using force would bring a faster and more efficient accommodation of the rights of Albanians, those who believed in a greater Albania, and radical Marxists (Bellamy 2002, p. 131). Therefore, it was not a straightforward process to winning allies with national or international actors. As a result, the fighting continued throughout the months of February, March, and April and mainly spread toward the regions populated by ethnic Albanians, namely, Tetovo and its surrounding villages and Kumanovo and several villages between it and the capital, Skopje. After the bombing, the fighting began initially in the village of Tanusevci, a village on the northern border of Kosovo, in late February of 2001. In March 13, the war moved to Tetovo (Bellamy 2002, pp. 134–135) where confrontations occurred in March 26, as the government forces led "offensive" after having rejected the call for a political dialogue made by the NLA (Bellamy 2002, p. 135). On April 28, 2001, the NLA killed eight Macedonian soldiers near Tetovo which instigated riots in various cities in North Macedonia by ethnic Macedonians (Bellamy 2002, p. 135). The "anti-Albanian riots in Bitola prompted its 10,000 Albanian residents to leave this city in the far south of the republic" (Bellamy 2002, p. 135). During the month of May, the conflict intensified and

expanded into more villages close to Kumanovo, and as the “summer approached, international society began to engage more fully in the search for a political settlement amidst fears that Tetovo, Kumanovo and Skopje could all become ‘new Sarajevos’” (Bellamy 2002, p. 136) particularly since state forces had started shelling villages indiscriminately. It was the inclusion of the international community which initialized the pathway toward a peace process.

A government of national unity was established in May 13, and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) began negotiations with the NLA and political parties, and reached a ceasefire. The OSCE then developed a two-stage plan for the peace process which included, firstly, confidence-building measures (disarming the NLA and addressing the five dispute areas) and, secondly, working toward a final political settlement (Bellamy 2002, p. 136). However, this attempt ended abruptly and unsuccessfully, which led to an escalation of hostilities during the summer. On July 20, 2001, three EU monitors were killed by a landmine, and there was violence in Tetovo. The ceasefire had effectively ended. With the inclusion of the NATO in the negotiations, a new ceasefire was reached on July 26, 2001 (Bellamy 2002, p. 138). This marked the start of the new negotiations in early August, which led to the signing of the Ohrid Framework Agreement (OFA). As leaders were preparing for discussions in Ohrid, the “deadliest fighting in the conflict occurred [. . .] On August 7, 2001 Macedonian police launched a raid on rebel forces in Skopje, killing five. [. . .] The next day, 10 Macedonian soldiers were killed in a rebel ambush between Skopje and Tetovo” (Kim 2002, pp. 7–8). This made the negotiations in Ohrid very intense, and political leaders from both sides faced a lot of pressure from their constituents. The OFA was signed on August 13, 2001, ending the hostilities and setting the path for the construction of a multiethnic state (see ► “Ohrid Framework Agreement, The”). Thus, ended the conflict in which “an estimated 250 persons were killed. Many of this number were killed during the final week of peace talks [and more] than 170,000 persons fled their homes”

(Kim 2002, p. 8). This conflict also marked the most violent ethnic conflict in the history of North Macedonia to date, while the Agreement still has implications and affects contemporary politics.

Post-2001 Society and Conflict Management

Ethnic relations between ethnic Macedonians and Albanians improved post-OFA, and the discussions and disputes moved back to the parliamentary and executive chambers. However, the path toward a more inclusive society continued to be strained, considering that “most of the Macedonian intellectuals and politicians experienced the OFA as a historical fatality” (Iseni 2013, p. 187). On the other hand, Albanians saw it as a victory, yet as Iseni notes, “did not manage to seize efficiently the historical opportunity that was presented in order to advance the process stated by the OFA” (Iseni 2013, p. 187). Indeed, the power-sharing arrangement, which was set up by the OFA, has led to a situation where parties largely cater to their ethnic constituents, which have maintained a public political sphere where discussions keep being divided on ethnic grounds. Progress has been made in increasing representation, employment, and university education in the Albanian language. Still, discrimination persists, and so does the utilization of ethnicity for political agendas, which sometimes continues to cause further crises.

While a conflict like the one in 2001 has not been repeated, there have been various moments of unrest and violence, including beatings between teenagers of different ethnic groups, ethnic slurs and racist language by public personalities, and hate speech. In 2011, there was a violent protest in the old Skopje fortress “Kale” between Albanian protesters and police (Iseni 2013, p. 190). The most violent incident happened in 2015, when North Macedonia seemed on the brink of another conflict. In the early hours of May 9, 2015, in the city of Kumanovo, heavy shooting occurred between Albanian fighters and the Macedonian security forces (Bieber 2020, p. 90). The whole incident lasted for one weekend

(May 9 and 10) and left 22 persons dead, among whom 14 fighters and 8 policemen, while 40 police officers were wounded (Cvetanoski 2017). There was also damage on property, but no civilians were harmed. While the fighting was reminiscent of the 2001 conflict, citizens of Kumanovo were quick to point out that this attack did not originate from them and that this was not the beginning of an interethnic conflict. State authorities stated that the “gunmen were ethnic Albanian terrorists, mostly Macedonian, but led by five Albanians from neighboring Kosovo” (*Macedonia clashes: ‘My town looks like a war zone,’* 2015). However, there was no support for the group by the local population or by the political parties (*United Citizens after shootings in Kumanovo – Macedonia,* 2015). As Bieber (2020) explained, “the incident appeared very odd. There had not previously been any Albanian groups seriously challenging the *status quo* or demanding greater rights. The gunmen were unknown in Kumanovo and were clearly outsiders” (p. 91). In addition, the incident took place in the midst of a deep political crisis (*Policy Brief: Unraveling the Political Crisis in Macedonia,* 2015) that had affected the state since the release of wiretapped conversations revealing corruption and abuse of power by the government led by VMRO-DPMNE, thus commentators suspected foul play. After the weekend incident, the 20 arrested gunmen were taken to Skopje to be prosecuted, and in 2017, they received sentences ranging from life sentence to between 12 and 40 years’ imprisonment. Fortunately, this incident did not cause a wider conflict, yet it did show how fragile ethnic relations are and how it still is used as a trope in political agendas to often create crisis and instability. However, it also showed that things had changed since 2001, with citizens no longer supporting a violent conflict to defend their rights.

Conclusion

The resolution of the political crisis which unraveled between 2015 and 2017 and the election of the new government in 2017 has shown signs of progress in the interethnic relations.

For the first time in the country’s history, ethnic Albanians voted in larger numbers for a traditionally ethnically Macedonian party, the Social Democratic Union of Macedonia (SDSM). While this does not establish a new pattern or mode of behavior, it does show a difference in the way that ethnic Albanians engage with the state and with politics, which differs from the first decade after independence. However, the perception of second-class citizenship still exists within the ethnic Albanian community, as the decade-old disparities among the different ethnic groups will take time to reach full equality and inclusivity. In large part, the ethnic conflict did not increase the understanding which Brunnbauer (2004) referred to. Instead, the resolution of the conflict instilled a top-down solution. Almost 20 years after the conflict, the increase in understanding has been slow, but there has been improvement, as shown by the fact that the 2015 Kumanovo incident did not become a full-blown conflict. On the other hand, the divisions between the communities persist since there is still not an active thinking instilled about the inclusion of non-majority communities. Namely, the inclusion of non-majority communities has not become understood as a must of a multicultural society, rather as a must of balancing the political parties and their constituents, which still bears similarities to the politics of the 1990s. The political rhetoric is still rife with nationalism, which makes the construction of a civic or a more inclusive society vulnerable to shifts that are dependent on the ruling parties of the day and not inscribed deeper into the *modus operandi* of the institutions. At the same time, the citizens are no longer easily mobilized along ethnic lines to create and sustain conflict, which is a positive development. For the country to move beyond the staple of ethnic conflict, it will have to fundamentally combine the institutional component whereby inclusion of marginalized communities becomes an active process of policy development while at the same time working on building trust and understanding between citizens. While the situation has ameliorated since North Macedonia’s independence, full equality between citizens, and a holistic understanding as to why this equality is

important, has yet to be established as a solid political and social reality.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Culture and Conflict Resolution](#)
- ▶ [Divided Cities](#)
- ▶ [Ohrid Framework Agreement, The](#)

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Ethnofederalism

- ▶ [Decentralization and Conflict Prevention](#)

Ethnographic Peace Research

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Definition

Ethnographic peace research (EPR) is best defined not as a specific methodology for data collection, but as an approach to peace research that allows a particular depth of insight and analysis. Specifically, EPR requires that the data

collected allows for both: (1) “thick description” of the complex social reality within local settings of peace interventions and (2) explanation not only of what happens, but of “why and how” these interventions impact local individuals and communities as they do. The driving motivation for the development of this approach has been the recognition that the stated end goals of peace interventions (including peace, justice, reconciliation, security, dignity, and empowerment) are experiential and not institutional. They are not universally constant, but locally rooted, historically contingent, and culturally defined concepts. As such, the perceptions, expectations, and experiences of peace interventions among “beneficiary” communities will diverge from what the international actors who plan, fund, and implement such projects expect. Any research seeking to understand the impact of peace interventions among beneficiaries (regarding peace, justice, security, etc.) must therefore commit to understanding how these concepts are defined within the locally, historically, and culturally specific contexts of intervention. EPR can be defined, therefore, as any peace research that seeks to achieve this depth of insight and analysis. However, this also means that even research that deploys methodologies often associated with ethnographic studies (interviews, participant observation, visual ethnography, participant mapping, etc.) cannot be defined as EPR if they do not seek, at a minimum, to achieve that depth.

Towards Locally Grounded Assessment of Peace and Conflict Dynamics

At its core, ethnographic peace research (EPR) is a means to understand the impacts of international peace interventions on local individuals and communities in post-conflict societies. Central to its initial development was the task of refocusing peace research data collection away from reliance on the relatively powerful actors who plan and implement peace interventions, and towards the relatively marginalized individuals and communities who experience those interventions (Millar 2014). Ideas regarding what constitutes peace, justice, reconciliation, and development (not to

mention related constructs such as dignity, honor, empowerment, and security) are widely recognized to be culturally defined and, therefore, divergent across sociocultural contexts. There are, as a result, fundamental methodological problems with relying on the accounts of either international actors, national elites, or even local implementing partners to speak for the nonelite communities defined as the final “beneficiaries” of peace interventions. While there is much to be gained from speaking to these actors, it is methodologically unsound to rely on these voices to accurately report on the experiences of nonelite individuals or communities. The turn to ethnographic methods is one solution to this problem.

It is important to note that the EPR approach within peace and conflict studies (PCS) is indebted to a long history of ethnographic work within anthropology. This work has focused on local dynamics of conflict, transition, and peace, on local conflict resolution or mediation processes, and on local experiences of violence and recovery (see, for example, Hamer 1980; Podelefsky 1990; Honwana 2006; Theidon 2013; Bräuchler 2015). But, unfortunately, it is quite rare to see substantial engagement with this work in the leading PCS journals, and dominant policies and practices of peace intervention rarely evidence much exposure to or understanding of this research. While it has become fashionable to make reference to the importance of culture even within the core PCS journals, driven recently by the “local turn” literature (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013), the field of anthropology itself is still marginal to PCS debates and there remain substantial structural and cultural issues limiting the incorporation of anthropological ethnographic methods into the core of PCS research. EPR seeks to resolve this problem by striking a balance.

The balance struck by EPR is based on the need to incorporate key characteristics of anthropological ethnography (thick description and in-depth explanations of why impacts unfold as they do) into PCS research, but in a way that allows these to be used for shorter-term studies that focus on the central problems facing PCS, as opposed to the more long-term engagement and very different topics covered by anthropologists. It is, therefore,

important to highlight that EPR is not ethnography as this is understood in anthropology. Whereas ethnography within anthropology usually focuses on broad cultural phenomena such as language, symbolism, ceremony, kinship systems, and systems of meaning making generally, in PCS our focus is more specific and bounded on the dynamics of conflict, violence, peace, and peacebuilding. In addition, unlike anthropology, which has largely evaded policy significance in the last few decades, PCS has an avowedly normative agenda and seeks to impact policy and practice as much as possible. While EPR, therefore, seeks to incorporate key characteristics of anthropological ethnography, it is not seeking to replicate this approach.

In PCS the EPR approach has also been divided into two quite different, but related, “registers,” one “scholarly” and the other “evaluative.” The scholarly register is best placed for the testing and generation of new PCS theory, as is central to scholarly work. EPR in this register is directly built on the two required characteristics of EPR as noted above: (1) “thick description” of the complex social reality within local settings of peace interventions and (2) explanation not only of what happens, but of “why and how” peace interventions impact local individuals and communities as they do. In addition, while these first two characteristics are required, two further characteristics which facilitate EPR studies should also be highlighted. These are: (1) the use of a “diversity of methodologies” capable of triangulating findings and responding to different data collection issues on the ground and (2) researcher “reflexivity,” or the constant self-critique and critical consideration of one’s own positionality and potential biases (see Millar 2018a, pp. 6–11). When implemented together, these four characteristics allow EPR in its scholarly register to generate and test PCS theories regarding the impacts and experiences of peace interventions.

At the same time, however, PCS is also in need of a less scholarly or theory-oriented approach; one which might be useful not only for scholars, but for evaluators working for funders and implementing partners who also seek to understand the impacts of their work in post-conflict settings. To this end, the “evaluative register”

provides a simpler four pillar model for EPR (see Millar 2014). These pillars require evaluators to:

1. Switch from seeing peacebuilding as institutional to instead recognize it as experiential
2. Engage in a robust effort at ethnographic preparation, reading existing anthropological studies regarding the pertinent setting prior to evaluating peace interventions in that setting
3. Commit to substantive local engagement with the actual targeted beneficiaries of peace interventions instead of those who claim to represent them
4. Constantly appraise their own implicit assumptions regarding the meanings of concepts central to peace interventions, such as peace, justice, reconciliation, and security

The four pillars of the evaluative register do not map directly on to the four characteristics of the scholarly register, but they are designed to allow a more instrumental use of EPR that is less about theory generation and testing, and more about understanding for the purposes of improving policy and practice (see Millar 2018b).

Summary

The development of the EPR approach has been driven by the desire to incorporate some of the strengths of anthropological ethnography into PCS research. The central goal remains to understand in more depth the dynamics of conflict, violence, peace, and peacebuilding on the ground in post-conflict societies. EPR does this by refocusing peace research data collection away from those actors who plan and implement peace interventions, and towards the individuals and communities who experience those interventions. The two separate registers provide tools appropriate for the different communities within PCS who perform the work of assessment (scholarly and evaluative). While the first is focused on developing and testing theory and the other on policy and practice, both registers provide the depth of insight and analysis that defines the EPR approach.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Conflict Fieldwork](#)
- ▶ [Culture and Conflict Resolution](#)
- ▶ [Culture, Anthropology, and Ethnography in Peace Research](#)
- ▶ [Everyday Peace](#)
- ▶ [Local Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Reflexivity in the Study of Security and Conflict](#)

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EU Conditionality in the Western Balkans

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Keywords

EU enlargement · Conditionality · Western Balkans

Definition

Conditionality refers to the European Union's (EU) broad policy framework for incentivizing political and socioeconomic reforms from neighboring states. It is a process which encourages states to transform and reform various aspects of their regimes in exchange for the prospects of eventual membership in the EU, the largest economic and political union in human history. The conditionality mechanism was primarily developed to provide a formula for incorporating the former Eastern Bloc and Soviet states in the EU, but has, arguably, seen its most sustained (and difficult) application in the states of the Western Balkans.

Introduction

Since the 2003 Thessaloniki Summit, the cornerstone of European Union (EU) policy in the Western Balkans – that is, countries of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) plus Albania – has been the promise of the extension of EU membership to the region in exchange for a sustained process of economic, social, and political reform. That exchange – membership for reform – has been referred to in the EU's own policy texts and the relevant scholarship as “conditionality.” In short, the EU conditions its promise of enlargement on the delivery of credible transformations within these societies and thus, in theory, incentivizes and accelerates the process of post-conflict and post-authoritarian democratization. In the academic literature, this process is referred to as the “External Incentive Model” (EIM) (Schimmelfennig & Sedelmeier, 2020) which presupposes that states, and the elites who govern them, will rationally seek to maximize their own power and influence, and can therefore be incentivized to undergo difficult sociopolitical transformations by external actors like the EU, in exchange for inclusion within this bloc, the largest and most economically prosperous union in history.

The fundamental issue with this theoretical approach, however, is that what is “rational” is

differently constituted for the EU, on the one hand, and the local political elites, on the other. Moreover, this approach neglects the extent to which local elites have been able to create parallel incentive structures among their own citizens which have allowed them simultaneously to extract concessions and benefits from the EU, while only engaging in limited, or otherwise cosmetic, reforms at home. Nor has this approach adequately accounted for the changes within EU politics, in particular the turn toward explicit anti-enlargement sentiment, especially following the 2015 migrant and refugee crisis.

Nearly 20 years on since the Thessaloniki summit, it appears that the central premise of the conditionality framework has fundamentally eroded. The promise of enlargement has proven to be less enticing to most of the region than anticipated; the EU has struggled to demonstrate credible commitments to democratic and political change in a complex, postwar region; and, in time, the EU's own members have begun to abandon the normative ideals which animated this policy framework in the first place (Holesch & Kyriazi, 2021).

The EU in the Western Balkans After 2003

The 2003 declaration promised that the “EU reiterates its unequivocal support to the European perspective of the Western Balkan countries. The future of the Balkans is within the European Union” (EU-Western Balkans Summit Thessaloniki, 2003). To date, that promise has only been realized by two Western Balkan states: Slovenia, which joined the Union as part of the “Big Bang” enlargement in 2004, and Croatia in 2013, the last state to have joined the bloc. Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia are all formal candidates for membership; Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) has applied for candidacy status; Kosovo has not, and its 2008 independence from Serbia is not recognized by five of the EU's own member states. None of these remaining states – collectively referred to as the Western Balkan Six

(WB6) – are likely to clinch accession in this decade. That will mean that 2020s will be the first decade since enlargement as concept began (with the 1973 accession of Denmark, Ireland, and the UK) that the Union will not take in any new members.

This prognosis, of course, is speculative. But it is rooted in a set of discernable facts about the changing political dynamics of both the Western Balkans and the EU. To begin with, conditionality was not a toolkit that could readily be adapted for use in the Western Balkans. As a policy framework, conditionality was developed to address the EU's relationship with the former Eastern Bloc and former Soviet states of Eastern Europe, and their states aspirations for inclusion in both the EU and NATO. But while the SFRY had attained a greater degree of economic development than nearly any of the Soviet or Eastern Bloc states by the late 1970s and early 1980s, the country's postcommunist period was far more catastrophic than the same in any of these latter states. The significance of the consequences of the Yugoslav dissolution – but also the post-Cold War chaos in Albania – cannot be overstated in this respect.

Between 140,000 and 150,000 people were killed in the Yugoslav Wars (1991–2001) (International Center for Transitional Justice, 2009), 100,000 of which were casualties in the Bosnian War (1992–1995) alone (Tokača, 2012). This decade of war – which saw the worst atrocities in Europe since WWII, the brunt of which took place in the context of the Bosnian genocide (see entry Bosnian Genocide) – devastated the region economically, socially, and politically. Even Albania, which escaped the Yugoslav Wars as such, notwithstanding its comparatively minor involvement in the Kosovo War, experienced a low-level civil war after the country's economic collapse in 1997. Quite simply, no other postcommunist state in Europe which eventually transitioned in EU membership had as cataclysmic an experience in the early 1990s as any of these polities.

Nor are Slovenia and Croatia's comparative success in this regard outliers per se. These two states were the most prosperous republics within the Yugoslav federation, and Slovenia's experience with the Yugoslav Wars extended no further

than the so-called Ten-Day War – a comparatively minor skirmish between the republic’s incipient armed forces and the Serbian-controlled Yugoslav Peoples’ Army in 1991. Croatia’s war of independence was far longer and bloodier, lasting between 1991 and 1995 and costing the lives of some 15,000–20,000 people (Fink, 2010, p. 469). But unlike nearby BiH, Kosovo, Serbia, Montenegro, or North Macedonia, Croatia came out of the war without any significant outstanding internal or external political issues. The Zagreb government exercised full control over the whole of its territory, and it had only comparatively minor border issues to resolve with Slovenia and Serbia. As such, after 1995, Croatia was, in comparison to its neighbors, able to quickly recapture its position as one of the two largest economies in the region.

This is not to suggest that Croatia did not undergo a significant political transformation in its postwar years. The spectacular arrest and conviction of former Prime Minister Ivo Sanader in 2010, for instance, speaks to a period of sustained anti-corruption efforts in the country in the lead up to its formal accession into the EU (Vladisavljevic, 2020). And the material and human costs of the war, as noted, were significant. But already by the late 2000s, Croatia had obtained a level of political and economic recovery comparable, and even superior, to that of Bulgaria and Romania, which joined the EU in 2007.

The Absence of Reform in the Western Balkan Six

That was not case then, nor has it been the case since in the rest of the region. BiH remained riven by sectarian tensions, and above all by continued threats to its sovereignty and territorial integrity by Serb nationalist elements within BiH but also on the part of Serbia’s revanchist regime, under the leadership of Aleksandar Vučić (Mujanovic, 2020). Serbia, as noted, has reverted to a proto-autocratic rule not seen in the country since the Milošević era. Indeed, its experiment with genuine democratization was brief; it lasted just over a

decade, and even then, it saw the assassination of arguably the most overtly reformist postwar figure, Prime Minister Zoran Đinđić, in 2003. Kosovo, of course, still lacks international recognition on account of the Russo-Chinese veto on the UN Security Council on behalf of Serbia. North Macedonia only recently resolved a quarter century dispute with Greece over the country’s constitutional name which hampered Skopje’s Euro-Atlantic aspirations for the duration and contributed also to a catastrophic collapse in democratic standards under former Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski. Montenegro only gained its independence from Serbia in 2006 and has been exposed near continued Serbian meddling in its internal politics – especially since Vučić’s rise to power beginning in 2012 – which culminated in a *coup* attempt in October 2016. Finally, Albania, which again did not experience direct consequences from the Yugoslav Wars, was a far less-developed polity than Yugoslavia to begin with, especially as compared to the SFRJ’s two most prosperous northern republics. The chaos of the 1990s further hampered the country’s European ambitions, on top of the lasting legacies of the obscenely repressive Hoxha regime.

Yet despite these differences, there are also relevant points of comparison between Slovenia and Croatia and the rest of the region, ones which are especially relevant to examine in the post-accession context. Namely, the past decade has seen significant democratic backsliding in both countries, in keeping with similar regional trends. Slovenia and Croatia remain freer and more democratic than their non-EU neighbors, but they are laggards by the Union’s standards. And much as is the case throughout the region, the war-time political elite in both countries remains dominant nearly three decades after the fact. Slovenia’s Prime Minister, Janez Janša, has been a mainstay of Slovenian politics since 1991 and has since the second decade of the twenty-first century emerged as one of the leading illiberal figures in European politics (Hopkins, 2021). In Croatia, the long-dominant Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) has only ever lost two parliamentary elections since 1990. Both countries have seen a significant

decline in press freedoms in recent years, and a turn to reactionary, anti-migrant politics, as well as an accompanying downturn in relations with neighboring states. And according to virtually every available metric on the subject, the rank consistently ranks as two of the most corrupt member states in the bloc, alongside Romania and Bulgaria (Stojanovic, 2021).

The point here is that while Slovenia and Croatia are frontrunners in terms of their overall sociopolitical development in comparison to the rest of the region, they are not complete outliers. Indeed, they are more alike the rest of the Western Balkan polities than not. And certainly, any kind of meaningful comparison between overall democratic standards between the two and, say, Germany or the Netherlands would be labored. Moreover, inasmuch as these two states have any sort of meaningful foreign policy it is exclusively directed toward intra-regional issues. Croatia's foreign policy is almost wholly concerned with the status of ethnic Croats in neighboring BiH, and Zagreb's continuous attempt to prevent significant reforms of the country's sectarian constitutional regime (which Croatia fears would disadvantage the Croat community there). Slovenia has no major interests in the region on the face of it, yet the Janša government has emerged as one of the chief advocates for new rounds of territorial reorganization of the Western Balkans – including schemes for the wholesale partition of BiH, Kosovo, and North Macedonia (Brezar, 2021). Relatedly, individuals in the orbit of the prime minister are widely suspected of being significant actors within regional money laundering and organized crime rings, and the prime minister previously served an (eventually overturned) jail sentence on similar charges (Kovacevic, 2018).

The End of the EU's Enlargement Agenda in the Western Balkans

But conditionality has not only – or even primarily – failed as a policy framework because of the recalcitrant tendencies in the region. It is the

growing rejection of the concept of European enlargement within the EU itself that is, arguably, still a more significant factor. If the political will within the EU existed to provide a comprehensive, enforceable agenda for the region – one rooted in credible commitments to the rule of law, democratization, and the defense of human rights – then progress could be made. That, for instance, was certainly the experience of the US-led reconstruction process in BiH, the region's most complex polity, between 1996 and 2006. Despite the horrors of the Bosnian War, BiH made major strides toward EU and NATO membership in that decade – including the creation of a state police and unified armed forces, an almost unthinkable in the immediate aftermath of the conflict – largely because Washington provided clear incentives but also clear consequences for local political elites to undertake reform initiatives.

This is something the EU has never done, especially not since the American presence in the region largely receded after 2006–2008. Brussels has provided a host of direct and indirect incentives to local elites, but it has never truly developed a mechanism for responding to or punishing those who abuse its resources or hamper its initiatives, overtly or otherwise. The result of that policy is most evident with the ongoing democratic backsliding in member states like Hungary and Poland, but it has shaped the accession and conditionality process as well. Postwar leaders in much of the Western Balkans have essentially deduced that there are more benefits to dragging out the accession process than to concluding it. Some even maintain a degree of permanent instability to extract additional concession from the bloc (Mujanović, 2018, p. 48). Such an approach allows these bad faith actors to receive significant “development funds” from the EU, without having to make the kinds of painful political concessions that might jeopardize their own political and material fortunes (having learned a lesson from the illustrative downfall of Ivo Sanader).

Moreover, political sentiments within the EU itself have evolved significantly since the

Thessaloniki era. While the global financial crisis of 2008–2009 contributed to dampening the appetites for further enlargement, it was the 2015 migrant and refugee crisis that fundamentally transformed the nature of the relationship between the EU and the region. Because the migrant crisis sharply bolstered the political fortunes of the far-right within the EU, it pushed parties on both the center-right and center-left to adopt a more reserved attitude toward further expansion. That was evident in the case of France where the election Emmanuel Macron, a nominal liberal, saw Paris upend virtually the entire enlargement process on two separate occasions to stonewall the start of accession negotiations with North Macedonia and Albania in 2019 (Stamouli, 2019). While both countries eventually started negotiations, it was not until France forced the EU to adopt an entirely new accession protocol. Although Paris' demands for a more merit-based approach, with more frequent opportunities to substantively evaluate the reform process in candidate states, was not without justification, the Macron government's conduct gestured at a more categorical change. Specifically, that rather merely making it more difficult to join the EU, Paris was effectively imploding the Union's entire commitment to the region. There was no longer an open-door policy; the door was closed, barring exceptional circumstances. And the fact that North Macedonia had, quite literally, changed its constitutional name to appease Greece and the EU in exchange for the start of negotiations was not, in the eyes of Paris at least, exceptional.

The French about-face was a massive blow to already beleaguered pro-liberal and pro-EU actors throughout the region. Following the onset of the French blockade—and despite its eventual lifting—it was difficult to interpret the episode as anything other than the practical conclusion of the end of the EU enlargement process. In 2014, the Juncker Commission had already announced that the Union would not take in any new members during its mandate. As no serious observer had expected otherwise, Commissioner Jean-Claude Juncker's explicit statement to that effect was widely

interpreted as a signal that the EU was moving to slow the enlargement process (Erebara, 2014). When this was followed by the French blockade, it made the explicit shift in sentiment undeniable: enlargement was over.

For local pro-EU actors, the challenge has since become how to continue to use the EU horizon as a catalyst for spurring domestic reforms; not so much with the (evidently nonexistent) hope of enlargement in any meaningful timeframe but as an end unto itself. That, however, has proven to be exceedingly difficult. First because the darkening of the European project in the region has been accompanied by the surging influence of illiberal and authoritarian actors like Russia, China, and Turkey, but also those from within the EU's own midst like Hungary. This has, of course, only strengthened the position of already entrenched oligarchic regimes across the region. And it has accelerated the EU's drift toward marginalia in the region. While Russia, China, Turkey et al are steering the core political and strategic decision making of local elites, and thus shaping the geopolitical significance of the region on the continent, the EU is devoting funds to improving municipal governance.

Worse, the growing political clout of far-right and nativist actors within the EU has contributed to the perception in several regional states that the cause of Brussels' and the member states turn against enlargement is not actually rooted in the lack of political and democratic progress in the Western Balkans. Instead, the primary motivating factor is sectarian: that of the remaining six nonmember states in the region, three are Muslim-majority states (BiH, Albania, and Kosovo), while two have significant Muslim minorities (North Macedonia and Montenegro). Moreover, Serbia, which has typically been highlighted as the most overtly autocratic regime in the region by relevant observers, continues to be characterized by EU officials as the "frontrunner" for membership (Gojgić, 2020). But its Muslim minority is, percentage-wise, the smallest among the WB6.

Whether such perceptions are accurate is, ultimately, irrelevant; and they are, in any case,

strenuously denied by Brussels. They are politically salient perceptions in much of the region, and ones that powers like Turkey, for instance, have sought to exploit, to position themselves as the actual benefactors of the region's Muslim-majority states (Maziad & Sotiriadis, 2020; Bechev, 2019). This then also exposes an absurd contradiction in the EU's turn against sustained, enlargement-oriented engagement in the region. The EU has turned against enlargement, supposedly, because it believes that the remaining WB6 states, broadly speaking, are not a good fit for the bloc given the current political conditions which have prevailed in those states (Fouéré, 2021). In so doing, Brussels has opened the door to adversaries and competitors to make in-roads in the region, and to undermine the EU's core strategic interest in the Western Balkans: that the region be stable, peaceful, and democratic. Russia, in particular, is categorically committed to keeping the region as an open sore for the bloc, forcing the EU to commit political and financial resources there indefinitely, a ploy that is only made more effective if that spending is accompanied by no coherent European strategy, as is presently the case.

In that sense, for the EU the problem is geographic rather than political. Any decision to sequester or quarantine the region is destined to failure because the Western Balkans is inescapably located on the European mainland. There is no sea protecting the core of the EU from its southeastern flank which means that, as in the 1990s, nonengagement is simply not an option. Even if the EU governments may not want to include the WB6 in the bloc, they cannot, whatever their desires, wall the region off. Any instability in the Western Balkans is inherently a political and security problem for the whole continent, a fact that has been repeatedly shown to be the case since at least the fifteenth-century absorption of the area by the Ottoman Empire. That is not to suggest necessarily that the Western Balkans must, in turn, be absorbed in their entirety by the EU. But it is to argue that a meaningful, sustained policy agenda for the region is required. And if the EU does not want to offer membership to the region, then it has to offer some kind of

framework that will advance its own interests in the region; that this group of polities be at peace, stable, and democratic. To date, such a "Plan B" has not yet manifested.

A failure to provide this framework will, in the final analysis, not only undermine its credibility in the Western Balkans. This will have consequences for the EU as a foreign policy actor, as such. If the EU can offer nothing of substance to the Western Balkans, then what are its prospects for dealing with the ongoing war in Ukraine? Or the ring of violence which characterizes the contemporary situation in the greater Mediterranean? Or, for that matter, the growing significance of states like Russia and China within the politics of the Union itself? A conditionality or transformation mechanism that can be successfully deployed and enforced by the EU is therefore a matter of preeminent political concern for the bloc itself. If the EU is to survive as a coherent union of democracies with shared political interests it will, like all polities, require a means for engaging neighboring states. While the EU is not a traditional Westphalian state, it is a quasi-sovereign all the same, whose long-term survival is dependent on successfully advancing and protecting its interests in the international arena. That, ultimately, was and remains the purpose of conditionality.

Summary

The EU's conditionality regime in the Western Balkans has only been a partial success in the region. The mechanism delivered progress and reforms in the two most highly developed regional polities, Slovenia and Croatia, but it has fared considerably worse in the remaining WB6. The reasons for that are myriad but boil down to a combination of post-conflict instability, local political intransigence, an insufficiently robust EU foreign policy apparatus, and a shift to anti-enlargement sentiments within the bloc. While the EU will doubtlessly continue to engage with the region, it has yet to develop a comprehensive post-enlargement agenda for the

Western Balkans, a fact which is only leading to further political turmoil.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Bosnian Genocide](#).
- ▶ [Democratization in Postconflict Western Balkans](#)
- ▶ [Ethnic Conflict in North Macedonia](#)
- ▶ [European Union's Peace Missions and Operations, The](#)
- ▶ [Ohrid Framework Agreement, The](#)
- ▶ [Transitional Justice in Croatia](#)
- ▶ [United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo \(UNMIK\)](#)

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European Union

- ▶ [European Union's Peace Missions and Operations, The](#)

European Union's Peace Missions and Operations, The

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Synonyms

Civilian and military missions and operations; Common Security and Defence Policy; European Union; Global interventionism

Description

The European Union (EU) has carried out 36 peace missions and operations in Europe, Africa, and Asia since the early 2000s, which have featured prominently in its Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). This chapter presents an overview of these missions and operations and offers a critique of the EU's efforts. It first explains the institutional and decision-making apparatuses which frame CSDP missions and operations; it then briefly analyzes the forces that have shaped their emergence and evolution. The chapter moves on to provide a concise mapping of the EU's practice and, finally, it outlines a few of the most significant strengths and critiques

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of the Union's approach, as well as current challenges to its efforts.

Definition

The EU's peace missions and operations, deployed since 2003, aim to "help resolve or prevent conflict and crises, enhance the capacities of partners and, ultimately, protect the European Union and its citizens" (EEAS 2020). Although not officially carrying the label of "peace", these missions and operations are deployed under the framework of the CSDP, which "enables the Union to take a leading role in peace-keeping operations, conflict prevention and in the strengthening of the international security" (EEAS 2018).

With a broad mandate, their tasks range from crisis management, mediation, and peacebuilding to security sector reform assistance, capacity building, military training, and humanitarian aid. Interventions which are civilian in nature or require nonexecutive military support are labeled *missions*, and interventions which are military in nature, and have an executive mandate at the level of command, are labeled *operations*. While the decision-making and institutional apparatuses employed by the Union to manage missions and operations have evolved over time, the process essentially involves deployment following a request from the state subject to intervention and/or following authorization by a UN Security Council Resolution.

Within the EU, it is up to the Political and Security Committee, responsible for determining the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and CSDP, and composed of representatives of all member states, to first discuss and endorse a mission or operation as an appropriate EU strategic action. Under its guidance, the decision to launch one takes place in the context of the Foreign Affairs Council and depends on the unanimous approval of member states, expressed through a European Council decision. The Council, alongside the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice President of the European Commission

(HR/VP), holds the authority over the specific mission or operation's overall political control and strategic direction throughout its lifespan.

At an operational level, the Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability oversees civilian CSDP missions' conduct, with its Director acting as the Civilian Operations Commander. The EU Military Staff coordinates military operations or missions requiring military support. Within it, the Military Planning and Conduct Capability manages nonexecutive military missions and will have the added responsibility of planning and commanding an executive military operation of up to an EU Battlegroup-size (1500 personnel).

Assets and personnel contributed to any mission or operation are provided primarily by member states. Financial resources for civilian missions are made available through the CFSP's budget; since 2021, military operations are financed by member states through the European Peace Facility. Third states have also contributed to CSDP missions and operations through Framework Participation Agreements.

CSDP peace missions and operations are, however, not merely part of a policy toolbox: they are supposed to reflect the EU's self-identity as a foreign policy actor aiming to "preserve peace, prevent conflicts and strengthen international security" (Art.21(2c)), TEU). They invoke a particular representation of the Union and the "way in which [it] engages with the rest of the world" (Davis 2018, p. 157), reinforced by the creation of the European External Action Service (EEAS) in 2010, and its 2016 *Global Strategy for the EU's Foreign and Security Policy* (EEAS 2016). From a strategic point of view, these missions and operations have become "an invaluable pillar of European security and defence" and a "tangible example of the EU's action for global security," as the current HR/VP, Josep Borrell, puts it (EEAS 2020).

The Emergence of CSDP Peace Missions and Operations

Conceived as a "giant peacebuilding project" (Duke and Courtier 2009, p. 14) since the end of

the Second World War, the EU has always been concerned with peace and security. Yet, already from its origins, agreement among member states over issues of security and defense proved difficult. A certain ambivalence towards further integration in the face of the US and NATO's role in European security and defense, alongside member states' fierce protection of their national spheres, saw reluctance to deepen coordination continue until the end of the Cold War, despite brief spells of political cooperation (Bretherton and Vogler 2006, pp. 159–163).

The breakdown of the Soviet Union would spur member states to hasten their agreement on a common framework to address international threats to peace and security, especially those latent or erupting to their east in the former Soviet bloc, while embracing an opportunity to spread its values and install its socio-economic and political model. As Merlingen and Ostrauskaite write, "uncertainties and instability associated with the monumental political changes in the region" instilled in member states "a new sense of collective responsibility for pan-European affairs" (2006, p. 34).

The EU's most decisive step came in response to the Balkan Wars in the 1990s and its failure to respond in a timely and effective manner. As Yugoslavia violently disintegrated in 1991, Brussels looked to take a leading role in rebuilding peace. Yet, failing to speak as one voice, its diplomatic efforts were of limited effect and were overshadowed by NATO and the USA (Gnesotto 1996, pp. 116–118). Nonetheless, the Yugoslav experience – and the evident failure to maintain peace in its own neighborhood – served as a catalyst for member states to pursue further security integration, translated into the institutionalization of the CFSP in the Treaty of the EU (signed in 1992; into force in 1993) (Nuttall 2000).

Likewise, the EU's apparent inability to prevent armed conflict in Kosovo in February 1998 provided a further impetus for a more active and autonomous EU role in promoting peace. Renewed violence in the Balkans was thus followed by a new European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) – later renamed CSDP in the Lisbon Treaty (signed in 2007; into force in

2009) – designed to provide the EU with the means necessary to respond quickly to international crises (Howorth 2007). These developments, although welcomed by many within the Union, generated concerns in some quarters that the EU's role as a security actor was too focused on its military capabilities, which needed to be balanced by a strong civilian component (Jakobsen 2009). Indeed, as Serrano puts it, “[w]e recognised early on that a civilian ESDP dimension was a precondition for a number of member states to accept military ESDP” (2020, p. 20).

With its identity as an engaged foreign policy actor gaining momentum, and with these concerns at heart, the EU launched its first independent civilian mission in January 2003, the EU Police Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Its first military operation, EUFOR Concordia in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, followed only 2 months later. The EU has since carried out over 30 peace missions and operations around the world, mapped briefly in the next section.

The EU's Past and Current CSDP Missions and Operations

Since 2003, the EU has deployed 36 CSDP missions and operations in Europe, Africa, and Asia: 19 completed and 17 ongoing, as of May 2021 (for a list of ongoing and completed missions, and their respective websites, see https://eeas.europa.eu/topics/military-and-civilian-missions-and-operations/430/military-and-civilian-missions-and-operations_en). An 18th mission, the EUBAM Moldova and Ukraine – European Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine, created on 1 December 2005 and still ongoing, is not managed within CSDP structures, but given its similar goals to other missions, it is often included in maps and overviews of the EU's peace missions and operations. In total, the EU has deployed 16 missions and operations to what it considers its immediate neighborhood (Eastern Europe, the Balkans, the Mediterranean, the Middle East and North Africa, and the Caucasus), 18 to Sub-Saharan Africa, and 2 to Asia.

The EU's first civilian mission was deployed in 2003 in Bosnia and Herzegovina, following on from the UN's International Police Task Force, to train and equip a multiethnic police force to enforce the law and fight against organized crime and corruption. Soon after, the Union deployed its first military operation in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, taking over from NATO but maintaining close cooperation with it and making use of its assets and capabilities, in order to provide security throughout the implementation of the Ohrid peace agreement. Currently, there are 11 civilian missions deployed in Ukraine, Georgia, Kosovo, Libya, the Palestinian Territories (Ramallah and Rafah), Niger, Mali, Somalia, Iraq, and the Central African Republic and 6 military missions and operations deployed in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Somalia, Mali, Central African Republic, and the Mediterranean. The most recent civilian mission is the EU Advisory Mission for the Central African Republic, deployed in July 2020 to Bangui, to advise the government's Security Sector Reform. In March 2020, the most recent military action, Operation Iriana (EUNAVFOR MED), was deployed to the Mediterranean to enforce the UN arms embargo on Libya, as well as to disrupt human smuggling and trafficking networks into Europe. Below are the tables of completed, as well as currently active, CSDP missions and operations.

Completed CSDP Missions and Operations

| | Dates | Mission/operation | Full name |
|---|--------------------------------|-------------------|--|
| 1 | 1 January 2003–30 June 2012 | EUPM/BiH | European Union Police Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina |
| 2 | 31 March 2003–15 December 2003 | EUFOR Concordia | European Union Military Operation in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia |
| 3 | 12 June 2003–1 September 2003 | EUFOR Artemis | European Union Military Operation in the Democratic |

(continued)

| | Dates | Mission/ operation | Full name | | Dates | Mission/ operation | Full name |
|----|--|-----------------------------|---|----|--|----------------------------|--|
| | | | Republic of Congo | | | | Congo (MONUC) during the election process |
| 4 | 15 December 2003–14 December 2005 | EUPOL FYROM | European Union Police Mission in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (EUPOL Proxima) | 12 | 15 June 2007–31 December 2016 | EUPOL Afghanistan | European Union Police Mission in Afghanistan |
| 5 | 16 July 2004–14 July 2005 | EJUST Themis/ Georgia | European Union Rule of Law Mission in Georgia | 13 | 1 July 2007–30 September 2014 | EUPOL RD Congo | European Union Police Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo |
| 6 | 12 April 2005–31 December 2006 | EUPOL Kinshasa | European Union Police Mission in Kinshasa | 14 | 28 January 2008–15 March 2009 | EUFOR Tchad/RCA | European Union Military Operation in Chad and the Central African Republic |
| 7 | June 2005–June 2006 | EUSEC RD Congo | European Union Security Sector Reform Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo | 15 | 12 February 2008–30 September 2010 | EUSSR Guinea- Bissau | European Union Mission in Support of Security Sector Reform in Guinea-Bissau |
| 8 | 1 July 2005–31 December 2013 | EJUST LEX Iraq | European Union Integrated Rule of Law Mission in Iraq | 16 | 18 June 2012–17 January 2014 | EUAVSEC South Sudan | European Union Aviation Security Mission in South Sudan |
| 9 | 15 September 2005–15 December 2006 | AMM | European Union Monitoring Mission in Aceh | 17 | 10 February 2014–15 March 2015 | EUFOR RCA | European Union Military Operation in the Central African Republic |
| 10 | 15 December 2005–14 June 2006 | EUPAT | European Union Police Advisory Team in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia | 18 | 23 March 2015–16 July 2016 | EUMAM RCA | European Union Military Advisory Mission in the Central African Republic |
| 11 | 12 June 2006–30 November 2006) | EUFOR RD Congo | European Union Military Operation in Support of the United Nations Organisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the | 19 | 22 June 2015–31 March 2020 | EUNAVFOR Med | European Union Naval Force Mediterranean (Operation Sophia) |

(continued)

Current CSDP Missions and Operations

| | Dates | Mission/ operation | Full name |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|--|
| 1 | 2 December 2004 – | EUFOR BiH | European Union Military Operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Operation Althea) |
| 2 | 25 November 2005 – | EUBAM Rafah | European Border Assistance Mission to Rafah |
| 3 | 1 January 2006 – | EUPOL COPPS | European Union Police Mission for the Palestinian Territories |
| 4 | 1 October 2008 – | EUMM Georgia | European Union Monitoring Mission in Georgia |
| 5 | 9 December 2008 – | EUNAVFOR Somalia | European Union Naval Force in Somalia (Operation Atalanta) |
| 6 | 9 December 2008 – | EULEX Kosovo | European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo |
| 7 | 10 April 2010 – | EUTM Somalia | European Union Training Mission in Somalia |
| 8 | 8 August 2012 – | EUCAP Sahel Niger | European Union Capacity Building Mission in Niger |
| 9 | 16 July 2012 – | EUCAP Somalia | European Union Capacity Building Mission in Somalia (Operation Nestor) |

(continued)

| | Dates | Mission/ operation | Full name |
|----|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|
| 10 | 18 February 2013 – | EUTM Mali | European Union Training Mission in Mali |
| 11 | 22 May 2013 – | EUBAM Libya | European Border Assistance Mission in Libya |
| 12 | 15 January 2015 – | EUCAP Sahel Mali | European Union Capacity Building Mission in Mali |
| 13 | 1 December 2014 – | EUAM Ukraine | European Union Advisory Mission in Ukraine |
| 14 | 16 July 2016 – | EUTM RCA | European Union Training Mission in the Central African Republic |
| 15 | 16 October 2017 – | EUAM Iraq | European Union Advisory Mission in Iraq |
| 16 | 31 March 2020 – | EUNAVFOR Med | European Union Naval Force Mediterranean (Operation Irina) |
| 17 | 30 July 2020 – | EUAM RCA | European Union Advisory Mission in the Central African Republic |

Key Features

Geographically, while the choice to intervene in territories close to the EU – and where insecurity at the borders can have a greater spill-over

effect – fits the Union's stated priority of linking international peace and security with the protection of its own citizens, the geographical scope of CSDP missions and operations may nonetheless appear limited. A vast number of countries around the world have seen crises, instability, and violence since the inception of CSDP missions and operations; yet the precise number of states subject to action may be considered small when compared to the EU's global scope rhetoric. Interventions in its immediate neighborhood comprise 16 missions and operations in eight territories, plus the Mediterranean sea: six interventions in the Balkans – Bosnia and Herzegovina (one completed, one ongoing), Kosovo (one ongoing), Macedonia (three completed); five in the Middle East and North Africa – two in Iraq (one completed, one ongoing), two (ongoing) in Palestine, and one (ongoing) in Libya; two in the Caucasus, both in Georgia (one completed, one ongoing); one in Eastern Europe, in Ukraine (ongoing); and two naval operations in the Mediterranean (one completed, one ongoing). Further afield, in sub-Saharan Africa, the number of operations is even higher, but the pattern is similar. While some 18 missions and operations have been deployed here, they have been concentrated in eight countries: the Central African Republic (three completed, which includes one joint operation with Tchad, two ongoing); the Democratic Republic of Congo (five completed); Guinea-Bissau (one completed); Mali (two ongoing); Niger (one ongoing); Somalia (three ongoing); and South Sudan (one completed). Only two countries in Asia have drawn the EU's attention: one mission completed in Aceh (Indonesia) and one completed in Afghanistan. No CSDP missions or operations have been deployed to the Americas. The EU's work thus appears to be focused on particular countries – perceived to merit repeated extensions and/or new missions and operations in complementary areas – and not on branching out into new countries or increasing the geographical range of its CSDP deployments.

The majority of the 36 missions and operations deployed (22) have been civilian in nature and have focused on capacity-building, monitoring peace processes and particular sectors, and even,

in the case of executive missions, undertaking tasks on behalf of the recipient state. Civilian missions have entailed strengthening police, border guards and customs officials, drafting national justice strategies, assisting in legislative changes, advising on the reform of rule of law institutions, monitoring trials, and training in gender issues. The remaining 14 military missions and operations have generally shied away from open use of force and coercion (Tardy 2015, p. 23). They have focused on providing military assistance to armed forces, deterring armed violence, securing the provision of humanitarian aid, advising security sector reforms, training local security forces, implementing arms embargos, and preventing trafficking into Europe. The EU has sent Falcon airplanes to the Mediterranean, naval vessels to the Horn of Africa, soldiers to the Congo, police to the Palestinian territories, judges to Georgia, monitors to Aceh, and human rights advisers to Iraq. Its specialization in military and civilian resources, and flexibility in deploying both, have proven useful. Indeed, as Fiott explains, “fusing civil and military tools” is a “hallmark of the Union's strategy against instability” (2020, p. 8).

In terms of scale, it is worth pointing out that neither civilian missions nor those with a military component can, in fact, be considered large, when compared to those of other organizations (Keohane 2011, p. 202) such as NATO, which commanded, at one moment, more than 130,000 NATO and non-NATO soldiers in its Afghanistan operation (ISAF) from 2003–2014, or the UN, with over 15,000 staff in Mali (MINUSMA) today. At its height, EUFOR Althea military operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina employed no more than 7,000 staff. On the civilian side, the largest civilian mission to date thus far consisted of 1,710 personnel in EULEX Kosovo. In its 17 ongoing missions and operations, the EU today deploys a total of 5,000 people.

In terms of length, EU missions and operations are generally proposed for an initial one-year deployment, although many receive one or more extensions to complete their initial mandate or address additional concerns. The shortest EU intervention was that of EUFOR Artemis, a

military operation in the Democratic Republic of Congo, between June and September 2003, to stabilize and improve the humanitarian situation in Bunia. The longest, still ongoing after 15 years, is the EU military operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUFOR BiH), established to deter violence and preserve the peace agreement.

Between 2003 and 2008, some 21 missions and operations were authorized. No period since has seen the same intensity of deployments, despite continuing instability in the EU's immediate and wider periphery. In the 12 years since 2008, only 15 missions and operations have been conducted, signaling a waning of the initial enthusiasm for this new instrument of EU security and defense policy, as well as a less permissive environment.

Strengths

A variety of actors are involved in post-Cold War global interventionism, each with their respective comparative advantages. What, specifically, sets the EU apart from others?

With a large territory, population and economy, and its status as the largest integrated market, trade bloc, and donor in the world, the EU enjoys significant influence in global affairs (Murphy 2008, p. 61). It currently engages in relations with almost every country in the world and has intervened, through various channels, on all continents. As regional agency goes, the Union's degree of integration bears no comparison with other regional arrangements (Hettne 2010). Moreover, the EU is not only a significant actor in global interventionism when operating as a regional organization; it is also composed of some of the most prominent individual states with long histories of ties to the periphery. While many such ties are rooted in colonialism, European states – such as the UK (prior to Brexit), France, Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, Belgium, Italy, and Germany – continue to draw on these shared histories to maintain and foster special connections with many countries of the global South, providing an entry point for the EU to exert political and economic clout.

That the EU's relationship with the once-colonized periphery is often mediated through former colonial powers is problematic: questions of neo-colonialism, dependency, and unequal power relations abound. Yet, these same enduring vested interests also ensure a level of long-term commitment, less prone to fads and more likely to translate pledges into actual support. Through the geopolitical and historical connections of many of its member states – be it by way of former colonial ties or stable relationships established post-independence – the Union can ensure that at least some members are invested in, and assume responsibility for, EU endeavors, such as its peace missions and operations, while also eliciting support from other members.

The EU benefits from stable and knowledgeable sources of information, as well as a depth and breadth of prolific policies on the part of its member states, besides its own. This shapes the *nature* of the Union's interventionism in the global South and the plethora of activities and instruments it deploys. From development aid and security sector reform to rule of law and civil society support, there is space for synergies and coordination between CSDP peace missions and operations, between them and different yet complementary EEAS' initiatives, and between them and initiatives carried out by individual member states as part of their own autonomous bilateral relations. Indeed, CSDP peace missions and operations are but one element of a much broader and comprehensive toolbox: on the one hand, they build on instruments already in place and, on the other, their activities are incorporated into other EU foreign policies on the ground when they leave (Gross 2014, pp. 1–2).

Acknowledgment of this peculiarity has led to profuse discussions on the *distinctiveness* of the Union's engagement in the international arena. In particular, much debated ideas of the EU as a “civilian power” (Duchêne 1972) and a “normative power” (Manners 2002) have drawn attention to the organization's ability to exercise power and influence, not through a projection of military force or other coercive means, but leading by example – that is, echoing beyond EU borders its commitment within them to the values of

peace, freedom, democracy, rule of law, and human rights. Though the Union's actual practices often contradict its own rhetoric, the idea of a cosmopolitan and pluralist Europe, which seeks to distance itself from other leading states' historic power politics, might (optimistically) still be rescued, to the advantage of those with whom the EU engages.

Critiques

Opinions about the EU's practice as a security and peace provider range from "impressive results" (Keohane 2011, p. 201) to "room for improvement" (Juncos and Blockmans 2018, p. 131) to having "largely failed" (Keukeleire and Delreux 2015, p. 49). Despite the inevitable dissent born out of these analyses, on many occasions, interventions have revealed an EU struggling to meet the challenges presented by the contexts in which it is involved. Despite multiple factors and distinct problems in each of these missions and operations, the overall mixed record stems, at least in part, from the institution's theoretical and conceptual framework and the blindspots and assumptions that such a framework produces.

EU peace missions and operations are predominantly guided by European interests and concerns, to the detriment of those prioritized by recipients. A common thread is a focus specifically on addressing European security, stability, and commercial interests, expressed through links with perceived transnational threats, such as those associated with migration, terrorism, or organized crime. The EU NAVFOR Atalanta military operation, launched in 2008 to combat piracy off the coast of Somalia, is an apposite example. Security arrangements are evidently relevant and counterparts' interests are not ignored altogether, yet they certainly appear to be relegated to the background, as is the broad goal of promoting peace, rather than the narrow one of stabilization.

CSDP missions and operations, once deployed, also appear to suffer from varied levels of commitment. Indeed, political and financial support has proven elusive on some occasions, while perhaps revealing the absence of an exit

strategy on others. There remains much disagreement on what constitutes the bloc's common interests and threats thereto, as well as whether CSDP missions are the right instrument to address these (Keohane 2011, p. 205). As a consequence, when situations on the ground become thorny, as with the EU Security Sector Reform mission in Guinea-Bissau (2008–2010) (Almeida Cravo 2016), waning support in EU capitals can rapidly determine the fate of an operation, with cuts followed by an abrupt end. In contrast, in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Operation Althea, 2004–), due to recent history and geographical proximity, withdrawal is considered high risk and becomes difficult to contemplate. In other words, the EU's deployments in situations of rising tension, crisis, war, or postwar reconstruction remain disjointed, inconsistent, and not entirely predictable.

Another recurrent and incisive criticism of the EU's engagement with the periphery relates to the way the Union appears to view conflict and post-conflict settings as clean slates onto which its own institutional template can be implanted. Presuming the universality of the *liberal peace*, the paradigm followed in CSDP missions and operations (and elsewhere) entails the imposition of a hegemonic system into the global South that reproduces particular (Western) social, political, and economic institutions and norms (Richmond 2011). Its focus tends to be exclusively on formal institutions and legal structures, often undermining the local legitimacy of reforms, with informal and/or traditional institutions largely ignored or simply outside its conceptual framework. Indeed, the preferred *modus operandi* of drafting of blueprints guided by western standards has often disregarded the local political and economic dynamics that underpin both enactment of and resistance to reforms transplanted from the EU.

Notwithstanding claims of support for local ownership, peace promotion remains informed and undergirded by a liberal ethos and a practice of expert knowledge. It is characterized by low involvement of local authorities and the local population, from consultation to planning. For instance, following an assessment of Georgia's criminal system, the EU's mission in Georgia

(EUJUST Themis) focused mainly on assisting the drafting of a legislative proposal. Once local counterparts began proposing legislative changes which ran counter to the European criminal justice model, the proclaimed principle of local ownership was swiftly overlooked and part of the draft strategy was actually concluded without Georgian input (Kurowska 2009, pp. 206–209). Elsewhere, as Marchetti and Tocci argue, EU efforts to build civil society in recipient countries tend to focus on replicating its own liberal urban and middle class, responsive foremost to EU, rather than local, concerns (2015, p. 175). This one-size-fits-all approach is characterized by little appreciation for local contexts or understandings and routinely dismisses the plural landscapes of peace, where locally resourced alternatives might be found and explored.

Current Challenges

In spite of its many achievements, the EU project has encountered numerous obstacles throughout its history – both to its efforts to unify and govern Europe and to its efforts to act as a unified and coherent actor in international affairs. In recent years, however, the Eurozone crisis and the rise of the extreme right and populist nationalist movements – bolstered by electoral success across Europe and the 2016 Brexit precedent – represent a significant challenge for multilateral engagement, as well as the very notion of European integration (Berend 2021). Enthusiasm for the European project has made way for a more conservative approach towards a minimum common denominator; likewise, backing for the EU's international activities has waned. Early domestic support for foreign interventions outside the narrow lens of national(ist) interest has faded in the face of a simplistic discourse privileging European security and *taking care of our own*. In a time of added budgetary strain, such sentiments inevitably undermine any beneficent or holistic policy towards the global South. And the more the current health and economic crisis lasts, the more reluctant member states will be to contribute to budgets for foreign policy and peace promotion

activities in the periphery which are not recognized as directly addressing their more immediate concerns. As Winn (2003) observes, robust operational capability, staunch political leadership, and sympathetic domestic opinion are all essential for the success of CSDP interventions. Yet, as in the past, the EU is struggling to combine all three – and the current context appears to foretell further difficulties in the near future.

These internal pressures are compounded by broader geopolitical shifts and increased tensions with other international powers. The relationship with the US has cooled – for a number of years but especially sharply during the Trump Presidency – casting doubts over its role as a security provider for Europe, while Russia and China seek to impose their stamp on world affairs (Bendiek et al. 2020). The turmoil surrounding Brexit has also hinted at a consequential rivalry between the UK and the Union, if trust is not restored between them, besides the evident loss for the EU at the level of military capabilities. A further challenge comes from recipients of EU support and intervention themselves. With its share of failed promises, the EU has often disappointed its interlocutors in the global South, creating weariness – even acrimony – towards the Union, which may prove difficult to surmount against the backdrop of multiple donors.

With its own neighborhood growing in volatility, the EU is struggling to define its place in world affairs. Some in the Union have seen increased threats, such as those posed by Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014, as grounds to reaffirm NATO as the primary line of defense for European countries, hindering efforts towards more integration in the area of European defense (Major and Mölling 2020, p. 42). Others have sought to use the uncertainty of the international context to advance EU "strategic autonomy," with Charles Michel, current President of the European Council, urging that this be "goal number one for our generation" (2020). Whether this ambition of boosting the Union's capacity to intervene independently within and beyond its borders will gain momentum remains to be seen. Either way, the redirection of EU resources and political clout towards European security narrowly conceived

does not bode well for CSDP missions and operations – and peace promotion in general – geared towards overseas commitments (Forti 2018).

Summary

Efforts towards making security and defense a central component of EU integration, unthinkable 30 years ago, have undoubtedly born recent fruits. The CSDP has institutionalized political cooperation between member states, which has translated into specific commitments in the realm of global interventionism, of which its peace missions and operations are a crucial outcome. Yet, even though the EU has come a long way in its ability to act strategically in global affairs and has expanded its collective role in international peace and security, its efforts to curb instability abroad remain elusive, as does its proclaimed goal of building a sustainable peace in the periphery.

On the one hand, many internal obstacles often impede joint efforts and the EU's coherent role in the international arena. Indeed, Hill's much-cited "capabilities-expectations gap" (1993) still lingers. On the other, strategies defined in Brussels are themselves deserving of criticism. From privileging narrow goals of threat containment and stabilization, despite a rhetoric often implying the contrary, to prioritizing the transplantation of a western liberal framework, the EU's performance in its missions and operations has largely lost sight of its supposedly holistic approach to supporting peace and of its commitment towards an equal partnership. While the Union's original peace project for the continent is generally considered a major achievement, the success of its peace promotion initiatives beyond the EU space, as translated into its CSDP missions and operations, remains far less so.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Assessment of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Conceptual Evolution of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [NATO's Approach to Peace Operations and Peacebuilding](#)

- ▶ [Peace Operations, Principles, and Doctrine](#)
- ▶ [Rule of Law as a Component of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Security Sector Reform After Armed Conflict](#)
- ▶ [Stabilization Operations and Their Relationship to Liberal Peacebuilding Missions](#)

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Evaluation

- ▶ [Assessment of Peace Operations](#)
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Everyday Peace

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Definition

Everyday peace is comprised of the actions, stances, and forms of communication used by individuals and groups to safely navigate through life in conflict-affected contexts. While mainly occurring at the level of microactions and stances, it can have wider significance if everyday peace acts reach critical mass and shape the nature of inter-group interaction in a society.

Introduction

Everyday peace can be regarded as the actions, stances, and speech-acts used by individuals and groups to safely navigate their way through life in deeply divided or conflict-affected contexts (Berents 2015; Mac Ginty 2014). It can also be regarded as a mode of thinking or logic (Brewer 2018). It relies on emotional intelligence and the ability to “read” social situations and calculate what might be possible and safe given the context. It can take the form of a one-off act or a series of actions and stances. While occurring at an interpersonal or small group level, it has the potential to have a wider impact (Mac Ginty 2021). For example, multiple small acts of inter-group civility in everyday actions in a deeply divided society can have a conflict-calming effect. Everyday peace can also operate at the intragroup level with, for example, some community members acting to restrain fellow group members who might advocate for incivility or worse toward out-group members.

The notion of everyday peace rests heavily on sociological and anthropological perspectives that regard the everyday, the familial, the intimate, and the hyperlocal as legitimate sites of scrutiny (Foucault 1980; Millar 2020). As such, everyday peace represents a very different vantage point to the classic top-down and institution-centric

perspectives that tend to see conflicts in terms of states, governments, political parties, and militant groups (Kissinger 2011). The everyday perspective instead highlights the importance of the family, friendship networks, colleagues, classmates, neighbors, and fellow shoppers and commuters. As such, it recognizes the importance of informal institutions.

Everyday peace can manifest itself in multiple ways that will be context-specific. Often it will operate in subtle ways and involve microactions. Thus, for example, it may involve civility between a Muslim stallholder and a Christian shopper in northern Nigeria, a Bosnian Muslim business owner employing a Croat on the basis of merit rather than only employing someone of the same faith, or Northern Ireland Catholics and Protestants maintaining friendship despite political tensions. Everyday peace is far-removed from the “big peace” of formal peace accords between major conflict-parties such as governments and militant groups. It can be thought of as “small peace,” or bottom-up prosocial and propeace activities and stances. Sometimes, everyday peace will be enabled by an elite-level peace process or peace accord. This might provide the physical security and psychological confidence to allow individuals and groups to engage in microactions of civility and respect. Sometimes, individuals and groups may act against the dominant opinion in their community and show civility and friendship to “the other side.” Such actions and stances may incur costs, such as being accused of being disloyal or treacherous.

We can think of everyday peace as being constituted by three mutually reinforcing ways of thinking and acting: sociality, reciprocity, and solidarity (Mac Ginty 2021). Sociality is a basic recognition that we are all human, social, and deserving of dignity and a minimum of rights. It involves an identification with others on the basis of their humanity rather than a stratification of humanity such as membership of a tribal or religious group. Reciprocity relies on the notion of exchange for mutual benefit. Individuals act in a particular way (for example, giving up a seat on the metro to an infirm person) because they would hope that this courtesy would be extended to them if they were in need. If factored out across society,

this reciprocity would help spread and normalize civility. Solidarity denotes a “standing with” and necessitates action rather than merely a privately held belief. Solidarity may be rare in cases of violent conflict, not least because it can bring costs such as the accusation of being a traitor.

As everyday peace operates at the local level (the apartment stairwell, the queue for the bus, and the local coffee shop), it requires us to utilize research methods that are able to capture highly localized and often subtle forms of action (see everydaypeaceindicators.org) (Firchow 2019). Those engaging in everyday peace may, quite deliberately, keep their actions quiet so as to avoid surveillance or discipline. Extremist in-group members may work hard to discipline their own group and thus may wish to discipline anyone from their own group who “breaks rank.”

In cases of overt conflict, everyday peace can be regarded as the first and last peace. It may be the last peace in the sense that some instances of inter-group friendship or civility might survive as a society descends toward incivility and violent conflict (Moore 2013). It might be the first peace in the sense of the first inter-group links (re)-established in the wake of violent conflict. These highly localized, people-to-people forms of interaction might form an assemblage of actions, speech acts, stances, and modes of thinking that can have a transformative effect on wider conflict (Mac Ginty 2021). They may be able to prevent the total collapse of society into conflict. Or they might be the ways that an elite-level peace accord becomes manifest on the ground.

In turn, this encourages us to think about how everyday peace – as embodied and enacted at the café or school gate in a conflict-affected society – might connect with wider political and military contexts. Orthodox thinking on peace operates on the assumption of “trickle down peace” or the notion that an elite level peace accord creates a context that so-called “ordinary” people will populate with acts of civility. But the link between the top-down and the bottom-up is not automatic. Peacebuilding initiatives designed to support inter-group toleration (and perhaps reconciliation) often have a limited reach, and so individuals and groups of individuals often take initiatives in their everyday lives (Brewer 2018).

Everyday peace may be regarded as a form of power. This requires us to move away from understandings of power that concentrate on the material and institutional elements such as armies or governments. Instead, everyday peace relies on forms of power rooted in emotional intelligence, force of personality of charismatic individuals, the quiet persuasion from an older relative, the dignity of an individual who reacts to provocation with indifference, or some other conflict-calming response. These are all immaterial forms of power. While orthodox forms of power often stress “power over” or coercive forms of power, everyday peace emphasizes more emancipatory forms of power such as power to, power with, and power from. These immaterial forms of power might rely on persuasion, respect, and personality trait.

Summary

A key question faces everyday peace: Is it really peace? In many cases, everyday peace may take the form of tolerance and coexistence rather than more expansive forms of peace. These grudging actions and stances might be best regarded as “negative peace.” It is, however, worth remembering issues of context. It may be that the security situation only allows for minimal speech-acts of civility. Emotions may be too raw, or the security situation too febrile, to allow for anything more expansive. Multiple small acts of everyday peace might be able to accrete and have a wider impact across society. In an optimistic scenario, everyday peace can be seen as a first step that helps a peace process or peace accord become manifest on the ground.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Alternative Dispute Resolution](#)
- ▶ [Culture and Conflict Resolution](#)
- ▶ [Human Geography and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Liberal Peace and Its Critiques](#)
- ▶ [Peace Infrastructures](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding and Korean Civil Society](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding: Utopia and Reality](#)

- ▶ Textiles Making Peace
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Evolution of Practice in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations

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Synonyms

Female Peacekeepers – Gender balance in peace operations; Holding the ground peacekeeping – maintaining the status quo; Identity Politics – Politics centred on leadership figures, sectarian and other groups; Peacekeeping – Conflict Stabilisation; Peacekeeping – Crisis

Management; Peacekeeping – Peacebuilding-Peace operations; Peacekeeping inputs – assessing approaches; Peacekeeping Mission objective – mission end state; Peacekeeping Missions – Peacekeeping Operations; Peacekeeping Operations – Protection of Civilians; Peacekeeping outputs – measuring peace; Peacekeeping Sovereignty – host government responsibilities; Successful Peacekeeping outcome – political solution to conflicts

Definition

Peacekeeping as an international tool for the stabilization of conflict has reached a new phase in its development. There is a certain worldwide change to the overall concept of peacekeeping and its role in the promotion of peace and stability. The United Nations (UN) has over 100,000 civilian and military personnel dispersed among 13 UN missions across the world (United Nations 2019a). The budget of 6.5 billion represents less than 0.5% of worldwide military spending (United Nations 2019b). Peacekeeping now rests in a period of uncertainty with questions over international commitment to such operations reflected in an ever-tightening budgetary environment. The rules-based international order centered on effective multilateralism cannot be taken for granted given the trend toward isolationism, populism on the extreme left and right fringes, and the rise of nationalism. Instability remains endemic worldwide and at issue is the evolution of practice in generating, deploying, and conducting peacekeeping operations. The concept is examined through the prism of an established peacekeeping mission in place since 1978 UNIFIL in South Lebanon and a more contemporary example MINUSMA in Mali. Peacekeeping challenges and failings are considered and a pathway reviewing new initiatives to foster the development of UN Peacekeeping as an important tool for the international community to promote peace and stabilize both established and emerging democracies.

Shifting the Peacekeeping Paradigm

Peacekeeping as an international tool for the stabilization of conflict- and crisis-driven nations has reached a new phase in its development. There is a certain worldwide change to the overall concept of peacekeeping and its role in the promotion of peace and stability. At issue is the evolution of practice in generating, deploying, and conducting such operations. Certainly, the UN overall has now entered a period of significant adjustment. In September 2015, the then Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon commented on the critical need for change in the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) report: “We must harness the full range of tools available: political, security, development, human rights and humanitarian, and we need to change the way in which we do business within and across that range” (Mueller 2015, p. 255). Peacekeeping now rests in a period of uncertainty with questions over international commitment to such operations reflected in an ever-tightening budgetary environment. Just one member, the United States (from a total of 193 UN member states), is funding 22% of the overall UN budget and 28.47% (United Nations 2019b) of the peacekeeping budget in the financial year 2018–2019. The rules-based international order centered on effective multilateralism cannot be taken for granted given the trend toward isolationism, populism on the extreme left and right fringes, and the rise of nationalism.

Instability remains endemic worldwide, with prominent examples including the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Central African Republic, and Mali in Africa. In the Middle East, the tragedy of Yemen verging on famine continues to unfold and Syria only now starting to emerge from chaos with the Occupied Palestinian territories and Gaza remaining restive and unpredictable. Venezuela in South America and Ukraine in Europe could all provide real challenges into the future – real challenges that the UN including traditional peacekeeping nations will be asked to address. The UN has been subjected to criticism from many quarters, and an unfortunate simple new phrase

has entered the lexicon surrounding the deployment of peacekeeping operations: “A UN mission should do no harm” which is some distance from the original UN Charter and the ideal of nations banding together to promote peace worldwide. This situation emerging from some poor UN experiences in Africa with Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and in Haiti with the introduction of infectious disease. UN casualties have also spiked; since 2013, over 205 personnel in UNPKOs (United Nations 2019c) have been killed by acts of violence, more than during any other 5-year period in UN history. For example, the highest UN mission in terms of fatalities is UNIFIL with 313 of which Ireland has the greatest number at 47. This prompted the completion of the Lt Gen Santos Cruz report to review peacekeeping operations where it stated:

The United Nations has not fully adapted to modern hostile, operational environments and Security Council mandates. The United Nations lacks a conceptual approach as certain missions operate outside the governing principles of peacekeeping – consent, impartiality and minimum use of force. The UN also lacks required supporting skill sets, and resource processes and mindset for delivering peace operations in modern, complex conflict environments and forceful Security Council mandates. (United Nations 2017, p. 18)

The UN has over 100,000 civilian and military personnel dispersed among 13 UN missions (United Nations 2019a). The budget of 6.5 billion represents less than 0.5% of worldwide military spending. The EU had 16 military and civilian missions deployed worldwide in November 2019 (European Union 2019) with approximately 5,000 personnel. In the framework of the CSDP, the EU has launched some 35 missions and operations since 2003 bringing stability, rule of law, and security sector reform to countries as diverse as Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kosovo, Iraq, and Ukraine. About 5,000 personnel are currently serving in the 16 ongoing operations, 10 civilian and 6 military (2018). This represents a significant international commitment by both the EU and UN to peace. However, a significant challenge for the UN has been the nonengagement in UNPKOs by

European countries where only 7.4% of UN troops (Novosseloff 2018b) are provided by western countries and a significant proportion of them are represented in the Middle Eastern missions including UNDOF, UNFICYP, and UNIFIL which has 14 EU/NATO countries. Why do we have such low representation? Firstly, former Yugoslavia, the Rwanda, and Srebrenica disasters still impact the thinking of some EU countries, and it is politically difficult for EU/NATO countries to accept fatalities in such missions. Ireland has been proactive and suggested a new initiative of rotation cycles or deeper cooperation between European countries in contributing to PKOs. However, “No End State” is always a concern for EU/NATO countries and particularly when important capabilities are deployed. The EU/NATO position is diametrically opposed to UN planning where short-term deployments with frequent turnovers are a real challenge.

Change is being addressed. Secretary-General Guterres launched his Action for Peacekeeping (A4P) initiative in 2018 and effective from Jan 1, 2019, UN HQ peace, and security architecture is now reconfigured in a new Department of Peace Operations (DPO), Department of Support (DOS), and a Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) with the intention to deliver more regionally integrated political strategies and improving linkages with regional partners such as the AU and EU (Sherman 2018). Time, of course, will reveal if such initiatives gain enough traction to have a real impact.

The changing practice in peacekeeping operations can be reviewed through the prism of two missions which demand different conceptual approaches. Firstly, the experience in Mali where a January 2013 offensive by armed groups toward the south including the capital Bamako risked losing this important region to criminality and terrorism.

A New Awakening: The Experience of Mali

UN Headquarters note that MINUSMA (UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization

Mission in Mali) was established by Security Council resolution 2100 of April 25, 2013, to support national political processes and carry out a number of security-related tasks. The Mission was asked to support the transitional authorities of Mali in the stabilization of the country and implementation of the transitional road map. UNSC resolution 2164 of June 25, 2014, further decided that the Mission should focus on duties, such as ensuring security, stabilization, and protection of civilians; supporting national political dialogue and reconciliation; and assisting the reestablishment of state authority, the rebuilding of the security sector, and the promotion and protection of human rights in that country. The seven-part mandate included support to the implementation of Mali’s transitional road map adopted in January to restore democracy and stability in addition to the protection of civilians and promotion and protection of human rights.

MINUSMA represents a major advance in peacekeeping evolution and is seeking through its mandate to assist in providing a path toward democracy for a state that could easily slip into failed status. The cost has been high; the strength of military and police in the MINUSMA mission is 13,539 (United Nations 2019a) and an approved budget of \$1,221,420,600 (United Nations 2019e). However, the real cost has been in lost peacekeeper’s lives, and MINUSMA is considered the UN’s most dangerous mission with 206 fatalities (United Nations, Fatalities 2019c). The mission has demonstrated that donning a blue helmet is no defense against militant jihadis with many fatalities resulting from roadside improvised explosive devices. The UN has had the difficult challenge of finding the correct path to follow both politically and militarily in a robust Chapter VII environment, balancing the peacekeeping principles of minimum force, agreement of the parties, and impartiality while been actively targeted by aggressive militants. Peacekeeping forces with white vehicles and aircraft are not designed for offensive military war fighting in any theatre. However, though the mission has no real end state in sight, it represents effective multilateralism with the international community working together to

ensure that Mali does not turn into a haven for jihadi terrorists, drug dealers, and illegal migration but is stabilized again in the community of democracies. Important here is that Mali is protected and supported as it seeks to negotiate a path to democracy. While Africa is providing the current focus for peacekeeping operations, it is also important to consider long-standing operations, and this is a good entry point to explore the role of peacekeeping in UNIFIL and the Middle East.

The Value of Consistency: Lebanon and the Middle East

Lebanon historically is enjoying a “purple patch,” and South Lebanon is currently playing out an uncharacteristic role in a period of unprecedented calm with gentle winds blowing through Tyre, Sidon, and Bint Jbeil while surrounded by perfect storms including Syria, Yemen, Libya, and even the Occupied Palestinian territories. The contrast now between the initial deployments by the United Nations under UNSCR 425 and 426 could not be more pronounced. During 2018 and 2019, Lebanon has successfully held local elections; framed an electoral law with proportional representation; held general elections on May 6, 2018; and managed following a significant time delay to form a government. For a country with 18 officially recognized religions (Global Security 2019) and major external influencers, Iran and Saudi Arabia, that is a significant achievement. However, corruption, provision of basic services, and over a million Syrian refugees in addition to the resident Palestinian refugee population place great strain on this embryonic institutional framework.

Interactions with the Lebanese government indicate that memories of the 15-year civil war and conflicts with Israel help greatly to reduce tensions and temper exchanges within the government. Hezbollah continues to grow in power, and in the general elections, Hezbollah and Amal won 28/128 (Wimmen 2018) seats taking all seats in South Lebanon. Lebanon has a form of identity politics focused on leaders and sectarian groups.

Militarily they represent a meaningful deterrent to Israel considering their success at frustrating the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) in the 34-day 2006 war and recent war fighting experience gained in Syria. Additionally, Hassan Nasrallah’s public pronouncements indicating that the next war will be fought in Israel contribute to maintaining high levels of tension between the parties. While the situation is relatively calm, the potential for a flare-up along the 118 km Blue Line is ever present, and constant liaison along that line of withdrawal by UNIFIL is imperative. The international community cannot let their guard down regarding this enduring flashpoint.

UNSCR 1701 adopted in August 2006 was a comprehensive mandate, containing both the military and political aspects. The mandate has been successful in providing the mission with the handrails to maintain stability. For instance, in 2019 UNIFIL had a military strength of 10,252 (United Nations 2019f) comprising 42 nations including 14 NATO/EU countries with a budget of 483 million. It is unique within PKOs in that it has a maritime task force, and within the UN, it is considered a “Five Star Mission” well-resourced comprising well-trained personnel. However, we should remind ourselves that in South Lebanon, we are sitting on a major regional fault line rife with many conflict triggers and traditionally the greatest hotspot in the Middle East. The underlying causes of the indigenous conflict remain unaddressed, and the strategic considerations underlying UNIFIL’s deployment in its current form remain equally valid today and rendered even more complex by the regional conflict. The 2019 constitutional crisis in Lebanon with determined anti-government protests in Beirut adds complexity to the mission’s deployment.

However, “holding the ground” peacekeeping and acceptance of the status quo is not enough; it must be dynamic and innovative, and risks must be taken to build a conducive environment between the parties while reassuring the international community that the resources they are providing are being put to good use. A mission like UNIFIL cannot replace an overall political solution, and peace cannot be imposed or enforced; it must grow from the parties.

Engaging the Parties

UNIFIL hosts monthly meetings between senior Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) and Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) Commanders, known as Tripartite Meetings, where both, despite still technically at war, can sit together in one room and calmly and professionally discuss issues of a tactical nature at Brigadier General Level. Both parties take part voluntarily in this process, and it is a mechanism that the UN is considering utilizing in other conflict areas. Backing up the tripartite system of communication, the Mission has Liaison Teams deployed on both sides of the Blue Line with the LAF and IDF to allow for immediate communication in the event of an incident occurring. A UNIFIL initiative was to assist in resolving a long-standing disagreement centered on the IDF construction of a wall/fence, and the Lebanese need to regain land in 13 reservation areas where the Blue Line was at variance from the 1948 armistice line. The 19 Tripartite Meetings held in 2017 represented more than three times the annual average with full engagement and cooperation between the negotiators on each side and chaired by UNIFIL. However, while ground solutions were found the Lebanese election cycle served to frustrate UNIFIL's efforts and were further complicated by the Lebanese imperative to solve the maritime resource issue offshore.

The question of Maritime resources provides both opportunities and challenges. The opportunity rests in the potential for the issue to help build some trust between Lebanon and Israel, but the possibility of disputes leading to greater tensions also exists. This Maritime issue though not part of UNIFIL's mandate resulted in the mission being drawn into the negotiations on solutions UNIFIL took an active part in assisting the acting US Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs David Satterfield in seeking solutions. However, trust needs to be built before there will be a satisfactory outcome for both parties. These negotiation initiatives will likely continue for some time into the future, and these two examples provide an understanding of the major strategic issues that UNIFIL sought to help resolve.

Developing the Concept: Steps Forward in Peacekeeping Practice

The 2018 Action for Peacekeeping (A4P) initiative seeks to provide a formula for the evolution of Peacekeeping in the years ahead. This strategy places emphasis on peacebuilding, performance, people, partnerships, and politics to strengthen peacekeeping overall. Greater coherence is emphasized between the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission and between the UN and external regional and subregional organizations such as the African Union and the European Union, host countries, and international financial institutions. Performance and leadership top down and bottom up to ensure peacekeepers have the training, equipment, and mindset to complete their mission without being overly exposed to fatalities as currently the case in Mali. People must always be central to all peacekeeping operations, and a deployed force must be ready to protect civilians at any point when they are found in harm's way.

The peacekeeping model will only evolve correctly along sustainable lines if gender balance is fully incorporated in the concept. There are many challenges to greater inclusion, and deploying females in appropriate numbers in full operational roles will be a work in progress for many years to come. The UNIFIL female strength of 587 out of a total strength of 10,252 (United Nations 2019d) though low in numbers was utilized fully to reach out to the female population of South Lebanon predominantly Shia and hence culturally difficult for UNIFIL male interaction. Such reach out ensured UNIFIL was communicating with the entire South Lebanon population and not just 50%. The inclusion of females is very much in accordance with the greater UN and Secretary-General Guterres' agenda to mainstream gender and promote more females to leadership positions in HQ and in the field.

The synergy that partnerships bring to bear on peacekeeping deployments must be a central tenet of future evolutionary trends. Hard lessons learned must be shared to enhance complementarity. Force generation to match the deployments to the mandate demands close cooperation.

The implementation of the new UN light coordination mechanism in UNHQ to avoid duplication and assist P/TCCs to provide the appropriate capability at the correct time will help grow partnership into the future. Peacekeeping in theatre must focus on the effect it wants to achieve and not just on the traditional modus operandi of providing adequate numbers on the ground.

On politics the mandates must be realistic and fit the resources provided. Acceptance of the political status quo can only lead to long protracted deployments such as witnessed in the Middle East going back to the 1948 war. Political movement is imperative to avoid a peacekeeping mission becoming an accepted entity in the local environment, a frozen force unable to broker solutions. The host government must be leveraged to find such solutions with UN member states recognizing the importance even primacy of the host government role. In general, the overall coherence of the political effort must be improved. In the Lebanon example, political movement now as UNIFIL passes the 41-year deployment mark is critical. UNIFIL continues to do its work essentially Fire Brigading along the Blue Line and ensuring the Area of Operations is not used to mount aggressive actions. However, the fact that a PKO can never replace political movement is very true in the case of Lebanon and Israel. Difficult conversations will need to take place, conversations that in some quarters can never be countenanced.

Pointing Toward the Future

Peacekeeping is the right way forward despite its detractors. However, peacekeeping has limitations, and such multinational deployments are not suitable for war fighting. Peace cannot be imposed or enforced; it must grow from the parties. UNIFIL is proving that where we can secure the commitment of the parties, peacekeeping can be successful and deliver. The relative calm along the Blue Line between Israel and Lebanon tends to suggest that UNIFIL is merely a holding operation; and hence the question of how much the international community should continue to invest toward this venture (annual budget of 483

million). However, this holding operation has gained strategic significance in the current regional context. There is merit in holding the ground when everything around is in free fall.

MINUSMA with over 50 contributing countries is pushing out the boundaries of peacekeeping practice, assisting in the stabilization of Mali and promotion of democracy. It is a highly complex environment with multiple challenges and shares its theatre of operations with the French Barkhane force engaged in counterterrorist operations. The 42 nations in UNIFIL have assisted the host country to gift peace to the population of South Lebanon for 13 years, and dividends of peace include the emergence of Tyre deservedly to become a hub for tourism, extensive infrastructural and personal building projects, and farming up to the Blue Line impossible in times past. In a similar manner, the population of Northern Israel have benefited from the presence of UNIFIL.

The South Lebanese take on Clausewitz's Enigmatic trilogy is – The Army, the People and the Resistance (in lieu of Government). UNIFIL has been building resistance to war and has a metric also, measuring peace by reference to the “teenage index” putting South Lebanon now 13 years (July 12, 2006) since the 34-day war and local youths who have not seen the face of conflict. This teenage index is the best hope for future accommodations and success because it is from that generation that progress can be made.

On the general construct of Peacekeeping, some commentators contend that states favor the logic of security and war over the logic of peace. Alexandra Novosseloff (2018a), a noted commentator on UN affairs, provides insights on how PK might go forward:

Peacekeeping is a worthy idea; what needs to be re-examined is how member states use it. Successful peacekeeping missions require that everyone be mobilized. They also require a genuine strategy that is understood by all actors, with the Security Council acting as an orchestra conductor and providing political support, while troop contributors manage the military support, the Secretariat oversees quality control of contributions, and partner organizations supply any political or military services within this strategy.

Peacekeeping remains the best path forward, but constant change is necessary to keep the concept fresh and meaningful. Globally there have been many interventions in attempts to promote democracy and stability where formerly tyrants held sway. The outcome of those interventions has often left an enduring legacy of instability. Long-term commitment to a peacekeeping operation is far less expensive and morally more sustainable as opposed to long-term instability in a state leading to a failed state. Peacekeeping operations may well be the worst method of bringing stability to existing and emerging democracies, but it is better than all the rest. Peacekeeping works, and we must persevere.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Conceptual Evolution of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Peace Operations, Principles, and Doctrine](#)
- ▶ [Stabilization Operations and Their Relationship to Liberal Peacebuilding Missions](#)

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Expats

- ▶ [Diasporas in Peace and Conflict](#)

Experiencia de Paz (Peace Experience)

- ▶ [Zones of Peace](#)

Extraterritorial Citizenship

- ▶ [Politics of Passportization and Territorial Conflicts](#)

Extraterritorial Naturalization

- ▶ [Politics of Passportization and Territorial Conflicts](#)

Extremism

- ▶ [Kenya's War on Terror](#)

F

Facilitation

- ▶ [Alternative Dispute Resolution](#)

Fact-Finding

- ▶ [Alternative Dispute Resolution](#)

Fair Division

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Synonyms

[Property disputes](#)

Description

Discusses three possible meanings and four desirable characteristics of fairness and proposes an easily understood method suitable for achieving that

goal with minimal stress in dividing property among claimants in a wide variety of circumstances.

Disputes involving division of property or raising similar issues come up in divorces, settling estates, dividing the assets of a business, assigning household chores, setting salaries and tax rates, and allocating resources (e.g., water among farmers, fish, homeowners, industry, and recreational users). It is a common element in truces and treaties, such as setting the boundary between North and South Korea, the de facto division of Cyprus into two states, the Israeli occupation of the Golan Heights, and the allocation of zones of occupation of Germany after World War II. Everyone wants to be treated fairly, but just what that means becomes particularly elusive when claimants define “fair” differently.

What Qualifies as “Fair”?

Imagine yourself as the judge in a court where three people have all been found guilty of driving 25 miles per hour over the speed limit. One is a multimillionaire who earns \$5000 a day in dividends from investments, one a hardworking blue-collar father who earns a median national income of about \$200 a day and was rushing his father to a hospital with a heart attack, and one an

orphaned college freshman working his way through college with part-time earnings of about \$50 a day and largely dependent on loans. Assuming you have complete discretion, will you fine them the same amount, say \$200 each? Or would you punish each of them with a fine of one day's pay in an effort to equalize the pain? Or would you let the second one off with a lecture telling him he should have called an ambulance? If you chose the first possibility, you equate fairness in this case with equality. If you chose the second, you think fairness requires equity. If you chose the third, you think that fairness requires consideration of need. These are three different definitions of fairness.

Brams and Taylor (1996) identified four additional considerations in thought problems based on two children sharing a cake. The classic solution, divide and choose, has one child cut it, while the second child chooses first. Theoretically, the result is *proportional*, in that neither child will feel the other one got a larger piece (although the chooser may sometimes feel he got the larger one). The procedure also is *envy-free*, a second condition, unless the chooser feels deserving of a larger piece for some reason. Now, suppose that half the cake is vanilla and the other half is chocolate. The girl likes vanilla and cannot abide chocolate, while the boy likes chocolate, thinks vanilla sickening, and is the cutter but does not know their tastes differ. To be certain to get some of his favorite flavor, he will cut the cake so each piece has equal amounts of chocolate. Both would end up with cake they would not eat, which is inefficient unless they trade the leftovers. If brother and sister had announced their preferences in advance, the boy could have cut the cake so that he got all the chocolate and his sister got all the vanilla (for our purpose, we need not worry about how to make such cakes). The solution would remain proportional and envy-free and also would be *efficient*, a third desirable consideration of fair division. But, if sister was being deceptive about her preference, which really is for chocolate, she will end up with all the chocolate and the boy only with the vanilla he dislikes. Efficiency also requires *truthfulness*, often limited among people in conflict.

How can Fairness be Achieved?

Instead of sharing cake, consider siblings deciding who inherits a classic 1938 Brough SS80 motorcycle with sidecar and who inherits a room-size handwoven silk Persian rug from Isfahan, both professionally appraised at \$30,000. They could of course simply sell both items and split the proceeds less any costs of making the sales. But sister is a cycle fanatic who values the rare machine at \$38,000. Brother, whose home is decorated with antique and modern Middle Eastern art from his travels and never learned to ride a bicycle let alone motorcycle, values the rug at \$35,000. If the cycle went to the girl and the rug to the brother, they would feel they had received total value of \$73,000, a joint improvement of \$13,000, illustrating how efficiency leaves both better off. Even though unequal, the second solution also is likely to prove a *stable* solution, a fifth desirable characteristic of agreements first identified by Nash (1950) and more fully developed by Fraser and Hipel (Churchman 2020). Add cross-reference here to the article on identifying stable solutions, submitted at the same time as this one.

Putting all this together, ideally, a fair division should be proportional, envy-free, and efficient, motivate truthfulness, maximize value, and prove stable, but fairness usually requires a choice among equality, equity, or consideration of need.

Regardless of how these issues are resolved, a practical method to achieve that complex list of characteristics remains elusive. Several methods have been devised, some extremely difficult to explain to anyone without a doctorate in mathematics, so less likely to be trusted by claimants. Two methods come close. The first and simplest is to sell everything and divide the cash among the claimants (not necessarily equally or limited to two individuals). This does not preclude the claimants buying particular items knowing that some of the payment will be returned when the cash is divided.

This idea leads naturally to an "imaginary auction." Before starting the auction, the rules must be clarified and agreed. First, the proportion of the total value each claimant is to receive must be determined (it is not always equal). Second, it is common to use the winning bid for each item to

calculate the total value received. Third, the currency and minimum raise required must be agreed. Fourth, after the auction, the books must be balanced with cash. Fifth, the method for disposition of any items not “sold” must be agreed.

Claimants make and raise bids on each item in turn until someone wins it. Instead of actually paying for an item, the winning bid is credited as value received. After auctioning off all items, the total value received by each claimant is determined, and cash is used to balance the books. The cash might be part of the property to be divided (so is not included in the auction), some of which might come from sale of items on which no claimant bids. If there is no cash, or not enough, the winner of the greatest value must make payments from personal funds (over time if necessary). If there is more cash remaining than necessary to balance the books, it can be divided among the claimants.

The figure shows what might have happened in such an auction in which 40 items were divided among three retirees with 40%, 35%, and 25% (to illustrate the case of unequal claims) entitlements to the assets involved.

| Each partner’s agreed entitlement | 40% | 35% | 25% | Totals |
|-----------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Items received | 15 | 19 | 6 | 40 |
| Bid totals \$ | 384,900 | 273,540 | 214,325 | 872,765 |
| Entitlement | 349,106 | 305,468 | 218,191 | 872,765 |
| Cash to even up | -35,794 | 31,928 | 3866 | 0 |
| Total received | 349,106 | 305,468 | 218,191 | 872,765 |
| Percent received | 40% | 35% | 25% | 100% |

A claimant could try to gain an advantage if he knows how much someone else values an item. By overbidding, he could force the other person to overpay, ultimately increasing the value he receives. However, the person seeking the advantage may overestimate the amount the other will bid and end up winning the item for more than he values it, reducing rather than increasing the total value received. Warning participants in advance against announcing which items they “must have” and making sure everyone understands the trick and its implications before the auction starts tend

to increase truthfulness and reduce even if it does not guarantee eliminating strategic bidding.

Summary

The imaginary auction meets most of the requirements for fair division discussed above most of the time. It assigns each item to the person who wants it most, so the result is likely to be efficient, envy-free, and stable. Proportionality is impossible to calculate because knowing how much more each winning bidder would have paid is unlikely – something the bidders might not even know themselves. Nobody has to decide in advance how much to bid on an item. Unequal entitlements are possible. It minimizes bickering and bitterness, reduces time wasted in trying to reach a solution, and is easy to understand, and many find auctions enjoyable.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Art and Reconciliation](#)
- ▶ [Assessment of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Everyday Peace](#)
- ▶ [Human Dignity and Transitional Justice](#)
- ▶ [Human Geography and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Identifying Stable Solutions to Conflicts](#)
- ▶ [Independent Commissions and Peace Settlements](#)
- ▶ [Negotiation](#)
- ▶ [Urban Peacebuilding](#)

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Famine

- ▶ [Conflict and Hunger](#)

Favelas

► Urban Violence and Crime

Female Combatants and Peacebuilding

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Description

Despite the pain, loss, and suffering that accompanies armed conflicts, and of course notwithstanding the stigmatized and gendered barriers to their participation as combatants, it is undeniable that women's involvement in political violence represents a way for many to exercise agency which under "normal circumstances" they could not. They therefore emerge from the aftermath of war not only as politicized and mobilized activists but also as persons who previously held positions of leadership and responsibility, representing a key but often neglected source of peacebuilding capital. Despite the centrality and importance of their postwar activism in the pursuit of peace, particularly within their own communities, combatant women constitute a group of peacebuilders that are consistently marginalized, overlooked, and undervalued. Drawing upon theoretical and empirical works, this entry highlights several important issues. Firstly, that peace processes are as gendered as wars. Certainly, from the perspectives of former female combatants, the transition from war to peace and the accompanying rhetoric of equality and rights tends to mask the reconstruction of patriarchal power. Second, there is a pressing need not only to recognize but fundamentally address the eclectic range of barriers that combatant women face in the aftermath of armed conflict. Finally, rather than focusing on "demobilizing" female combatants, it is necessary to consolidate their agency and activism by seeking

out their involvement in process of conflict transformation as agentic and competent peacebuilders.

Introduction

Despite the ill-informed and long-standing conflation of women with peace and peacefulness within mainstream narratives, there is now a relatively sizable amount of feminist research documenting women's role as armed activists during armed conflict. These significant studies challenged the dichotomies of male/violence and female/peace, demonstrated women's politicization and mobilization, examined women's motivations and experiences, and defied the notion that women and political violence are somehow mutually exclusive (for example, see Henshaw 2017; Lorentzen and Turpin 1998; Sjoberg and Gentry 2007). Despite the pain, loss, and suffering that accompanies armed conflicts, and of course notwithstanding the stigmatized and gendered barriers to their participation as combatants, it is undeniable that women's involvement in political violence represents a way for many to exercise agency which under "normal circumstances" they could not. Combatant women therefore emerge from the aftermath of war not only as politicized and mobilized activists but also as persons who previously held positions of leadership and responsibility. While the passage of United Nations SCR 1325 in October 2000 acknowledged women's roles as combatants, the resulting "Women, Peace and Security" agenda over the course of the last two decades has largely overlooked the peacebuilding agency and capabilities of combatant women. Despite the centrality and importance of their postwar activism in the pursuit of peace, particularly within their own communities, combatant women constitute a group of peacebuilders that are consistently marginalized, overlooked, and undervalued.

(Re)Defining Peace and Peacebuilding

The principal concern of those charged with devising a new "post-conflict" landscape are

issues such as state security, sovereignty, law and order, democratic governance, and functioning capitalist economies. The establishment and delivery of such approaches requires a political, cultural, and discursive framework that legitimizes this “negative peace,” that being the absence of military violence, and recasting it as universally beneficial for all. The power of those who propagate the ending of armed actions as signifying “post-conflict” resides in their capacity to normalize all other forms of violence that do not sit within the narrow confines of physical violence. Traditional approaches to war, peace, and security, as embodied by the dominant schools of realism and liberalism, seek to analytically differentiate armed conflict from everyday violence through cultural and discursive representation of war as something exceptional and a source of insecurity for all. The construction of meaning with regards to war not only solidifies its privileged status as an exceptional and therefore paramount existential source of insecurity; in doing so, it diminishes the meaning associated with other forms of violence as less important.

Feminist scholars, among others, have long taken issue with the apparent orthodoxy that pervades these conventional tropes and practices. While prevailing forms of peace and peacebuilding are delineated as universally beneficial for all, evidence from postwar societies around the world demonstrates a continuity of violence for women, with many also facing new forms of violence. A vast body of work documenting the many instances of violence against women in the aftermath (and, of course, during) war challenges the prevailing discourse of “post-conflict” or a “return to normal” (Pillay 2001). Female insecurity and exposure to various acts of violence during the so-called “peace time” indicates the androcentric bias within mainstream conflict resolution processes, particularly levels of gender-based and sexual violence, which remain high, and in many instances increase exponentially in the aftermath of wartime violence (Handrahan 2004). “Post-conflict” is therefore reconceptualized by feminists as a period of continued violence and insecurity for women (McLeod 2011, p. 599), where they remain socially, politically, and economically marginalized, and exposed

to various forms of physical violence, which paradoxically appears to increase in the aftermath of war (Cockburn 2013; Karam 2001).

A common distinctive characteristic of feminist visions of peace is the consensus that peace is not merely the absence of “conventional violence” but is a broader tackling of all forms of violence and discrimination (Anderlini 2007; Karam 2001; Pankhurst 2008; Porter 2007). Of importance to feminists is the work of Johan Galtung (1969) and John-Paul Lederach (1997), which distinguished between a “negative” and a “positive” peace. While the former adheres strictly to conventional ideas around ending armed conflict, the latter encompasses structures and cultures of violence which pervade the so-called postwar peace. Structural violence exists when people suffer or die because of economic or social structures, not because of direct, physical violence (Galtung 1969). In many respects, the emphasis on social justice provides a theoretical link between women’s pursuit of peace and their struggle for emancipation, arguing that a genuine peace “is the antithesis of exploitation, marginalisation, and oppression. Ending discrimination against women and achieving peace are mutually interdependent, virtually inseparable goals” (Reardon 1993, p. 71).

Oliver Richmond reminds us that peace processes, peacebuilding, and state building are intensely political processes which represent a contestation over resources, needs, and rights (2013, p. 68). He contends that peacebuilding approaches need to recognize where oppression has arisen, whether from local political, social, or economic systems. The negotiation between macro, international peace interventions and localized, micro forms of peacebuilding requires us to be cognizant of the need for local ownership, identity, custom, need, and aspiration to shape a peace project in each specific context (see chapter ► “Everyday Peace”). Given the heterogenous and often contested nature of peace, there is a need to transcend dominant forms of liberal peacebuilding which deliver a peace that serves the interests of the international order, and instead, focus on localized visions and practices of peace. A critical understanding of peacebuilding is attentive to allowing space for local actors and agency

to shape a peace of their own making (Aggestam and Björkdahl 2013).

Women, War, and Peace

The universalizing tendencies within conventional approaches to war and peace typically homogenize women as a unitary group while simultaneously positioning them as “outsiders” to the conflict. Such approaches assume they are neither representatives of warring parties nor members of other groups involved in war (Jansson and Eduards 2016, p. 7). These tropes typically find clear expression in the persistent conflation of women with peace and/or victimhood, so much so that the “women and peace” hypothesis remains a dominant conceptual frame in which the role of gender in conflict zones is analyzed (Aharoni 2017). While women’s pursuit of peace and non-violence creates spaces for mobilization, activism, and the pursuit of social justice, theoretically the idea that shared gender indicates a shared meaning of peace is highly problematic. It neglects the historical and cultural specificities that shape women’s identities, needs, and interests and assumes that women primarily interpret or construct their political identities in a one-dimensional way, that being through gender, without taking seriously their ethnic, national, and racial identities. The deliberate positioning of women as “outsiders” to the conflict is premised on a myth that women do not have an interest or stake in ethno-national politics. If gender and women are both generally positioned as “outsiders” to mainstream accounts of war and peace, then combatant women are undoubtedly the “outsiders’ outsider” (Gilmartin 2018, p. 15). Therefore, examining the postwar lives of former female combatants not only challenges the reductive dualism of warring male and peaceful female but also yields significant new insights into their overlooked peacebuilding capabilities.

Notwithstanding, a burgeoning body of work on combatant women has documented the myriad of ways in which they continue their struggles for peace, justice, and security long after the weapons of war have fallen silent. The overriding focus for many of these scholarly excavations however, has

been women’s exclusions and experiences of demilitarization, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) programs (Anderlini 2007) (see chapter ▶ “Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR)”). While such explorations offer incredibly rich and important insights into the gendered and often patriarchal assumption and exclusions underpinning such programs, they also tend to implicitly (and unintentionally) re-establish a link between women and victimhood. While DDR is an important part of the story concerning female combatants and conflict transition, focusing solely on their “demobilization” as armed fighters neglects the ways in which combatant women use consolidated gains from wartime experiences to organize politically in conflict transition. In other words, we need to look beyond the “demobilization” moment of combatant women and take seriously their capacity, activism, and skills for peacebuilding.

Combatants as Peacebuilders: A Contradiction?

Given that they defy the gender stereotypes, the idea of associating women of combat with peace or peacebuilding may appear to represent something of an anomaly. An examination from a burgeoning body of global research on the postwar lives of female combatants, however, suggest that combatant women and peacebuilding are not mutually exclusive. Furthermore, endeavors to disassociate female combatants from peacebuilding serve to augment and underscore erroneous gender tropes regarding “men’s violence” and “women’s peacefulness.” Peace from the perspectives of combatant women particularly those in liberation/nationalism from below movements typically conceptualizes peace and security in multidimensional and sometimes overlapping ways. Combatant women’s acquisition of political consciousness and revolutionary mobilization can and at times does nurture a feminist and often socialist standpoint that transcends their political objectives beyond nationalism and nation-building.

In Palestine and Israel, Aharoni (2017) finds that women’s vision of peace is invariably shaped

by structural conditions, economic vulnerability, and ethnic discrimination (see chapter ► “Women’s Community Peacebuilding in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT)”). Women’s experiences of war, their ethno-national identities, class position, and, of course, their gendered lives determine their visions of peace and security. In her research on combatant women in El Salvador and Colombia, Luisa Ortega (2015) contends that female ex-combatants tend to have broad conceptual understandings of peace as not simply the ending of armed hostilities but with processes of political and social transformation. There, ex-combatants spoke of human rights, corruptions, gender, ethnic and class discrimination, reproductive rights, and gay rights. Like nationalist women active in other regions such as Palestine (Farr 2011) and Iraq (Gibbings 2011), republican women active in the Irish Republican army (IRA) in Northern Ireland describe a postwar landscape enmeshed in various forms of violence, oppression, and insecurity. While the 1998 Good Friday Agreement (GFA) has and continues to draw plaudits both nationally and internationally as a model of conflict resolution, and its unambiguous commitments to gender equality and the promotion of women within the text of the 1998 peace accord, the postwar period has brought an increase in other forms of violence including gender-based violence, homophobic attacks, the crippling effects of neoliberal austerity, and the continuing struggle for women’s reproductive rights. Republican women’s postwar struggle for the betterment of their communities today represents a continuity of political consciousness stemming from their wartime experiences of injustice (Gilmartin 2015, 2018). As former combatant women, their plural understandings of violence – physical, direct, cultural, and structural – is central to understanding the links between postwar sources of insecurity and the demonstrable capacity of combatant women to recognize, root out, and resist these ubiquitous forms of violence. In other words, the experiences and practices of armed conflict cultivate a political consciousness that does not simply “demobilize” alongside the ending of armed actions. On the contrary, their wartime activism and high degree of agency mutates

from practices of armed struggle to practices of peacebuilding, that being the pursuit of social justice, equality, and the removal of all sources of insecurity.

Mobilized Resources for Peacebuilding: International Perspectives

The overwhelming consensus among the body of research pertaining to combatant women in the aftermath of armed conflict signifies several important issues. First, levels of political consciousness and activism among combatant women does not “demobilize” or end with cessations of military violence. Second, their “postwar” pursuit of peace across several outlets including electoral politics or grassroots organizing is informed by the pursuit of social justice and a “positive peace” on behalf of a defined community. In postwar El Salvador and Colombia, former combatant women’s organizations transformed into women’s NGOs and firmly embedded themselves in the wider women’s movement, specializing as service providers and capacity builders to install gender-sensitive approaches in the Attorney Generals Office and the Ministry of Education (Ortega 2015). Female Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) members in postwar El Salvador re-energized their semiautonomous activism during conflict transition period to ensure women’s demands were visible (Luciak 1999, p. 48). *Las Mèlidas*, a feminist organization formed in 1992 after the Peace Accords were signed, began with women who came from the Popular Liberation Forces, one of the political-military forces that made up the FMLN. Like many combatant women’s organizations, *Las Mèlidas* advocated and agitated around issues beyond their immediate combatant identities and were instrumental in working for women experiencing poverty and exclusion, lesbian and sex workers, promoting sexual and reproductive rights, as well as campaigning for women’s empowerment, citizenship, and political rights. The *Colectivo de Mujeres Excombatientes* in Colombia, a group of former female combatants from a range of insurgent groups, have successfully drawn public attention to the importance of women’s peace agenda

while campaigning for economic, social, political, and cultural rights. The postwar period in Nicaragua witnessed significant advancements for women there due to the formation of AMNLAE, a mass-based women's popular organization that ran in parallel to other Sandinista organizations. To consolidate these successes, Chinchilla advocates for vigorous grassroots pressure as well as international solidarity and links to other feminist groups in post-conflict (1990, p. 393). A common trend across case-studies of female combatants and nationalist women in Latin America is their visions of women's rights as something far more than participation in formal politics. Issues of health care, education, childcare, gender-based violence, struggle against sexism, the burden of unpaid domestic labor are all consistently cited as barriers to women's emancipation (Chinchilla 1990).

In northern Uganda, former Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) fighters established and maintained community projects supporting other "girl mothers," providing counselling and care for these former abductees and their children, as well as foster cross-community reconciliation work (Anderlini 2007). In South Africa, the main anti-apartheid movement, the African National Congress (hereafter the ANC) women organized in semiautonomous groups to pursue women's rights alongside the anti-apartheid struggle agenda, broadening the political agenda of the ANC. Many of these demands resided in the immediacy of the State's failure to provide basic resources. The feminist demands that emerge within the ANC in the early 1990s and throughout the transition emanated not from the few at a leadership level but from the grassroots popular base from which the ANC draws its support (Seidman 1993, p. 315). The pressure to question male control in the transition comes from women who have organized independently or semi-autonomously, and who clearly insist that their gender-specific needs be addressed alongside the national question (Axelsson 2015; Seidman 1993, p. 315).

Field research from Palestine also reveals a distinct trend of regression as institutional politics re-emerges in the years following the 1993 Oslo Accord. The gendered political structures of the

Palestinian Authority (PA) presented restrictions and limitations for Palestinian women. While operating to resist ongoing Israeli aggression, Palestinian women also face the constraints of conservative gender ideologies within their own movement (Farr 2011, p. 545). Palestinian women channel their energies into all aspects of women's lives including health, education, legal literacy, income generation, advocacy of rights, among others. Such activism has increased women's role in public life and to some extent has challenged patriarchal control, helping Palestinians understand the interconnections between public, militarized violence, and violence in the home (Farr 2011, p. 545). Most practically, "they argue that the gap between where ordinary people find themselves and where politicians focus is so significant that nothing decided at the top will have meaning when attempts are made to apply it on the ground" (Farr 2011, p. 546). Considering this, women's autonomous organizing in the face of postwar patriarchal barriers offers women the best site and opportunities for continuing their political struggle (Richter-Devroe 2012). The case of Palestinian women demonstrates that different groups of women live different experiences and wage their struggle for emancipation and peace according to their location and needs (Abdulahadi 1998, p. 669).

In El Salvador, an initial reading of the post-conflict moment indicates that most female combatants within the FMLN returned to "civilian life." Barriers to women's meaningful participation in postwar recovery and transitional processes are equally as potent and ubiquitous as those present during war. In the aftermath of armed actions, combatant women, deemed to have transgressed traditional gender roles, face multiple barriers to continued political activism, including stigma, taboo, resurrection of traditional gender expectations, marginalization, shame, among others for having seemingly transgressed their traditional gender role (Anderlini 2007). In addition are other practical matters such as war fatigue and lack of childcare. It is therefore understandable that some wish to and do return pre-conflict roles, shedding their former roles and lives as fighters. The reality for

many former combatant women is that the skills and competency acquired during their conflict enabled them to contribute significantly to the development of their communities. Drawing upon the networks forged during the conflict, combatant women were instrumental in the development of community-based organizations providing education, training, and health care (Anderlini 2007). While the comparative case-studies are diverse, the primary underlying commonality is that first, combatant women have the consciousness to recognize postwar violence, insecurity, oppression, and injustice in its many forms and complexions, and second, they have the experience of exerting agency for social change and therefore ideally situated to tackle it. Sanam Naraghi Anderlini contends that increased recognition and support for female ex-combatants who are pushing for peace both within their respective movements and within their communities would be an efficient future use of social and financial resources (2007, p. 105).

Summary

Feminist scholarly encounters with female combatants have increased steadily over the last two decades or more, offering new insights and understandings of women, conflict and peace from their unique perspectives. This direction in feminist research points to several important issues that warrant future attention. Firstly, there is a pressing need not only to recognize but fundamentally address the eclectic range of barriers that combatant women face in the aftermath of armed conflict. Second, rather than “demobilizing” female combatants, it is necessary to consolidate their agency and activism by seeking out their involvement in process of conflict transformation as agentic and competent peacebuilders across a range of multiple post-conflict settings. Finally, the complex relationship between gender, nationalism, and non-state military movements offers a nascent avenue of future scholarly inquiry. The eclectic postwar experiences among former female combatants defy the tropes which suggest a return to

“pre-conflict” roles as dominant masculinity once again reasserts itself as military actions cease. This means attention not only to the consequences of post-conflict but also the enhancing peacebuilding capacity and consciousness of combatant women.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration \(DDR\)](#)
- ▶ [Everyday Peace](#)
- ▶ [Women’s Community Peacebuilding in the Occupied Palestinian Territories \(OPT\)](#)

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Feminist Peace Research

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Synonyms

Class; Critical Theories; Emancipatory; Epistemic Violence; Everyday; Gender; Grassroots; Intersectional; Justice; Kashmir; Local; Margins; Normative; Northern Ireland; Oppression; Patriarchy; Positive Peace; Power Structures; Race; Sexuality; Standpoint Theory; Transdisciplinary; Transnational; Transversal Politics

Summary (Definition)

This chapter introduces the reader to feminist peace research whose analysis of the gendered continuum of violence offers key insights to the field of peace and conflict studies. Feminist thinkers have long worked with an understanding that violence and peace occur along continua that span multiple levels of analysis; they explore instances of peace- and war-making at the international level as well as at the state, group, and interpersonal levels. The approach of feminist peace research recognizes the importance of analyzing gender – but also sexuality, race, class, and other relations – as power structures within any given empirical setting. The orientation of feminist peace research is explicitly normative putting the transformation of gendered power relations at the center of peaceful societies. As this chapter outlines, adopting a feminist approach to peace research fundamentally challenges not just what peace means but also how one should research it.

Introduction

Scholars and activists unfamiliar with feminist approaches might think of familiar themes of

women and peace, when they hear about feminist peace research. Studying women's involvements in peace movements and their work as peace-makers in their homes and communities is an important part of the larger research area but, as is outlined below, feminist peace research has a much broader agenda and offers key insights to the whole field of peace and conflict studies.

In terms of its scope, feminist peace research (hereafter FPR) is concerned not just with spectacular instances of violence, such as the event of war, but considers the everyday as a key site of concern (see chapter ► “Everyday Peace”). Feminist thinkers have long implicitly (if not explicitly) worked with an understanding that violence and peace are gendered and that they occur along continua, an interconnected series of instances that share a fundamental quality (see, e.g., Donahoe 2019). For example, war is clearly a type of spectacular violence that affects men and women differently, but feminist scholars extend their concern to everyday violences such as domestic abuse or bullying of trans-community members. Violence occurs at these sites and so too can peace. The scope of FPR is therefore multi-level, exploring spectacular instances of peace-making at the international level as well as instances at the state, group, and interpersonal levels.

As Wibben et al. have argued, FPR aims to be “transdisciplinary, intersectional, normative, and transnational [which] challenge[s] disciplinary (and other) boundary-making, allowing for conceptual and methodological cross-pollination to occur” (2019, p. 86). What is more, “as a feminist endeavor, feminist peace research necessarily analyses gender, sexuality, race, and class relations as power structures within any given empirical setting” (ibid., p. 87). Feminism and peace research are each grounded by an explicitly normative agenda: gender equality for feminism, a world without violence for peace research. As Catia Confortini has argued convincingly, “[a]t the most elementary level, then, [FPR] integrates these two normative goals into an axiology of transformation of gender relations as a constitutive element of peaceful societies” (in Wibben et al. 2019, p. 88). Adopting a feminist approach

to peace research fundamentally challenges what peace means and proposes different ways of studying it. In what follows, therefore, this chapter discusses feminist peace research by talking about each element: (1) feminism; (2) peace; and (3) research in turn, before turning to a (small) illustrative case study on Northern Ireland to show what this means in practice.

Feminism

Feminism, besides describing a form of activism, refers to a set of critical theories that interrogate power structures, mainly (but not exclusively) through the lens of gender. Due to its long histories and multiple sites of origin, it is not monolithic, being more accurately described as feminisms, multiple. While liberal, equality feminisms have often dominated mainstream understandings of feminist thought, it is the work of scholars whose experiences from the margins of (global) society illuminate about how the center functions that is emphasized here. These scholars teach that patterns of (gender) subordination intersect across dimensions of ability, class, caste, ethnicity, indigeneity, race, religion, sexuality, and more (see Agathangelou and Ling 2009; Chowdry and Nair 2004; Crenshaw 1991; Collins 2000; hooks 1984; Kirk and Okazawa-Rey 2020; Mohanty 1984; Tuhiwai-Smith 2012, and chapter “► Intersectionality and Peace,” this volume). These intersections compound injustice among vulnerable populations and, Patricia Hill-Collins notes, “regardless of the particular intersections involved, structural, disciplinary, hegemonic, and interpersonal domains of power reappear across quite different forms of oppression” (2000, p. 18).

Feminisms are inherently normative: seeking not only to analyze and critique unjust gender structures but to develop emancipatory alternatives to them. While feminist scholars and activists emerge in a variety of locations and address specific grievances, they are united by the shared goal of gender justice. “Feminism is about liberation from gender discrimination and

other forms of oppression,” as Gwen Kirk and Margo Okazawa-Rey (2020, p. 2) argue. For intersectional feminists the struggles against any particular form of oppression can never be divorced from other struggles for justice. What this means in any specific case depends on the grievance being addressed. While gender oppression is a global phenomenon, it manifests in particular ways in different sites.

María Lugones and Elizabeth Spelman’s (1983) discussion of the demand for “the woman’s voice” – singular – in feminist theory and activism illustrates this issue nicely. Rather than attempt to capture “the woman’s voice,” they suggest that the purpose of theory should be to be “helpful, illuminating, empowering, respectful” (Lugones and Spelman 1983, p. 578). For them, “a theory that is respectful about those about whom it is a theory will not assume that changes that are perceived as making life better for some women are changes that will make, and will be perceived as making life better for other women” (ibid., p. 579). It is not possible, therefore, to devise *one* feminist agenda that fits *all* (women, queers, trans), because “our visions of what is better are always informed by our perception of what is bad about our present situation” (Lugones and Spelman 1983, p. 579). Indeed, “how we think and what we think about does depend in large part on who is there - not to mention who is expected or encouraged to speak” (ibid.). This is crucial because “oppression works through systems of power and inequality, including the dominance of certain values, beliefs and assumptions about people and how society should be organized” (Kirk and Okazawa-Rey 2020, p. 14) – those whose values dominate often fail to recognize their privilege and how it facilitates the ease with which they move in (global) society. It is only by centering those on the margins and by encouraging and valuing a wide variety of perspectives that scholars and activists get better at challenging all forms of oppression – hence the importance of focusing on feminist knowledges from the margins.

Feminist scholarship is also always transdisciplinary and transnational – not only has it

developed across a wide variety of places and spaces, but since gender oppression is global (even as it expresses itself locally), resistance to it must be global (and local at the same time). This involves difficult conversations and has led to the need to challenge simplistic notions of global sisterhood and “the image of a deracialized universal woman” (Falcón 2016, p. 12). Hence, Barbara Smith’s early challenge for feminist politics is key: “What I really feel is radical is trying to make coalitions with people who are different from you. I feel it is radical to be dealing with race and sex and class and sexual identity all at one time” (Smith 1981, quoted in Collins 2000, p. 233). This also implies to “listen seriously to the concerns, fears, and agendas of those one is unaccustomed to heeding when building social theory, taking on board, rather than dismissing” (Sylvester 1994, p. 317).

Transversal politics (developed mainly by Yuval-Davis, see, e.g., 1994, 2006) is one way of capturing intersectionalities and problematizing assumptions of homogeneity as well as of universality. It is based on a recognition that position, identity, and values are not the same and are not necessarily co-located: Members of the same identity group, for example, can be differently positioned (in terms of, e.g., class, race, ability, life-stage, etc.), while, at the same time, similar positioning may not result in similar (social, cultural, economic, political, etc.) values. Like feminist standpoint theory, transversal politics recognizes the importance of point of view while also complicating the understanding of a standpoint by recognizing its shifting, unfinished character. Importantly, it emphasizes difference not in opposition to equality, but rather as making justice possible by acknowledging power differentials entailed in varied positionalities. It is the contention of FPR scholars that only by drawing on multiple feminist insights, while consistently interrogating their limits and their unfinished character, FPR scholarship can remain “true to feminist methodological and political commitments and to continual, radical, and deliberate critique, allowing for only temporal resting points” (Wibben 2011, p. 114).

Peace

As Betty Reardon (1993, p. 6) explains, “peace is a social environment that favors the full development of the human person.” While much traditional scholarship reads the human as either male (such as in the tradition of “natural man” described by Thomas Hobbes in the *Leviathan*) or as neutral (where a human person could be any or no gender), feminist explorations of the human point to a number of crucial limitations with these accounts. For example, Natashia Marhia points to the importance of interrogating “how the ‘human’ has historically been constructed as an exclusionary – and fundamentally gendered – category” (2013, p. 19). This particular construction of the human in the “liberal humanist, normative intellectual heritage” (ibid., p. 20) underpins the human development and the human rights discourses, all of which have been criticized by feminists for their emphasis on individual capabilities without considering often conflicting needs of the group, side-stepping the need for one’s humanity to be recognized and valued by others, and a tendency to universalize an a priori understanding of what it means to be fully human. As Marhia (2013, p. 32, citing Butler and Robinson) concludes, “in order to address the uneven global distribution of embodied vulnerabilities [our understanding of the human] must also include ‘the social relations that mediate human life in ways that ensure its quality and flourishing.’”

Consequently, if peace is a social environment that favors the full development of the human person, then violence is that which interrupts human development or the social environment in which it thrives. In order to build peace, one must “endeavor to achieve... humane and equitable global social conditions” (Reardon 1993, p. 5) – and FPR points toward the ways in which intersecting oppressions shape these conditions, opening up “other ways to make grievances known” (Vellacott 2008, p. 203). Otherwise this “peace” (often referred to as negative peace) continues to be shaped by varied forms of violence, many of which are continuous with violence during war and whose effects are gendered, raced,

classed, and more. Conditions of peace must occur across multiple levels, across all the sites in which human development takes place and can be interrupted with violence. “FPR understands peace as dynamic (Vellacott 2008) and constantly in the making, a process laying the foundations for relationships of mutuality within “multiple worlds” (Ling 2014)” (Wibben et al. 2019, p. 87).

In their recent article on feminist peace research, Annick Wibben et al. (2019, p. 87) propose that a key contribution of FPR is that it “not only provides insights into what can be termed ‘spectacular’ instances of violence but also sharpens our analysis of the everydayness and possibilities of peaceful coexistence and conflict transformation and prevention.” Identifying the everyday as an additional key site of analysis has a number of implications for feminist conceptions of peace. Most importantly, such a focus grounds feminist peace in human experience, which allows the researcher to pay attention to intersecting forms of oppression, rather than what Choi (forthcoming) refers to as the “established institutionalized language of states.”

This focus on everyday experiences of peace (and war) requires “paying attention [at] the level of the interpersonal and intercorporeal” (Wibben et al. 2019, p. 87) and moves FPR past the peace/war dichotomy, to identify the ways in which various violences may simultaneously overlap with various spaces of peace. “Formal peace can be negotiated in the state house while domestic violence continues in the family house” (Donahoe 2019, p. 88). A country supposedly at peace with its neighbors may suffer domestic crime, poverty, and racism and be lacking health care and education; a state’s citizens may exercise civil liberties at the same time as indigenous rights continue to be stripped away. Researching these issues from the margins shifts the focus to ongoing violences, leading FPR scholars to note how each of these injustices maintain and invite violence into the lives of many. From this vantage point, “peace is never a return to normality when life before the war was already in a shape of war for certain gendered, sexualized and variously othered bodies and lives” (Choi forthcoming). Feminist scholars have often referred to this phenomenon

as the continuum of violence that spans war and peace as well as the multiplicity of sites associated with them (e.g., Cockburn 2004; Enloe 2004; Kelly 1987; Reardon 1993).

Caroline Moser (2001) pointed out that thinking about violence as a continuum provides an heuristic to identify the ways in which types of violence are linked and reinforce each other. Paying attention to this continuum, argues Sanam Roohi, “can make us aware of insidious forms of violence that hinder peace or the promise of peace” (in Wibben et al. 2019, p. 92). Without such attention, she goes on, peace researchers “render opaque the everydayness of both peace negotiations and the eruption of [violent] conflict in places like Kashmir” (ibid.). Notwithstanding this (overdue) recognition, FPR argues that “feminist scholarship provides particularly located insights about how a wide range of practices and discourses - security, war, and citizenship being just three examples - are crucially gendered, sexualized expressions of patriarchal power” (Choi forthcoming).

FPR highlights peacebuilding practices along the continuum of peace beyond the spectacular as well. These practices are localized, particularistic, and bottom-up (see, e.g., McLeod 2015). A particular type of example is the people-to-people activities that are often rooted in care. As Vaittinen et al. (2019, p. 3) argue “care, and the gendered power relations that go with it, cut through social practices in all contexts of peace and conflict. For the understanding of everyday peace, engaging with feminist theories of care is therefore crucial.” While not essentially (biologically) female, care acts tend to be interpreted as women’s work and are henceforth devalued (Ruddick 2002). This is a topic FPR scholars emphasize because traditional scholarship neglects the historical reality that traditionally gendered care work has produced skills and resources among women that are “critical not only to human survival but to human *development*” (Boulding 2000, pp. 108–109) and therefore peace.

Given the importance of full human development (with the feminist caveats outlined above), more attention to the politics of care is a key concern for FPR. “Everyday practices of care not

only sustain life through direct acts of care-giving, but in various gendered ways involving caring human beings they also sustain and help to build trust among and within communities” (Vaittinen et al. 2019, p. 3). Care, whether for children, elders, or the community at large, the rhythm of daily life with its rituals and celebrations that build trust, along with other everyday acts form cultures of peace (Boulding 2000) and amount to what Donahoe (2017, p. 2) terms slow peace because of the ways in which it is often banal, dispersed both across time and space rather than spectacular, and a process of accretion. From an FPR perspective, at each level of peacebuilding, whether international and spectacular, driven by formal practices or local, slow, everyday practices, peace is the ongoing challenge to create and sustain environments in which human beings thrive.

Research

The previous two sections introduced the reader to intersectional feminism and then outlined how a focus on the everyday, as a key site for peace research, stretches the definition not just of what peace might be but also where insights might be found. This third section turns to how these insights shape feminist research on peace. Since FPR “is prefigurative of feminist peace [...] we are committed to ask at every step of our research process the following question: how does my research contribute to human flourishing, gender justice, and a gender-informed positive peace?” (Confortini in Wibben et al. 2019, p. 88). This question is at the heart of feminist research in peace and conflict studies, even if it might not always be perfectly executed.

It is also important to note that “most writing that explicitly locates itself as part of the feminist tradition takes a political stance, but not all scholars that research women (or gender) do so [some work uses] gender only as a variable or takes an essentialist view of gender” (Wibben 2016a, p. 2). Feminist peace research, especially as it is currently being revitalized through efforts such as the Feminist Peace Research Network, takes a more explicitly intersectional feminist

approach as outlined above. While some scholars “specifically anchor the discussion by building knowledge on the basis of women’s experiences [...] others engage more broadly with feminist insights, even studying the experiences of men rather than of women” (Wibben 2016a, p. 2). Importantly, while social science often requires that “we have to think about women as a group—and of the structures that make it necessary to think of them as such and that also affect their everyday lives—we also need to pay attention to the ways in which individual women are situated in varied contexts which shape not only their experience, but also how they identify themselves and make sense of their lives” (Wibben 2016a, p. 3). As such, much of FPR is transversal, paying attention to a variety of perspectives shaped by identities, positionalities, and values, which are in constant flux as the conversation and those involved continue to change (see also Yuval-Davis 1994).

As a critical theory, feminism approaches research methods with a keen recognition that “knowledge is for someone and for some purpose” (Cox 1981, p. 128). Hence a feminist understanding of the continuum of violence includes attention to epistemic violence, the term developed by Gayatri Spivak to describe the “type of violence that attempts to eliminate knowledge possessed by marginal subjects” (Dotson 2011, p. 236). The critique inherent in the term “epistemic violence” is that knowledge can function as a form of domination when it is designed and applied to silence the “colonial other” (Spivak 1994, pp. 24–25; see also Chowdry and Nair 2004; Tuhiwai-Smith 2012). While epistemic violence draws attention to how knowledge practices can silence and exclude, it is also possible for knowledge to be emancipatory by bringing awareness to patterns of shared oppressions as well as strategies for resistance. Here, feminist commitments to interrogating power structures, also as they appear in how research is conducted, what counts as knowledge, and who is allowed to participate in the conversations and to set its frame (Lugones and Spelman 1983), are crucial.

Feminist peace scholars have long been concerned with examining power: Almost

50 years ago, in 1972, Berenice Carroll challenged peace research's "cult of power" and Judith Stiehm's explored nonviolent power. They and other scholars have pointed out there are many ways to think of power. More recently, Jo Rowlands (1997) proposed four types of power: power-over (coercion), power-to (agency), power-within (empowerment), and power-with which is both collective and collaborative. While power-to and power-within are each important formulations for feminism, the feminist research process conscientiously engages the power-with formulation which emphasizes the value of the relational. To achieve this, feminists purposefully engage across levels of analysis in order to better understand relationships between people, structures of violence, and social relations (see also Agathangelou and Ling 2009; Tickner 2001).

This is true across multiple levels of research. Feminists are often drawn to research methodologies that pay careful attention to the ways in which subjects relate to one another and interact. Feminists are also cognizant of the ways in which they as researchers relate to research participants, pursuing methodologies that require them to engage directly with the populations they study, whether through interviews or ethnographic work (see also Ackerly et al. 2006; Tuhiwai-Smith 2012). These commitments also imply that feminist scholars often engage in research that emanates from and is directly applicable to particular activist communities (of which the researcher herself might be a part). Consequently, feminists prize participatory research where they work with or alongside communities (of which the researcher might have become a part in the process or of which they were already a part), emphasizing the need for reflexivity throughout the research process (see also Wibben 2016a, b). It is no surprise then that feminist scholars value working with colleagues as co-researchers, co-authors, and members of networks, creating knowledge that serves all those involved in the project.

Accordingly feminist research ethics emphasize "a self-reflexive commitment to revisiting epistemological choices, boundaries and relationships throughout the research process" (Ackerly and True 2010, p. 38). Unlike traditional science

where objectivity (supposedly) arises from a view from nowhere, "feminist objectivity means quite simply situated knowledges," writes Donna Haraway (1988, p. 581). Acknowledging that scholars are variously positioned, as transversal politics also emphasizes, and reflecting on the constraints this places on knowledge creation, makes for more accurate (objective) research. What is more, by emphasizing the "with" in their relationships with the populations they study, with colleagues, and with students, feminists privilege the relational elements of the research process: collaboration, community building, and respect for the agency of those working toward peace and toward a better understanding of peace. The knowledge garnered and created by FPR seeks to be not just illuminating but also respectful and empowering (Lugones and Spelman 1983), thus contributing to the full development of the human person. Thus, FPR as a normative endeavor contributes directly to the goal of peace.

Northern Ireland

Formal peace processes generally include elites among belligerent parties. These are rarely women. As Christine Bell and Catherine O'Rourke (2010) found, only 16% of peace agreements even reference women and only rarely do those "references illustrate good practice." The result is that those tasked with making peace are often those same men responsible for making war. The Northern Ireland peace process is an interesting exception because women were formally elected to participate in the peace process though Eilish Rooney (1995) notes that women's peacebuilding attempts here had been historically dismissed. A network of women in the community and voluntary sector organized to form the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition (the Coalition). As an "identity conflict" characterized by the sociopolitical divide between Catholics and Protestants, the three decades of political violence known as the Troubles were formally concluded by the 1998 Belfast or Good Friday Agreement (see chapters ► "Troubles, The: The Northern Ireland Conflict" and ► "Reconciliation in Northern Ireland"). The

Coalition received a large enough share of votes that two of their members, Pearl Sagar (Protestant) and Monica McWilliams (Catholic), were granted seats at the all-party talks (see Aretxaga 1997; Sales 1997; Ward 2004, 2005). Women's participation in this peace process is a useful heuristic not simply for identifying ways in which women work for peace but also for exposing the ways in which peace and conflict processes are inherently gendered.

FPR analysis shows how gender operated in this case and how women contributed to the peace process in numerous ways and changed the dynamic between parties. The violence of many decades often spilt over into antagonisms and aggressive behavior between opposing parties during the peace talks. Members of the Coalition experienced this same antagonistic behavior, but what the public accepted as normal behavior between rival men looked abnormal when carried out against women. The members of the Coalition neither yielded nor returned the abuse and, instead, publicly shamed the leaders of the other parties for their bad behavior. This shifted public opinion and resulted in better interactions between all parties, allowing the space for productive discussions. It also alleviated concerns voiced publicly from numerous corners that perhaps the peace process was not a place for women (Donahoe 2017; Fearon 1999). Not only did Coalition members evidence the same capacities as their male colleagues, their engagement in the peace process challenged the gender norms of the process in its entirety and contributed positively to the final agreement.

Importantly, as members of the community and voluntary sector, the Coalition represented communities and a wide range of issues across Northern Ireland. The women's work was at the local, grassroots level, serving the everyday needs of their communities: running after school programs, education and training courses, writing grants for community centers, parks and memorials, and delivering critical information to their communities regarding unemployment and welfare. Callie Persic explains that as part of women's networks and representatives of communities, they were not committed to party politics (2004,

p. 178) and posed no direct threat to the establishment. Rather than run as local candidates for office, they served as vote collectors.

This method of organizing is an example of transversal politics. Where women across Northern Ireland represented a multitude of differences in political identity, class, life stage, and other positions, they shared the political value of women's inclusion and peace according to Linda Holmgren (2014). While the Coalition did not win seats in any district nor get any individual member elected, they garnered enough votes overall to qualify for their seats at the peace talks. Their logic prioritized the needs of the communities for a cessation of violence and the recognition that those needs were unlikely to be served if the only parties at the table were the political arms of paramilitary organizations. Further the Coalition argued for and achieved the creation of the Civic Forum in the Agreement. The Civic Forum would sit in parallel to the government to ensure that the thriving community and voluntary sector which continues to employ women in the majority could continue to serve as a conduit of information to and from the government (see chapter ▶ "Civil Society Inclusion in Peace Mediation"). As such, the Coalition strived to connect the government to the everyday needs of women and the community at large. In the first years following the peace agreement, the Civic Forum was stood down and never reinstated. The Coalition members lamented that this was a metaphor for the government, and "politics" in general, not caring for the needs of people on the ground (Donahoe 2017).

As a political party, the Coalition was short lived. May Blood, Avila Kilmurray, Bronagh Hinds, and Monica McWilliams, founding members of the Coalition with long resumes of ongoing political activism and public engagement since 1998, each stated clearly that their goal was not to create a formal political party (A Century of Women 2020). They organized "out of almost sheer badness" Avila Kilmurray described, in order to ensure that women would be represented at the peace talks (Donahoe 2017, p. 58). Monica McWilliams who continued to represent the Coalition in the Stormont government following the agreement described the

Coalition as a temporary “affirmative action measure” and agreed in 2006 that it had served its purpose (Donahoe 2017, p. 74.) A common view was that the Coalition had failed and fell apart or that their mandate had diminished (Murtagh 2008, p. 37; Ashe 2012, pp. 234–235), but when read through the lens of transversal politics, a different picture emerges.

One key element of transversal politics is that coalitions are often temporary, because they are based in shifting, continually renegotiated, interests (Collins 2000; Yuval-Davis 1994). To dismiss the Coalition as a failed experiment also dismissed the purposeful and strategic work that these women did to ensure that the women of Northern Ireland would have a voice in their own peace. Additionally, in prioritizing power-with methodology, it was important to the researcher to give space in the analysis to the voices of these women who had shared their lived experience. They challenged the gender norms of political participation. As further evidence of their long-term impact, it is noteworthy that most of the political parties of Northern Ireland began putting women forward on their party lists as it was clear that the failure to run women candidates was costing them votes (Donahoe 2017, pp. 76–77).

FPR not only challenges the inherent patriarchy of peace processes that exclude women and draw attention to why women’s participation is important (O’Rourke 2014); it must also employ a feminist critique as outlined above. While religious affiliation looms large as an intersectional concern in this story (Cockburn 1998, 2010), it is often narrated without attention to the whiteness of the process. Northern Ireland is touted as a successful case of women’s inclusion and yet rarely is there mention of the silences that were maintained in the other forms of homogeneity present. One might also draw attention to the ways in which the Coalition was organized by the women listed above and others who were well-educated either through formal schooling or through professional careers. For example, their strategy required a deep understanding of the political and legal ramifications of the electoral process that was employed for the peace talks to recognize that the Coalition wouldn’t need to

garner enough votes to get women elected in any single community. As noted, their strategy also worked because it did not require their members to directly compete with the larger more established political parties. The privilege of knowing how to navigate the political process helped create the space in which the Coalition operated, but it is unlikely to be replicated in other spaces.

Though the participation of the Coalition in the formal peace talks is often the focus of research on gender and peace in Northern Ireland because it is spectacular, that is only part of the story. This focus on women and peace ignores an equally interesting parallel story about women in paramilitary organizations and their direct participation in violence (see, e.g., Alison 2009 and chapter “► [Female Combatants and Peacebuilding](#),” this volume). The spectacular story of formal peace talks also ignores the work of slow peace as actors in community development, a field dominated by women and often described as women’s work, even when undertaken by men, operate after-school programs to prevent kids from participating in riots or engaging in paramilitaries or write grants for international peace funding to operate centers for victims of domestic violence, for training and education to combat unemployment, and for physical and mental health services to combat problems with drug addiction and suicide. This less spectacular work takes place across the boundaries of the sectarian divide as women from historically opposing communities support and learn from each other (see chapter ► “[Women’s Organizations in Post-Conflict Contexts](#)”). Men in Northern Ireland have been less likely to or able to cross communal lines in the same ways because for men this is more likely to be interpreted as treachery (Donahoe 2017). Community development efforts are sometimes deliberately oriented toward peace as in *Women Together* (Roulston and Davies 2000, p. 188), the *Women’s Peace Movement* (Aretxaga 1997, p. 181), or the *Peace People* whose founders Mairead Corrigan and Betty Williams were awarded a Nobel Peace Prize in 1977 (Fairweather et al. 1984; Edgerton 1986; Morgan 1996). Overall the varied efforts are purposeful in achieving

power-with members of their own and other communities to fully develop the human person.

Key Takeaways

This chapter set out to show how taking a feminist approach to peace research has implications for the entire field: its strong normative orientation puts gender justice at the center of peaceful societies. After introducing the reader to contemporary intersectional feminisms which interrogate gendered power relations as they intersect with various additional forms of oppression, it turned to discussing implications for conceptions of peace that have long been championed by feminist peace scholars and activists (see also Väyrynen et al. [forthcoming](#)). Starting from the everyday experiences of peace and the varied types of violence that shape human lives across the peace-war continuum, feminists have paid particular attention to the corporeal and to relations of care that are fundamental to achieving gender justice and positive peace. Studying the everyday also requires strong ethical commitments, including recognition of how all (research) relations are imbued with power. Through ongoing reflexive practices, feminist scholars have developed unique practices of working with research participants and, indeed, creating new communities of knowledge and action in the process. These broader insights and commitments, including acknowledging a multiplicity of identities, positionalities, and values, are exemplified in the case study on women's involvement in the Northern Ireland peace process.

To conclude, the insights in this chapter are made possible because of a community of scholars and activists: the Feminist Peace Research Network (FPRN). The members' collective aim is to revitalize a feminist peace research tradition; one that includes not just recovered insights from the past (also beyond the one third world), but one that is truly interdisciplinary and transnational (see, e.g., Lyytikäinen et al. [2020](#)). This is not just an intellectual endeavor; feminist scholarship provides important insights that are

needed to solve current crises: from ongoing wars and the resulting refugee flows, to climate change, environmental degradation, and the resulting global health implications, to the always present but ever-increasing inequalities that shape our ability to respond in a humane manner. This chapter is one piece in the larger puzzle of making feminist contributions to peace and conflict research visible (again) and encouraging colleagues to teach them. The articles and books cited here (including a forthcoming *Handbook of Feminist Peace Research*, edited by Väyrynen et al.) should provide plenty of material for those interested in digging deeper.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Civil Society Inclusion in Peace Mediation](#)
- ▶ [Everyday Peace](#)
- ▶ [Female Combatants and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Gender Justice and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Intersectionality and Peace](#)
- ▶ [Reconciliation in Northern Ireland](#)
- ▶ [Troubles, The: The Northern Ireland Conflict](#)
- ▶ [Women, Peace and Security Agenda](#)
- ▶ [Women's Organizations in Post-Conflict Contexts](#)

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Feminist Security Studies

- ▶ [Women, Peace and Security Agenda](#)

Fetial Code

- ▶ [Just War Theory Across Time and Culture](#)

Fieldwork

- ▶ [Reflexivity and Fieldwork in Feminist Peace Research](#)

Fiscal Decentralization

- ▶ [Decentralization and Conflict Prevention](#)

Foreign Mediation

- ▶ [Yemen Conflict](#)

Fragile Peace Transitions

- ▶ [Yemen Conflict](#)

Fragmentation

- ▶ [Balkanization](#)
- ▶ [Troubles, The: The Northern Ireland Conflict](#)

Freedom from Anxiety

- ▶ [Conflict, Peace, and Ontological Security](#)

Frontier Cities

- ▶ [Divided Cities](#)

Future Peace: Digital Innovations and the International Peace Architecture

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Synonyms

[Artificial intelligence](#); [Big data](#); [Digital peace](#); [Digital technologies](#); [International peace architecture](#)

Definition

Intellectual and policy attempts to make peace after war have recently been enthused by the

implications of new data-driven possibilities and technologies. These digital approaches to peace and security offer the possibility for predicting wars and making a better quality of peace, both for researchers and policymakers. After recent failures in peacemaking, and lengthy wars since 9/11 from Afghanistan and Iraq to Syria and Yemen, it was likely that new approaches would emerge. New artificial intelligence (AI) and data-driven approaches to conflict prevention, peacekeeping, and humanitarian aid are the international community's latest hope, but they also appear to be something of a chimera. In fact, they should not be seen as anything more than an addition to the already substantial international peace architecture. This entry offers a brief overview of the emerging digital innovations and their application and potential limits for peacebuilding and conflict resolution.

Introduction

There is a familiar pattern in modern history: after every cycle of war, new innovations are required for peacemaking. Over the centuries, these innovations have built up into an international peace architecture (IPA), which has evolved different layers, tools, and techniques (see Richmond [2020a,b](#) and [2021](#)). The IPA has been led by US foreign policy apparatus and diplomacy, and it is embedded in the UN system via human rights and multilateralism. It is a substantial, intergenerational architecture, transcending geopolitical, social, public, and private boundaries and systems. Geopolitical balancing, intervention, liberal internationalism and law, democratization and development, peacekeeping, mediation, peacebuilding and statebuilding emerged in different epochs, each new layer and method building on the last. They respond to geopolitical, imperial, and colonial conflicts, industrial-scale and ideological warfare, wars of decolonization and self-determination, revolutions, post-socialist ethnic, tribal wars, as well as insurgency and terrorism (Richmond [2021](#)). New artificial intelligence (AI) and data-driven approaches to conflict prevention, peacekeeping,

and humanitarian aid are its latest hope, but they also appear to be something of a chimera (see Wählisch 2020).

“Future peace” is a historical term commonly used to herald new approaches. In the contemporary era, this refers to “digital peace.” However, it should not be seen as anything more than an addition to the already substantial architecture. This already spans local NGOs, networks, and social movements, to a range of state and international, political, social, economic, and security issues and apparatus to consolidate peace (Peace Direct 2020). Indeed, though it offers new capacities for peacemaking, it also introduces new risks (Karlsrud 2014).

Digital Peacemaking or Self-Interest?

Much of the early literature on peace and war, couched in more traditional problem-solving methodologies, offered broadly agreed insights on the roots of conflict and the measures that may be used to remedy them. In modernity, the entire international peace architecture and more formal UN system has been built upon such premises. Yet, in practice, peacekeeping, peacebuilding, statebuilding, as well as international mediation have tended to follow well-worn paths of development, following great power interests and political will with only minor modifications based upon scientific development (Fortna 2008, p. 116). As a result, practice has diverged from the interdisciplinary, scientific consensus on peacemaking. Will new AI and data-driven responses to war and related research and practice on peace follow the scientific consensus or great power interests? They may deepen data patterns and speed up micro-responses to local instability, but they do not tend to engage with issues of peace and security’s quality, especially when measured against local political claims in conflict-affected societies (as much research on everyday experiences of peace has already indicated). This is because they tend to reflect the interests of powerful actors in the international political economy and reflect their technological progress. Such new approaches’ rapid

adoption may undermine such work and destabilize the overall IPA, in other words. Yet, the UN, security actors, and donor states are pushing the agenda for peace and security into these new digital terrains (UN DPPA 2021). They have so far fallen short in addressing the pressing needs of millions of civilians affected by conflict. Though on paper digital peace approaches may offer the potential to predict and prevent war, in practice they shift peace and security processes to a technical level of analysis. Consequently, they risk ignoring the underlying and fundamental political compromises involved in peacemaking and peacebuilding according to its multidisciplinary strands (Richmond and Tellidis 2020).

There is a risk that peace data and algorithms risk introducing blockages within the finely balanced, existing “analogue” international peace architecture (Richmond 2020a,b). This is because of their limited political engagement with a conflict’s root causes and dynamics (Perera 2017). They risk ignoring the enormous amount of existing qualitative data, particularly from conflict-affected and historical contexts, that has already been amassed across a range of disciplines (Mac Ginty 2017). This existing data and set of peace and security methodologies has informed some of the key breakthroughs since the end of the Cold War, including in the conceptual development of peacebuilding, the role of civil society, concepts like human security, Responsibility to Protect, and the Sustaining Peace agenda the UN has been developing recently (UN Security Council 2018). The latter points to the connection between rights, justice, and sustainability (everyday, hybrid, peace formation processes, in other words), in line with multidisciplinary scientific findings, and empirical evidence (Richmond 2016).

In fact, new digital technologies offer the prospect of supporting but not replacing existing practices in the states-system and global political economy, despite the work of civil society, the donor, and multilateral system (Richmond and Visoka 2021). This is because they offer the temptation – through data patterns and algorithms – of governing risk and war from afar without endangering vital interests in the older extant

geopolitical systems (Duffield 2018). They allow previous findings on peace and security to be watered down. New technologies are not value-neutral, apolitical, or detached from socio-material interests, particularly those of the superpowers and major corporations. They are rather an extension of existing tools and patterns. This indicates that they will tend to bypass issues raised by the roots causes of war, such as self-determination struggles and resistance against oppression, state collapse and regional geopolitics, environmental collapse, socioeconomic inequality and power stratifications, nationalism, and militarism.

The new tools are “owned” or connected to hegemonic actors and their knowledge systems in the states with the most substantial foreign policy apparatus, able to support their security, deploying peacekeeping, peacebuilding and development measures in order to maintain their positions in international relations. There are not yet AI algorithms substantial enough to prevent or predict war, and respond with measures designed to deal with the deeper, structural and political issues that lead to political violence. Thus, inevitably, such approaches remain related to the maintenance of the status quo rather than its substantial improvement, thus limiting their humanitarian or emancipatory legitimacy.

The Political Limits of New Approaches in Peacemaking

All peace processes are about significant political issues, relating to power, law, and justice, the distribution of land and resources, the organization of society and government, and international governance (Richmond 2014). Big data and AI tends to be manipulated to favor existing power relations in conflict-affected societies, reflecting geopolitical biases (Zuboff 2019: 9). This is so even among outside third parties, and undermines peacemakers’ aim to enable human security and the political claims of the wider conflict-affected population for more secure and improved lives and prospects. These tools cannot be used as a panacea to replace old tools, or to replace and ignore the findings of existing research. Alone,

they have methodological and ethical flaws and make it easier to avoid responding to the political claims made in conflict-affected societies for self-determination, more rights and prosperity (see Lepore 2020). Many peacekeeping and peacebuilding interventions have suffered from cultural biases against local populations, on top of limited resources and political will. Technologies operating on algorithmic formulas can antagonize further and discriminate against certain targeted groups and local communities. Experience from the use of technology and big data for counterterrorism, surveillance, and migration control illustrates how racialized and depoliticizing algorithmic predictions can be (Gilman and Baker 2014; Jacobsen 2015).

Given these deficits, it is difficult to see how digital humanitarianism and prevention, remote peacekeeping, and digital enhancements for peacebuilding might address of the existing flaws in predicting, understanding, and responding to conflict trends, in creating suitable responses that carry local and regional legitimacy, and amassing sufficient resources and political will (Jacobsen 2015). By ignoring such long-standing issues, they risk deepening the insecurity of civilian populations in conflict (Donini and Maxwell 2014). Moreover, the lack of technological resources and capacity to engage with new technologies in conflict-affected zones makes it extremely difficult for conflict-affected communities to make use of and benefit from such data. Essentially, these approaches might lead to a new form of digital colonialism and digital trusteeship, that reproduces yet again the dynamics of material and cultural domination and exploitation within peace processes rather than responding to inequalities as causal factors in war (Kwet 2019). They have not, so far provided answers to the political claims, security or material problems of conflict-affected populations, as in Syria, Yemen, or many earlier conflicts where peace processes, mediation attempts, peacekeeping, diplomacy, or peacebuilding are now frozen or in retreat, such as in the Balkans, DRC, or Colombia.

Digital approaches give an impression of international engagement, with little political substance in addressing the root causes and

contemporary dynamics of the conflict. They may create the impression that local communities are resilient (Chandler 2014). However, they reduce the possibility for engaged interactions between local and international actors and risk undermining the legitimacy of any externally and remotely designed or imposed peace settlement. Existing research shows that generating data, methods, and theory from a substantial distance about the local dynamics of conflict and citizens' perceptions on the ground is an unreliable approach to peace and security issues. Predictive systems and AI operate on the symptoms of violence rather than the causes. Scholarship in peace and conflict studies, using more traditional methodologies, has already made this clear and amassed substantial data, theory, and methods.

So many aspects of the goal of peace depend on issues of identity, culture, custom, human relations, and justice in historical, distributive, and environmental senses (global or planetary justice, in other words) (Nagel 2005; Dryzek and Pickering 2019: 67), as well as on political reform. Peacemaking thus depends on multidisciplinary scholarship, evidence, and approaches in order to address root causes of war and violence and develop sustainable and emancipatory alternative political orders. The major lacunae in recent times have been a lack of political will for reform or intervention at state levels, and an absent political engagement with everyday, local political claims, rather than a lack of data or digital capacity.

As in the long Syrian war, the availability of early warning, data collection, and prevention technologies have been of no consequence in preventing or resolving it. Such failures probably would not have been avoided with new data and AI methods. Sufficient data already existed as did the methods of conflict prevention, peacekeeping, and peacemaking, all of which were undermined by the failure of multilateralism and the lack of international political will. No new data, variables, or methods would have saved Syria's population under these conditions. This failure has placed the legitimacy of international and civil society actors actually trying to reform the

state, support human rights and democracy, via the existing IPA frameworks for diplomacy, mediation, intervention, rights, and law, at great risk. Technological supplements for peacemaking activities risk deflecting from its failures, displacing the long-standing need to address substantive security, rights, and justice concerns in conflict-affected societies.

Summary

The contribution of new technologies and data approaches should be set into the context of the existing IPA, which already monitors and moderates geopolitics, builds international law, norms, state constitutions, and human rights, based upon an enormous volume of multidisciplinary evidence. This has been captured to some degree in the evolution of UN doctrines, and is now connected to the wider goals set by the UN's Sustaining Peace agenda (United Nations 2015; UN Secretary-General 2018; UN General Assembly 2015). Peace praxis also needs to relate, not to Western and Northern interests, but more closely to the political claims and the complex balances peace with global justice requires within conflict-affected societies (Richmond 2021). New approaches and technologies can help but should not disrupt this system, at least without a clear idea of consequences, intended and unintended. This is a hard lesson learned from the connection between industrialized states and empires, the development of total and cold war, and the several breakdowns of international order last century. Bridges need to be built with existing approaches in the IPA as a complementary process of innovation, rather than displacement.

AI for peace is no panacea, nor a replacement for the existing and highly complex epistemological and practice frameworks of the IPA and wider international order. Displacing the latter with "peace tech and & data-stabilisation" methodologies and epistemologies is connected to a hegemonic epistemology that seeks to pacify and contain war while maintaining exclusive interests, economic hierarchies, and sovereignty. This may maintain the existing domestic and international

order in the short term only. These methods may support warlords more than citizens, may not be able to maintain legitimate political order in conflict-affected societies, and risk destabilizing the entire legacy IPA, as well as its newly emerging layers. For these reasons, new technologies for predicting conflicts and then devising strategies for peaceful resolutions should support the existing IPA, and enhance its capacity vis-à-vis the new types of war that have coming into being since the end of the Cold War, many of which have been facilitated by new technologies of violence. They should not be aimed at status-quo management or the extension of geopolitical power. That path risks the collapse of the legacy, analogue international order and also threatens more recent innovations in the IPA resting on the scientific, expanded human rights, environmental, and policy nexus. In order to maintain the legitimacy and capacity of the whole IPA, the expansion and extension of the quality of peace and security are required, but for this digital peace is relatively marginal in terms of political innovation.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Asymmetrical Warfare](#)
- ▶ [Conceptual Evolution of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Cyber Conflict](#)
- ▶ [Evolution of Practice in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations](#)
- ▶ [International Peace Architecture, Blockages, and Counter-Peace](#)
- ▶ [Peace Infrastructures](#)
- ▶ [Technology and Peace](#)

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Gender

- ▶ [Consociationalism and Peace After Conflict](#)
- ▶ [Feminist Peace Research](#)
- ▶ [Gender Justice and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [LGBTQ Perspectives in Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Masculinity and Conflict](#)
- ▶ [Women's Organizations in Post-Conflict Contexts](#)

Gender and Mediation

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Synonyms

[Inclusive mediation](#); [Women's participation in peace processes](#)

Definition

Gender and Mediation refers to the ways in which women, their rights and interests are taken into account in peace processes.

Introduction: Origins

The question of gender in mediation has its roots in the Security Council's Women Peace and Security Agenda (WPS). **UNSCR 1325 (2000)** recognized that women have a role to play in conflict resolution (see also ▶ [Women, Peace and Security Agenda](#)).

This was subsequently developed through a series of UNSC resolutions under the so-called "participation" pillar of the WPS Agenda (Kirby and Shepherd 2021). While the participation pillar is concerned with women's participation in **peace and security** broadly defined, it also makes specific provision for participation in conflict resolution, including mediation.

Mediation is defined by the UN as a "process whereby a third party assists two or more parties, with their consent, to prevent, manage or resolve a conflict by helping them to develop mutually acceptable agreements" (UN, 2012). Recent years have seen an increasing emphasis on mediation as a tool for **sustainable peace** globally. This has emerged alongside a new approach to leadership at the UN which increasingly recognizes the need to increase the diversity of the leadership pool (United Nations, 2017a) and deliver a global **gender equality** strategy (United Nations, 2017b). The need for women's leadership in peace and security has also begun to

appear in the text of WPS Resolutions (UNSCR 2122, 2013b). The question of gender and mediation therefore sits at the intersection of a number of institutional priorities for the United Nations at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

Of particular note for the question of gender and mediation is the existence of a model of “multi-track” mediation whereby mediation happens in different spaces with different actors (Palmiano Federer et al., 2019). Track 1 mediation is generally understood as a high-level political process in which political and military representatives take part in an official capacity. Track 2 is an informal process which brings together civic leaders (such as, for example, community or religious leaders, intellectuals, or politicians acting in their personal capacity) to engage in creative thinking about the conflict. Track 3 is more recently recognized as part of the mediation landscape (Turner, 2018). It is understood as encompassing the work done at grassroots level to prevent and mitigate the effect of violent conflict within and between communities (Table 1). These three “tracks” of mediation are now recognized as the dominant way in which mediation and the role of gender are conceptualized (see also ► [Mediation](#)).

Women’s participation in peace processes has emerged as one of the most dominant sites of advocacy within the broader WPS Agenda. A significant body of policy and supporting practice has emerged around supporting women to participate in peace negotiations and highlighting the benefits for peace of such participation. More recently there has been a closer focus on mediation as the specific vehicle through which to increase women’s participation.

Representing Women in Peace Mediation

The question of gender in mediation begins with the underrepresentation of women in peace processes. Research from **UN Women** has demonstrated the persistently low numbers of women who participate in peace processes in any capacity. In 2012 a UN Women study reported that

between 1992 and 2011, across 31 major peace processes, women had comprised only 2% of chief mediators, 4% of witnesses and signatories, and 9% of negotiators (UN Women, 2012). These figures catalyzed action on increasing the representation of women in mediation. Not only were women physically absent from peace talks, but their interests were not represented as a result (UN Women, 2012).

From the outset the participation resolutions have recognized the dual strategy of women’s participation in peace processes on one hand, and recognizing the unique ways in which women are impacted by conflict and different perspectives they bring to mediation as a result on the other. These dual aspects emerge and develop through the resolutions and are supplemented by policy approaches to participation. Work on women’s participation is therefore structured around two separate but linked forms of representation – **descriptive representation** and **substantive representation**. Attention has also turned more recently to how women’s participation can be made meaningful.

Descriptive Representation

As a starting point, women’s descriptive representation reflects the fact that as a principle of equality, women have a right to full and equal participation. It is also important symbolically to have women visible in decision-making roles in mediation processes. There are a number of ways in which women’s descriptive representation can be promoted in peace processes. These focus primarily on creating mechanisms to give women direct access to high-level track 1 processes.

A difficulty that arises from looking at women’s participation in peace processes through the lens of descriptive representation is that there is no guarantee that the women who participate in talks will represent the rights or interests of women. Direct participation is not the same as equality of influence with regard to women’s rights and gender equality outcomes. Therefore, what is important is not just counting women, but making women count (Paffenholz et al., 2016). This raises the question of “who” participates in mediation, and whether they are able or willing to

Gender and Mediation, Table 1 Women's participation in mediation in the WPS Resolutions

| Resolution | Provisions on participation |
|-------------|---|
| 1325 (2000) | Reaffirming the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding Stressing the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, <i>Urges</i> member states to ensure increased representation of women [in the] prevention, management, and resolution of conflict; and <i>Encourages</i> the secretary-general to implement his strategic plan of action (A/49/587) calling for an increase in the participation of women at decision-making levels in conflict resolution and peace processes |
| 1820 (2008) | <i>Reaffirming</i> the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding, and <i>Stressing</i> the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security <i>Deeply concerned</i> also about the persistent obstacles and challenges to women's participation and full involvement in the prevention and resolution of conflicts as a result of violence, intimidation, and discrimination, which erode women's capacity and legitimacy to participate in post-conflict public life, and acknowledging the negative impact this has on durable peace, security, and reconciliation, including post-conflict peacebuilding |
| 1889 (2009) | <i>Reiterating</i> the need for the full, equal, and effective participation of women at all stages of peace processes <i>Expressing</i> deep concern about the underrepresentation of women at all stages of peace processes, particularly the very low numbers of women in formal roles in mediation processes <i>Urges</i> member states, international and regional organizations to take further measures to improve women's participation during all stages of peace processes, particularly in conflict resolution |
| 2122 (2013) | Intends to focus more attention on women's leadership and participation in conflict resolution <i>Requests</i> the secretary-general and his special envoys and special representatives to United Nations missions, as part of their regular briefings, to update the council on progress in inviting women to participate, including through consultations with civil society, including women's organizations, in discussions pertinent to the prevention and resolution of conflict <i>Recognizes</i> the continuing need to increase women's participation and the consideration of gender-related issues in all discussions pertinent to the prevention and resolution of armed conflict <i>Requests</i> the secretary-general to support the appointments of women at senior levels as United Nations mediators and within the composition of United Nations mediation teams; and <i>Calls on</i> all parties to such peace talks to facilitate the equal and full participation of women at decision-making levels |
| 2242 (2015) | <i>Encourages</i> those supporting peace processes to facilitate women's meaningful inclusion in negotiating parties' delegations to peace talks, <i>Calls upon</i> donor countries to provide financial and technical assistance to women involved in peace processes, including training in mediation, advocacy, and technical areas of negotiation, as well as providing support and training to mediators and technical teams on the impact of women's participation and strategies for women's effective inclusion |
| 2493 (2019) | <i>Urges</i> member states supporting peace processes to facilitate women's full, equal, and meaningful inclusion and participation in peace talks from the outset, both in negotiating parties' delegations and in the mechanisms set up to implement and monitor agreements |

bring about transformative change through that participation (Ellerby, 2016; Shepherd, 2011).

Substantive Representation

Women's substantive equality requires that matters that particularly concern women's equality and rights should be included on the agenda of

peace negotiations. The connection between presence and influence has been significant in shaping the direction of the research agenda on gender and mediation. The emphasis on women's participation arises from the perceived connections between women's participation, their influence on the mediation agenda, and the resulting gender

sensitivity of the outcome. The connection is explicitly made in the WPS Resolutions. UNSCR 1889 recognizes “that an understanding of the impact of situations of armed conflict on women and girls, . . . adequate and rapid response to their particular needs, and effective institutional arrangements to guarantee their protection and full participation in the peace process, . . . can significantly contribute to the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security.”

This requirement of taking women’s needs, rights, and equality into account in mediation process design has been present in the text of the Security Council Resolutions from the outset. UNSCR 1325 calls on all actors involved, when negotiating and implementing peace agreements, to adopt a gender perspective, including measures that ensure the protection of and respect for human rights of women and girls. This reflects a substantive engagement with the rights and interests of women and girls as defined normatively in the WPS Resolutions (Bell & O’Rourke, 2010) (see also ► [Women, Peace and Security Agenda](#)).

Initially this connection was drawn between the presence of women at the negotiating table and their influence on the agenda and outcomes of peace negotiations (UN Women, 2012), which led to greater attention being paid to the ways in which women were or were not able to influence the agenda of mediation. This is referred to as “meaningful” participation.

“Full, Equal and Meaningful Participation”

Addressing the connection between women’s presence and their influence on the agenda of mediation, UNSCR 2493 (2019b) *encourages* Member States to support efforts, including timely support to women to enhance their participation and capacity building in peace processes, in order to address the unequal representation and participation of women in the peace and security agenda. This provision reflects and underpins systemic efforts on the part of agencies such as UN Women, as well as international civil society organizations, to provide technical assistance to enable women’s participation and overcome systemic barriers such as education or resources that

prevent women from participating. Meaningful participation in this sense refers to the extent to which women who do participate in mediation processes are able to effectively influence either the agenda or the outcome.

Participation and the Durability of Agreements

Another central theme of research and policy is the connection between women’s participation in peace talks and the durability and inclusivity of the resulting peace agreement. A statistical analysis of 181 peace agreement demonstrated that peace processes that included women had a 20% greater chance of the agreement lasting for 2 years, and a 35% increased chance of it lasting for 15 years (Stone, cited in O’Reilly et al., 2015). Studies have also shown that when women participate in mediation the outcome is likely to be more gender sensitive (Kraus et al. 2018). The reasons cited for this are that women are deemed to be more likely to build consensus, and were also more likely to push for a deal to be reached (UN Women, 2015).

Gender sensitivity in this regard is measured in terms of the references made to women or gender in the text of an agreement (UN Women, 2015; Bell & O’Rourke, 2010). There were also higher levels of implementation when women participated (see also ► [Peace Agreements](#)).

UNSCR 2242 notes “the substantial link between women’s meaningful involvement in efforts to prevent, resolve and rebuild from conflict and those efforts’ effectiveness and long-term sustainability.” As a result, advocacy for women’s inclusion has been shaped by functionalist arguments for including women that draw on assumptions that women will act as peacemakers (Anderlini, 2007).

Gender Advisors in Mediation Teams

In addition to the connection being made between women’s participation and the gender sensitivity of peace agreements, the question of gender

sensitivity in peace mediation has begun to be detached from women's participation. Mirroring a more general trend toward professionalization in the peace mediation field (Convergne, 2016), and an increasing influence of norms in shaping mediation processes (Helmuller et al., 2020), gender-sensitive mediation has emerged as a technical approach which can be implemented by men or women through the provision of gender advice to mediators and their teams. This breaks the inherent connection between women and gender when it comes to peace mediation. It also reveals a move away from the language of "participation" toward that of "inclusion," and inclusive strategies, which applies to civil society more broadly (Hirblinger & Landau, 2020) (see ► [Mediation](#)).

UNSCR 2122 requests the secretary-general to "strengthen the knowledge of negotiating delegations to peace talks, and members of mediation support teams, on the gender dimensions of peacebuilding, by making gender expertise and gender experts available to all United Nations mediation teams." This request is actioned through the UN Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) which makes gender expertise available through its Standby Team of Mediation Experts and a roster of senior technical experts who are available to give advice as needed. In 2013 gender expertise was provided by the UN to 88% of processes, a figure which fell to 67% in 2014 (UN Women, 2015).

In 2017 the UN DPPA published a guidance note on gender inclusive mediation strategies which set out the core strands of this approach. The guidance seeks to enhance gender-sensitive mediation practice, and to create more consultative mediation processes, both through the meaningful participation of women and effective gender-sensitive process design and outcomes (United Nations, 2017c). While incorporating women's participation into inclusive strategies, the guidance adopts a broader definition of gender to underpin its aims. Gender, for the purposes of inclusive mediation, is defined as "the social attributes, challenges and opportunities as well as relationships associated with being male or female" (United Nations, 2017c, 7). Of particular

note is the way that gender has become a cross-cutting theme, and a lens which should be applied to all the variety of substantive issues that may be on the negotiating agenda in a mediation – including, for example, security arrangements or constitutional reform (United Nations, 2017c). This builds on an earlier guidance for mediators addressing conflict-related sexual violence in peace negotiations and agreements which reinforces the need to incorporate gendered security concerns into mediation processes (United Nations, 2012).

One notable feature of the guidance on gender inclusive mediation is that it seeks to connect both process and substance-focused aspects of mediation. Gender inclusive mediation addresses the need for broad consultation and engagement in process design, as well as the need for gender-sensitive **conflict analysis** to inform those processes of engagement. This represents a step forward in terms of recognizing the need to create pathways for women to influence the mediation agenda before talks are convened, and responds clearly to previous barriers that women had experienced in accessing political talks (Turner, 2018; O'Reilly et al., 2015). Introducing requirements for consultation and engagement also help to connect the different "tracks" of mediation and recognizes the considerable role played by **civil society** in the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict.

Reflecting the diversity of actors in the peace mediation field, as well as the important role played by nongovernmental organizations in supporting participation in mediation, **practitioner "toolkits"** for gender-sensitive conflict analysis and mediation have also been produced by NGOs working in the peace mediation field at the grassroots level (Mason et al., 2015; Conciliation Resources, 2015). These toolkits are made freely available to assist practitioners in integrating a gender analysis into their work.

While the modalities outlined above (Table 2) are aimed at creating formal mechanisms for women's participation, more recent strategies have focused on the need to create pathways for civil society, including women's groups, to influence mediation.

Gender and Mediation, Table 2 Modalities for women’s participation

| Form of participation | Examples |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Negotiator | As a member of a negotiating delegation: on behalf of a government on behalf of an official opposition party on behalf of an armed group |
| Civil society consultee | Appointed to a dedicated mechanism created to advise the mediator: gender technical commission Women’s Advisory Boards consultations with civil society groups without formal roles in the process |
| Mediator | Appointed to the mediation team: envoy/Lead mediator/co-mediator mediation advisor mediation expert |

Connecting the Local and the Global

One reason that has been suggested for the increased durability of peace agreements that have been negotiated in a process that includes women is the collaboration between female delegates for official talks and civil society organizations (Kraus et al., 2018; O’Reilly & O’Súilleabháin, 2013). This collaboration leads to more gender-sensitive content, and higher implementation rates. This reasoning is also adopted by UN Women in its 2015 Global Study, which cites that peace agreements are 64% less likely to fail when civil society representatives participate (UN Women, 2015, 42).

A central theme of recent research has been the need to connect the different “tracks” of peace mediation. This reflects that while there is some work done on gender in mediation as an aspect of diplomacy (Aggestam & Svensson, 2018), advocacy for women’s participation, and for gender sensitivity, has been primarily driven by civil society. This in turn reflects the relatively small numbers of women involved in track 1 mediation, and the overrepresentation of women in track 3 mediation. Most of the mechanisms that have been created to date have focused on increasing the number of women participating in track 1 processes. And yet the majority of the work that

women do is at the grassroots level through civil society organizations. As a result, more recent research on women in mediation has focused on the need to make visible the work that women mediators and peacebuilders are doing at the grassroots (or track 3) level, and also to create pathways to connect that work into the political mediation processes at tracks 2 and 3 (Bell & Turner, 2020; Turner, 2018; O’Reilly et al., 2015).

The need for these connections has also been set out in the resolutions. UNSCR 2122 (2013b) takes “note of the critical contributions of civil society, including women’s organizations to conflict prevention, resolution and peacebuilding and in this regard the importance of sustained consultation and dialogue between women and national and international decision makers. . .”.

One of the most significant new developments has been the creation of a number of regional **networks of women mediators**. These networks have been created as foreign policy tools aimed at increasing the representation of women in high-level mediation. Networks have been created for the Nordic region, the Mediterranean, the Commonwealth, Africa, and the Arab region. Since 2018 the networks have worked together to form a Global Alliance of Regional Women Mediator’s Networks, which was also created to coordinate activities and advocacy.

The networks have an explicit goal of addressing the underrepresentation of women in mediation, focusing on the potential of women mediators to amplify the voices of women peacebuilders across the spectrum of WPS, and to address the relative invisibility of women’s peace work at the institutional level (Fellin & Turner, 2021, 295). To do this, their work focuses on three priorities: (1) increasing the visibility of women mediators; (2) the development of skills and capacity of women participating in mediation in any role; and (3) using the tool of the network to make more effective connections between global actors and local initiatives. These networks aim not only to increase the representation of women in high-level international processes, but to increase the visibility of all women’s voices in mediation.

For example, research conducted with members of the Women Mediators Across the Commonwealth network has demonstrated the contribution that the work of women mediators and peacebuilders makes to conflict prevention and sustainable peace locally, nationally, and regionally (Conciliation Resources, 2020). This research has also begun to examine the specific skills and approaches women bring to mediation and how these contribute to the effectiveness of mediation efforts (Conciliation Resources, 2020; Turner, 2020) (see ► [Women and Peace Negotiations in Cyprus](#)).

What has emerged from this research is the need to think beyond simply adding women to high-level political processes where they have little chance of shaping the agenda, toward creating different pathways into mediation processes that allow women and civil society to engage with the mediation process at different times and on different subjects as necessary (Bell & Turner, 2020). This would help to shift the focus away from the “peace table” as the primary site where mediation occurs and to recognize the multiple and varied ways in which mediation is practiced beyond the political.

Mediation and Gender

While there has been extensive feminist engagement with the need to increase the representation of women and the gender sensitivity of mediation, research in the field of mediation demonstrates a less positive engagement. Inclusive mediation is now generally accepted as an overarching norm of mediation, yet UN Women reported in 2015 that requests for specialist gender advice and expertise were significantly lower than for other areas of technical expertise (UN Women, 2015). Where WPS work has focused on the need to adhere to substantive norms related to the substance of peace talks and agreements, mediation research has tended to look more closely at process-related norms and how they shape the activity of the mediator (Helmüller et al. 2015). For mediators, gender exists as a “non-core” norm of mediation – one to be addressed once other “core” norms, such

as the consent of the parties to mediate, have been established (Palmiano Federer, 2016) (see also ► [Mediation](#)).

Further, unless lead mediators are expressly mandated by the Security Council to include women in the process, the decision to invite women to participate, or to request gender expertise, rests with the individual mediator (Turner, 2018). This leaves gender vulnerable to marginalization when the mediator and their team engage in analysis and process design. The mediator must weigh up the value of including women in the process with the risk that other participants will withdraw their consent. One way in which this tension has been addressed in the Syrian process is through the creation of a technical Women’s Advisory Board by the Office of the United Nations Envoy. This body was created to advise the Envoy on gender aspects of the process without being fully included in the talks (Bell & Turner, 2020). The UN Guidance on Inclusive Mediation Strategies encourages mediators and their teams to engage in gender-sensitive conflict analysis and consultation, but as yet there remains some tension over the relative priority of gender in mediation.

New Directions

Research in the field of gender and mediation has developed significantly from its initial focus on women’s participation. Yet there are still some tensions underpinning work in this area.

First is the question of representation. Much of the advocacy on women’s inclusion has been based on the idea that women are inherently more peaceful than men, and as a result more likely to seek consensus and push for agreement. This has led to inclusion being advocated more often on the basis of its utility to peace than on its contribution to equality (Charlesworth, 2008; El Bushra, 2007). This also leads to a dilemma whereby only the “right” women – namely those who will participate on a feminist platform – are sought for participation. It also expects that women can and will work across other political divides in a way that men are not expected to

(Poutanen and Turner 2021). This risks excluding women who do not self-identify in these terms, and raises thorny issues of both representation and mandate for women who do participate. For example, the Syrian Women’s Advisory Board has been criticized for being unrepresentative of Syrian women broadly, and of being “elite” and disconnected from grassroots women’s movements (see Bell and Turner, 2020; Kapur, 2016).

Similarly, it is not always clear that civil society mechanisms that sit outside the main structure of peace talks can make a meaningful impact. A more nuanced approach is needed to challenge the tendency to essentialize women and to ensure that a diverse range of women are included in talks. It is also suggested that the narrow and technical frame of inclusion serves to depoliticize women’s activism (Turner, 2020) and the reasons for political mobilization (Tarnaala, 2021). Further research is required to more fully connect the multifaced ways in which women mobilize politically with the realities of technical mediation process design in which they are reduced to a homogenous social group who are invited to contribute on a limited range of issues.

A second strand of emerging research is the connections between women’s participation in mediation, and peacebuilding more generally, and their protection. UNSCR 2467 (2019a) recognizes that “women’s protection and participation are inextricably linked and mutually-reinforcing...” Recent research from the International Civil Society Network (ICAN) has demonstrated the very real security risks faced by women who engage in the field of peace and security (Holmes, 2020). More needs to be done to connect the WPS pillars of participation and protection, to recognize cost of participation and the need to challenge exclusionary norms and structures that expose women to very real risks when they challenge the status quo through their participation in mediation and post-conflict implementation of agreements (Holmes, 2020; Turner and Swaine, 2021).

Finally, the limitations and challenges faced in increasing the representation of women, and the

gender sensitivity of mediation, are all linked by the idea that by using “inclusion” as a technical approach, women are being asked to participate in processes that are not structured to allow them to make a difference. The emphasis on “meaningful” participation acknowledges this tension, but until there is more fundamental transformation in the model of mediation and the way in which it contributes to the restoration of peace existing structures of inequality will continue to limit the possibilities of mediation as a vehicle for advancing gender equality (Sapiano, 2021) (see also ► [Feminist Peace Research](#)).

Summary

Women’s inclusion in peace mediation has been a central concern of peace process research for the past two decades. During this time a normative architecture has developed that speaks to the need not only to include women in peace processes and **conflict resolution** more generally, but also to ensure that peace agreements are gender sensitive. This entry traces the development of both **norms** and strategies for the inclusion of women and gender in peace mediation at the global level. It demonstrates the ways in which connections are made between the representation of women in peace negotiations and the substantive goal of gender sensitivity. It engages with core debates about the role of women and gender in peace mediation and the ways in which advocacy is framed to support women’s **inclusion**. Finally, it considers the relationship between scholarship and activism in the field of WPS, and that in the separate field of mediation, outlining a gap in the way in which the role of gender is understood.

Cross-References

- [Feminist Peace Research](#)
- [Gender Justice and Peacebuilding](#)
- [Mediation](#)
- [Peace Agreements](#)

- ▶ Women and Peace Negotiations in Cyprus
- ▶ Women, Peace and Security Agenda

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Gender and Peacebuilding in Cyprus

- ▶ [Women and Peace Negotiations in Cyprus](#)

Gender Equality

- ▶ [Peace and Feminist Foreign Policy](#)

Gender in the Negotiations in Cyprus

- ▶ [Women and Peace Negotiations in Cyprus](#)

Gender Justice

- ▶ [Peace and Feminist Foreign Policy](#)

Gender Justice and Peacebuilding

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Synonyms

[Gender-just peace](#); [Conflict](#); [Feminist peace research](#); [Gender](#); [Sexual and gender-based violence](#); [Violence](#); [UNSCR 1325](#); [Women's participation in transitional justice](#)

Definition

Gender justice in peacebuilding contexts can be defined as efforts to recognize, and provide redress for, the gendered harms of war. In post-war contexts, transitional justice mechanisms are often used to address complex legacies of mass violence and widespread human rights abuses. In recent decades, feminist researchers and activists have highlighted the importance of integrating gender justice into peace and justice initiatives. This entry focuses on two key approaches to achieving gender justice in peacebuilding settings. The first, legal justice, is a top-down, formal approach to gender justice. It involves states and/or international organizations establishing courts and tribunals where perpetrators are held accountable under international criminal law. The second, Women's Courts and Tribunals, represents a bottom-up, informal approach to gender justice. It involves grassroots actors creating informal truth-telling mechanisms, which may better respond to the needs of survivors and the communities in which they live.

Introduction

The question of how to achieve gender justice in peacebuilding contexts has occupied the minds of policymakers, practitioners, and researchers alike in recent years. Since the 1990s, reports of sexual

and gender-based violence (SGBV) experienced by civilians in situations of armed conflict have attracted increased attention. The widespread use of rape, sexual slavery, enforced pregnancy, and other forms of SGBV during periods of war and dictatorship has been documented by international media and human rights organizations. Sharper awareness of the gendered logic and impact of violent conflict has led to calls to transform transitional justice mechanisms – including criminal trials, truth-telling initiatives, reparation programs, institutional reform – that are used to help societies recover from war and authoritarian rule. A key challenge is to ensure that transitional mechanisms recognize and respond to gender-based harms, and also confront the (hetero-)sexism underpinning SGBV.

Early transitional justice initiatives were criticized for being “gender-blind” (Valji 2007: 8) – since many failed to incorporate gender and the situated experiences of women, girls, and non-binary people into the design and implementation of these accountability mechanisms. UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and subsequent resolutions on “Women, Peace, and Security” provide an important impetus to integrate gender justice into peacebuilding. These resolutions emphasize the importance of preventing and prosecuting crimes of SGBV in situations of armed conflict. They stress the need to ensure that survivors can access justice and redress. Crucially, they emphasize the importance of recognizing women as agents of post-war justice and peacebuilding processes.

Transitional justice mechanisms have the potential to acknowledge the gendered harms of war. By advancing criminal accountability for SGBV, uncovering the truth about human rights violations, and awarding symbolic and/or material reparations, for example, these mechanisms can extend important measures of justice and redress to victims and survivors. Acknowledging victims of SGBV, challenging socioeconomic injustice and providing a platform for survivors to voice their experiences and concerns are all important steps to prompt positive transformation following violent conflict. Some progress in tackling SGBV in conflict has been made in recent years. Yet, key

obstacles to achieving gender justice remain, resulting in all-too-frequent failure to hold perpetrators accountable and to provide victims with adequate redress.

Definition

Gender justice in peacebuilding contexts can be defined as efforts to recognize, and provide redress for, the gendered harms of war. In post-war contexts, a variety of transitional justice mechanisms – including criminal trials, truth-telling initiatives, reparation programs, institutional reform – are used to address complex legacies of mass violence and widespread human rights abuses. These mechanisms have often failed to provide justice to victims of gender-based violations.

Feminist research and activism have stressed the importance of integrating gender justice into peacebuilding. Building a just and durable peace requires identifying and addressing the gendered harms of war. It also entails designing and implementing justice processes and institutions that succeed in challenging rather than reinforcing gendered hierarchies of power (Valji 2007; Campbell 2007). Without addressing unequal power relationships, confronting (hetero)sexist attitudes and behaviors, and dismantling oppressive power structures and institutions, the shift from war to peace is unlikely to be long-lasting.

Acts of sexual violence – including rape, sexual enslavement, enforced pregnancy, forced marriage, forced prostitution, and other forms of sexual assault – are examples of the gendered and sexualized forms of harm experienced by people of different genders during armed conflict. Sexual violence can be defined as “acts of violence that are enacted, intended, or experienced as ‘sexual’, either because they involve sexual or reproductive organs or otherwise relate to the victim or perpetrator as sexual agents” (Buss 2014: 8). These acts may be experienced by women and men, girls and boys, and people from sexual and gender minorities, who are living in conflict settings.

Rape is not an inevitable part of war (Wood 2009). However, the coercive circumstances of violent conflict can provide the enabling conditions for sexual violence to emerge (Campbell 2018: 481). Different forms, functions, and patterns of sexual violence in conflict have been observed by researchers and peace-workers. Some acts of sexual violence may be strategic and form part of an “orchestrated policy to achieve military and political ends” – such as the destruction of a protected group (genocide) or an attack against a civilian population (Buss 2014: 10). Other acts may be opportunistic, perpetrated without an instrumental goal.

Crucially, sexual violence in conflict is strongly connected to pre-war inequalities, with particular groups in society targeted along lines of gender, as well as race, class, sexuality, nationality, etc. (Boesten & Wilding 2015). Addressing the underlying causes or enabling conditions of sexual violence in conflict requires connecting such acts to preexisting structures of inequality, including gendered patterns of violence, domination, and oppression that span both wartime and peacetime (Buss 2014: 7). Achieving gender justice in peacebuilding contexts therefore involves not only ensuring that transitional justice mechanisms respond to individual survivors’ interests, needs, and rights to redress, it also requires tackling asymmetrical relationships, transforming unequal social structures and institutions, and challenging cultures of domination that promote and/or maintain gender inequality before, during, and after conflict.

Theorizing Gender Justice

Justice as Recognition, Redistribution, and Representation

Nancy Fraser’s model of justice as recognition, redistribution, and representation provides a useful framework for understanding and evaluating gender justice initiatives in peacebuilding contexts. This framework can be used to identify the gendered forms of exclusion and inequality that are so often constructed and maintained in the transition from war to peace (O’Reilly 2018).

Fraser (2008: 16) defines justice as “parity of participation,” whereby social relations and institutions enable everyone to “participate as peers.” Participatory parity requires distributing resources equitably in society, and promoting modes of representation which grant recognition, foster respect and social esteem.

Fraser (1997, 2005) highlights three institutionalized forms of injustice that require redress:

- Cultural/symbolic injustice, which is rooted in negative forms of representation, non-recognition, and disrespect of certain individuals and social groups
- Socioeconomic injustice, which refers to economic exploitation, marginalization, and discrimination that act as barriers to full participation in society
- Participatory injustice, meaning the marginalization and exclusion of disadvantaged individuals and social groups from political institutions and decision-making processes

Tackling gender injustice requires social arrangements which foster respect and value the contributions and activities of all groups in society. This means challenging androcentrism, heterosexism, racism, and other discriminatory norms, values, and practices so that members of all social groups can participate as equals in social life. Confronting gender injustice also involves tackling the root causes of poverty and income inequality, to ensure that human needs are satisfied and to prevent women and other marginalized groups from experiencing exploitation. Challenging gender injustice also requires creating structures and institutions that enable women to participate fully and equally in political life.

Gender Justice in Peacebuilding Contexts

Extending Fraser’s model to peacebuilding contexts, there is evidence that all three forms of gender injustice are frequently present (O’Reilly 2018). For example, female combatants often experience stigma and discrimination after wars end, after having challenged conventional norms surrounding “acceptable” womanhood

(Shekhawat 2015: 17). This is a common example of cultural/symbolic injustice.

Wars also produce socioeconomic injustice. Armed conflict leads to material destruction – of property, infrastructure – and creates economic recession and poverty in the post-war period (Đurić Kuzmanović and Pajvančić-Cizelj 2020). The economic impacts of war are not gender-neutral, with both women and survivors of SGBV more likely to experience poverty, job insecurity, and economic exploitation (Kuzmanović & Pajvančić-Cizelj 2020).

As regards participatory injustice, women living in conflict-affected settings continue to be drastically underrepresented in formal peace negotiations (Bell 2018). At these negotiations, crucial decisions are often made concerning the establishment of post-war justice mechanisms (Ní Aoláin and Turner 2007). This exclusion reduces the likelihood that the gendered impact of conflict is discussed and addressed.

Affirmative Versus Transformative Remedies

Fraser outlines two contrasting approaches to remedying injustice: affirmation and transformation (1997). Affirmative remedies strive to fix unjust outcomes without changing the social arrangements that generated inequity in the first place. One example, of affirmative recognition, is the criminal prosecution of SGBV in conflict. Prosecuting SGBV extends recognition that SGBV is as serious and as violent as other crimes (Chappell 2015). This remedy is significant since it challenges the historical silencing of survivors' experiences. By making visible sexual violence and other harms that women disproportionately endure, prosecutions also offer acknowledgement of "women as equal and worthy members of . . . 'humanity'" (Buss 2014: 11).

Transformative remedies, in contrast, aim to correct unjust outcomes by transforming the underlying structural inequalities that enable SGBV to emerge. One example, of transformative redistribution, is the decision to award forms of reparations that challenge, rather than reaffirm, the root causes of violence and discrimination. By destabilizing the gendered economic structures and divisions of labor, reparations can be

used to transform the structural position of survivors rather than merely returning them back to a prewar position of economic marginalization and discrimination (Manjoo 2017).

Gender Justice from Above: Legal Justice

There is a long history of SGBV being perpetrated in armed conflict. Notorious examples from the twentieth century include the sexual enslavement of Korean "comfort women" by Japanese military during World War II (Kimura 2016); the targeting of civilians, including the rape of women and girls, during the 1990s wars in Yugoslavia (Campbell 2007); and the use of sexual violence during the Rwandan genocide (Mibenge 2013).

Rape was for centuries prohibited by international humanitarian law and by military codes regulating armed conflict (Meron 1993). Yet, historically, very few perpetrators were brought to justice. Wartime rape and sexual violence were often wrongly characterized as involving damage to women's "honor" rather than recognized as violent crimes (Jarvis 2016: 11). Consequently, perpetrators of sexual violence in war enjoyed widespread impunity.

Early prosecutions under international criminal law (ICL) failed to recognize SGBV as international crimes. Sexual violence crimes were largely overlooked by the 1945 International Military Tribunal (Nuremberg Tribunal) and 1946 International Military Tribunal for the Far East (Tokyo Tribunal, or IMTFE), which were created following World War II (De Brouwer 2005: 5–9). The Charters of both Tribunals, which outlined the crimes falling within the Tribunals' jurisdiction, failed to expressly reference sexual and gender-based crimes (Askin 2003: 301). Sexual violence was not explicitly prosecuted at Nuremberg, and the Tokyo Tribunal prosecuted rape in a limited fashion and under general war crimes categories (Askin 2003: 301).

Prosecuting Crimes of SGBV

Since the 1990s, however, ICL has been applied progressively to challenge impunity for these crimes. The UN Security Council established the

International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in 1993 and International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) in 1994. These tribunals were charged with bringing prosecutions for war crimes, for genocide, and for crimes against humanity (Haddad 2011). Prosecutions under ICL have also taken place at other ad hoc tribunals (including tribunals for Cambodia, Sierra Leone, and Timor Leste), at domestic courts, and at the permanent International Criminal Court (ICC) (Londras 2010: 290).

The Rwandan and Yugoslav tribunals took important steps to establish accountability for crimes of sexual violence. These tribunals set out legal definitions for sexual violence offences and demonstrated that rape and other forms of sexual violence were prosecutable under charges of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide (Campbell 2016: 227). The 1998 Rome Statute (which created the ICC) built on ICTY and ICTR jurisprudence by recognizing a wide range of sexual and gender-based crimes. The Rome Statute explicitly recognized that rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilization, and “any other form of sexual violence” can be committed as a war crime or as a crime against humanity (Chappell 2014: 186). And, for the first time, persecution on the grounds of gender was recognized as a crime against humanity (Chappell 2014: 186). These advances challenge the androcentrism of ICL and its historical failure to recognize gender-based harms (Chappell 2015).

International courts and tribunals have introduced a range of policies and strategies to advance the prosecution of SGBV. The Rwandan and Yugoslav Tribunals, and the ICC, all put in place witness protection and support measures, to encourage sexual violence victims to participate as witnesses in court proceedings. These measures include the use of pseudonyms and closed sessions. They also include prohibitions on the admissibility of evidence relating to the prior sexual conduct of a victim, and the use of consent as a defense (De Brouwer 2005: 231–282). Victims and Witnesses Sections were also established to provide counseling and support to victims and witnesses, and training to Tribunal/Court staff

(De Brouwer 2005: 277–278). These measures were introduced to safeguard witnesses’ rights to privacy and dignity, to safety, and to physical and psychological well-being (De Brouwer 2005: 231–282).

Steps have been taken to address the historical under-representation of female lawyers, and to embed “gender competence” within the Court and Tribunals (Chappell 2015; Jarvis and Nabti 2016: 79). The Rome Statute, for example, states that “a fair representation of female and male judges” should be considered when appointing judges to the bench (ICC Statute cited in Chappell 2015: 63). Gender advisors and other dedicated mechanisms have also been used to focus attention on sexual violence crimes. At both the ICTY and ICTR, for example, specialized teams were created to investigate sexual assaults. A Legal Advisor for Gender-related Crimes was also appointed to the Office of the Prosecutor at both tribunals, to help advance the investigation and prosecution of sexual violence offences (Haddad 2011: 114–116; Jarvis and Nabti 2016: 74–76).

Limitations of Criminal Justice Mechanisms

Progress has been made in challenging the traditional gender bias of international law. Yet, there remain significant barriers to prosecuting SGBV. Jarvis and Vigneswaran (2016) highlight as key concerns misconceptions regarding the nature of sexual violence (such as the belief that victims are reluctant to testify) and the impact of prosecutorial discretion on which crimes should take priority. The authors also identify key hurdles, or “pressure points,” at each phase of legal proceedings. For example, sexual assault allegations may not be adequately investigated, and charges for sexual violence may fail to be included in indictments or may be dropped at the pre-trial phase (Jarvis and Vigneswaran 2016: 54–66). The attrition of sexual violence cases from the criminal justice system remains a significant concern.

Other scholars identify a need to further develop ICL, so that it more accurately reflects the gender harms of war (Campbell 2016; Jarvis 2016). They point out that prosecutions are hampered by the fact that crimes of SGBV are not

standalone offences under ICL and are instead prosecuted as war crimes, crimes against humanity, or as genocide. Consequently, prosecutors must place these acts within the context of conflict, and outline the connections to other acts of violence, so that SGBV can be appropriately charged (Jarvis 2016: 5–8). Another problem is that some forms of SGBV achieve “heightened visibility” while other “types of harms and categories of victims are rendered invisible or unseeable” through the process of legal categorization (Buss 2009: 154–155). At the ICTR, for example, sexual violence perpetrated against Hutu women and Tutsi men tended not to be prosecuted, since these acts did not form part of a genocidal strategy (Buss 2009; Mibenge 2013). One solution to the under-development of ICL, proposed by Campbell (2016), is to introduce a convention on the prohibition, prevention, and punishment of sexual and gender-based crimes. This convention would set out these offences and “incorporate a full range of implementation, enforcement, and referral policies and mechanisms” (Campbell 2016: 229).

The suitability of legal remedies in providing justice to survivors of SGBV is also debated. Key challenges facing victim-witnesses include trauma, fatigue, community silence, and inadequate witness support mechanisms (Jarvis and Vigneswaran 2016). The adversarial structure of legal proceedings can mean that testifying in the courtroom, particularly under cross-examination, is a disempowering experience (Kelsall & Stepakoff 2007; Mertus 2004). Despite the constraints of the legal process, it is important to recognize that witnesses have found space to articulate agency and resistance (Grewal 2017). Nevertheless, the subversive potential of criminal justice is constrained by the tendency of international legal norms and practices to reinforce (rather than undermine) hierarchical gender norms (Campbell 2007).

To promote agency and recovery, Mertus (2004: 124) advocates the use of bottom-up justice mechanisms, such as people’s tribunals, grassroots truth commissions, and memory projects, as complementary to criminal trials. These methods, she points out, focus on addressing

victims’ needs, rather than punishing perpetrators. These mechanisms can “help create a narrative that fully includes survivors’ experiences and empowers them in the process,” thereby honoring their agency and strength in recovering and rebuilding their lives (Mertus 2004: 124).

Gender Justice from Below: Women’s Courts and Tribunals

The shortcomings of legal justice have prompted feminists and women’s organizations to pioneer the development of informal truth-telling mechanisms. In the last two decades, civil society groups have organized dozens of Women’s Courts and Tribunals across the world. These are specifically designed to acknowledge women’s experiences of violence and injustice and to call for formal recognition of gender-based harms. Women’s Courts and Tribunals follow a tradition of “popular justice” in which individuals and groups from civil society deliver justice using informal mechanisms (O’Reilly 2016: 428). Popular justice promotes notions of “popular sovereignty, direct governance and control by the people” (Merry & Milner 1995: 4). They involve civil society actors, rather than states or international organizations, taking responsibility for organizing proceedings.

History of Women’s Courts and Tribunals

Women’s Courts and Tribunals are part of “a global movement that seeks to relook at rights and other notions of justice from *the lives and life visions of women* – particularly from the global South” (El Taller, cited in Duhacek 2015: 160). The concept and model for the Women’s Court emerged in the Asia Pacific region, from the work of the Asian Women’s Human Rights Council (AWHRC) which organized several Courts in the region.

The first Women’s Court was held in Lahore, Pakistan (1992) and focused thematically on violence against women (Kumar 2005: 192). Since then, Women’s Courts have taken place across Asia and have addressed different aspects of gender violence and injustice – including crimes

committed against Dalit women (Bangalore, 1994), human trafficking (Kathmandu, 1995), war crimes against women (Tokyo in 1994), and the violence of development (Bangalore, 1995) (Kovačević et al. 2011: 21–33).

AWHRC's sister organization, El Taller International, brought these courts to Africa, the Middle East, and to Central and South America (Duhacek 2015: 175). The Courts have examined a range of topics including the feminization of poverty (Nairobi, 1999), nuclear issues and land rights (Aotearoa, 1999), and war and peace (Cape Town 2001) (Kumar 2005: 194).

A recent example was the Women's Court for the former Yugoslavia, held in May 2015 in Sarajevo. Thirty-six women from all Yugoslav successor states (Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Slovenia) publicly testified before an audience of around 500 people. The *Women's Court – A Feminist Approach to Justice* is significant, since it offered an alternative, feminist model of justice to women affected by the violent dissolution of the Yugoslav state during the 1990s (Duhacek 2015).

Women's Tribunals are another important form of popular justice. The first Women's Tribunal, the International Tribunal on Crimes Against Women, was organized in Brussels in 1976. It brought together over 2000 women from over 40 countries to raise awareness of violence against women and to demand that states sanction gender crimes (Russell and Van De Ven 1990: 6). Since then, several women's tribunals have been convened across the world. At the Global Tribunal on Women's Human Rights (Vienna, 1993), for example, participants protested the failure of human rights mechanisms to protect women's rights (Bunch & Reilly 1994). Other Tribunals have sought justice for survivors of wartime sexual violence – including the Women's International War Crimes Tribunal on Japan's Military Sexual Slavery (Tokyo, 2000), the Guatemala Tribunal of Conscience for Women Survivors of Sexual Violence during the Armed Conflict (Guatemala City, 2010), and the Women's Tribunal on Sexual Violence on Women During Conflict (Kathmandu, 2014).

Alternative Model of Gender Justice

A similar model of gender justice underpins the work of Women's Courts and Tribunals. First, it is grassroots women's organizations, survivor's organizations, and other actors from civil society who take the lead in organizing proceedings. The Women's Court for the former Yugoslavia, for example, was organized by a coalition of women's groups and nongovernmental organizations from across the region of ex-Yugoslavia (Duhacek 2015).

Second, these alternative mechanisms are established in response to the failure of formal justice mechanisms to secure redress for survivors of SGBV (Duhacek 2015). The Women's Tribunal in Tokyo, for example, was created in response to the failure of the IMTFE to bring charges against those responsible for rape and sexual slavery by the Japanese military during World War II, and in response to the refusal of the Japanese government to accept legal responsibility for these crimes (Chinkin 2001: 335–336).

Third, Women's Courts and Tribunals are designed as women-only hearings. Violence specifically perpetrated against women, particularly rape and sexual violence, is significantly underreported in the proceedings and reports of mainstream justice mechanisms (Goldblatt & Meintjes 1998). The rationale for organizing women-only hearings in Guatemala and other peacebuilding contexts is that supportive spaces are required to enable women to testify to violence against themselves (Crosby and Lykes 2011: 461).

Fourth, since Women's Courts and Tribunals take place in contexts where perpetrators of human rights abuses enjoy widespread impunity, the process of organizing and preparing for each court or tribunal is emphasized as strongly as the hearings themselves (Duhacek 2015: 161). In the lead-up to the Women's Court for former Yugoslavia, for example, women's organizations spent 5 years prior to the event raising awareness of the initiative within their local communities and working with potential witnesses by providing practical and psychological support and preparing them to testify (O'Reilly 2016). This preparatory process is viewed as essential to ensure that a

supportive environment is created where survivors feel safe and empowered to voice their experiences.

Fifth, in contrast to international criminal tribunals (such as the ICTY and ICTR), Women's Courts and Tribunals localize justice by holding proceedings in the countries where human rights abuses took place, rather than organizing these in third countries (Chinkin 2001: 339–340; O'Reilly 2016: 429). This allows each initiative to design the preparatory process and proceedings so that they acknowledge and respond to the situated experiences, interests, and concerns of the context in which they take place (Duhacek 2015). It also provides opportunities to create space for public discussions and debate on the wartime past, using street performances, art exhibitions, and other artistic interventions and alternative commemorative practices (O'Reilly 2016).

Sixth, the structure of proceedings holds some continuity with the structure of legal proceedings. The Women's Tribunal in Tokyo, for example, resembled a mock trial. It featured testimonies of women who survived military sexual slavery and was the first time these experiences were publicly aired. Prosecution teams from ten countries where women were enslaved, plus two lead prosecutors, presented indictments (Chinkin 2001: 336). After oral and documentary evidence was presented by victim-witnesses and by expert witnesses, a panel of international judges deliberated before handing down a preliminary judgment. This judgment indicated that the Tribunal found Emperor Hirohito guilty on the basis of command responsibility, and also indicated that Japan was responsible for crimes of rape and sexual slavery as crimes against humanity (Chinkin 2001: 338).

Reformist Versus Transformative Approaches

There are, however, important differences between, on the one hand, Women's Courts and Tribunals, and, on the other hand, legal proceedings. Unlike criminal trials, the proceedings are not adversarial and these alternative justice institutions do not have the power to sanction perpetrators or award reparations (Duhacek 2015).

Furthermore, while some Women's Courts and Tribunals are "distinctly legal projects" that aim to reform and extend the law, others demonstrate "transformative ambitions beyond the law" (Otto 2017: 228).

The Women's Tribunal in Tokyo took a reformist approach to gender justice. It was designed to extend IMTFE proceedings and drew on international law which was applicable at the time of the events to establish guilt and legal responsibility (Chinkin 2001: 338). In this way, the Tribunal aimed to extend legal justice to women who had been denied justice by the IMTFE and formal justice institutions, and also aimed to contribute to the development of international law (Dolgopol 2003).

By contrast, the Sarajevo Women's Court represents a transformative approach which moved beyond the framework of legal justice (Otto 2017). It offered an explicitly feminist model of justice which promoted greater empathy for, and solidarity with, survivors of SGBV (Zajović 2015), while also providing space for women to take up agential roles as "political subjects" (rather than objects) of justice (O'Reilly 2016: 426). As described by participants of preparatory workshops, the Court aimed to:

- Make visible the continuum of violence experienced by women across war and peace
- Give voice to women's situated experiences and incorporate these into collective memory
- Acknowledge the suffering of victims
- Identify the wider social, economic, cultural, relational, and personal context in which violence against women was enabled
- Construct a new approach to justice that addresses victims' needs
- Empower women and create transnational networks of solidarity
- Prevent future crimes and build a just peace for future generations (Zajović 2015: 26–27)

At the proceedings, witnesses testified to a wide spectrum of harms and to the ongoing impact of war and of post-war liberalization processes. Expert testimonies contextualized witnesses' accounts, highlighting the structural

inequalities and hierarchies of power that provided the enabling conditions for SGBV to materialize (O'Reilly 2016). The preliminary decision issued by the Court's Judicial Council named the crimes that were perpetrated. It also identified as responsible individuals and groups who were part of "systems of criminality, which reinforce and intensify unequal power relations between men and women" (Bunch et al. 2015: 5). The decision called for "truth, justice, reparations, and a commitment that these crimes will never recur" (Bunch et al. 2015: 6). It also foregrounded the courage and agency of survivors in giving testimony and fighting for justice. Overall, the Sarajevo Court extended recognition of women across the former Yugoslavia as victims, as survivors, and (crucially) as agents of change. It also expanded women's participation in justice processes and strengthened calls for redistributive justice in the region (O'Reilly 2016).

Summary

Feminist contributions to the fields of transitional justice and peacebuilding have critically evaluated the extent to which post-war justice mechanisms adequately respond to gendered forms of violence and help to build a gender-just peace. A top-down approach aims to provide gender justice from above. This involves states and/or international organizations establishing courts and tribunals where perpetrators are held accountable under the law. Prosecutions under ICL have been used to challenge impunity. By prosecuting SGBV in conflict, acts of SGBV are recognized as serious crimes worthy of redress. Legal rules and practices of rendering justice have evolved significantly in recent decades. Yet, further steps are required to address gaps in gender justice and to ensure that the law adequately captures gendered experiences of harm. There is an ongoing need to identify and address the various barriers to prosecution and to enable survivors of SGBV to participate in legal proceedings in ways that honors their agency and courage in surviving these crimes.

An alternative approach is to use Women's Courts and Tribunals. This bottom-up approach involves grassroots actors establishing informal truth-telling initiatives. Women's Courts and Tribunals aspire to better respond to the needs of survivors and the communities and societies in which they live. These provide alternative arenas in which survivors of SGBV can testify to the various harms endured – in public and private, in wartime, and in peacetime. They open up space to discuss the continuity of the forms of violence that are experienced across war and peace.

Whichever mechanisms (or combination of mechanisms) are chosen, many feminists point to the need to shift the focus from affirmative to transformative approaches to remedying injustice. Building gender-just peace involves not only acknowledging the gender harms of war, it also involves achieving a more equitable distribution of material resources within a society. Moreover, gender-just peace means enabling survivors of SGBV to participate as agents of post-war justice and peacebuilding processes. Both criminal trials and grassroots truth-telling initiatives can contribute to gender justice in peacebuilding contexts. The challenge is to use these mechanisms to generate positive impacts on the lives of individuals and communities recovering from war. This involves challenging (rather than reinforcing) the underlying gender inequalities that enable gendered forms of violence to be perpetrated.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Feminist Peace Research](#)
- ▶ [Socioeconomic Justice and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Transitional Justice in Croatia](#)
- ▶ [Transitional Justice and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Women, Peace and Security Agenda](#)
- ▶ [Women's Organizations in Post-conflict Contexts](#)

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Gender Mainstreaming

- ▶ [Women, Peace and Security Agenda](#)

Gender-Just Peace

- ▶ [Gender Justice and Peacebuilding](#)

Genocide

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- ▶ [R2P and Prevention](#)

Geocoding as a Method for Mapping Conflict-Related Violence

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Definition/Description

Geocoding refers to the systematic assignment of geographic coordinates (such as longitude and latitude) in order to denote places in the world where something is located or takes place. Geocoding within peace and conflict research usually refers to pinning down the precise locations where violent interactions or other similar events take place, with the purpose of enabling the study of spatial dynamics of violence across time and space. Geocoded violent event datasets usually contain rows of information where each row represents an event and rows contain information such as date, form of event, intensity of violence, and the actors involved, in addition to location coordinates. Such data can then be projected onto a map to study patterns of violence or analyzed using statistical software to assess if and why certain types of events tend to occur close to each other. It can also be connected to other geocoded datasets to assess whether certain physical or social conditions increase or decrease risks of violence locally. The introduction of geocoded event datasets covering multiple states since around 2010 have opened up many new avenues

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of inquiry within peace and conflict research as well as helped answer old questions.

Synonyms

Event data; Location data; Mapping

Introduction

The location of conflict-related violence is fundamental to how it is reacted to or what consequences it has. People in the vicinity of violence tend to flee from it while societies exposed to it often suffer enormous losses – of population, infrastructure, political institutions, economic output, and societal norms. Those at safe distance can in turn resort to increasing aid, accepting refugees, and sending peacekeepers or ignoring the matter, closing borders, and exploiting the situation for economic, geopolitical, or military gains. *Where* violence happens thus has an enormous impact on both its immediate surroundings and the world beyond. This means that *knowing* where violence happens (and where it does not) is key for research exploring why it happens and what events or dynamics fuel it, predicting where and when it will manifest, or developing tools for dealing with or even preventing it.

In line with realizing the importance of location, peace and conflict researchers have begun mapping where violence takes place by geocoding it, which concretely means systematically assigning geographic coordinates (such as longitude and latitude) to denote places in the world where violence is located or manifests. The overall ambition of these endeavors is to enable the study of spatial patterns of violence, which then can be used to understand what dynamics fuel or suppress violence as well as what kind of spaces attract or are spared from it. Analyses of geocoded data add to a broader body of empirical research on armed conflict and political violence, comprising in-depth studies of individual cases – such as states, regions, or other geographic entities – and comparative studies across multiple cases, including statistical analyses covering the whole world.

Geocoded data on violent events has made possible a broad range of empirical analyses that generate new knowledge, both on individual cases and vis-à-vis broader questions. Examples are when an analysis of the Peruvian armed conflict in the 1980s counterintuitively reveals that communities victimized by state forces were more likely to revolt against insurgents at later stages of the conflict (Schubiger 2021) or when a cross-case analysis of geocoded data questions the common assumption that armed conflict has become increasingly urban (Elfvérsson and Höglund 2021).

By enabling the study of spatial patterns of violence dynamics, as well as the links between such patterns and other sociopolitical dynamics at the subnational level, geocoding has facilitated a much more nuanced and in-depth understanding of violence and its causes and effects. It is therefore important for students, scholars, and analysts to understand the opportunities and challenges of geocoding within peace and conflict studies as well as the practical procedure of compiling and working with geocoded violence data. This chapter provides an overview of these matters. It begins by making a theoretical case for geocoding and gives examples of the types of knowledge the availability of geocoded data has enabled. The next section presents a concrete example of the practice of geocoding conflict-related violence, discusses practical challenges involved in geocoding, and provides some examples of how the data can be used. The chapter concludes with a summary and outlook for future research – both research enabled by and research avenues opened through geocoding.

A Theoretical Case for Geocoding

Many of the theoretical questions peace and conflict scholars have engaged with through the discipline's history are fundamentally spatial in nature. Concepts such as war zones and peace zones are in themselves spatial, while questions about conflict dynamics are inherently linked to patterns of fighting and control across space – for instance, territorial sovereignty is often the key

aim of war while securing strategic sites is crucial in winning it (Björkdahl and Buckley-Zistel 2016). Other theoretical questions also require attention to trends, patterns, and dynamics that take place in specific locations. To fully understand why war breaks out, we need to examine the confluence of factors that shape motivations and possibilities for armed struggle among people within a specific local context. Understanding prospects for sustainable peace after war in turn necessitates paying attention to the local experiences of peacebuilding and the way that space conditions interactions and power relations (Crossref: ► [Human Geography and Peacebuilding](#); Crossref: ► [Local Peacebuilding](#); Crossref: ► [Peacebuilding and Spatial Transformation](#)). The actual location of violence is thus key to answering some of the most fundamental problems that have occupied peace and conflict scholars for long, while knowing where violence takes place in more detail also enables asking new questions about the causes, experiences, and consequences of violence.

In line with such considerations, geocoded conflict datasets have begun laying the foundation for major advances in empirical peace research. Geocoded data has been a longtime feature in some fields of research, such as studies of climate change and geophysical features, urbanization, and logistics. Within peace and conflict studies, however, geocoding is a relatively recent phenomenon. A major development has been the introduction of violent events datasets covering large-scale political violence across the world or large parts of it. Examples are the Uppsala Conflict Data Program's Georeferenced Events Dataset (UCDP GED) (Sundberg and Melander 2013), the Armed Conflict Location and Events Dataset (ACLED) (Raleigh et al. 2010), and the Social Conflict in Africa Database (SCAD) (Salehyan et al. 2012). More recent additions include geocoded data on the subnational presence of peacekeeping operations (Cil et al. 2019), sexual violence during armed conflict (Bahgat et al. 2016) and social disorder in major cities in the developing world (Urdal and Hoelscher 2012), as well as microlevel data on violence within specific cities such as Belfast

(Cunningham and Gregory 2014) and Jerusalem (Rokem et al. 2018). Datasets like these have enabled researchers to study quantitatively how localized weather and climate patterns affect the risk that violence breaks out (Fjelde and von Uexkull 2012; Gizelis et al. 2021; Hendrix and Salehyan 2012); how the degree of state presence and power struggles in different parts of a country affect different types of conflict (Elfverson 2015; Raleigh 2014); and how the experience of conflict at the local level affects long-term health and well-being (Bendavid et al. 2021). More generally, the availability of geocoded data has – in combination with in-depth qualitative case studies that have always been a core component of peace and conflict research – improved the theoretical and empirical understanding of how armed conflicts emerge, develop, and end.

Research on peacekeeping is one concrete example of the importance of knowing where conflict and peace take place. Geocoded conflict data has enabled researchers to more closely study theorized links between peacekeeping presence and violence deterrence. The question of whether peacekeeping “works” in preventing a resurgence of warfare has for long been an unresolved debate within the field (Crossref: see ► [Assessment of Peace Operations](#)), partly because many of the theoretical mechanisms posited – such as physically preventing violence or shaming perpetrators through monitoring – play out locally whereas comparative studies have often focused on the state or conflict as the unit of analysis. The result of the data being too aggregated is that researchers have been unable to explore and explain relevant micro dynamics closer to the theorized causal mechanisms. This has recently begun to change as studies using disaggregated geocoded data have been able to make major advances to the theoretical understanding of peacekeeping by showing that the presence of peacekeepers at the local level has a clear effect in terms of shortening episodes of conflict (Ruggeri et al. 2017), bolstering local economies (Bove et al. 2021), and reducing the risk of violence against civilians (Fjelde et al. 2019).

In addition to the ability to carry out statistical analysis of causal hypotheses with better

precision, geocoding as a method in itself is exciting because it gives researchers a unique way to combine quantitative and qualitative research as well as positivist and critical traditions. The field of human geography has spearheaded an extensive methodological debate and a robust research agenda that seeks to incorporate the merits of these different methodological and theoretical strands (e.g., Schwanen and Kwan 2009; Shelton et al. 2015). Other fields may also benefit from such a pragmatic approach given that systematically geocoded data can – as an example – underpin critical studies that challenge dominant conceptualizations of cases and spaces.

Take the city of Belfast as an illustrative example. At first glance, the entire city was ravaged by war for nearly three decades and today remains stuck in its transition to peace. Yet disaggregated data at the sub-city level complicates the picture as it reveals that the city’s north, west, and center were disproportionately affected by riots, shootings, and bombs while the east and south were much less affected to the point that these two clusters almost constituted different worlds (Cunningham and Gregory 2014). It also tells us that this pattern remains in the postwar period as the east, south, and the now regenerated city center have “moved on” – at least economically if not also politically and socially – from war while the north and west remain in a “no war no peace” state (cf. Mac Ginty 2016; Murtagh et al. 2019). Disaggregated and more fine-grained geocoded data thus shows us that for some Belfast was never that dangerous and today almost is like any other city, while for others it was immensely dangerous and remains so today.

The example of Belfast furthermore underlines that *the degree of precision* in the geocoding – which can vary between assigning events to very specific places (such as a particular building or landmark), via villages or towns, to less precise assignment of events to subnational regions, districts, or even states – matters immensely for the type of research questions the data can help answer and in what ways. The case of Belfast, just as the research on peacekeeping mentioned above, underlines how conclusions made on aggregated geocoded data may be nuanced and

sometimes even “proven wrong” when this data is disaggregated and more fine-grained insights are gained.

The move toward increasingly disaggregated data also aligns well with the recent “turn” in peace and conflict research toward recognizing that war and peace are inescapably spatial in the sense that they shape but also are shaped by space (Crossref: ► [Human Geography and Peacebuilding](#); Crossref: ► [Peacebuilding and Spatial Transformation](#)). This intrinsic relationality between space and violence reiterates that knowledge about *where* violence happens – and also: where it does not – is fundamental to understanding its causes and effects. It is only by knowing where violence takes place and exploring the nature of these sites – e.g. their material composition, who lives there and what relations they have, what (political, economic, social, strategic, geopolitical) roles they play, how they are governed, and so on – that we can begin understanding what dynamics and conditions cause violence. The examination of sites which are spared from violence might in turn uncover what planning regimes, policing strategies, economic models, or demographic compositions are effective against violence.

Geocoded Data on Conflict-Related Violence in Cities

One research agenda where geocoded data has enabled new progress revolves around urban peace and conflict (Crossref: ► [Urban Peacebuilding](#)) – including how political violence manifests differently between rural and urban areas (e.g., Elfversson and Höglund 2021; Nedal et al. 2019; Raleigh 2015) and if climate-driven urbanization affects risks of violent contestation in cities (Gizelis et al. 2021; Petrova 2021). Much of this existing research has studied patterns within and across entire states. Studies using geocoded data to analyze patterns *within* cities are, by contrast, relatively scarce since most of the major conflict datasets do not geocode events to precise locations within cities. UCDP assigns all events within one city to a standardized set of

coordinates for that city (i.e. its central point) (Högbladh 2021: 36). ACLED does assign some events to a more specific location within cities – “when events occur in neighbourhoods of large cities and distinct neighbourhood/district coordinates are available” – but does not discriminate between these and city-level events through its precision codes (ACLED 2019: 29). These examples illustrate that the highest precision level in some of the leading armed conflict datasets often is quite far from the location where an act of violence actually takes place. While geocoded datasets such as these have – as illustrated above – enabled a lot of progress within peace and conflict studies, they usually do not enable analysis of violence dynamics within cities – meaning that we neither know in which city parts violence concentrates nor why.

There are many benefits of geocoding event data with higher precision within cities. For instance, such data can help us better understand why many postwar cities remain (or become) violently contested even after war has formally ended (Crossref: ► [Divided Cities](#); Crossref: ► [Urban Violence and Crime](#)). A few recent studies that have used geocoded data to look at patterns within cities during and after war illustrate the potential of such data to assess how urban peacekeeping relates to dynamics of violence in a case like Mogadishu (Elfversson et al. 2019) and how infrastructure and mobility affects risks for individual and collective violence within a contested city like Jerusalem (Rokem et al. 2018). The following section presents the process of geocoding as a method for mapping conflict-related violence in postwar cities in more depth, as well as illustrates some of the potential uses of such data, drawing on insights and experiences from the research project *The continuation of conflict-related violence in postwar cities: Mapping violence at the street level* (below, “Postwar Cities”).

Geocoding in Practice

The process of geocoding involves several steps and a significant amount of detective work. A first step is to identify the events to be geocoded. This normally entails defining a set of scope conditions and definitions, and then conducting a systematic

search in news databases or other information repositories. Within the Postwar Cities project, research assistants rely on a pre-set search string in order to identify events of conflict-related violence that occur within a set of postwar cities. The procedure is guided by a detailed codebook where each part of the procedure is concretized and documented. This includes defining conflict-related violence as violence which is perpetrated by those previously active in the war and/or which is manifested across identity lines that were salient in the war, as well as delimiting the scope to events that entail serious physical violence. The codebook also sets out the search string used by the research assistants to identify events in a major news database. For each city, the search string includes the city name (taking account of different names and spellings), a set of standardized keywords to pick up reports of physical violence, and context-specific keywords that enable connecting the event to the preceding war.

The codebook also describes all the variables to be coded based on the news information, and the values the variables can take. Some variables denote intensity or level (e.g. number of reported injuries), others contain standardized categories (e.g. type of weapons used), while some contain free-text descriptions of the violent event and actors involved. Information about each identified event is noted down in a structured spreadsheet. In addition to systematically recording information about the actors involved and the nature of the violent event, all available information about the physical location of the event – such as the neighborhood, street names, and proximity to certain landmarks or buildings – is carefully noted down and used as a basis for assigning geocoordinates that as precisely as possible locate the event on the city map.

The result of the coding process is a spreadsheet where each row denotes one event and different columns contain information about different variables – e.g. the date the event took place, the actors involved, the dynamics and intensity of violence, and the location of the event. The latter includes a description of the specific location, within what part of the city it

is located, and the latitude and longitude coordinates.

Practical Challenges and Solutions in Geocoding Violence Within Cities

The procedure of pinpointing events to specific geocoordinates is often challenging and time consuming. Within the Postwar Cities project, the aim is to be able to assign each event to a location that is as precise as possible. In some cases, the specific location is immediately available – e.g. a report may specify that the event took place inside a specific public building, on a specific bridge, or similar. Yet reports of violence often do not provide enough details. News reports often only mention in which neighborhood or city administrative area an event has taken place. There are, however, often additional clues that, given some triangulation, can help derive a more specific location – the report may mention that the event took place outside a pub associated with a certain sports team, or that it occurred near the residence of a certain politician. In Abidjan, an incident was described as taking place at the base of a pro-government militia group and using an external source, the location of this former base was possible to identify. In other cases, satellite imagery can be used to confirm the precise location of a site, such as the parking lot of the Hotel Ivoire, also in Abidjan.

While it is often possible to pinpoint geocoordinates through a search in web mapping platforms, such as Google Maps, Wikimapia, or Mapcarta, sometimes information on the location of violence events does not produce any tangible results. When coding historical events, for example, street names or neighborhood layouts mentioned in old news reports may not exist anymore. In the case of Belfast, this meant that historical maps, online neighborhood forums, and transcriptions of historical street directories had to be used to pinpoint locations of violent events. Meanwhile, some cities or neighborhoods do not have official street names, with residents often using nearby landmarks as points of references. Real estate websites can also be a good resource for cities for which maps do not have enough information on sub-district-level units – if not to

identify the location, then to confirm that it indeed exists before further researching geocoordinates.

Other challenges of geocoding might include discrepancies in how place names are spelled or in which languages locations appear in. In Beirut, a directory of restaurants and eateries called “Zomato” was used to identify street names since these were available on Google Maps only in Arabic. In Mitrovica, Kosovo, news reports variously referred to locations in Serbian, Albanian, or English, thus requiring some triangulation in determining what places were referenced.

One specific challenge relates to determining whether events took place within the city at all. This includes taking a theoretically informed decision on where the city ends and the surrounding areas begin. Within the Postwar Cities project, cities are theoretically understood as being heterogeneous, densely populated, open/permeable, and functioning through mixing, conflict, accommodation, creativity, and fragmentation (Gusic 2020). These characteristics are most likely to be present within the contiguous built-up area with dense communication networks to the rest of the city – this is where people and ideas are in close proximity and contact. Consequently, suburbs that are well-integrated into the city fabric are included, but not satellite cities and peri-urban areas.

A particularly difficult case for geocoding presented itself in the city of Imphal. Here, news reports use the labels “Imphal West” and “Imphal East” for the two main sub-divisions of the city as well as for the larger districts of the area that reach far beyond the city borders. This meant that every event had to be carefully evaluated based on the question whether it occurred inside the city or not. In one event this required mapping the potential routes that a victim, who was shot dead while driving their vehicle, could have taken to reach their intended destination, and the determination whether these routes fell within the city boundaries or not.

Limitations and Dilemmas in Geocoding Violence

A first broader challenge when it comes to any geocoding project is that it is a time-consuming endeavor. As can be gleaned from the examples

above, every geographic context brings unique challenges with it that require adaptation and creativity in the individual coding procedures. A general point then is that high-quality geocoding requires coder familiarity with the case in question. Those planning a geocoding project should make sure to include ample time in their planning for getting familiar with the cases to be coded as well as for geographic detective work subsequently needed throughout the coding process. Much of this entails learning about how a city works. The experiences within the Postwar Cities project also underline that it may be impossible to achieve maximum precision for all events (see also Sundberg and Melander 2013). This has important implications for analysts: For instance, quantitative algorithms to detect clusters of events should always be validated by rigorous qualitative examination of the nature of each event.

In addition to the practical challenges of assigning events to specific locations, geocoding also raises ethical dilemmas that warrant reflection. For example, information about a person's home can be considered sensitive. Researchers compiling and analyzing this type of data should therefore be mindful of what information is made available to others. As an example, the Postwar Cities project, while relying on publicly available information to compile the datasets, only makes available the data in a form where the coordinates are not connected to information identifying individuals. Additional concerns relate to the purposes for which the data might be used – for instance, how should we handle data that could be sensitive for battle outcomes? It is also important, as has been emphasized by other fields, that we are careful when branding certain areas as “hotspots of violence” because doing so can create new cartographies that affect how UN peacekeepers move around, or whether areas are safe/dangerous with implications for policing strategies and everyday life (Ratcliffe 2002; Kindynis 2014; Lemay-Hebert 2018).

Using Geocoded Data to Analyze Violence in Postwar Cities

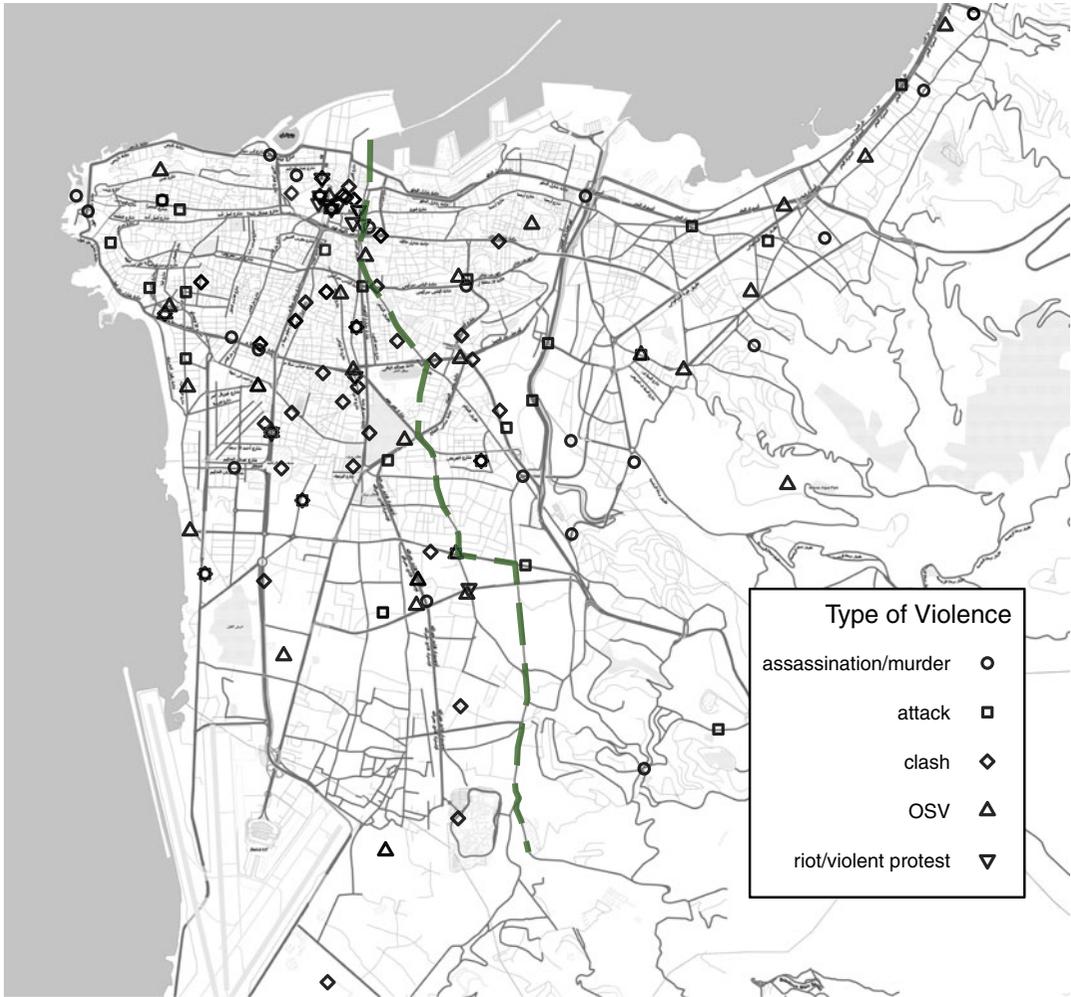
Geocoded datasets can be processed in GIS software – such as ArcGIS, QGIS, and R – to generate

static or interactive maps. We illustrate below how mapping the events of conflict-related violence in one city – Beirut – provides a clear view of the distribution of the different types of violence within the city. The maps were created using the programming language R and the packages *sf* (Pebesma 2018) and *ggmap* (Kahle and Wickham 2013). Similar datasets can also be used to generate interactive maps, where the user can click on event symbols on the map to read more about the dynamics of the specific event (for examples of such interactive maps, see the UCDP database (<https://ucdp.uu.se/exploratory>)).

Figure 1 highlights the different types of violence that occurred in Beirut from 1990 to 2019 and their respective location within the city. Looking at the map, it becomes clear that riots/violent protests seem to cluster around Beirut's Central District while other types of violence seem to be more widely spread across the city. Examining the trajectory of Beirut's Green Line – which separated Christian East Beirut from Muslim West Beirut during the Lebanese Civil War (Bădescu 2011) – further adds an interesting layer to the pattern of violence by showing that while some events occurred along this division, the majority did not. The disaggregated nature of the data thus enables observations of violent trends at the microlevel.

Figure 2 illustrates the significance of pursuing precision when geocoding locations of violent events. It contrasts event locations with higher precision with those that could only be assigned to larger administrative units – i.e. the level of geocoding precision that events would have been coded at if research assistants had not pursued precision. The red triangles in the map are center points of the quarters whereas the black dots show the actual locations where these events occurred. This allows for additional observations, such as the significance of the distribution of violence alongside specific roads or within the vicinity of government buildings, which would not be possible otherwise and which enriches our understanding of the particular case study.

The information contained in geocoded datasets can also be used for descriptive analysis of a case or for statistical analysis of the patterns

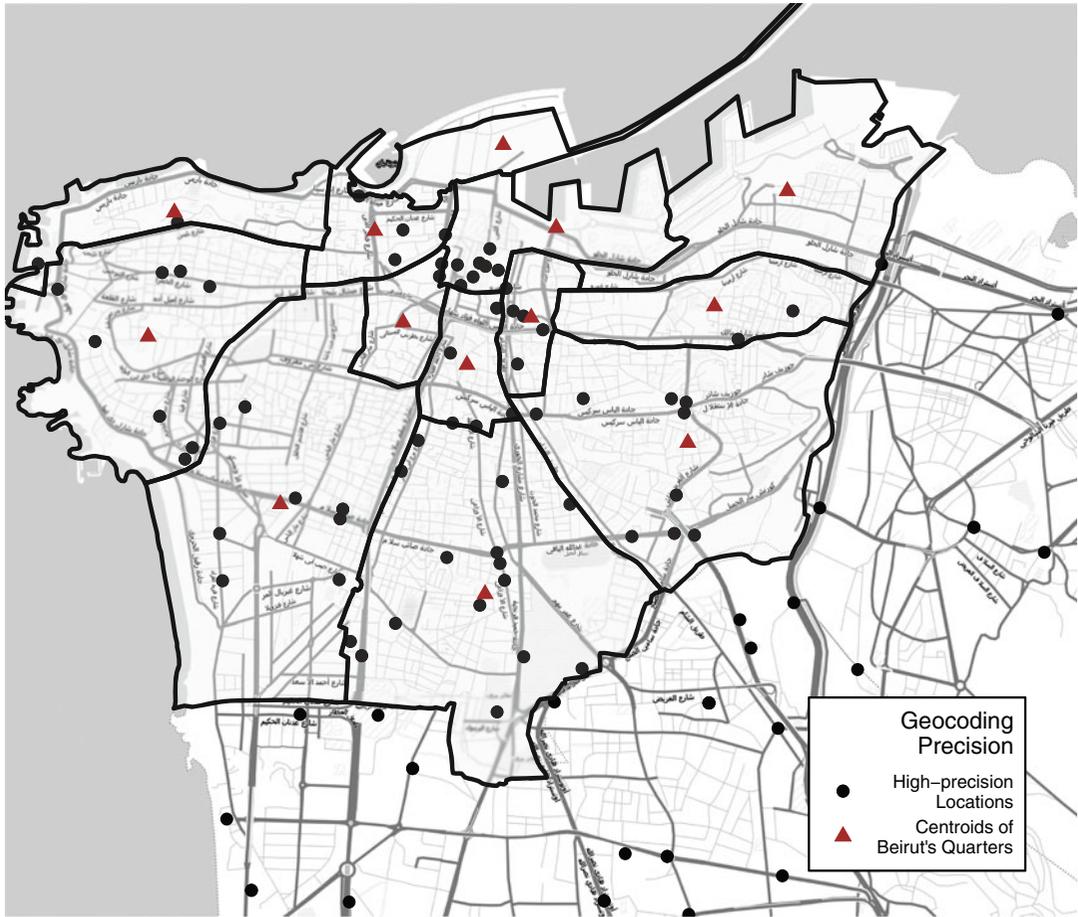


Geocoding as a Method for Mapping Conflict-Related Violence, Fig. 1 Conflict-related violence events in Beirut. The different points indicate types of violence, and the solid line represents the Green Line

that divide Beirut during the civil war. The Green Line relies on information provided by the Lebanese Institute, while the shapefiles of the quarters of Beirut city come from GADM (<https://gadm.org/>)

of violence across time and space. As an example of the former, the data collected for Abidjan within the Postwar Cities project was used to identify appropriate case studies for field work. Mapping the events of violence and looking deeper into the dynamics and characteristics of the events enabled identifying locations that were particularly violence-affected as well as locations that exhibited puzzlingly low levels of violence. The information contained in the data also matters beyond the coordinates as its more

qualitative nature can offer a glimpse into the relationship between the location and the perpetrators and victims of violence. This could for instance be illustrative for research that seeks to understand mobilization in urban contexts (see Staniland 2010). More generally, geocoding can be used as a framework to guide the collection and organization of qualitative in-depth case studies. It could, for example, be useful for organizing process-tracing data. In terms of formal statistical analysis, Rokem, Weiss and Miodownik (2018)



Geocoding as a Method for Mapping Conflict-Related Violence, Fig. 2 Different levels of geocoding precision in Beirut

offer an example of how the method of space syntax analysis can be used to assess the relationship between urban infrastructure and violence.

Importantly, geocoded data on violence within cities offers a fruitful basis for mixed-methods analysis and for the combination of systematic mapping and inductive or interpretive theorizing. Combining forms of analysis helps overcome drawbacks with different methods – for instance, in-depth study can help overcome the risk of reporting bias inherent in large-scale data collection, whereas relying on comprehensive datasets reduces the risk of case-selection bias. Within the Postwar Cities project, for instance, combining geocoded data on Mitrovica and qualitative field material allows for ascertaining where conflict-

related violence concentrates and then exploring how the way spaces are perceived and lived affect their potential for concentrating violence or generating coexistence (Meye et al. 2021).

Summary and Notes on Future Research

This chapter has provided an overview of geocoding as a method for mapping conflict-related violence and has illustrated the many theoretical and analytical benefits of geocoded data. The chapter underlines that matters of war and peace are inherently spatial and that geocoded data is essential to the study of causes, experiences, and consequences of violence. It has also

described how geocoding is carried out and noted some of the challenges involved in geocoding violence with high precision, taking violence in postwar cities as a concrete example. There are several important avenues for future research within this growing body of work. The demonstrated usefulness – and widespread lack – of geocoded data at the micro-level suggests that it would be extremely beneficial to expand the empirical endeavor to include more cases which are coded with maximum precision (e.g. more cities) but also to include additional forms of violence (such as physical violence which does not lead to serious injury and more indirect or structural forms of violence), more accurate temporality (able to capture how risks and dynamics of violence change at different times of the day), and additional aspects of the impacts or severity of violence (e.g. by systematically capturing psychological harm and damage to property). In terms of the research agenda, existing and future data also enables answering theoretical questions such as what roles built environment, climate change and weather patterns, socioeconomic development and inequality, and pandemics play in the micro trends and patterns of violence. These are all dimensions of war and peace that need to be explored better.

If lifting the gaze to geocoding within peace and conflict studies at large, there are obvious benefits from and reasons to expand the empirical endeavor to look beyond violence and also geocode with maximum precision the location of peacebuilding initiatives, defensive architecture, public space regeneration efforts, economic development programs, memorials, sites of actual and/or symbolic value, and so on. While violence – especially direct physical violence related to the conflict – is much easier to code than many other similar aspects, war and peace are much more multifaceted than violence between different groups, meaning that the ability to avoid war and build peace can be also be advanced by more detailed and fine-grained data on other aspects as well – so that we can explore to what extent local economic development increases the stability of any given site or whether more “shared” spaces stimulate coexistence or securitization of territory.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Assessment of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Divided Cities](#)
- ▶ [Human Geography and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Local Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding and Spatial Transformation](#)
- ▶ [Urban Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Urban Violence and Crime](#)

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Georgian-Abkhaz Conflict

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Definition

As Soviet power declined, and Georgian nationalists sought independence, Abkhazians tried first to remain within the USSR before opting for independence. A bitter Georgian-Abkhaz war claimed about 10,000 lives between 1992 and 1993. Approximately 250,000 ethnic Georgians fled Abkhazia, most of whom have never returned. The conflict remained largely “frozen” for 15 years until August 2008 when following a brief war that primarily involved Russian and Georgian forces in South Ossetia, the Kremlin recognized Abkhazia as an independent state.

Only a handful of UN member states followed suit. The Kremlin's investment has brought economic dividends for Abkhazians, but it has also increased the risk of more intensive Russification. While international law favors Georgia, this does little to convince Abkhazians. In their view, the Soviet Union's arbitrary borders were frequently conceived with the aim of elevating one nation's interests over another and that for the international community to recognize these boundaries breathe life into Stalin's legacy. Since 2009 no mediating international organization has had a permanent field presence inside Abkhazia. Initiatives such as the European Union Monitoring Mission and the Geneva International Discussions have no mandate to facilitate negotiations on major areas of dispute such as Abkhazia's status. Rather they manage the status quo by addressing the humanitarian needs of the conflict-affected population.

Historical Background

Since the thirteenth century, Turks, Arabs, Persians, and Mongols have occupied Georgia. However, it is the Russian influence, which begins in force from the beginning of the nineteenth century, that is most important for understanding the country today. The collapse of the Russian Empire permitted the Democratic Republic of Georgia a brief experiment in independent rule from 1918 to 1921, incorporating a recalcitrant Abkhazian population that, in 1919, was granted autonomy within the new state. Once the Red Army had consolidated its control in Russia, the "prison of nations" (as Lenin had described the Tsar-led empire) was re-established in the form of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). Four days after the Georgians had enacted their constitution, the Red Army invaded. When the country regained its sovereignty seven decades later, it proved to be a poisoned chalice. Economically, politically, and psychologically unprepared for the challenges of independence, Georgians could not impose their authority on substantial parts of the new state; between 1991 and 1993, Georgia

endured two secessionist wars with South Ossetia and Abkhazia and two civil wars (Jones 2015).

Many Georgians maintain that their nation enjoyed a productive relationship with Abkhazians over several centuries (Coppieters et al. 1998). The use of Georgian as the language of Abkhazian nobility in medieval times, intermarriage, and shared customs are all cited as evidence of this intermingling. They blame Russia for the deterioration in Georgian-Abkhaz relations which, through the Tsarist and Soviet Empires, fostered divisions between the two groups. Georgian nationalists consider Abkhazians to be Moscow's puppets with few legitimate concerns or grievances of their own.

Russia has indeed played a major role in the affairs of the South Caucasus region. The "near abroad" – as the newly independent post-Soviet states are often called in Russia – is vital for the Kremlin's ambitions to revive its geopolitical fortunes and resurrect itself as a world power. Moscow can hardly aspire to be a major actor on the global stage if unable to impose its will as a regional hegemon. Foreign policy success is also necessary to secure domestic allegiance and respect. For if the Kremlin cannot be lord of its neighborhood, it will assuredly be unable to be the master in its own house. Obsessed with territorial security, the Russian leadership viewed the Caucasus as a vulnerable "soft underbelly" at which opponents might direct attacks. While Russia has been the primary supporter of Abkhazian secessionism, the relationship is a complicated one. The extreme asymmetry of this association, combined with Abkhazia's anomalous status, has fostered a very high level of dependence on Moscow's goodwill. Economically Russia is responsible for most of Abkhazia's trade and subsidizes about half of Abkhazia's annual budget. The result is that Abkhazians appreciate Kremlin assistance but worry of creeping annexation. After all, they fought for independence and not to join the Russian Federation.

Abkhazians are indigenous to the Caucasus and autochthons of Abkhazia. According to the most recent census (2011), little more than

240,000 people live in the Black Sea republic, less than half the number that resided there at the end of the Soviet era. There is also a large diaspora in Turkey, mostly decedents of those expelled by the Russian empire in the late nineteenth century following rebellions against the Tsarist rule. Under direct rule from Moscow, Abkhazia was repopulated with a plethora of other nationalities including Mingrelians, Armenians, Russians, and Greeks. Abkhazians became a minority within Abkhazia, producing a demographic crisis for the small nation from which it has never recovered (Trier et al. 2010). During the last century, Russification has reduced the numbers of native speakers of Abkhaz, an ancient tongue unrelated to Georgian, which belongs to the Western Caucasian branch of Abaza-Circassian languages (Hewitt 2013, p. 2).

The Soviet Period

With the collapse of the Russian Empire in 1917, Abkhazia was incorporated into, and granted autonomy within, the newly established Democratic Republic of Georgia, but in February 1921, both Georgia and Abkhazia were made Soviet Socialist Republics within the USSR. Abkhazia's status was repeatedly diluted, until in 1931 it was reduced to an autonomous republic within Georgia.

A "Georgianization" policy was vigorously pursued during the 1930s and 1940s accompanied by substantial migration to the region. Many in Abkhazia today attribute this period of repression to two ethnic Georgians, Joseph Stalin and Lavrentiy Beria, the latter being a native of Abkhazia, who headed the secret police within the Soviet Union and regulated inter-ethnic disputes within the Caucasus. Although conditions improved for Abkhazians in the decades following Stalin and Beria's deaths in 1953, they continued to lose the demographic battle. The 1959 census indicated that their numbers had dropped to just 15% of the population and that they constituted only the fourth largest group in Abkhazia, after Georgians, Russians, and Armenians. In every decade (1957, 1964, 1967, 1978, and

1989), Abkhazians made direct representations to Moscow demanding secession from Georgia.

As Soviet power declined, and Georgian nationalists sought independence, Abkhazians tried to remain within the USSR. In his speech to the First Congress of People's Deputies of the USSR in 1989, Vladislav Ardzinba, considered the founding father of modern-day Abkhazia, declared that "the Abkhaz people consider remaining within the USSR the sole possible means of preserving its national self-identity." An ever-widening chasm developed between the Georgian and Abkhazian national projects. Notwithstanding the trials of the early Soviet period, Abkhazians had come to see membership of the USSR as a bulwark against Georgian domination. Despite their inferior numbers, Abkhazians enjoyed disproportionate political influence within the republic with all the trappings of statehood including a parliament, flag, and anthem. By contrast, Georgians felt emasculated within the Soviet system and believed that only full independence would facilitate the development of their nation. The Soviet massacre of peaceful protesters in the capital Tbilisi on 9 April 1989 only accentuated separatist sentiments among Georgians. Georgians now viewed the aspirations and demands of smaller nationalities such as the Abkhaz as a Soviet/Russian strategy to keep their nation within the USSR. The unexpected collapse of the Soviet Union created a dangerous vacuum, whereby Georgians considered it feasible to subdue the Abkhaz militarily.

The 1992–1993 War

An intense and bitter war followed the invasion of Abkhazia on 14 August 1992 by Georgian paramilitaries under the direction of the executive in Tbilisi controlled by warlords Tengiz Kitovani and Jaba Ioseliani and under the titular leadership of former Soviet foreign minister Eduard Shevardnadze who had returned to Georgia at their invitation in March 1992. Reflecting on mistakes made at this critical juncture, Shevardnadze conceded many years later that he should have immediately flown to the Abkhazian capital of Sukhum/i

to speak directly to Ardzinba in an effort to preempt an escalation of the conflict (Shevardnadze, interview with the author, 2008).

The Georgians that invaded Abkhazia fought for territorial integrity, but for Abkhazians the struggle was for nothing less than survival. This was made clear when the Commander-in-Chief of Georgian troops in Abkhazia, General Giorgi Karkarashvili, occupied the local television station and, in a formal televised address to the people of Abkhazia on 24 August, warned that Georgian troops would not be taking prisoners of war. Moreover, he maintained that if 100,000 Georgians lost their lives, it would mean that all 97,000 Abkhazians would be killed and that the Abkhaz nation would be without descendants. In a similar vein, the Georgian Minister for Abkhazia in Tbilisi, Giorgi Khaindrava, told *Le Monde Diplomatique* that “there are only 80,000 Abkhazians, which means that we can easily and completely destroy the genetic stock of their nation by killing 15,000 of their youth. And we are perfectly capable of doing this.” (Ó Beacháin, 2016, p. 213)

Although the war lasted just over a year (14 August 1992–30 September 1993), it claimed up to 10,000 lives. Approximately 250,000 ethnic Georgians (many of them Mingrelians) fled Abkhazia as the war drew to a close although tens of thousands have since returned and resettled primarily in the southern district of Gal/i. The war had far-reaching effects on Abkhazian relationships with Georgians and their sense of themselves as a nation. During the 13-month conflict, the Abkhaz lost about 4% of their population.

Georgian leaders underestimated Abkhazian resistance to their national project. Abkhazians were considered numerically insignificant and incapable of surviving alone. The Georgians fought without external support, however, and were pitted against not only Abkhazians but also other ethnic minorities within Abkhazia. General Karkarashvili recalled: “we [Georgians] entered Abkhazia in a very disorganized way. We didn’t even have a specific goal and we started looting villages along the way. As a result, in the space of a month we managed to make enemies of the

entire local population, especially the Armenians.” Abkhazians also managed to attract support from the people of the North Caucasus, including their ethnic cousins the Adyghe (Adyghe, Kabardians, and Circassians), the Abaza, and the Chechens. They also gained support from the Abkhaz and Circassian diasporas (Ó Beacháin, 2016, pp. 212–213).

Georgians today tend to de-emphasize local opposition in Abkhazia in favor of a narrative that suggests that Georgia lost to Russia, which used the Abkhazian issue to make Georgia more pliant to Moscow’s wishes and to preserve a Russian sphere of influence in the Caucasus (Shevardnadze, interview with the author, 2008). The character and extent of the Kremlin’s involvement during the 1992–1993 conflict are difficult to gauge accurately, and there have been wildly conflicting evaluations. When the Soviet Union imploded, substantial arsenals of military hardware ended up outside of state control, and in this chaotic environment, much of what passed for military activity was decentralized, ad hoc, and personalized.

Following the ceasefire between the Georgian and Abkhazian authorities, the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) was established in August 1993 to verify compliance. The UNOMIG’s mandate was expanded following the signing by the parties of the 1994 Agreement on a Ceasefire and Separation of Forces. The ceasefire, which gave Russia a central role in the region, remained largely intact until 2008.

The 2008 War

The inauguration of a 36-year-old Mikheil Saakashvili as President of Georgia in January 2004 introduced a new dynamic to the conflict. Saakashvili had come to power as a result of the “Rose Revolution” that followed popular mobilization to challenge fraudulent parliamentary results in November 2003. The collapse of the Adjara police state, which was ruled as a personal fiefdom by Aslan Abashidze, in May 2004, gave the new Georgian administration a false basis for optimism when approaching the more

intractable separatist regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. It was regularly claimed or implied that a breakthrough would be achieved during the Saakashvili presidency, thus personalizing the conflict resolution process. Controversially, the Georgian government changed the name of the Ministry for Conflict Resolution to the Ministry for Reintegration (of the national territory), which inhibited interaction with the Abkhaz authorities. Rival (pro-Tbilisi) governments were established on the territory of Abkhazia (in the mountainous Kodori Gorge region) and South Ossetia, but Georgia's attempts to widen conflict resolution formats by the internationalization of "peacekeeping" duties consistently blocked. There was widespread and ever-increasing hostility to the role played by Russian peacekeepers in Abkhazia and South Ossetia (dubbed "*piece-keepers*" by some Georgian officials).

Georgia requested the EU to involve itself directly in the peacekeeping process but was rebuffed, in part because Brussels knew the proposal would be unacceptable to Russia. The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) Action Plan negotiated throughout 2006 placed a low priority on resolving Georgia's territorial integrity problems. In contrast to the Action Plans agreed with Moldova and Azerbaijan, which made conflict resolution the top priority, for Georgia it was sixth, and the document spoke vaguely of the EU's willingness to "contribute to the conflict settlements" in Abkhazia and South Ossetia without spelling out how this might be done. Instead the Action Plan focused on improving Georgian governance. The ENP Action Plan's limited scope and financial support were a source of dissatisfaction for the Georgian government (Georgian government ministers, interviews with the author, 2006–2008). From the EU's side, it reflected both a wariness of getting too tied up in Tbilisi's efforts to regain its "lost territories" and a belief that in the aftermath of the Rose Revolution, the greatest returns were most likely to be achieved by investing in democratization, which in turn might also yield results in the sphere of conflict resolution (EU officials, interviews with the author, 2011).

Saakashvili's plans to extend his government's jurisdiction over Abkhazia and South Ossetia put him on a collision course with Moscow. Since the collapse of the USSR, Russian-Georgian relations had never been warm. Many of the political elites in Moscow adopted a neo-imperial policy toward Georgia and found it difficult to conceive of Georgia as a sovereign state, independent of Russia. In seeking membership of the EU and NATO, Georgia challenged the Kremlin's role as regional hegemon and risked setting an example to other post-Soviet states. Moreover, Russia viewed western economic, political, and military support for Georgia as actions hostile to Russian interests.

There was a clear relationship between Georgia's moves toward NATO and Russia's actions toward Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Shortly after the NATO summit on 16 April 2008, which declared that Georgia and Ukraine would eventually join the military alliance, President Putin signed a decree that strengthened diplomatic and economic links with Abkhazia and South Ossetia. In addition, Russia deployed an additional 1500 troops to its "peacekeeping" force in Abkhazia. This was done without Tbilisi's consent – thus violating the 1994 ceasefire agreement – and some of the troops were equipped with heavy weaponry. Russia's MIG fighters shot down unmanned Georgian drones in Abkhazia, again violating the 1994 agreement. In June, the Kremlin deployed troops to Abkhazia to rebuild the rail line linking Sukhum/i and Ochamchire, an action widely considered to be for military purposes. The following month, Russia conducted a large-scale military manoeuvre to the immediate north of Georgia (entitled *Caucasus 2008*), which involved almost 10,000 troops and several hundred pieces of military hardware.

What happened next is a matter of political and partisan controversy (Tagliavini 2009). Following provocations, Georgian government forces launched a major military assault on the South Ossetian capital of Tskhinvali inflicting hundreds of casualties before being repulsed by Russian and South Ossetian forces. The Russian military continued their advance deep into Georgia, coming within 30 km of Tbilisi and used its air and naval

superiority to degrade Georgia's military infrastructure. With Russian military assistance, Abkhazian forces expelled the Georgian government forces from the Kodori Gorge. It is widely believed that Saakashvili and his coterie of advisors were shepherded into a well-prepared trap and that the Kremlin orchestrated a pretext for a military confrontation.

The international community scrambled to find an effective mechanism to end military hostilities, and the European Union quickly emerged as the favored mediator. The 2008 war exposed the limitations of the EU efforts (and those of international institutions generally) to prevent military conflict. However, it was the very lack of a prior strong or coherent involvement that pushed the EU to the forefront of endeavors to negotiate a ceasefire and then monitor and maintain the peace. For Russia, the USA and NATO were unacceptable mediators, and the OSCE had been discredited for its failure to warn of, or react to, the large-scale conflagration. After shuttling between Moscow and Tbilisi, a six-point accord was brokered by Nicolas Sarkozy, the President of France, which had the rotating EU presidency. The agreement included provisions for an immediate ceasefire, the nonuse of force, the withdrawal of the Russian and Georgian troops to *ex ante* positions, and the opening of international discussions on the modalities of lasting security in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. The option of deploying armed peacekeepers that would separate the conflicting parties was ultimately rejected in favor of a more modest proposal of sending unarmed EU monitors.

Recognition of Abkhazia

Russia's decision to recognize Abkhazia as an independent state on 28 August 2008 enhanced the Abkhazians' sense of security and triggered a campaign to obtain additional recognitions (O'Loughlin et al. 2011, p. 2). Early successes were achieved in Latin America with Nicaragua (2008) and Venezuela (2009) establishing diplomatic ties with Abkhazia, and there appear to have been near misses in Bolivia, Ecuador, and the

Dominican Republic. Intensive efforts to secure recognition from Belarus, considered the most loyal ally in the post-Soviet space, did not bear fruit due to pressure from the EU. Other allies in the Commonwealth of Independent States and Shanghai Cooperation Organisation had their own secessionist threats to contend with. Attention shifted to the South Pacific microstates, many of which were veterans of the China-Taiwan recognition tug-of-war. Consequently, the UN member states Nauru (2009), Tuvalu (2011), and Vanuatu (2011) all recognized Abkhazia, but the latter two subsequently withdrew from this by establishing diplomatic ties with Georgia. Alive to the threat, and with the EU and US support, Georgia embarked on an extensive diplomatic counteroffensive. During the 4 years following the 2008 war, Georgia established diplomatic relations with no less than 50 UN member states (Ó Beacháin, 2019, p. 68). In 2018, Syria joined the small batch of states recognizing Abkhazia.

Postwar Efforts at Mediation and Intervention

The 2008 war brought an end to the UNOMIG due to a lack of consensus on the UN Security Council. The primary controversy stemmed from Russia's attempts to have the mission's name changed to the UN Observer Mission in Abkhazia, which Georgia's supporters refused to countenance. Since 2009 no mediating international organization has had a permanent field presence inside Abkhazia. Shortly after the war subsided, in October 2008, the Geneva International Discussions (GID) were launched to address the consequences of the conflagration. Co-chaired by the OSCE, the EU, and the UN, the Geneva process brings together representatives of Georgia, Russia, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and the USA. Since the cessation of the UNOMIG, the GID is the only platform for parties to the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict. It is not, however, a conflict resolution process and has no mandate to deal with issues such as the status of Abkhazia. Rather it offers opportunities for Georgian and Abkhazian representatives to meet and to oversee the status quo by

solving local disputes and issues, such as the humanitarian needs of the conflict-affected population. In this way the talks are aimed at managing rather than transforming the conflict and preempting any problems that might trigger an escalation (OSCE officials and participants of GID, interviews with the author, 2011). The European Union Monitoring Mission (EUMM) continues to operate solely on Tbilisi-controlled territory with 200 unarmed monitors from the EU member states. By verifying information on the ground and evaluating conflicting reports of incidents, the EUMM can help defuse tensions and act as a trip-switch in the event of future military mobilizations.

Following the 2008 war, the Georgian government introduced the State Strategy on Occupied Territories, which contained many useful ideas about how Georgians and Abkhazians might cooperate, but was largely undermined by the subsequent publication of the modalities. (“On Approval of Modalities for Conducting Activities in the Occupied Territories of Georgia,” Regulation of the Government of Georgia, N 320 Tbilisi, 15 October 2010) The modalities made engagement between Abkhazia and foreign states and international organizations conditional on Georgian government approval. Linking cross-border cooperation or inter-community interaction to a larger strategy of “de-occupation” made cooperation problematic (even the strategy’s name seemed guaranteed to thwart its ostensible aim of reaching out to Abkhazians and Ossetians). Many Abkhazians viewed the strategy on the occupied territories as a direct response to the EU’s policy of “engagement without recognition” and designed to limit any interaction between Abkhazia and the outside world. Abkhazian public representatives and civil society leaders, interviews with the author 2009–2012. For many years Tbilisi has financed and directed a “government in exile” for Abkhazia. It plays no role in conflict-resolution formats and is largely a publicity exercise for international consumption. Whereas during the decade following the 1992–1993 war seats were symbolically reserved in the Georgian parliament for Abkhazia, these have since been abolished.

Summary

It is unlikely that there will be any resolution to the dispute between Georgians and Abkhazians given the incompatible and mutually exclusive features of their respective nation-building projects. Although the Georgian official (and popular) narrative tends to portray the essential conflict as being one between Georgia and Russia, the clash is at heart an intra-Caucasian one between two different nationalities which, whatever their past amities, have polar-opposite views on the present and future status of Abkhazia. Georgians still speak of a resolution to the conflict and of absorbing Abkhazia, whereas for Abkhazians – separated from Georgia for almost three decades – the conflict is over, and they wish merely to settle the terms of the divorce.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Moldova-Transnistria Conflict](#)
- ▶ [Troubles, The: The Northern Ireland Conflict](#)

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Grassroots Organizations and Peacebuilding

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Synonyms

[Civil society](#); [Community-based organizations](#); [Conflict transformation](#); [Local peacebuilding](#)

Description

Grassroots and community-based organizations mobilize “ordinary” people in peacebuilding processes, initiating wide-ranging and contextually specific action which is crucial to the “bottom-up” transformation of personal, relational, structural, and cultural dynamics of conflict-affected societies. Contributions made by these organizations inform and drive activity in a range of sectors relevant to peacebuilding, including providing services for victims and survivors of conflict, reintegration of combatants, economic and political representation, transitional and transformative justice, memory work, commemoration, and many more. Grassroots organizations reflect the contestation and sociopolitical divisions of the societies from which they emerge, which presents complex challenges but also ensures a diversity of perspectives and experiences are incorporated in the consolidation of peace. In the internationally orientated

contemporary discourse of peacebuilding, the agency and potential of grassroots organizations tend to be homogenized and marginalized in favor of top-down liberal peace interventions. This entry explores the forms and functions of grassroots organizations working to build peace and considers the contextual and structural constraints they face in light of hegemonic liberal peacebuilding discourses.

Introduction

It is broadly agreed in theory – if not reflected in mainstream peacebuilding practice – that individuals and communities affected by conflict hold the greatest potential for building peace (Curle 1994; Lederach 1997). Excluding or ignoring the specific experiences and needs of those most directly affected by conflict leaves significant underlying forces of conflict unresolved and undermines the sustainability of peace processes. Indeed, the imposition of norms, assumptions, and policies from external actors into local initiatives has often proven counterproductive (see Autesserre 2017 for an overview of failed international peacebuilding interventions). The extent and patterns of conflict vary greatly from one community to the next, and so international- and even national-level initiatives alone cannot always capture meaning for those whose experiences vary significantly (Arriaza and Roht-Arriaza 2008). Grassroots organizations and community-based stakeholders are best placed to understand and address these specific experiences of violence, and to develop sustainable processes to heal individual and collective trauma, build relationships, address structural inequalities, and influence official peacebuilding mechanisms.

Paternalistic views of local populations by international organizations often obscure the reality that “there is no shortage of agency in most post-conflict spaces at grassroots levels” (Roberts 2011, p. 421), and that local actors who were embedded in the “everydayness” of conflict can and should be the primary architects, owners, and long-term stakeholders of peace (Fetherston 2000). Not only can grassroots organizations and

stakeholders provide contextually sensitive and appropriate peacebuilding activity in their own right, their inclusion in wider processes is crucial, because, as Donais (2009, p. 3) argues, “any peace process not embraced by those who have to live with it is likely to fail.”

Peacebuilding “From Below”

Despite its more contemporary international, institutional formulations, peacebuilding as a concept is often attributed to peace scholars such as Johan Galtung and John Paul Lederach who were interested in how affected communities themselves could transform conditions which underpin violent conflict in contextually specific and sustainable ways. Galtung in particular conceptualized peacebuilding out of the distinction between negative and positive peace, wherein negative peace denotes the absence of direct or physical violence, and positive peace entails identifying and addressing the structural roots of conflict and striving for social justice (Galtung 1969, 1975). Through his scholarship and practice, Lederach carried forward this notion of peacebuilding, theorizing how transforming conflict requires constructive change of personal, relational, structural, and cultural levels (Lederach 2003), and maintaining that “the greatest resource for sustaining peace in the long term is always rooted in the local people and their culture” (Lederach 1997). In this view, peacebuilding is a holistic, multi-level and long-term process that seeks to transform violent conflict in its many phases and forms. These theories have been highly influential in the design and practice of local peacebuilding efforts over the past several decades (Paffenholz 2014), and how these efforts are understood and articulated in research and evaluation.

Lederach’s conflict transformation-orientated peacebuilding theory approaches the processes required to build sustainable peace holistically, drawing conceptually from Galtung’s work on violence and peacebuilding, social-psychological approaches to relationship building, the management of protracted social conflicts, and Friere’s

Pedagogy of the Oppressed (Paffenholz 2014). It is based on the premise that conflict is an inevitable and necessary part of human existence, and indeed is a driver of change (Lederach 2003). Such principles are supported by more recent applications of Complexity Theory to peacebuilding, which argue that “[c]hange and conflict are normal and necessary, and peacebuilding should thus not be so much about order and stability, as it should be about stimulating change and facilitating constructive conflict” (de Coning 2016, p. 29). This counters conflict management and conflict resolution approaches to peacebuilding which understand conflict as a problem for which a solution must be designed and implemented, and which continues to be a core logic in technocratic international peacebuilding operations (Mac Ginty 2012).

The task of transformative, “bottom-up” peacebuilding, then, is to seek constructive change in those areas which are producing violence and violent conflict. Lederach (2003) identifies four of these areas, which he refers to as “change goals”: the personal, the relational, the structural, and the cultural. Personal change involves cognitive, emotional, and perceptual development, for example, dealing with issues such as wellbeing, trauma, and guilt that may emerge from experiences of violent conflict. Relational change requires the building of relationships both within and between social groups, facilitating interdependence, communication, and eventually mutual trust between erstwhile enemies. Structural change refers to the need to reorganize social, political, and economic structures that have often been both affected by and instrumental in conflict in order to ensure they provide basic needs and access to resources for all members of society. Finally, cultural change refers to the broadest patterns of life such as identities, rituals, languages, and symbols.

Other scholars have considered specific, strategic objectives of peacebuilding which help to begin articulating the myriad roles and contributions of grassroots organizations. Lisa Schirch, for example, has developed a strategic peacebuilding framework which she and colleagues have applied to various types of peacebuilding actors such as

women’s organizations (Schirch and Sewak 2005) and types of peacebuilding activity such as arts-based interventions (Shank and Schirch 2008). This conceptual framework is underpinned by principles of conflict transformation, and includes (1) waging conflict non-violently through initiatives such as monitoring, advocacy, and direct action, (2) reducing direct violence through legal routes, ceasefires and peace zones, humanitarian assistance, and early warning systems, (3) transforming relationships through trauma services, restorative and transitional justice, and local conflict transformation work, and (4) building capacity through training and education, development and research (Schirch 2005). This framework demonstrates how those constructive change processes which are core to Lederach’s approach to peacebuilding may be operationalized by a range of actors.

The conceptualizations of a transformative peacebuilding approach represented here reflect the need for “complex, flexible, and inter-subjectively produced” responses to violent conflict (Fetherston 2000, p. 23). Far from the professionalized, externally imposed approaches of the liberal peace paradigm, these frameworks provide tangible pathways for organizations rooted in communities affected by conflict to constructively transform conditions within their societies to prevent further violence and build sustainable peace.

Grassroots Organizing for Peace

Grassroots organizations emerge from and mobilize “ordinary” people and communities to take collective action, filling gaps where official state and international institutions fail to address their needs or indeed often leading the agenda on necessary reforms within society. “Grassroots” describes the level and location of activity that is “bottom-up,” directly related to and often based in the communities in which that activity seeks to benefit, and consisting of “organic activities that citizens commit to and participate in” (Mitlin 2008, p. 343). In the broader view of peacebuilding actors, Lederach (1997) positions

the grassroots as part of a top-down, middle-out, and bottom-up formation where grassroots feeds up into middle-level and elite-level action. However, the grassroots itself is not an exclusive category or boundary. For example, organizations that emerge from the grassroots may operate and mobilize in multiple spaces ranging from local and national political processes to international exchanges. Indeed, grassroots and community-based organizations are as varied and diverse as the social, economic, political, and cultural issues present in the societies in which they are based. This section provides an overview of how grassroots organizing contributes to peacebuilding as well as some specific types of grassroots activity that relate to peacebuilding processes.

Grassroots organizing emphasizes collective, participatory action, which brings more diverse voices and perspectives into the design and undertaking of peacebuilding initiatives (Fetherston 2000; Paffenholz 2014). Broadly speaking, it is argued that citizen participation and civic engagement encourages more just decisions, greater buy-in, and cooperation (Staples 2012). The participatory nature of grassroots organizing is a means to consolidate local action, address immediate needs within communities, and negotiate with official state processes (Mitlin 2008). Moreover, empowering individuals and communities who were directly affected by conflict through participation in peacebuilding initiatives may in itself constitute an opportunity for addressing and “healing” trauma (Parent 2016), not to mention ensuring the full range of needs and experiences emerging from conflict are heard and addressed.

Of course, challenges as well as opportunities arise out of the diversity of grassroots organizing. The grassroots is a highly contested, heterogeneous space, necessarily embodying the contestation, social and political divisions, and structural inequalities that characterize a society emerging from violent conflict (Mac Ginty 2015). Grassroots organizations represent and mobilize a range of interests which may conflict with one another and embrace not only different definitions and visions of peace (if that is indeed their objective) but also different beliefs about how that

peace may be achieved. In this way, grassroots and civil society organizations reflect the “politicized realities of conflict situations” and are “subject to the same set of political dynamics, constraints, and incentives that affect local political elites” (Donais 2009, p. 14). Conflict and contestation need not be seen a spoiler for peacebuilding, however, as much as an enabling and generative factor in the transformation of conflict (Lederach 1997, 2003).

Grassroots organizations may also demand and deliver upon the social justice and transformational promise of positive peace. Such initiatives represent and articulate the interests of groups who are frequently unheard or otherwise structurally disadvantaged in official processes. Indeed, women – often excluded from elite level decision-making in peace processes – have played a significant role in developing grassroots and community-based organizations around the world (Marshall 2000). Organizations based in communities and which operate in this bottom-up way represent a resistance to narrow, institutionally focused peacebuilding initiatives that rarely scratch the surface of lived experiences of all who were affected by and/or involved in conflict, or undertake the necessary transformations to upend structural inequalities and hierarchies of power. By encouraging participation of marginalized voices and identities such as women, LGBTQ communities, young people, ethnic minorities, and other oppressed groups, grassroots organizations may resist liberal peace interventions that often reinforce existing local, national, and global power disparities (Chandler 2010).

Grassroots organizations in the context of peacebuilding operate in a wide range of overlapping sectors, take many different forms and engage with a variety of local stakeholders. These contributions relate to many interrelated facets of peacebuilding, including transitional justice, services, and support for victims and survivors, reintegration of offenders, relationship building, storytelling and memory work, reconciliation, and in-group capacity building among others. Insufficient research and policy focus has been dedicated to understanding grassroots peacebuilding activity, and for that reason it is

challenging to provide a comprehensive overview of the full range of its forms and functions. However, it is useful to demonstrate the diversity of areas in which grassroots organizations may contribute to peacebuilding.

The most coherent scholarship in the broad area of grassroots peacebuilding focuses in particular on civil society contributions. The terminology of grassroots is often used alongside “civil society” though there are a number of issues with conflating the two, not least because civil society is differently conceived in Global North and Global South (Weerawardhana 2018, pp. 72–74). The concept of civil society itself carries certain Western and institutional connotations which further highlight the frequent mismatch of liberal peace interventions and the social, political, and cultural contexts in which they operate (Richmond 2009) and may refer to NGOs and other organizations that are externally based rather than grassroots. Nevertheless, there is some congruence in the categorizations offered in this literature for the purposes of sketching out the general thrust of community-based initiatives. In her work on civil society and peacebuilding, Thania Paffenholz (2015) outlines seven categories of activity through which grassroots organizations may contribute to peacebuilding: protection, monitoring, advocacy, socialization to promote in-group identity building, social cohesion to promote inter-group relationship building, facilitation and mediation, and service delivery.

These categories of activity relate back to the conceptualizations of bottom-up peacebuilding described above. Revisiting Lederach and Schirch’s lenses for strategic and transformational approaches to peacebuilding helps to articulate how grassroots and community-based organizations may reduce direct violence, wage conflict non-violently, transform relationships and build communities’ capacity in order to effect personal, relational, structural, and cultural transformation. While reducing direct violence, or protection work, aligns most explicitly with negative peace, the diversionary activities and community or even cross-community-based networks aimed at diffusing immediate tensions may galvanize relational change among those involved.

Waging conflict non-violently, or harnessing the constructive change processes of conflict, may entail a range of monitoring and advocacy initiatives. Monitoring work may involve anything from drawing attention to human rights abuses to holding states and other institutions accountable for implementing ceasefires, negotiated agreements and policies. Grassroots advocacy work articulates specific needs and interests in order to demand inclusion in and influence over official mechanisms, institutions, and policies. This advocacy may take a variety of forms, including facilitating community engagement with official processes, both in terms of demanding those processes be shaped through participation and facilitating access and support for those individuals and communities who engage with those mechanisms. These processes may include complex transitional justice mechanisms such as truth commissions, reparations hearings and official archives, development of new modes of governance, or re-structuring of public services and support. A women’s peacebuilding network in Burundi called *Dushirehamwe*, for example, has successfully lobbied to incorporate policy priorities around addressing sexual- and gender-based violence, equal rights, representation, and economic policies that support rural women into the national policy agenda (Vernon 2019). In Northern Ireland, the organization Healing Through Remembering (HTR), co-produced resources and workshops to enable public debate around official mechanisms proposed to deal with the legacy of its conflict in the 2014 Stormont House Agreement and to widen participation in a 2018 public consultation into the implementation of those mechanisms.

Transforming relationships is perhaps the type of work most associated with peacebuilding practice, and encompasses a wide range of mutually reinforcing processes including in-group socialization, social cohesion between groups, as well as facilitation and mediation that may effect relational, personal, and cultural transformation. This relationship work may consist of initiatives specifically designed for that purpose, such as intergroup dialogue or encounter workshops (Lowry and Littlejohn 2006), though many other initiatives

facilitate this transformation indirectly. Arts interventions may transcend ethno-national divisions by creating inclusive public spaces, for example, the organization *Abart* which promoted art and culture in the city of Mostar to enable new “modalities of being *together*” (Carabelli 2018, 32 emphasis in original) or site-specific drama performances developed in Northern Ireland by Kabosh Theatre Company. Memory and storytelling work ranging from informal narrative gathering exercises to wide-scale oral history archives may also enable individual reflection and catharsis as well as collective acknowledgment of common experiences across conflict divisions (Senehi 2015). Initiatives aimed at reintegrating ex-combatants into society may deliver crucial services in terms of education and employment training while also contributing to processes of socialization and social cohesion by facilitating dialogue among combatants from different armed groups as well as with victims and survivors through restorative and transitional justice initiatives. The organization *Fambul tok*, responding to gaps in community reconciliation left by the UN supported Special Court for Sierra Leone and the national Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission, used village level storytelling and dialogue with the aim to transform relationships among offenders, victims, and their communities (Mhandara 2020).

Depending on their structure and objectives, some organizations may contribute across a range of peacebuilding processes. For example, community organizations involved in delivery of wellbeing and trauma services to victims and survivors may aid in personal transformations, while also lobbying for formal recognition from the state and thus working to transform structural aspects of conflict and cultures of violence. Organizations such as *Unidad para las Victimas* in Colombia and *WAVE Trauma Centre* in Northern Ireland deliver specific therapeutic services to address trauma, isolation, self-esteem, and guilt, as well as undertake more collective processes of dialogue, memory, and memorialization. Through this work, such organizations may directly or indirectly effect relational change through socialization and/or social cohesion processes and implementing restorative and transitional justice

processes. Similar transformative approaches can be identified in organizations working with other specific stakeholders such as young people or ex-combatants, and in other types of interventions such as arts-based peacebuilding, sports, dialogue workshops, storytelling, and many others.

Capacity building also represents a crucial contribution of grassroots peacebuilding organizations, and may entail provision of citizenship and peace education, social and economic development, as well as research and knowledge transfer. Local peacebuilding practitioners generate significant locally based practical knowledge on effective conflict transformation and peacebuilding practices. Much like the hegemonic views of grassroots peacebuilding practice, however, this knowledge is often undervalued and subjugated in favor of academic knowledge production (Stanton and Kelly 2015). This practical knowledge may be used in education and dialogue processes, monitoring and advocacy, and of course research and evaluation of effective peacebuilding practice. A core aim of HTR in Northern Ireland is to generate and share learning among and beyond its diverse community membership. To this end the organization has established collectives such as the *Stories Network*, through which local oral history practitioners share lessons, resources and technical expertise, developed and shared core principles for “dealing with the past,” coordinated international study visits for local community practitioners to generate insights and connections with practitioners in other regions, as well as produced reports in collaboration with local scholars.

Given the long-term nature of peacebuilding and dynamic realities of societies emerging from violent conflict, the relevance and urgency of grassroots organizing may also evolve over time. For example, during early negotiations and development of new institutions, these organizations may advocate to include particular voices and issues into the agenda whereas later work may be needed to ensure agreements are implemented inclusively, and individuals and communities can access and fully utilize mechanisms for truth, justice, reparations, development, and so forth. *Never Again Rwanda*, a peacebuilding and social justice organization founded in the wake of the

1994 genocide, began as a space for addressing young peoples' trauma and promoting societal healing. Over the years, however, its scope has evolved in response to changing societal and political conditions to incorporate work around rights, education, and sustainable livelihoods.

Of course, there are aspects of grassroots organizing that may constrain its contributions to peacebuilding. The self-organization of grassroots and community-based activity is by its very nature non-linear, unpredictable, and a reflection of complex social systems, and thus may limit the degree to which knowledge from one context can be generalized and applied elsewhere (de Coning 2016), or scaled up and/or integrated with top-down processes (Donais and Knorr 2013; McKeon 2003).

Constraints of the "Local Turn" in Peacebuilding

Contemporary peacebuilding practice has been dominated by international, institutional conceptions of peace which are largely driven by external interventions to introduce liberal values such as democratization, free markets, human rights, neoliberal development, and law and order (Donais 2009; Richmond 2006). This international focus has nevertheless experienced a well-recorded "local turn" (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013) which has spilled over into related fields such as transitional justice (Kochanski 2020) and has a range of implications for the work of grassroots and community-based peacebuilding. In particular, this liberal peacebuilding project has faced significant critique for the ways it has co-opted and exploited local stakeholders, reproduced structural inequalities, and undermined local initiatives. Critical peace scholars have conceptualized alternatives to this shallow local turn, including critical localism (Mac Ginty 2015), emancipatory peace (Richmond 2006), and communitarian peacebuilding (Donais 2009). Nevertheless, the assumptions underpinning top-down, liberal peace interventions remain the norm.

The version of the "local" towards which international peacebuilding has claimed to shift is constructed and perceived through the vantage

point of global encounters (Hirblinger and Simons 2015, 422), and grassroots stakeholders are co-opted and exploited primarily in terms of their utility in achieving liberal peace outcomes regardless of whether those outcomes align with the interests of local communities (Campbell 2013, 40). Rather than shifting power and resources to empower and reflect the agency of local stakeholders, this local turn emphasizes the utility of local actors in increasing legitimacy, sustainability, and cost-effectiveness of international peace interventions (Mac Ginty 2015, 846). Local populations and grassroots actors are often romanticized (Richmond 2009), simultaneously considered "saviors" of peacebuilding interventions in that they provide legitimacy and access for international actors, while also being viewed as uncivil, incapable, and in need of assistance from external intervenors who "know better" about what is needed to build sustainable peace (Mac Ginty 2015). Hughes and Pupavac highlight what they call the "pathologisation" of the local in Cambodia and the post-Yugoslav states, where international organizations project an image of whole societies as irrational, traumatized, and inherently predisposed to violence that "legitimizes perpetual international supervision" (2005, 875). Local actors are valued within international peacebuilding structures insofar as they adopt and legitimize liberal, Western values and conceptions of peace yet are granted limited agency in developing and leading peacebuilding processes.

International peacebuilding values a highly mediated, instrumental notion of who local actors are and how they can best operate to serve and adopt international, neoliberal norms, values, and practices (de Coning 2013; Richmond 2009). The messiness, complexity, and politics of grassroots and community-based peacebuilding initiatives undermine the managerial, bureaucratic, and depoliticized ideals of the liberal peace. As such, rather than embracing or empowering insiders in societies affected by conflict and following their lead, "local perspectives are more often viewed as hurdles to be overcome or obstacles to be avoided than as potential sources of sustainable solutions" (Donais 2009, 8). From this vantage point, the view of the local as fractious, contested, and

politicized limits the amount of control external actors will relinquish because of uncertainty about the legitimacy of local representatives (de Coning 2013; see also Hirblinger and Simons 2015).

Moreover, in imposing external visions of peacebuilding in societies affected by conflict, the liberal peace reinforces and reproduces structural inequalities, existing power hierarchies, ideologies, and interests as well as neo-colonial geopolitical dynamics (Chandler 2010; Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013; Weerawardhana 2018). The subjugation and trivialization of local knowledge reinforces these inequalities (Stanton and Kelly 2015), and “[t]his knowledge hierarchy legitimates and justifies the interveners’ claim that they have the capacity and expertise necessary to help resolve the host populations’ problems” (Autesserre 2017, 125). The balance of power by which outsiders hold the resources, determine decision-making structures and select local partners (Donais 2009), exacerbates structural inequalities within local communities as well. Support goes to local actors who are willing to model the neoliberal values championed by external actors and can help to implement prescriptive policies and definitions of peace: “outside support continues to be largely directed to moderate, like-minded, urban, non-membership, elite-based peacebuilding NGOs” (Paffenholz 2014, p. 25) and has “deliberately excluded local actors that do not support its geopolitical worldviews” (Goetschell and Hagman 2009, p. 63). Weerawardhana (2018, 91–96), for example, describes how Sinhala nationalist groups in Sri Lanka resisted what they saw as the neo-colonial influence of Western peacebuilding NGOs in the governance of Sri Lanka and she contends that the neglect of these “uncivil” components of civil society is in part responsible for failures of the Sri Lankan peace process. Representations of local stakeholders as “good” or “bad” for the liberal peace imposed by external actors, regardless of the politics of those constructions (Hirblinger and Simons 2015, 423), once again creates scenarios where local stakeholders willing to adopt and implement liberal peace ideals are lifted up over grassroots and community-

based organizations which challenge or resist externally imported blueprints for peace.

Grassroots organizations often face tensions in their relationship to national and international institutions committed to a peace project that is “intolerant of alternatives and creativity” (Mac Ginty 2012, 288). Many rely on support from state and international funding bodies and thus out of necessity must absorb and model external conceptions of peace, effective practice, and neoliberal governance to comply with the terms of that support. Grassroots organizations receiving external resources and support face challenges in balancing the adaptations they make to maintain that support while remaining focused on the specific local populations, experiences, and circumstances with whom they work. In these unequal relationships, “the power dynamics between international and local peacebuilders are such that the latter have little opportunity to challenge even the most counterproductive ideas” (Autesserre 2017, 121), and assumptions about effective peacebuilding held by interveners are usually prioritized.

Despite espousing commitment to local ownership and empowerment, the very nature of neoliberal peacebuilding often leads to the marginalization and instrumentalization of local actors and organizations (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013, 764; Richmond 2009), undermining local initiatives and disempowering local stakeholders (Autesserre 2017; Van Leeuwen 2020). By placing the emphasis on local actors and local ownership, international organizations shift responsibility for policy outcomes onto these local stakeholders (Campbell 2013; Chandler 2010) without handing over any agency with regards to policy design or implementation. Donors determine organizational practices and strategies, within which “organizations and communities may have to fight to apply their own approaches, and their knowledge is not always respected” (Firchow 2018, 16). In Northern Ireland, for example, some organizations seeking to capacity build in “single-identity” or single community programs have been told that to secure funding they must re-design their activities to be entirely “cross-community” according to donor beliefs about effective peacebuilding. Similarly, EU funding in the

region comes with strict conditions for how many hours participants must engage in “cross-community” encounters in order to satisfy donor metrics of success. Local actors often must adopt and implement externally conceived peacebuilding policies regardless of local needs and visions, fundamentally disempowering local agency, and expertise (Donais 2009, 7).

The increasing rhetorical gestures towards the importance of local stakeholders, participation, and buy-in, have not been accompanied by any meaningful shift in power or resources in favor of grassroots or “bottom-up” peacebuilding (de Coning 2013). Resources, direction, concepts, and authority continue to reside with international donors, administrators, and institutions (Mac Ginty 2015, 846), and peacebuilding interventions still tend to overlook the crucial role of grassroots organizations in attending to local needs, definitions, and practices of peace.

Summary

This entry has provided a brief overview of the nature of grassroots peacebuilding, its conceptual underpinnings, and the constraints it faces within the wider field of peacebuilding research and practice. It emphasized the importance of taking local-level initiatives as a starting point, rather than an addition to externally conceived peace for practical and ethical reasons. Grassroots and community-based peacebuilding actors have context-specific knowledge, resources, and agency which must be centered. Emancipatory (Richmond 2006) and communitarian (Donais 2009) approaches to peacebuilding argue similar, and place significant importance on local, community determinations about “the legitimacy and appropriateness of particular visions of social order, justice, or ethics” (Donais 2009, p. 6). Grassroots peacebuilding actors understanding intimately the personal, relational, structural, and cultural transformations that must happen to consolidate peace in their communities.

Grassroots organizations are nevertheless marginalized in liberal peace research and policy which, it has been argued, privilege top-down, state-orientated interventions and co-opt local

stakeholders to achieve certain agendas which may not align with their own. As a result, community-based initiatives may be persuaded to accept and implement externally imposed values, norms, and practices in order to receive necessary funding and support. This undermines the transformative potential of grassroots organizing for peace, reinforces structural inequalities and power hierarchies that exist in conflict-affected societies, and risks excluding those actors and initiatives which resist external intervention.

More, varied research focus should be dedicated to the local and specific in peacebuilding, not as a legitimating resource or savior of internationally led processes, but as core to re-orienting peacebuilding practices, processes, and knowledge. As important, that focus on local actors and “bottom up” approaches needs to be accompanied by critical shifts in power and vantage point so that research and policy does not simply replicate neo-colonial structures which homogenize, pathologize, and subjugate grassroots actors. This research should be critical and challenge existing neo-colonial power structures as part of an active decolonizing process, and embrace subjective, indigenous knowledge production rooted in conflict-affected societies in the Global South who can articulate, with nuance and detail, specific local peacebuilding initiatives, their practices, definitions, and obstacles.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Civil Society Inclusion in Peace Mediation](#)
- ▶ [DR Congo: Local and International Peacebuilders' Interaction](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding and Korean Civil Society](#)
- ▶ [Reconciliation in Northern Ireland](#)
- ▶ [Youth and Peacebuilding](#)

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the permanent five members (P5) of the UN Security Council: The United States, Russia, China, the United Kingdom, and France. These five states hold control over the legitimate use of force under the UN framework and thus can influence peace operations in unique ways.

The scholarly literature has thus far looked at two forms of great power involvement in peace operations: (1) their direct involvement as peacekeeping contributors and (2) their impact on launching and shaping peace operations (e.g., where peace operations get deployed; what they do in the operational theatre). In this chapter, I provide an overview of these two active research areas with regards to peace operations launched under a UN umbrella as well as regional (EU, NATO, AU) and ad hoc frameworks. I conclude by highlighting interesting future avenues of research in this burgeoning field of scientific inquiry.

Grassroots Peacebuilding

► Local Peacebuilding

Great Power Involvement in Peace Operations

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Definition/Description

In the academic field of International Relations (IR), great powers are both material and ideational constructs. They possess first-class military-political capabilities (usually measured in terms of population, territory, resource endowment, economic capability, political stability, and military strength), while at the same time see themselves and are accepted by others in rhetoric and behavior as having this rank (Waltz 1993, 50; Buzan 2004). In the peace operations field, five great powers are particularly noteworthy. These are

Great Powers as Peacekeeping Contributors

At the time of this writing, the involvement of most P5 nations as UN peacekeeping contributors is limited. US contributions peaked from November 1992 to March 1996, when the US government sent significant numbers of personnel to UN missions in Somalia (UNOSOM II), Haiti (UNMIH), and the former Yugoslavia (UNPROFOR and UNPREDEP). However, after suffering numerous US casualties in Somalia, US president Bill Clinton signed *Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) 25* in May 1994 de facto extricating the United States from UN missions (Smith in Bellamy and Williams 2013). From then on, US troops have served in regional and ad hoc peace operations but no longer in UN missions. Similarly, France and the United Kingdom were among the largest UN troop contributors in the 1990s contributing a significant number of soldiers to UN operations in the Balkans. Nevertheless, this trend did not endure. Starting in the mid-1990s, both countries also shifted their attention away from UN operations to regional or ad hoc missions. Russian reluctance to contribute to UN missions also started in the mid-1990s. Perceiving UN operations in the Balkans as a mere tool of “Western influence,”

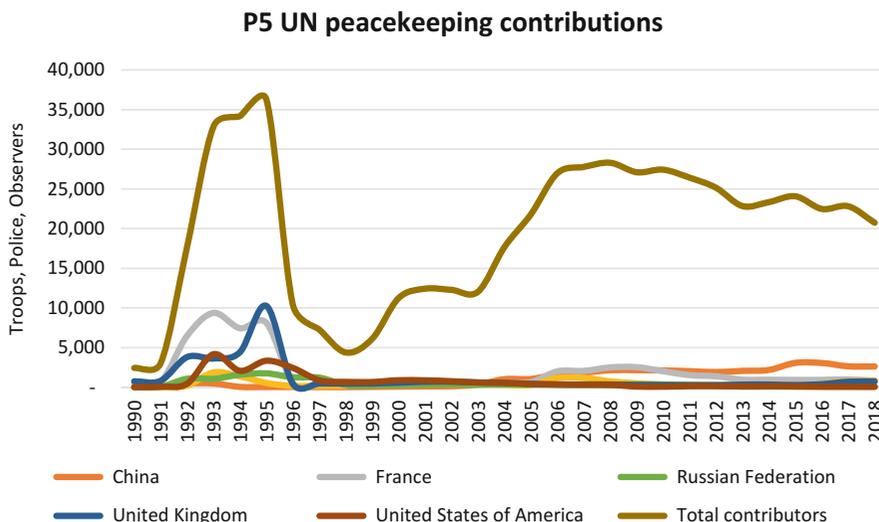
Russian contributions to UN peacekeeping declined and Russia retooled the *Commonwealth of Independent States*, a regional organization composed of nine former Soviet Union member states into a peacekeeping organization to intervene e.g., in Tajikistan and Moldova (Allison 2013; Mackinlay and Cross 2003). Nevertheless, Russia still is the second largest supplier of contractor services to UN peacekeeping operations, and the main supplier of air transportation services. China is the only P5 member bucking the trend of declining UN contributions. Since the early 2000s, Chinese commitments to UN missions have increased more than 20-fold. Scholars have proposed various reasons to explain this development. UN peacekeeping allows China to demonstrate its commitment to “peaceful conflict resolution,” while at the same time foster Chinese military modernization and professionalization (Hirono and Lanteigne 2011, 2013).

Great Powers as Peacekeeping Influencers

It is always states (not institutions) that are the ultimate decision-makers on whether peace operations get launched, and how the mandates of these operations look like. Great Powers play critical roles in the latter processes.

Great Powers Influence Where Peacekeepers Go
What explains why peace operations deploy to some countries, but not to others? The existing literature proposes two sets of arguments to answer this question: the “needs-based” argument focuses on aspects of the conflict (e.g., civilian death tolls, large displaced populations) to explain international actions. It stipulates that the “harder” a case, the more likely it is that a peace operation gets sent (e.g., Doyle and Sambanis 2000, 2006; Gilligan and Stedman 2003; Bredsley and Schmidt 2012; this section should simply refer to Fortna 2004, 2008; Allen and Yuen 2014). The “high politics” argument, in turn, proposes that Great Powers and, in particular, the P-5 determine the destinations of peace operations (e.g., Regan 2002; Gilligan and Stedman 2003; Mullenbach 2005; Allen and Yuen 2014; Jakobsen 1996). De Jonge Oudraat (1996, 491), for instance, argues:

It is a mistake to think of ‘the United Nations’ as an independent political actor with respect to peace and security issues: it would be more accurate to think of the United Nations as a policy instrument of the organization’s member states. Except for limited actions undertaken by the Secretary-General, such as fact-finding and mediation efforts, member states, led by the P-5, determine when and whether action will be taken.



Great Power Involvement in Peace Operations, Fig. 1 Great Power Involvement in Peace Operations. Data source: UN peacekeeping department

Durch (1993, 23) tells a similar story suggesting that peace operations “require complimentary political support from the great powers and the local parties” and if “either is missing or deficient, an operation may never get underway.” Henke (2019a, b) tries to explain when exactly individual P5 members mobilize. She argues that no single variable can explain such development. Rather, it is a combination of structural and domestic factors that motivate certain states to take on this role in the context of a particular conflict. For example, US leadership on Darfur in 2007 was largely the result of intense lobbying efforts by a domestic mass movement: The *Save Darfur Coalition*. French leadership on conflicts in Mali, Côte d’Ivoire, and Chad/Central African Republic (CAR), in turn, is the result of colonial legacies and ad hoc domestic factors.

Great Powers’ Influence on What Peacekeepers Do

Similar to peace operation destinations, there is a debate in the literature on how peace operation mandates are formulated. What criteria are used to determine how many troops, police, and observers to deploy, what postures to adopt and what mission objectives to achieve? A variety of arguments have been advanced including conflict dynamics, bureaucratic process, and great power influence (e.g., Allen and Yuen 2014; Autesserre 2014; Benson and Kathman 2014). With regard to the latter, Howard and Dayal (2018), for instance, suggest that the parochial interests of the P-5 member states dominate UN mandate writing, in particular, when it comes to what type of mission to authorize (i.e., a mission under Chapter VI or Chapter VII of the UN Charter). Frequently, P-5 states have only limited geopolitical interests in the states in which peace operations deploy. As a result, they do not bother to tailor mandates to individual country characteristics but rather focus on what Howard and Dayal (2018:73) call “group-preserving” dynamics (i.e., they repeat previously agreed upon solutions even when these solutions do not fit the new context and may appear suboptimal, illogical, or even pathological. They thereby privilege the achievement and repetition of agreement over the content of the

agreement to maintain group status and legitimacy). Allen and Yuen (2014) and Benson and Kathman (2014) provide more nuanced assessments. They find that the UN Security Council does at times tailor mandates to local events (e.g., civilian fatalities). However, P-5 parochial interest do constrain these actions considerably.

Great Powers Affect Which Countries Offer Peacekeepers

Recent research has revealed that Great Powers are intensely involved in recruiting forces to serve in peace operations – UN and others. Henke (2016, 2019a) found, for instance, that the United States was deeply engaged in recruiting peacekeepers for the UN-AU peacekeeping force in Darfur (UNAMID). On several occasions, the US State Department instructed US ambassadors all around the world to petition their host governments for UNAMID force contributions. When UNAMID fell short of specific strategic assets (e.g., helicopters and other transport equipment), the United States would again appeal to foreign governments at the highest political levels to make the required contributions. Moreover, on some occasions the US government was willing to offer troop allowances, air lift, training and equipment or other political rewards to countries if they agreed to deploy. As a result, Henke (2016) suggests that a distinct division of labor exists between the United Nations and Great Powers when it comes to UN force generation. In the case of UNAMID, UN officials, such as UN Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Marie Guéhenno, and Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Sudan, Jan Pronk, provided the United States with valuable information on which countries to approach for UNAMID force contributions and why. Indeed, these UN officials served as important “brokers” between the United States and potential peacekeeping contributing states. They identified suitable states, which the United States would then approach bilaterally and bargain into the operation. For the most part, the United States would negotiate a political commitment to join a

peacekeeping operation. Once these commitments were locked down, the United States would instruct its recruits to get in touch with UNDPKO in New York and to engage UNDPKO in direct discussions of its precise military requirements. UNDPKO would then negotiate with the peacekeepers as to which area of the conflict theatre they would operate, what type of equipment they would provide, and what the exact reimbursement rates were for the equipment. UNDPKO also inspected the countries' equipment prior to their deployment.

Great Powers Train Peacekeeping Troops

Lastly, the United States, France, and the UK all run important peacekeeping training programs. The US-led Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI) provides training and equipment to potential peacekeeping nations. It is today the largest bilateral UN peacekeeping capacity-builder of any UN member state. The EU has established similar training programs called EURO-RECAMP and AMANI Africa.

Remaining Puzzles

The involvement of Great Powers in peace operations is a field of research that is still in its infancy and many questions remain unanswered. One critical question is, of course, whether Great Power involvement contributes positively or negatively to the success of the peace operation. Thus far, no definitive answers exist. On the one hand, scholars have suggested that without Great Power involvement hardly any peace operations would deploy (Bellamy and Williams 2010; Henke 2019b). In this regard, because of Great Power engagement, international cooperation in the security sphere occurs much more frequently than the actual constellation of intrinsic security preferences would permit. Nevertheless, what's the quality of such "constructed" cooperation? How do states perform in peace operations if they are not entirely *intrinsically* motivated to participate but are prodded or even coerced to do so by Great Powers? Does Great Power involvement contribute to some of the shortcomings of recent and past peace operations?

In this context, the externalities of payments the Great Powers provide to peacekeeping contingents require special scrutiny. Optimists would suggest that these payments do not generate any negative side effects. Most payment packages, especially those that might trigger controversy, are never made public. Rather, recipient states often go to great lengths to publicly justify their deployment in other ways. Moreover, these payments can benefit the country at large by helping build proficient militaries, as well as boosting economic, social, and political development from the individual soldier to the nation state (Atkinson 2006; Ruby and Gibler 2010; Worboys 2007).

Pessimists would, however, argue that a deleterious propensity toward profit has infiltrated peace deployments. States limit their peacekeeping commitment to ensure a profit margin (i.e., they restrict their involvement to a minimum, for example, via risk-averse operational strategies or caveats). Moreover, if a Great Power reneges on a promised payment, threatens to do so, or is perceived to do so (sometimes falsely so), peace operation contingents may retaliate accordingly. Such behavior is feasible for two reasons. First, it is hard for Great Powers to observe what is going on in the deployment theater at all times and places. As a result, peacekeeping participants may be tempted to look for shortcuts to protect their assets: Why undertake undue risks? Why engage with difficult targets if easier activities can be undertaken? Second, Great Powers face punishment challenges, especially in environments in which peacekeeping participants are scarce. Great Power then have few options for disciplining deviant peacekeeping states if they desperately rely on them.

Furthermore, at the state and individual level, Great Power incentive payments can also create complex social and political contingencies. At the microlevel, allowances received by soldiers deploying abroad often exceed the salaries of other professions and their own salaries prior to joining a mission (Wilén et al. 2015, 316). Such an influx of money can create jealousy and social tension, both inside the military between those

who deploy and those who stay behind, among different military ranks, and between the military and the civilian population (Dwyer 2015). Such payments can also create the potential for corruption, favoritism, and nepotism, e.g., in the selection process of officers that get to serve in operations or in the process of how funds are used (e.g., Aning 2007, 141; Levin et al. 2016). At the macrolevel, research suggests that the money, material, and training provided by pivotal states risks increasing domestic political repression and even the probability of coups (Savage and Caverley 2017).

Various strategies may be able to counteract these negative forces. Pakistan reportedly allows its soldiers to serve only once in any foreign “subsidized” operation to diminish the risk of social inequality and excessive “autonomy” (Murphy 2007, 166), while Uruguay has put in place an elaborate system of how soldiers receive their share of the deployment subsidies. Nevertheless, implementing these strategies is complex and, arguably, can have an impact on the operational effectiveness of the mission (e.g., soldiers get chosen not for their professional capacities but for sociopolitical reasons).

Summary

Great Powers, and in particular, the P-5 nations, play a critical role in the set-up and conduct of peace operations. While their troop commitments to UN operations has declined over the years, they are active in non-UN peace operations such as NATO and the EU. However, when it comes to UN operations, Great Powers still pull many of the organizational strings. The scholarly debate today centers on the degree of influence. Are they critical and decisive or do other factors such as conflict dynamics, bureaucracies, etc. mitigate their power? Moreover, the quality of their influence constitutes another emerging and vast field of inquiry. Do Great Powers help or hurt in the process of establishing sustainable peace via peace operations?

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Grounded Nationalism

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Definition

Nationalism is an ideology which posits the nation as a principal unit of human solidarity and political legitimacy. Grounded nationalism is a concept that aims to capture variety of historical processes that make nationhood organizationally, ideologically, and micro-interactionally embedded phenomenon.

Introduction

Although aspects of nationalist thinking were present well before the eighteenth century, it was the proliferation of the enlightenment and romanticism that played a crucial role in formulating the key postulates of nationalist doctrine. The American Revolution (1765–1783) and the French Revolution (1789–1799) together with the Latin American wars of independence (1808–1833) gave further impetus to establishing nationhood as the principal sources of political legitimacy. While before modernity political elites typically justified their right to rule by invoking the specific dynastic claims or by appealing to religious and mythical entitlements such as the idea of divine origins of monarchs, in modern era political power is deduced from the notion of popular sovereignty. Nevertheless, for much of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, nationalism coexisted and competed with other ideological doctrines for political primacy and it was only after WWII that nationhood was entrenched as the dominant organizing principles of territorial rule in the world. Whereas in the nineteenth century nationalism and imperialism often cohabited within the same political space as was the case with the British, French, Dutch, and later German political projects, the end of WWII delegitimized

the idea of empire and reaffirmed the principle of national sovereignty as the dominant ideological vista of contemporary social and political order. Once nation-state was established as the only legitimate form of polity in the world, nationalism gradually became the hegemonic ideological discourse throughout the globe (Malešević 2013, 2019).

The scholarship on nationalism has traditionally distinguished between the aggressive and banal experiences of nationhood. On the one hand, nationalism has been associated with wars, revolutions, terrorism and insurgency, genocide and ethnic cleansing, and the violent break-ups of old states and the creation of new political entities (Hall and Malešević 2013; Mann 1993). On the other hand, nationalism has also been traced to variety of everyday habitual practices ranging from the idealized tourist destinations and sporting competitions to distinct consumption practices, national cuisine, or popular song contests (Fox and Miller-Idriss 2008; Billig 1995).

Another influential and well entrenched typology differentiates between the civic and ethnic forms of nationalism (Smith 1998). Traditionally, ethnic nationalism was a synonymous with hereditary and descent-based membership in the nation, whereas civic nationalism was associated with the shared political rights and allegiance to the shared constitutional order. Hence, ethnic nationalism was tied to the specific cultural markers such as shared language, ancestry, or religion while civic nationalism is regularly linked to the moral equality of citizens and a voluntary political association.

Finally, scholarship has also been divided on the question of how old are nations and nationalism, with the two dominant perspectives – modernism and ethno-symbolism – offering very different explanations. Hence, the modernist perspective insists that since nationhood and nationalism are dependent on the socio-economic and political structure of modern social order (i.e., industrialization, urbanization, secularization, educational systems, etc.), they cannot develop before modernity (Breuilly 2017; Mann 1993; Gellner 1983). In contrast, ethno-symbolists claim that there is a strong element of cultural

continuity between the premodern ethnies and modern-day nations as they both utilize shared symbols, myths, traditions, and collective memories (Smith 1998, 2009).

Several scholars have questioned these sharp dichotomies pointing that banal nationalism can quickly transform into its virulent forms and that banality is not a synonym for benign action. Other scholars have argued that there is no purely civic nationalism and that all nationalisms contain ethnic and civic elements (Brubaker 2015; Yack 1996). Moreover, one should not assume that civic nationalism is harmless, and that ethnic nationalism is destined towards violence. The ethno-symbolist versus modernist debate has also been criticized for its neglect of other social factors that make nationhood possible and relevant in the modern world.

Despite these pronounced criticisms, there have been little sustained attempts to integrate these varieties of nationalist experience into a historically and sociologically coherent framework. The organizational *longue durée* perspective aims to capture the changing dynamics of nationhood through time and space (Malešević 2010, 2013, 2017, 2019). This perspective challenges the two dominant paradigms within the nationalism studies and aims to transcend the ethnic versus civic and aggressive versus banal dichotomies that have dominated nationalism studies for decades.

In this understanding, nationalism is a historical phenomenon that developed gradually through the organizational, ideological, and micro-interactional grounding. In contrast to ethno-symbolism and modernism, the organizational *longue durée* perspective argues that nationhood is a modern phenomenon, but its emergence and proliferation was dependent on the long-term organizational, ideological, and micro-interactional processes. This view opposes the modernist idea where nationalism is functionally tied to modernization and also contests the ethno-symbolist emphasis on unbroken cultural continuity. In contrast, the organizational *longue durée* perspective aims to show that there are premodern organizational, ideological and micro-interactional ingredients that have made modern-day nationhood and nationalisms

possible. Hence, the concept of grounded nationalism aims to seize the historical complexities and contradictions that underpin the development of nationhood over *longue durée*: its organizational, ideological, and micro-interactive grounding.

Nationalism is an organizationally grounded phenomenon in a sense that its existence and proliferation is tied to its coercive and disciplinary capacity to coordinate social action. There is no nationalism without organizational power. The first proto-nationalist associations were comprised of dedicated middle-class individuals who would congregate in saloons, beer houses, and private clubs espousing variety of nation-centric ideas (Mann 1993). These cultural associations later transformed into the secret revolutionary societies many of which developed into disciplined and militant organizations that were capable of utilizing violence (i.e., assassinations, dynamite campaigns, hijackings, etc.) to pursue their nationalist ambitions. From Carbonari and Philiki Hetairia to Young Ireland and Young Bosnia, such clandestine organizations have attained significant organizational capacity to inflict damage on the structures of imperial states and also to popularize the idea of sovereign nationhood. Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, these national projects were attained wider support base and have often transformed into formidable social movements many of which advocated the establishment of independent states. From the Finian Brotherhood in Ireland to the Fennoman movement in Finland or the National League in Poland, European continent witnessed proliferation of nationalist movements that created wide and deep organizational networks throughout their respective societies, thus making the eventual transition to independent statehood possible. In addition to these society-based initiatives, the main vehicle for the development of coercive organizational power has been the state. The continuous rise of state infrastructural power in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has played a crucial role in making nationalism society-wide phenomenon. With the substantial improvements in the communication systems and transport networks, the modern states have increased their ability to control their

borders, enforce the taxation, and implement better systems of surveillance. These new developments were later used to coercively homogenize populations of new nation-states as was the case in France where cultural minorities were forcibly assimilated and the minorities languages such as Basque, Breton, and Occitan were largely wiped out. By the end of WWII, much of Europe has experienced a similar process of national homogenization with some regions witnessing genocides, ethnic cleansings, and violent exchanges of populations. It is no accident that nationalism became organizationally more grounded as the coercive capacities of nation-states increased.

Nationalism is also an ideologically grounded phenomenon. While political elites may approach the power game in a cynical way and thus may not believe in the political and social programs they nominally advocate, many of their supporters see the ideological messages as important. Since nationalist narratives offer grand vistas of liberation, salvation, emancipation, and authenticity, they attract a wide support base. Some nationalist discourses invoke the idea of collective self-interest including the notion of prioritizing nationals over non-nationals. Historically, many East European nationalist movements attracted support among nationally ambiguous peasantry only when they promised tangible benefits such as the land redistribution, lower taxation, or full citizenship rights. Nevertheless, most nationalist ideologies gain traction through their emotional and moral appeals. Hence most successful nationalist leaders tend to invoke the ethical discourses to delegitimize the existing political orders and state structures. The imperial rulers are regularly condemned for their unjust, unequal, or immoral treatment of their subjects. The question of popular sovereignty and the necessity of independence are framed as moral questions such as “Ireland unfree shall never be at peace” (Patrick Pearse) or “We will face the bullets of the enemies, we are free and will remain free” (Chandra Azad). The key nationalist principles are often couched in the language of righteousness emphasizing the ethical principles of self-determination such as the idea that all nations should be free and possess a state of their own. In this context, nationalism is

ideologically grounded in two principal ways: as a vehicle of mass scale social mobilization and as a dominant discourse of political legitimization. These two ideological processes play a decisive role in articulating unified nation-centric discourses that bring different social strata together resulting in what Mosse (1991) called “the nationalisation of the masses.” The organizational grounding provides a structural scaffold through which ideological penetration of the social order is achieved. The mass scale ideological mobilization is only possible once organizational capacity is in place. Hence, the state, social movements, and variety of other social organizations utilize the existing social structures such as the mass media, educational system, the courts, military and police, the welfare institutions, and many other outlets to forge and reproduce nation-centric understandings of social reality. Furthermore, ideological grounding is also achieved outside of the formal institutions as the civil society, religious institutions, private corporations, and the public sphere are all also involved in the creation, reproduction, and proliferation of nationalist tropes.

Finally, nationalism is also dependent on the micro-interactional grounding. While the organizational structures and ideological discourses provide the structural context for grounding, they cannot penetrate the micro-universe of everyday life without having a strong embedment in the interpersonal relationships. The scholarship on banal and everyday nationalisms has made clear that nationhood is reproduced through variety of habitual experiences including the everyday communication, naturalized and routinized practices of interaction, consumption rituals, and habitual activities that all take place daily in the lives of ordinary individuals. As Billig (1995) emphasized, the strength of nationalism is better gauged not from the passionately waved banners but from the barely noticeable flags hanging on the government buildings and the porches of private houses. It is the banal and unconscious practices of everyday life that sustain and reproduce nation-centric realities and as such make nationalism a hegemonic project that can be triggered at any moment in time. Nevertheless, habitual nationalism does not automatically transform into its virulent

forms. Instead for nationalism to have a significant impact on social life, its organizational and ideological grounding must coalesce with the micro-interactional grounding. In other words, since human beings are not puppets that simply follow the wishes of their rulers but are in fact reflective and thinking creatures, it is paramount that their interests, emotions, and norms are reflected in the ideological narratives and organizational structures of nationalism. Hence nationalist discourses can resonate only when they speak and act in the language of everyday interactions. It is here that organizational and ideological grounding fuse with micro-interactional grounding. Nationalism can and does become a dominant form of modern subjectivity only when the micro-attachments, local meanings, interests, and emotions became fully aligned with the society-wide nationalist narratives. The nationalist ideas and practices become normalized and naturalized through the personalized experiences linked to micro-level solidarities that matter to all human beings such as our intimate relationships with our families, close friends, comrades, lovers, friendly neighbors, and so on. In this context, nationalist ideologies have been very successful in deploying and often monopolizing the discourses of kinship and comradeship where nation-states and nationhood have regularly been depicted as one’s family members and close friends. Thus whether they are framed in the predominately ethnic or civic terms, nationalists tend to speak in potent metaphors such as “our sacred Indian motherland,” “our French brothers and sisters,” “our American boys fighting overseas to preserve the honor of our fatherland,” “the sacrifices of Russian comrades,” and so on. In some instances, this language of kinship and friendship is deployed deliberately as a propaganda strategy, but in most cases, this is not necessarily a top down exercise, but something generated by the successful blending of the organizational, ideological, and micro-interactional grounding. It is a structural and interactional process whereby organizationally and ideologically embedded ideas and practices are translated into the local micro-worlds, whereas the micro-localities also contribute towards shaping the larger macro narrative of nationhood. The organizational and ideological grounding create a

situation where nationalism can tap into the local attachments and emotional dynamics of the micro-worlds.

Summary

The historical grounding of nationalism indicates that this is a Janus-faced phenomenon that can generate violence and protracted conflicts but can also contribute to peaceful social environment. Nationalism is not inherently a violent ideology but its ideological potency in modernity makes it an effective tool for mass mobilization in times of crises and wars. In a contemporary world where an overwhelming majority of people feel strongly attached to their nation-states, political leaders can and do regularly invoke nationalist tropes to justify participation in wars or support for the use of violence, something their premodern predecessors could not do. In this context, organizational, ideological, and micro-interactional grounding of nationalism has contributed to the proliferation of violence. However, development and expansion of nationalism in everyday life has also created opportunities for prolonged periods of peace in some parts of the world. The states where nationalist ideas and practices are deeply and consensually grounded (i.e., Denmark, Sweden, Norway, etc.) have managed to develop strong and functioning organizational, ideological, and micro-interactional structures that have generated political stability, economic prosperity, societal integration, and protracted peace.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Ethnic Conflict](#)
- ▶ [Genocide](#)
- ▶ [Identity and Political Violence](#)
- ▶ [Organized Brutality](#)
- ▶ [Peace](#)

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How Apologies After War and Atrocities Matter in International Politics

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Definition

How do apologies and other acts of contrition after war and atrocities matter in international politics? Much of the existing scholarship has been concerned with whether such gestures can facilitate reconciliation between perpetrators and victims. While recognizing the value of such scholarship, this entry also discusses what apologies and other acts of contrition do more broadly. It suggests that apologies can have effects other than facilitating reconciliation. Apologies and other acts of contrition provide opportunities for former perpetrators to distinguish themselves from what they used to be. Through such differentiation, states and collectives that transgressed in the past can construct new identities for themselves and relate in new ways to other states and

groups. However, this entry also suggests other possible consequences of such identity redefinition through apologies. First, it may lead the former transgressor to want this new self-understanding to be recognized by others. If such recognition is not forthcoming, it might result in bilateral friction. Second, such changes may also contribute to enabling security policies that previously could not be enacted. These points are developed and illustrated through engagement with the case of Japanese apologies for colonialism and World War II.

Introduction

History-related issues in international politics have increased in importance after the end of the Cold War, and demands for apologies and compensation for past transgressions can be heard throughout the world (See the chapter on [Conflict, Memory, and Memory Activism: Dealing with Difficult Pasts](#) and the chapter on [Memorials and Transitional Justice](#); Kampf, 2009; Lazare, 2005, pp. 6–8). This has prompted some scholars to declare that we live in the “age of apology” (Brooks, 1999; Gibney et al., 2008). But how do apologies and other acts of contrition after war and atrocities matter in international politics?

This entry surveys the growing body of research that has explored such issues. It thereby highlights how apologies have typically been seen to matter in international politics. It shows that much research has emphasized the positive potential and power of apologies when it comes to achieving reconciliation. This entry, however, also discusses more critical and skeptical views of this conciliatory potential. In addition, through reference to recent research, it argues that apologies might also matter in other ways. Most notably, it suggests that apologies provide important opportunities for former aggressors to distinguish themselves from what they used to be. In other words, states and collectives that committed atrocities in the past can use apologies to construct new identities for themselves. As part of this process, they can also relate in new ways to other states and groups. This entry goes on to show that such identity redefinition through

apologies may have significant consequences. First, it may lead the former transgressor to want this new self-understanding to be recognized by others. If such recognition is not forthcoming, it might result in bilateral friction. Second, such changes may also contribute to making possible security policies that previously could not be enacted due to fear that it might lead the former aggressor to revert to its old ways. These points are illustrated through discussion of the case of Japan. Based on these discussions, this entry suggests that future research on apologies should further explore whether apologies matter in international politics beyond the possibility that they might contribute to reconciliation.

The Power of Apologies: How Contrition Can Facilitate Reconciliation

Much of the existing research has emphasized the power of apologies in achieving reconciliation (e.g., Barkan & Karn, 2006; Daase et al., 2016; Lazare, 2005). It has, for example, been argued that “[a]n honest and contrite confrontation with the past can . . . help to reduce threat perceptions abroad and build confidence and trust” (Langenbacher, 2010, p. 38). Politicians too have testified to the power of apologies: “When I admit my mistakes, people are convinced. It’s very effective” (Benjamin Netanyahu, quoted in Kampf, 2009, p. 257). Several scholars have stressed that apologies are closely linked to collective memory and identity (e.g., Tavuchis, 1991, p. 9; Löwenheim, 2009, p. 532). Apologies are said to have the power to alter identities through a reinterpretation or reframing of history (Luke, 1997, p. 366; Weyeneth, 2001, p. 10). Acts of contrition are likely to be particularly successful when the performance they entail expresses emotion (Wilson & Bleiker, 2014). It is argued, for example, that “[r]emorse improves the national spirit and health. It raises the moral threshold of a society” (Brooks, 1999, p. 3). Apologies may thus involve a reinterpretation of the story a group tells about itself (Barkan, 2000, p. xxii). Admitting (or refusing to admit) past transgressions indicates who a group is because it becomes part of this story. “How the offender perceives and addresses that past (in its

collective memory and historical narrative) demonstrates how it defines its role in it and what course it may take to come to terms with it” (Löwenheim, 2009, p. 554).

Critical Approaches: Why Do Apologies Fail?

The positive view of apologies has been questioned by scholars advocating a more skeptical approach that focuses not primarily on successful but also failed apologies (Kampf & Löwenheim, 2012).

Sometimes, demands for apologies are met with outright refusal to apologize. Such refusal may be related to the story a group tells about itself and the belief that the story and the group’s honor will be stained by such disclosures (O’Neill, 1999, p. 177). It may also be the case that even if an apology is presented by a representative of a state, other influential actors within the apologizing state may make statements that are seen as denying the apology (Cunningham, 2008; Lind, 2008). Because there may be opposition to apologies, it has been argued that rhetorical strategies that construct a common identity between the offender and victim groups can serve to legitimize apologies because it garners broad support for it within the group the apologizer represents. Such strategies are especially effective if coupled with an emotional and detailed description of the acts, which prompted the apology (Augoustinos et al., 2011).

An important criticism of arguments about the positive potential of apologies is that too much power has been ascribed to qualities seen as inherent to apologies. It has thus been pointed out that in much research, the power the audience has to interpret apologies and the context in which such interpretation takes place have not been sufficiently taken into account (Renner, 2010, p. 1586). Relatedly, some studies propose that the apology ritual is culturally specific and that misunderstandings are common in inter-cultural apologies (Gries & Peng, 2002; Murata, 1998). Differences in language or religion may function as obstacles to successful apologies (Barkan & Karn, 2006, pp. 14–15). This indicates that international apologies, especially in cases

characterized by cultural distance, may be especially complicated.

Additional Ways in Which Apologies Matter

While acknowledging the great value and important contributions of research concerned with the potential for apologies to facilitate reconciliation, this section suggests that apologies may matter in international politics in other ways as well. It proposes two ways in which apologies matter. First, states or groups that apologize for war or atrocities may present themselves as having changed since the time of the transgression. They may then want others to recognize that change. If such recognition is not forthcoming, however, it might disturb bilateral relations. Second, such changes may also contribute to enabling security policies that previously could not be enacted. Both these arguments have to do with identity and temporality. In what follows, I develop these points through engagement with the case of Japanese apologies for colonialism and World War II.

As indicated in the Wikipedia page that lists Japanese apologies (See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_war_apology_statements_issued_by_Japan, accessed 1 June 2021), Japan has apologized numerous times for wartime atrocities and colonialism. These apologies, however, have not been very successful in improving Japan’s image in the states that suffered most from Japanese aggression and colonialism, most notably China and South Korea. Some suggest that the reason is that Japanese apologies have been ambiguous (Coicaud, 2009, p. 117). Similarly, it has been suggested that the failure of Japanese apologies can be attributed to the fact that they have been followed by acts or statements by Japanese right-wingers and conservatives that have been seen as nullifying the apologies (Lind, 2008; Yamazaki, 2006). However, that apologies fail to change the views of victims does not necessarily mean that they do not matter. They may have effects on other audiences. Crucially, Japanese apology statements have contained discursive constructions of a Japanese identity that differentiates present-day Japan from wartime Japan. For example, during a

speech at the Asian-African Conference in Bandung, Indonesia in 2005, Prime Minister Koizumi Junichirō stated:

with feelings of deep remorse and heartfelt apology always engraved in mind, Japan has resolutely maintained, consistently since the end of World War II, never turning into a military power but an economic power, its principle of resolving all matters by peaceful means, without recourse to use of force. Japan once again states its resolve to contribute to the peace and prosperity of the world in the future as well, prizing the relationship of trust it enjoys with the nations of the world. (Koizumi, 2005)

Numerous Japanese apologies have contained similar statements in which postwar and present-day Japan are depicted as starkly different from wartime Japan. Whereas wartime Japan was a warmongering state that committed atrocities, postwar Japan is portrayed as peace-loving and contrite. This Japanese identity as peaceful is also apparent in abundant statements by Japanese politicians and the media describing Japan as a “peaceful nation,” or “peace state” (*heiwa kokka*). However, as Japan has apologized and emphasized its peacefulness and difference from wartime Japan, it has become increasingly sensitive to actions and statements that are seen as denying this self-image. For example, Japanese politicians, as well as the Japanese media, have repeatedly criticized Chinese education for focusing excessively on atrocities committed by wartime Japan, while not recognizing Japan’s peaceful development in the postwar period. This lack of recognition for Japan’s peacefulness has been described as one of the main reasons for violent anti-Japanese protests and other incidents that occurred in China in the 2000s and 2010s. The lack of recognition for Japan’s self-image as peaceful has thus contributed to the deterioration in bilateral relations (For more detailed accounts, see Gustafsson, 2015, 2016).

Apologies have also contributed to enabling changes to Japanese security policy that have taken place in recent years. These have been described as “radical policies that appear to transform national security, US-Japan alliance ties and relations with China and East Asia” (Hughes, 2015, p. 1). For example, in April 2014 Japan relaxed its ban on arms exports. In July the same year, the Japanese government reinterpreted Article 9 of the Japanese constitution, often referred to as the “peace clause,” to allow for collective self-

defense. This means that the Japanese Self-Defense Forces (SDF) are now allowed to offer military support in case an ally is attacked, even if Japan itself is not directly under attack. A key legal obstacle to Japan’s participation in war has thus been removed. But how did these changes occur?

Several scholars have argued that for a long time in the postwar period Japanese security policy was limited by a strong antimilitarist or pacifist self-understanding. Many Japanese expressed a fear of the revival of Japanese militarism. To prevent postwar Japan from reverting to its old militarist ways, constraints such as Article 9 of the constitution, the ban on arms exports, and other measures were self-imposed on Japan’s security policy (Berger, 1998; Katzenstein, 1996; Oros, 2008). This fear that Japan might once again become an aggressor unless legal restrictions were kept in place was accompanied by the abovementioned efforts to apologize to countries that suffered from Japanese militarism and colonialism. Again, these apology statements emphasized how different postwar Japan has become from wartime Japan. It was stressed that while wartime Japan was an aggressive warmonger, postwar Japan had become a peace state. As such apology statements were repeated, over time more and more people in Japan came to regard Japan as almost inherently peaceful and the fear that it might again become an aggressor declined significantly. The image of the Japanese Self-Defense Forces became increasingly positive, and opposition to security policy reform weakened. In this way, Japanese apologies and the self-image that they constructed contributed to enabling the far-reaching security policy changes mentioned above. This is not to say that there was no opposition to the reforms. The reforms were severely criticized. However, opposition had weakened to an extent that arguably made the changes possible (For a more detailed account, see Gustafsson, 2020).

Conclusion

This entry has surveyed the literature on apologies after atrocities and war. Such research has often

highlighted the power of apologies and suggested that apologies and other acts of contrition can bring about interstate or intergroup reconciliation. However, there is also a body of research that has emphasized that apologies are not always successful. Such scholars have argued for the importance of paying attention to failed apologies.

This entry has sought to further expand the debate about how apologies matter. In doing so, it has developed arguments based on the insight that apologies often are bound up with identity change. Those who apologize may seek to present themselves as having changed – as no longer being aggressive, war-mongering perpetrators. If, in such a situation, others do not recognize such a change in identity, the result might be a deterioration in relations. In addition, this entry has also suggested that apologies can contribute to enabling security policy change. A state that apologizes many times may thereby reconstruct its self-understanding from one where it sees itself as potentially dangerous to one where it considers itself inherently peaceful and therefore no longer a threat to peace. As a consequence, it may alter its security policy so that previously existing constraints are removed and actions that used to be considered illegal or inappropriate become possible.

These are only two additional ways in which apologies matter in international politics. Future research on apologies could explore whether there are additional ways in which apologies matter. One way to do so might be to focus on other audiences than the ones the apologies are directly meant for. For example, exploring effects on third-party audiences that belong neither to the apologizing nor the victimized states might be fruitful.

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Hugo Grotius

► [Just War Theory Across Time and Culture](#)

Human Dignity and Transitional Justice

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Synonyms

[Autonomy](#), [Agency](#), [Dignification](#), [Good life](#), [Right to have rights](#)

Definition

The idea of human dignity entails that humans have inherent and equal value due to the mere fact of being humans. This worth is unconditional, equal, and universal. Human dignity is an idea found at the core of human rights, and it has been recognized as a value and a right in diverse constitutions across the world. Human rights are a social practice and effective means to protect human dignity (Donnelly 2007). Human dignity is the ground to define what it means to live a life worth of living by humans; in a sense it is the definition of humanity in itself.

People who have suffered grave human rights violations have had their dignity violated, although it has not necessarily been lost. Transitional justice is an attempt to deal with violent and atrocious pasts by providing mechanisms of redress for victims. This includes truth commissions, criminal prosecutions, reparation programs, memorialization efforts, and other measures used to address large-scale or systematic violations in the wake of mass violence. Transitional justice offers an important toolkit of mechanisms that can help restore the human dignity of victims. Victims’ demand for human dignity points at their claim for recognition of their humanity as equal citizens. This entry explains the uses of the concept of human dignity in transitional justice, with particular reference to truth commissions and reparations.

Introduction

After the Second World War, human dignity became a fundamental legal concept. European constitutions sought to prevent the resurgence of totalitarianism by emphasizing that individuals should receive certain core protections from the state. For instance, the German Basic Law of 1949 presents human dignity both as a principle and as a right ensured by the state, declaring in Art. 1.1 that “human dignity shall be inviolable. To respect and protect it shall be the duty of all state authority.” Further, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights made the

relationship between human rights and human dignity explicit; it recognizes “the inherent dignity and . . . the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family,” as well as states in Art. 1 that “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.” Today, over 150 constitutions recognize the right to dignity and several international treaties refer to human dignity in their bodies or preambles.

Transitional justice, as it is understood today, emerged in the late 1980s to mid-1990s as a way to signal a new type of human rights activity (Arthur 2009; Bell 2009). Transitional justice is the product of attentive consideration on how to deal with human rights violations and political violence in societies undergoing some form of transition (Nagy 2008). Transitional justice is also deeply intertwined with the field of human rights. It is logical then that human dignity plays a prominent role in the scholarship and practice of transitional justice. The protection and restoration of human dignity is considered to be paramount in the policies of reconciliation, transition, and peace (Rosoux and Anstey 2017). Similar assertions can be found in Louis Joinet’s report on the “*Principles against impunity*,” (UNHCR 2005): “Collectively, symbolic measures – annual homage to the victims or public recognition by the State of its responsibility, for example – **besides helping to restore victims’ dignity**, also help to discharge the duty of remembrance” (my emphasis). However, contrary to fields such as constitutional law and human rights, the meaning and the role of human dignity in transitional justice has seldom been interrogated.

Human dignity can be defined as simply as “the equal treatment and respect of human beings due to the fact of being human,” but the materialization of human dignity as a principle, norm, or right to be protected is more complex than that simple definition. The protection of human dignity challenges a consensus over its conceptualization amid international and domestic courts (Dupré 2015; Rosen 2012; Waldron 2012). Human dignity as a constitutional value requires that the state ensures its protection and realization. Additionally, many modern

constitutions recognize human dignity as a constitutional right, “The constitutional right to dignity is intended to ensure human beings’ political and civil liberties as well as their social and economic freedoms” (Barak 2015, p. 367). Courts invoking human dignity have used different versions of the concept, for example, “dignity may be considered part of autonomy, liberty, equality or respect—values that will often be irreconcilable” (Rao 2008, p. 208). Contrary to the uses of human dignity in constitutional law, the treatment of human dignity within transitional justice is more focused on its restoration than on its protection, with the exception of the protection of the dignity of the victims involved in testimonials in truth commissions and reparation mechanisms, in an attempt to avoid their revictimization.

This entry explains the uses of the concept of human dignity in transitional justice, with particular reference to truth commissions and reparations. The reason for observing these two particular mechanisms is because in contrast to the rest of the mechanisms such as trials, vetting, or amnesties, reparations and truth commissions focus on the victims. The entry discusses how this concept has been used in the transitional justice process in Colombia, following the Victims and Restitution of Land Law in 2005 and the peace accord between the FARC guerrillas and the government in 2016 as well as mentions to other internationally prominent transitions.

The Uses of Human Dignity Amid Transitional Justice

Transitional justice measures are established to deal with the legacy of past atrocities amid political transition. Transitional justice includes governmental and non-governmental policies and mechanisms that aim to bring justice, truth, reparations, and warranties of non-repetition. Although some scholars contend that these practices date back centuries ago (Elster 2004), they have only been systematically applied, at times as a toolbox to different sociopolitical contexts, since the 1980s, with a rapid surge in the creation of truth commissions in the 1990s

(Teitel 2014). Truth commissions, memorials, and reparations not only seek to recognize the indignities suffered by the victims of violence but to restore victims' human dignity.

For instance, the Guatemalan Commission for Historical Clarification claims that:

There is no doubt that the truth is of benefit to everyone, both victims and transgressors. The victims, whose past has been degraded and manipulated, will be dignified; the perpetrators, through the recognition of their immoral and criminal acts, will be able to recover the dignity of which they had deprived themselves.

Similarly, the final report of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission argues that:

The Commission facilitated the official, public acknowledgement of these violations. In so doing, it sought to restore the dignity of those who had suffered.

Scholarship on reparations and truth commissions has explicitly claimed that transitional justice can restore victims' human dignity and that "by acknowledging suffering and wrongdoing and allowing victims to tell their story it will help restore dignity and assist the healing process" (Lundy 2011, p. 100). These assumptions are repeatedly spread (Nauenberg 2015). For example, claims that public testimonies at South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission "helped people to restore their human dignity" are generally accepted as common wisdom (Castillejo-Cuellar 2007). According to Malamud-Goti and Grosman (2006, p. 541), "in the context of a transitional democracy, the specific goal of compensation to victims of human rights abuse is to restore their dignity and to reintegrate them to civil society as equal citizens." Bernadette Atuahene (2016, p. 796) uses the category of "dignity takings and dignity restoration" in her analysis of land restitution programs for victims of involuntary property loss in South Africa. She defines dignity restoration as the mechanisms that address "deprivations of both property and dignity by providing material compensation to dispossessed populations through processes that affirm their humanity and establish their agency." However,

several challenges arise when trying to use this same definition to address nonmaterial loss, such as death, disappearance of bodies, or torture.

Meanings of Human Dignity

For the purpose of the present discussion, the meanings of human dignity are divided in two sets. The first set of meanings highlights the dimension of human dignity as a universal justification for the protection of human rights. The second set of meanings emphasizes the meaning of human dignity in everyday life and is dependent on particular sociocultural contexts.

According to the first set, human rights should be protected because humans have a special place in the creation, either because they were created in the image of God (religious explanation) or because they are equipped with autonomy and reason (secular explanation). Kant justifies the exceptionality of humans on the basis that, "we – all of us, equally – contain within ourselves the moral law to which we are subject" (Rosen 2012, p. 55). There is something in humans both as an essence and as a status that makes them special and at the same time equal. Waldron (2012, p. 33) explains this argument as follows: "the modern notion of *human* dignity involves an upwards equalization of rank, so that we now try to accord to every human being something of the dignity, ranks, and expectation of respect that was formerly accorded to nobility." Although this is an important discussion in philosophy and law, it is not as relevant in the context of societies in transition or post-atrocity societies, which are more concerned with the realization of human dignity and its restoration than on debates about the meaning or origin of human dignity.

Questions about the origin of human dignity are neither a strong priority nor self-evident in the aftermath of conflict or authoritarian regimes. Instead, transitional justice is concerned with the question of how to restore victims' human dignity. For some victims, the inherent value and worth of people is not lost even after experiencing the worst circumstances, what is lost is the social regarding of their human dignity. The social and

relational dimension of human dignity is the locus of victims' claims in the context of transitional justice. This dimension has two sociocultural components, the emotional (cultural) and the relational (social).

Although there are legal definitions for “the right to lead a life in keeping with human dignity” (see the Belgian constitution, art. 23), debates about undignified and inhumane treatment (Buyse 2016), as well as for the violation of human dignity, the definition of human dignity is not only a philosophical or legal problem. The everyday understanding of human dignity is based on cultural notions of humiliation and social recognition.

The cultural dimension of human dignity reflects emotions and feelings that are culturally constructed (Fierke 2015). For instance, the term *Agaciro* is a word in Kinyarwanda that denotes dignity. It has been used as a form to create an idea of a “New Rwanda”; therefore it not only has a cultural but also a political dimension. This cultural aspect of human dignity allows us to understand certain crimes in the light of what they culturally mean for the victims, for instance, how the desecration of a body is a way of harming somebody's dignity, and the challenge to restore their dignity in the aftermath (Bolin 2019).

Dignity or lack of dignity is related to the emotion of humiliation, humiliation as the denial of a mutual sense of worth (Hicks 2011). The cultural element of human dignity refers to the feeling of “inherent value and worth” that people experience (Hicks 2011, p. 6). This is not an existential or a philosophical definition as much as a feeling or an emotion that is materialized in social norms and behaviors. When victims claim that their dignity has been violated or that it needs to be restored, they mean that those social norms required to be regarded as humans have been broken, and something needs to be done in order to repair them.

The social dimension of Human dignity emphasizes its relational character. This means that the recognition of human dignity goes beyond the personal self-assessment and the individual recognition of self-respect and reaches toward the dignifying dimension as it is constructed

through human relationships. According to Llewellyn and Philpott (2014, p. 21), “Dignity is not something that resides in the individual alone. Rather it marks the relationship between and among parties. Dignity refers here to the way in which we are connected with others – that such connections must refer their value.” From this perspective, the violation of human dignity means that there is a rupture in the relationship between people as members of the human family, between victims and perpetrators, but also between perpetrators as members of the human family. In this way, some scholars have argued that perpetrators also lose their dignity through the practice of atrocities. Corrias (2016) commenting on the case of the prisoner, war criminal and former leader in the Khmer Rouge movement, Cambodian Kaing Guek Eav, better known as Duch, claims that “By committing the crimes he has confessed, by dehumanizing his victims and humanity, Duch has dehumanized himself in the sense that he has made himself an outcast of humanity (inhuman, or outsider of humanity).”

Demanding Dignity

The concept of human dignity also becomes relevant in post-conflict contexts when it is used as an umbrella term for bringing together claims of social justice from disenfranchised groups, particularly victims' groups. The use of the language of dignity in relation to the violation of their human, economic, social, and cultural rights serves as a tool for highlighting the urgency and severity of the victims' situation. These demands stress that a minimum of basic conditions need to be achieved in order to live a life worth of human dignity (Nussbaum 2011).

The demand for social recognition goes beyond the self-recognition and includes the claim for political recognition as an equal citizen. This demand points at the need to be regarded in equal terms. This claim is imbued in the principle of equality of access to resources and political rights, but also it demands the equal acknowledgment and status to different identities (Margalit 1996; Taylor 1992). According to Daly and May

(2018, p. 3), “Dignity then is both a means (participation itself promotes human dignity) and as an end (democratic participation produces results most likely to advance and enhance human dignity as a substantive matter of lived experience).”

Dignity is built through the demand for rights, and for dignity itself. By highlighting autonomy and agency, the empowerment that results from the claims of citizens, and particularly of victims, they regain their dignity even before their demands are met. The claim for human dignity has become a popular slogan among emancipatory and social movements, and it works as a vehicle that creates empathy and brings together the dispossessed in their fight for freedom, equality, and basic resources (Alhassen and Shihab-Eldin 2012; McCrudden 2013). The demand for human dignity is an implicit claim for equal recognition of their humanity, particularly after living under a political system that has prospered under the denial of their human worth. Regarding dignity from a postcolonial perspective, El Bernoussi (2015) brings important questions about the material aspect of dignity; can dignity be bought? In her research on the Egyptian revolution, she coined the term *dignition* to explain “mainly a struggle between a seemingly misunderstood dignity, and a need for defiance and recognition” (El Bernoussi 2015, 378).

Dignification of Victims in Colombia

Human dignity plays an important role in the Colombian Constitution. In the context of its transitional justice policies and legislation, the Law of Victims and Land Restitution (2011) created a number of mechanisms intended to repair victims and support the restitution of their land property. Article 4 establishes “Dignity” as one of the general principles of the law, and Article 1 establishes that in addition to the core principles of transitional justice (right to truth, justice, reparation, and nonrecurrence for victims), the goal of the law is:

that their condition of victims is recognized and dignified through the materialization of their constitutional rights. (“dentro de un marco de justicia transicional, que posibiliten hacer efectivo el goce de sus derechos a la verdad, la justicia y la reparación con garantía de no repetición, de modo que se reconozca su condición de víctimas y se dignifique a través de la materialización de sus derechos constitucionales.” (my emphasis))

Article 2 establishes that

... it offers tools [for victims] for them to claim their dignity and take on their citizenship. (“ofreciendo herramientas para que estas reivindiquen su dignidad y asuman su plena ciudadanía.”)

The framework of reparation in Colombia is integral, which means that it includes not only measures of material reparation and distributive justice but also of symbolical redress through restorative justice; “it is about the dignification and restoration of the effective enjoyment of the victims’ fundamental rights.” ((iii) el derecho a la reparación de las víctimas es integral, en la medida en que se deben adoptar distintas medidas determinadas no solo por la justicia distributiva sino también por la justicia restaurativa, en cuanto se trata de la dignificación y restauración plena del goce efectivo de los derechos fundamentales de las víctimas) Similarly, regarding the Truth, Coexistence, and Non-Recurrence Commission, “its main focus is to **guarantee the dignification of victims.**” (“13. Los procesos de transformación positiva de las organizaciones e instituciones a lo largo del conflicto. Para el logro de los objetivos y del mandato, la Comisión, tiene como eje central **asegurar la dignificación de las víctimas** y contribuir a la satisfacción de su derecho a la verdad y las garantías de no repetición, bajo los enfoques territorial, diferencial y de género, de conformidad con lo establecido en el Decreto 588 de 2017.” [emphasis added]. <https://comisiondelaverdad.co/la-comision/mandato-y-funciones>)

Up until now, attempts to restore the human dignity of victims have mainly been applied in the context of measures of satisfaction following the United Nations (2005) statement that victims of gross violations of international human rights law and serious violations of international

humanitarian law should receive full and appropriate reparations to nonmaterial harm or harm that cannot be repaired through material means. For example, “the publication of a sentence [that recognizes the responsibility of the state over a criminal act] in official newspapers or other media, is considered [by the Interamerican Court of Human Rights] as an action that can help to dignify the victims” (Gamboa Martínez 2016, p. 16).

Truth-telling and measures to address victims’ memories of harms are also perceived as an outlet for the restoration of victims’ human dignity. For instance, according to the 1448 Law, the Historical Memory National Center (Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica, CNMH) should create a National Memory Museum that should develop actions that can reestablish victims’ dignity and spread the truth about what happened. Similarly, different attempts by the CNMH seek to emphasize the memory of the active engagement and resistance of civilians and victims amid conflict. There is an assumption that highlighting the positive and resilient actions of victims is a way of inscribing their narratives into the collective memory of the conflict in Colombia (see CNMH 2013).

Summary

Human dignity is a legal concept that has become increasingly recognized by national constitutions and international treaties. It has been amply understood as a justification for human rights. Additionally, the demand for human dignity has been a call for social justice and recognition by emancipatory movements across the world. The idea of human dignity has been included in transitional justice measures to justify the transformation of a political system that requires stronger support for human rights and prompt a social transformation that recognizes all members of society as equal and worthy of rights. Transitional justice has mainly focused on the restoration of the human dignity of victims and the reincorporation of perpetrators into civilian life, who also have the opportunity to restore

their own dignity that was violated through the enactment of atrocities. While victims have not entirely lost their human dignity, the social relationships that ensure the recognition of their worth has been broken. Memorials, truth commission, apologies, and other measures can help restore victims’ dignity. However, further research on the local and cultural meanings of human dignity and dignification is required. The focus on the Colombian case presented in this entry, shows the challenges for operationalizing and materializing the demand and the right to dignity in a post-conflict setting.

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Human Geography and Peacebuilding

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Synonyms

Space, place, and peacebuilding; Spatial agency; Spatial analysis

Definition

Peacebuilding as a concept, and a spatial and social process, is rooted in human geography. This entry looks at the interconnectedness of human geography and peacebuilding and how this has advanced understandings of peace (building). Through this, the chapter demonstrates the long-standing spatial nature of the field though this has developed more so in recent years. Notably, this advancement has been preceded by closer attention paid to bottom-up initiatives which contribute to, and establish conditions of, peace. Such localized spaces have created opportunities beyond elite and international spaces of peacebuilding. Though notably, these spaces have their own accessibility issues. International peacebuilding efforts characterized by liberal peacebuilding have been marked by a lack of effectiveness through, in some cases, a replication and maintenance of divisions, spatially and socially. To illustrate the intersection of human geography with peacebuilding, this chapter will use the case studies of South Africa and Bosnia and Herzegovina to illustrate the connection of human geography and peacebuilding. Other relevant case studies will be noted to illustrate key points.

Introduction

Peacebuilding was first introduced by Johan Galtung in 1976 (298); it involves the establishment of structures which “remove causes of wars and offer alternatives to war in situations where wars might occur.” As Galtung observes, in the opening paragraph of the work, geographical distance and topography have long served as a tool for classical approaches to peace in international relations (1976, p. 282). Peacebuilding is enacted on multiple levels, from the interpersonal to interstate, in the broad spectrum of the field of peacebuilding. The term was formalized as a process within the UN through the 1992 *An Agenda for Peace* written by former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali which set out that peacebuilding would “identify and support

structures, which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict” (Boutros-Ghali 1992, p. 6). The Brahimi Report released in 2000 sought to move peacebuilding as a concept and a process forward to encompass that which provides the “the foundations of peace and provide the tools for building on those foundations something that is more than just the absence of war” (Brahimi 2000, p. 3). A few months later in 2000, UN Security Council Resolution 1325 was passed which was a landmark resolution on the inclusivity of women in all spheres of peacebuilding (UN SC RES 1325: 2000). This has been followed by reports which refine focus on localized approaches and those which further advance the involvement of women in peacebuilding.

Critically, peace means different things to different people and is experienced differently dependent on positionalities. In “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” written by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr in 1963, King Jr observes the structural violence and maintenance of the status quo which the “White moderate” facilitate in the fight for social justice and racial equality. According to King Jr, the White moderate is “more devoted to “order” than to justice; [and] prefers a negative peace which is the absence of tension to a positive peace which is the presence of justice.” King Jr’s conceptualization of what peace means socially alongside Galtung’s 1969 theorization of positive and negative peace (the latter being merely the cessation of violence and the former being a situation in which individuals could experience a fulfilled life in Galtung’s conceptualization) allows us to think critically about what peace looks like and how peace manifests differently depending on positionalities. In relation to peacebuilding as a concept, positive peace is the condition wherein peacebuilding occurs and can be most effective. These understandings of what peace is and how peace may be built can be thought of in combination with Lederach’s (2003) work on conflict transformation. Through this concept, Lederach (2003) frames conflict as that which is part of everyday life and can be transformed for the improvement of relations. Lederach (2003, p. 12, 7) deploys a spatial

metaphor to address the context and layers of conflict, which create the ““topography” a relief map of the peaks and valleys,” essential to understanding how peacebuilding may occur.

Human geography is the study of people and their spatial surroundings. It is an area of study which covers the broad relationship between humans and geography. The growth of intersections between human geography and peace and conflict studies is demonstrable due to the intrinsic link between lived environment and human relations. Peace and conflict studies have always been spatial in nature, and human geography has long explored different types of conflict (Williams et al. 2014, p. 7). The variety of spaces which interact with war and peace are broad, as both place and war are created through human movement and use of space (Flint 2005, p. 5) and war transforms place. Notably, there is a range of *spaces* in which humans interact with the lived environment and in which social constructions dictate movement or create conflict, for example, water resources, land, migration and movement, urban and rural spaces, and the relations that spatially manifest therein. In researching these areas and others, geography scholars have been part of widening the scope of the field of peacebuilding. This has been a recent development as Koopman observed in 2011 (193) peace was not central in any way in geography despite critical geography largely being “about and for peace.” Part of the contribution which geographers have made involves the critique of liberal forms of peacebuilding through “deconstructing normative assumptions about peace and in exploring peace as situated knowledges within different cultural settings” (Williams et al. 2014, p. 11). This localization of understanding peace is a central contribution to the development of peacebuilding research.

Spatial Dimensions of Peace and Conflict

Conflict, in all its forms, interpersonal, intercommunal, and interstate, is spatial in nature and complex in its origin and form. The post-Cold War era saw the rise of intrastate violence incited under

the mask of ethnic tensions. Interstate conflicts, such as the Bosnian War, the Rwandan genocide, and the Sri Lankan Civil War, among many others, were characterized by displacement, ethnic cleansing, and genocide. Such types of violence are spatial, involving the mobilization of persons through evoking narratives of ownership over space and stoking tensions regarding resources and space. In more recent years, there has been rise in the popularity and visibility of right-wing nationalist politics, and siege mentality focused around state borders has been used to solidify political control through fueling fear and inciting violence (e.g., the USA). This is illustrative of the use of socially constructed understandings of space and statehood to restrict or legitimize movement (Foucault 1976). Such spatially orientated narratives center on “imagined geographies” (Said 1979, p. 49) and “imagined communities” (Anderson 2006, p. 6). These imagined socio-spatialities create temporally and physically static perceptions of place.

As explored by Massey in *Space, Place, and Gender* (1994), space is constructed through intersections of identity and social relations. In this work, Massey (1994, p. 5) proposes a reimagining of place identities as that which are “always unfixed, contested and multiple.” It is through understanding place identities in this way that the narratives of place as belonging exclusively to “internal histories or to timeless identities” may be deconstructed (1994, p. 5). Therein altering narratives around place identity can impact on how peace is built and aligns well with the concept of conflict transformation through the dynamism inherent in social ideas of space and social relations.

Case Studies

South Africa was colonized by Dutch, and British forces who exploited the land and oppressed the Indigenous population. The 1913 Natives Land Act facilitated the displacement of Black populations to townships and reduced the space available to this majority group. Following this, in the mid-1900s, the racist apartheid government

expanded the project of displacement and regulation of movement furthering racialised spatial restrictions through multiple laws including those which restricted education, work conditions, and political representation, alongside marital and sexual relations. The displacement of Black but also Indian and Colored (as defined and described by the South African government) communities led to an expansion of townships and enforced separateness of public spaces. After a long civil rights fight against the oppressive apartheid state violence, in 1994 the apartheid era officially ended with the transition to democracy. However, the large-scale inequalities fostered by the apartheid government were spatially maintained. This was compounded by a lack of reparations through the Transitional Justice process, and a lack of social support for marginalized communities, resulting in a transgenerational continuation of the inequalities established during the era of apartheid.

Since the formal end of apartheid, the population of townships has expanded. This has led to a splitting of access to basic resources such as water and electricity, and an increase in informal settlements which are more vulnerable to poor weather conditions or removal and displacement by government officials. Furthermore, in Cape Town, one of the most divided large cities in South Africa, the inequalities created by apartheid and maintained in the post-apartheid era have led to an increase in gang violence which has resulted in murder statistics which are comparable to war zones (Merrington 2018). The widespread physical violence is paralleled by widespread structural violence (Galtung 1990) which has resulted in the maintenance of separate schools, long commutes for those living in townships, and unequal opportunities for Black, Colored, and other minority ethnic groups. This maintains the economic violence created by apartheid's spatial and structural divides, which preserves socioeconomic divides and perpetuates inequality transgenerationally.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

In 1963 the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) was established, under the leadership of Josip Broz Tito, who enforced a narrative

of Yugoslavian identity through “brotherhood and unity.” Following the death of Tito, the “imagined geography” (Said 1979, p. 49) and imagined community (Anderson 2006, p. 6) of SFRY began to crumble. The economic turmoil that followed led to a rise in nationalism which manifested along ethno-nationalist lines and resulted in numerous states declaring independence. In 1991 ethnic violence erupted in the former Yugoslavia, stoked by elite actors creating a climate of misinformation and fear. Plans to divide Bosnia and Herzegovina were already underway by Slobodan Milosević and Franjo Tudman, Serb and Croat leaders, respectively. This resulted in the Bosnian War, during which there was a widespread use of rape as a weapon of war, ethnic cleansing, displacement, and detention, alongside the destruction of cultural heritage and the social fabric of the spaces and places where violence occurred. The Dayton Agreement in 1995 brought an end to the conflict through spatially dividing the contested territory. The Agreement established two separate spatial entities, the Federation of Herzegovina and the Republika Srpska and separately the Brcko District.

These conflict divisions still permeate everyday life in Bosnia and Herzegovina, such as in the divided schooling system which frequently operates as separate schools for the main ethnic groups, Bosniak, Croat, and Serb. The resulting effect is that children learn three different histories through ethno-nationalistically charged textbooks. The division also manifests at a local-spatial level, in divided cities (see section “[Divided Cities](#)”), such as Sarajevo and Mostar, among others. Over 20 years on from the end of the Bosnian War, the result of these maintained divisions is the transgenerational perpetuation of narratives of division, of movement, and of the heritage and ownership of space.

The two case study examples, South Africa and Bosnia and Herzegovina, though different in their spatial context and histories, demonstrate the spatial nature of conflict, and the ineffectiveness of top-down orientated “peace” agreements. In combination, the stagnant and maintained nature of divisions in these two very different spatial contexts demonstrates a lack of peacebuilding,

as the structures which created the conditions for war and conflict are replicated.

Divided Cities

Due to economic, social, and cultural, and spatial practices, all cities can be considered divided. This is observable globally and can be seen to take different forms. For example, the Grenfell Tower disaster in 2017 demonstrated the catastrophic variability of quality of housing in one of the most affluent parts of Central London. While all cities are divided in some way, the divided city classification is one which represents a significant socio-spatial divide that perpetuates divides established through large-scale violence, physical, cultural, or structural, though the three are often intertwined (Galtung 1990). The divide may be immediate; for example, in some areas of Cape Town, gated communities exist opposite informal settlements. Comparative to the pools and luxury housing on one side, communities living in informal settlements experience restricted access to basic rights such as water, electricity, and proper housing. Such inequality, which is racialized, perpetuates and maintains the divide created under the apartheid government and acts as a barrier to peacebuilding initiatives, as structures which prevent conflict are not in place. Rather, the unequal system perpetuates social divides and acts as an impediment to building peace.

Other divided cities, such as Belfast and Mostar, are also spatially divided, with separate schooling spaces facilitating the transgenerational maintenance of the conflict divisions. In focus, the city of Mostar has been divided between East and West, since the onset of the 1992–1995 Bosnian War. It is a city which has suffered significant violence and destruction of cultural heritage during the war, including the destruction of Stari Most, an Ottoman era bridge. Following the conflict, and at the hand of various international institutional efforts to mitigate political relations, the jurisdictional divisions of the city were enshrined in the constitution of the city. Such spatially based measures replicate divisions of the conflict and demonstrate the lack of social structure-building necessary to transform social divisions of a conflict.

Fundamentally, while the spaces mentioned here are not considered spaces of violent conflict, due to different top-down agreements, it can be observed that they are very much spaces which would benefit from peacebuilding. In such spaces where the state is stagnated structurally, localized forms of peacebuilding can create opportunities which allow for conflict tensions to be mediated or diffused. Therefore, in such contexts we can look closer at localized and bottom-up responses to divisions in order to explore how and if people living in these spaces experience peace.

Space, Place, and Peacebuilding

In 1991 radical critical geographer, Doreen Massey, set out the impact of space and place identity in relation to movement and globalization. Massey (1991, p. 26) observed that while expedited global flows created wider and more frequent use of space, they also restricted and “effectively imprisoned” others through the nexus of space and global flows of capital. Understandings of space have historically been centered around space as empty, and as a vacuum, devoid of meaning (Foucault 1980, p. 177) and space has been analytically marginalised (Gupta Ferguson 1992, p. 7). However, it is notable that place but also space is imbued with complex social relations and therefore essential to consider in peacebuilding. In particular, place is something which we derive formalized sources of identity from, such as passports, which dictate the spaces and places that we have access to (dependent on statehood and the interrelation of this with other states which can impede or expedite movement across borders).

While we live in a world characterized by sharpening borders and walls, socially led initiatives which provide the preconditions for peacebuilding, those rooted in social justice, operate transnationally and are frequently borderless. Increasingly, global movements, such as those tackling violence against women, racial inequality, and the global environmental crisis, have manifested as cross-border protests through resistance to oppressive hegemonies. Such protests

and resistance are created in an effort to establish conditions that allow for individuals to live a fulfilled life, which can be considered a process of peacebuilding.

Notably, place is created through shared understandings of what space is and by proxy what it is not; however this will never be a uniform experience. We can therefore say that ideas and understandings of place are built out of conflict. This is a continuous struggle which may or may not be violent (Mitchell 2011, p. 7). As citizens seek to re-negotiate spatial realities of the every day, there may be a conflict of understanding which may involve structures of power. For example, protest is a spatial conflict; it involves the visibility of individuals; it may be for liberation and progress (environmental marches, anti-war) or oppression (far right, fascist marches). Protest are often anti-governmental, which can result in intrastate violence as can be seen in the 2011–2014 Egyptian revolution, 2014 Ukrainian revolution, or the 2019- ongoing protests in Hong Kong, alongside many more occurrences. Therefore, returning to what Martin Luther King Jr set out in 1963, it can be observed that some protests aim to establish positive peace as the presence of justice, and this may involve “tension.”

Spaces of Peacebuilding and “The Local”

Notably, within the field of peace and conflict studies, understandings of what peace is and how peace is experienced differ depending on the positionality of the individual. As Koopman (2017, p. 4976) observes, the variability of what peace means is space-time dependent, “peace means different things at different scales, as well as to different groups and at different times and places.” Critically, it can be observed that the concept of peace has long been an elite and temporal experience. State violence, marginalization, racism, homophobia, transphobia, and xenophobia, among others have long made *peaceful* space, that which is distinctively dangerous and conflictual, for individuals who face oppression of their identity or intersecting identities (Crenshaw 1989). In focus, our experience of space is a

temporal and a spatial intersection, which is influenced by our positionality.

It can be observed that peacebuilding as a process is a spatial conflict and, indeed historically, has operated as a process which instils peace top-down, on instead of in communities. While top-down peace agreements create important conditions, for example, for the cessation of violence and recognition of statehood (Caspersen 2011, 2016; Visoka 2018), such agreements frequently overlook the space of the every day. And as can be seen from the two case studies, the top-down form of peacebuilding has, typically, replicated conflict divisions spatially. This form of peacebuilding, though successful in some spaces, has a poor track record of transforming communities and the conflict narrative and conflict divisions. Such issues with top-down peacebuilding have led to a reorientation toward bottom-up peacebuilding and to the everyday spatial experience of peacebuilding, or “the local turn.”

The local turn describes a refocusing of peace and conflict studies to the level of the every day as part of a larger critical turn in the field (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013; Richmond et al. 2015). It is a development of peace and conflict studies which focuses on bottom-up peacebuilding, as peace which is established locally. The local turn focuses on local understandings of peace; this has been advanced by “the spatial turn” to include analysis of space and place. Such spatially based analysis, in combination with a critical view of the interplay of structure and agency, can help develop understanding of the interactivity of the “structures of war and peace, as well as the role of individual and collective actors to either engrain them, or to put them openly in to question” (Björkdahl and Kappler 2017, p. 137). This chapter uses the term local to refer to residents of the space of focus, as in those who use the space frequently. It is worth noting that “the local” is not a cure-all for intergroup tensions and may replicate uneven and oppressive power relations. Notably, localized approaches to peace and reconciliation may exclude marginalized groups, for example, women (see chapter “► Gender Justice and Peacebuilding”), or minority groups. This may also exclude youth, working class

communities, ethnic or religious groups, individuals from the LGBTIQ+ community (see chapter “► [LGBTQ Perspectives in Peacebuilding](#)”), elderly people, or people with health conditions or impairments. And of course, this list is not exhaustive and could include intersections of the aforementioned identities, creating significant non-spatial barriers to engagement in peacebuilding in local settings.

However, beyond locally established spaces of peace, localized peacebuilding or everyday peace (see chapter “► [Everyday Peace](#)”) occurs in daily geographies, for example, malls, parks, and schools (Kappler 2014; Mac Ginty 2014; Björkdahl 2015; Forde 2018). A closer exploration of the narratives of post-conflict space allows researchers to better understand how residents experience everyday spaces and what this means for peacebuilding. Such developments have the potential to further advance localized understandings of peace and conflict from a participatory approach. Mac Ginty and Firchow’s (2014) work on “everyday peace indicators” demonstrates this through facilitating respondents to define their own experience of peace as a highly localized experience. As observed through earlier case study examples, peace agreements can reaffirm the territorial divisions of the conflict, maintaining the divisive narrative through schooling and homogenous, isolated, communities. It is in such spaces that the utility of human geography informed understandings of space can be of benefit. The refocusing toward the spatial every day entails an exploration of agency and movement.

Notably, traditional understandings of space and place have been informed by top-down understandings of how individuals use space. For example, colonial maps and engineering of space have created the conditions wherein former use of space is drastically reorganized along new power nexuses, creating conflict over understandings of the heritage and use of space. As part of the local turn and the spatial turn in peace and conflict studies, academics and practitioners working in post-conflict space, informed by the fields of anthropology, sociology, psychology, and human geography, have looked toward the agency of local actors as a form of peacebuilding and the

transformation of social relations (see chapter “► [Peacebuilding and Spatial Transformation](#)”) (Kappler 2014; Björkdahl and Kappler 2017).

Agency is as framed by Giddens (1984, p. 14) as the capability of an individual to “make a difference.” In structurally oppressive spaces, wherein top-down peacebuilding (or top-down governance) has established divisive structures which govern everyday movement, and/or the liveability of space, agency has the potential to build everyday peace. Notably, some local actors reinforce the status quo in post-conflict divided spaces, but there are individuals which traverse top-down understandings and conceptualizations of post-conflict spaces. It is the latter which local, and critical peace and conflict studies focus on and through this focus demonstrate the agentive capabilities of local actors to engage in peacebuilding at an everyday level. This may occur in public, through movement, use of space, and the establishment of local shared spaces, or may occur in private spaces through socialization; both of these broad spaces facilitate the transformation of trans-generational narratives of peace and conflict. Theoretically and empirically, a range of authors have engaged with the social use of space in post-conflict or post-violence spaces, including but not limited to Björkdahl and Gusic (2013), Carabelli (2018), Kappler (2014), Palmberger (2013), and Vogel (2018). One of the challenges of understanding this type of highly localized movement and use of space is methodological, and this is also an area wherein geography-based methodologies enhance understanding of post-conflict space and the process of peacebuilding.

Methodologies of Place and Space

Understandings of localized everyday peacebuilding have been developed through the application of various spatial and socially based methodologies. Approaches such as walking interviews, mapping, narrative interviews, and others have been used in practitioner and academic research in post-conflict spaces to better understand relations and interactions alongside the use of space.

Sometimes referred to as “the Troubles,” the conflict in Northern Ireland spanned from the

1960s to the late 1990s, ending with the signing of the Good Friday Agreement. The origin of the conflict is rooted in the colonization and governance of the Ireland by British forces, resulting in sectarian violence spanning hundreds of years. Presently, some cities in Northern Ireland remain divided, for example, some areas of Belfast are still divided by “peace” walls. It is due to the close proximity of the communities that the value of investigating the use of social space at an interpersonal and community level is valuable for researchers aiming to understand the post-conflict use of space and post-conflict memory. For example, in Belfast, Switzer and McDowell (2009, p. 337) and separately Murphy and Murtagh (2010, p. 12) have used mapping to better understand community relations and use of space in the city.

Spatial methodologies are also utilized by practitioners and research-based organizations to better understand the social use of space on a micro level and to increase the everyday security and stability for individuals living in vulnerable conditions. For example, in South Africa, the Sustainable Livelihoods Foundation (SLF), among others, works to improve the lives of individuals living in townships in South Africa through research-based advocacy and activism. The organization uses participatory methodologies which are innovative and engaging to better understand local perceptions and use of community space; this includes mapping local space but also the use of photography and participant-led narratives to tell the story of the space (SLF 2016; Brown et al. 2018). Such locally focused research aims to meet some key goals of peacebuilding, though not framed as such, through the increase in the safety and quality of life that residents can enjoy in these spaces. It also creates a platform for residents to express their understandings of space alongside demonstrating the agency that marginalized actors have in oppressive spaces.

In other cities, such as Jerusalem, Raanan and Shoval (2014) have conducted research on movement and use of city space which involved the GPS tracking of participants’ movement; this was compared to mind maps which the participants produced. While in Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina, researchers have used walking and mapping

methodologies (Carabelli and Zuljevic 2012; Carabelli 2014; Forde 2018, 2019) in researching the use of public space and public memory. Further still, the interdisciplinary nature of understanding post-conflict, space is demonstrated through Djurasovic’s (2016) work on Mostar, rooted in the field of urban planning and design. A wider range of peace and conflict scholars, such as Björkdahl (2015), Björkdahl and Gusic (2013), Hromadžić (2015), Kappler (2014), Laketa and Suleymanova (2017), Palmberger (2013), and Björkdahl and Selimovic (2015), have also engaged in site-specific research in the city in order to better understand how locals negotiate everyday divided geographies. Critically, how we understand peacebuilding at a local level has been advanced and expanded by related fields which concern the spatial including human geography and related fields of urban studies, urban planning and design, sociology, and anthropology, among others. Such localized approaches create the opportunity for bottom-up narratives of peacebuilding to be featured in research and academic work which has previously often structurally excluded and marginalized such voices.

Summary

While human geography is useful for understanding the logistics of peacebuilding on a large scale, it has strong application potential as a tool for understanding bottom-up peacebuilding or everyday spaces of peace. Through interdisciplinary work and peace and conflict literature that explores the spatial and the every day, a greater understanding of the complexity and diversity of experiences in post-conflict space has been achieved in recent years. While the field of peacebuilding has only recently moved toward what is termed the “spatial turn,” it is observable that peacebuilding has always been spatial in nature. Therefore, notably, though peacebuilding has always concerned human geographies, recent developments in the field have compounded the importance of interdisciplinary understandings of what peacebuilding involves, on all spatial scales. As previously explored, conflict may be that

which is transformative and resistant to structural oppression and violence; it may therefore in some cases be a process of peacebuilding. Therein spatial insights from the field of human geography have proved invaluable in advancing the understanding researchers have of the use of post-violence and post-conflict space. Through looking closer at the “every day,” researchers can establish a better understanding of peacebuilding at a local level through reimaged understandings of spaces which resist hegemonic power structures.

Cross-References

► Peacebuilding and Spatial Transformation

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Human Rights

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Human Security

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Definition

A contested concept such as human security is not easily defined in concrete terms. Instead, human security has two key elements: (1) it aims to shift the referent object of security from the state to the individual giving the individual intrinsic value and placing the interests of the individual ahead of the state; (2) it gives rise to a broader view on what can cause insecurity and that many threats are interconnected and reinforcing.

Introduction

Human security has been the subject of fierce academic debate since it was coined by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in 1994 (UNDP 1994). During the twentieth century, security as a concept has been liberalized to become denationalized and both globalized and individualized (Daase 2010). Following the Second World War the referent object of security was argued to be the state with the international community protecting itself from nuclear attack. However, in the 1970s liberal theorists argued that the referent object should be society where “a collective of citizens lives in safety and freedom so that it can develop its productivity and wealth” (Daase 2010, pp. 27–8). Later the concept of human security was suggested to instead give the individual intrinsic value (UNDP 1994). Under a human security approach, where the individual’s interests compete with that of the state or society, the individual should be given priority. This entry recounts some of the early development of the concept of human security and its initial purposes for the UNDP and the states who took an active interest in its advancement. Second, some of the

definitional issues will be discussed by looking at the broad versus narrow conceptions of human security. Lastly, the entry will cover some instances where the concept of human security has been used, as an analytical tool, in interdisciplinary studies.

The Emergence of Human Security

Human security stems from “the erosion of the nation-state and the fact that fewer and fewer decisions that affect our lives are taken at the level of the nation-state” (Kaldor 2011). Although human security gained mainstream attention in the 1990s, its origins can be found earlier in the twentieth century as states, and consequently the international community, became more concerned about the individual. Following the Second World War there was a growing critique of national security and the traditional focus of the state being the referent object of security. The critique was based on the state being unable to provide the level of security desired and the reclaiming of rights that had previously been traded upwards to the state (MacFarlane and Foong Khong 2006, p. 109). The post-war international system that emerged balanced state sovereignty under the Westphalian order with the increased recognition of human rights and human dignity. However, the state-based system and its focus on national security continued to prevail during the Cold War.

The Palme Commission in 1982, chaired by former Swedish Prime Minister Olaf Palme, used the term “common security” when reporting on key international security concerns. The report considered nuclear-weapon-free zones and regulations on conventional weapons sales, but importantly for human security, there was investigation into insecurities in developing countries. For example, the commission notes how developing countries build up armaments to defend themselves, but without effective and reliable regimes for their security their vulnerability will increase (Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues 1982, pp. 128–9). It recognized that in all countries security needs to consider both economic progress linked to the freedom from

want and the freedom from fear in military terms. The report suggested that security should be viewed globally and not only from the viewpoint of states. However, the position of the state was enshrined with the report reiterating “all states have the right to security,” but states must cooperate to be secure and not seek security at each other’s expense through war and arms buildups (Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues 1982, pp. 138–9).

The Brundtland Commission in 1987 followed, headed by former Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland, with a focus on development. The commission coined the term “sustainable development.” Sustainable development is “not a fixed state of harmony, but rather a process of change in which the exploitation of resources, the direction of investments, the orientation of technological development, and institutional change are made consistent with future as well as present needs” (United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development 1987, p. 30). The report examined the environment with analysis of available resources for the population, food security challenges, different energy sources, and the environment as a cause of conflict. The Brundtland Commission built on the Palme Commission by introducing elements of humanity into their concept of sustainable development where previously development was focused on triggering industrialization and measuring growth through indicators like gross domestic product (GDP), investment, savings, and industrial outputs (Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy 2007, p. 101). Brundtland was part of the shift to “human development,” which argues “economic growth does not automatically trickle down to benefit the well-being of people, and other approaches, such as basic needs, did not hand over the reins of decision making to the beneficiaries themselves” (United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development 1987, p. 104). The Palme and Brundtland Commissions laid important groundwork on securitization and development that contributed to the emergence of human security.

The concept of human security entered the scene in 1994 as part of the UNDP’s 1994

Human Development Report. The UNDP is not a body primarily concerned with “security,” but security became a concern because the needs of people during different forms of emergencies, be it a natural disaster, war, or humanitarian crisis, were understood to be inseparable from development (Murphy 2006, p. 277). The 1994 Report expresses dissatisfaction with traditional practices of development focusing solely on increasing gross national product (GNP) and uses language such as “safety from chronic threats such as hunger, disease and repression” to direct attention away from prevalent physical threats that were focused on during the Cold War (UNDP 1994, p. 23; Acharya 2014, p. 449; Owen 2004, p. 382). This led to human security effectively “securitizing” what were traditionally development issues to increase awareness of new, non-traditional threats of insecurity (Zwierlein and Graf 2010, p. 8).

The team behind the 1994 Report sought to create an approach that “focuses on building human capabilities to confront and overcome poverty, illiteracy, diseases, discrimination, restrictions on political freedom, and the threat to violent conflict” (Acharya 2014, p. 449). The report attempted to change security from its national focus to people’s security and from security through armaments to security through sustainable human development (UNDP 1994, p. 24). The 1994 Report includes a nonexhaustive list of seven dimensions of human security which are as follows: economic, health, personal, political, food, environmental, and community security (UNDP 1994, pp. 24–5). The UNDP Report encourages that resources be directed towards the most prevalent threats regardless of the source, be it a state or nonstate actor, and that the international community should work towards prevention rather than intervention. The UNDP Report represents a “broader normative shift leading to the strengthening of the position of individual human beings at the international scene” (Bilkova 2014, pp. 30–1). However, there are concerns with the 1994 Report and its securitization. For instance, Gasper and Gómez call the seven categories of threats a “rough starting point” and critics have lamented human security as a

reductionist idea (Gasper and Gómez 2014, p. 14; Buzan 2004).

In 2000, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan reiterated the call for freedom from fear and want in his Millennium Report. Annan said that the UN was founded on seeking freedom from fear and want, and that achievement still eludes the international community (Annan 2000, p. 17). Annan elaborated that the UN Charter “reaffirms the dignity and worth of the human person, respect for human rights and the equal rights of men and women, and a commitment to social progress as measured by better standards of life, in *freedom from want and fear alike*” (Annan 2000, p. 6 (emphasis added)). After the publication of the report, Annan created the Commission on Human Security cochaired by Sadako Ogata and Amartya Sen. The commission published its *Human Security Now* Report in 2003 (Commission on Human Security 2003). The report identified that human security should have a distinctive focus on humanitarian crises as opposed to underdevelopment that is largely addressed by human development (Farer 2011, p. 47). Importantly the commission emphasizes “[t]he idea is for people to be secure, not just for territories within borders to be secure against external aggression. And unlike traditional approaches that vest the state with full responsibility for state security, the process of human security involves a much broader spectrum of actors and institutions—especially people themselves” (Commission on Human Security 2003, p. 6).

Human security efforts within the UN continued in this period with the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security (UNTFHS), which was established in 1999, tasked with furthering the efforts towards freedom from fear and want. Following the *Human Security Now* Report an Advisory Board on Human Security was created in 2003 to liaise with the UN secretary-general and manage the UNTFHS. In 2004, the UNTFHS was transferred to work under the auspices of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and a Human Security Unit (HSU) was created (Thérien 2012, p. 208). The HSU’s purpose is to help adapt the UN to consider human security activities. Nevertheless, the use of human security terminology has waned within the UN in recent years.

The 2005 General Assembly World Summit decided to commission work on creating a definition of human security and a General Assembly Resolution in 2012 outlined the UN’s interpretation of the concept (UN General Assembly 2005, p. 143; UN General Assembly 2012a). The resolution uses the definition:

The right of people to live in freedom and dignity, free from poverty and despair. All individuals, in particular vulnerable people, are entitled to freedom from fear and freedom from want, with an equal opportunity to enjoy all their rights and fully develop their human potential (UN General Assembly 2012a, p. 3(a)).

Narrow Versus Broad Human Security

Following the 1994 Report the UNDP continued to use human security’s seven categories when creating new Human Development Reports, but definitional issues have remained (Gómez et al. 2013, p. 62). In the late 1990s and early 2000s various middle powers including Canada, Norway, and Japan adopted human security approaches in their foreign policies with differing interpretations (Farer 2011, p. 46). Much of the literature on human security unpicks these definitional differences and includes debates that cut to the core of what the concept encompasses. The definitions put forward can be broken into two broad categories: narrow and broad. It should also be said that some authors have attempted to use human security in their work with no concise definition to attempt to operationalization the concept and move the debate forward (Benedek et al. 2011).

In the narrow conception, a human security threat exists where there is the risk of *physical* violence, no matter the root cause be it economic disaster or health epidemic. This approach is argued to be academically useful and manageable for actors due to the limiting of the type of threats. An illustrative example of the narrow definition in practice is Canada who notably adopted a human security approach based on pervasive violent threats which undermine the rights, physical safety, or lives of people (Moher 2012). Canada deemed the UNDP articulation “unwieldy” and criticized the 1994 Report for ignoring insecurity

resulting from violent conflict (Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade 1999). Canada took the approach that the UN Charter, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and Geneva Conventions embody the core of human security to focus on violent conflict and physical security (Acharya 2001, p. 445). The definition used by Canada is human security as “a condition or state of being characterized by freedom from pervasive threats to people’s rights, their safety, or even their lives” (Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade 1999). Further examples of what Canada sees as progress towards human security are: the Ottawa Convention on Anti-personnel Landmines, the Rome Treaty creating the International Criminal Court, UN prioritization of women and children in armed conflict, and the prevention of small-arms proliferation (Acharya 2001, pp. 445–6; King and Murray 2002, p. 590).

The Canadian definition, despite being characterized as narrow, does not only include safety from violence. Axworthy explains the Canadian position as follows:

human security is much more than the absence of military threat. It includes security against economic privation, an acceptable quality of life, and a guarantee of fundamental human rights. This concept of human security recognizes the complexity of the human environment and accepts that the forces influencing human security are interrelated and mutually reinforcing. At a minimum, human security requires that basic needs are met, but it also acknowledges that sustained economic development, human rights and fundamental freedoms, the rule of law, good governance, sustainable development and social equity are as important to global peace as arms control and disarmament. It recognizes the links between environmental degradation, population growth, ethnic conflicts, and migration. Finally, it concludes that lasting stability cannot be achieved until human security is guaranteed (Axworthy 1997, p. 184).

Importantly though, King and Murray argue that while Canada do accept some broader notions of human security, they instead split the concept into human security as the freedom from fear and human development as the freedom from want (King and Murray 2002, p. 590). The core of Canada’s approach is to use preventative measures, whether it be strengthening legal norms,

intervention, or soft diplomacy, to avoid violence that causes physical insecurity (Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade 1999).

Proponents of the narrow definition have a distinct focus on violence. One narrow advocate, Sverre Lodgaard, argues that “[s]ecurity concerns arise when the threat of violence is present, but not all cases of socio-economic disaster lead to violent action; hence they should not be placed under the rubric of human security” (Acharya 2001, p. 447). Proponents argue that a focus on the freedom from want side of human security detracts from serious threats individuals face in times of war and conflict (MacFarlane and Foong Khong 2006, p. 164). Threats under the narrow approach are largely traditional, including armed conflict, human rights violations, organized crime, and public insecurity (Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy 2007, p. 40). Linking security with violence then retains many notions of state-based security. Rebuttals to the necessity of violence in human security include the narrowing of the concept being “grossly out of step with the reality of the globalized threats we face” (Owen 2004, p. 379). Liotta and Owen argue an almost exclusive focus on violence will “do little to protect the millions who will die this year from nonviolent preventable human security threats” (Liotta and Owen 2006, p. 52).

It is argued by others that a narrow definition is favorable because it is analytically and practically useful (Bajpai 2003). Conversely, a broad definition is “nothing more than a shopping list” of wants and desires (Krause 2004, p. 367). Krause claims that there is nothing to be gained by linking issues on the shopping list such as education and public health. Krause also feels that perceiving items on the shopping list like HIV/AIDS and migration as threats builds walls rather than bridges. However, it has also not been proven that narrowing down the broader notions of human security would provide the desired clarity and analytical usefulness. For example, Paris points out that authors often arbitrarily narrow human security, without providing “a compelling rationale for highlighting certain values” (Paris 2001, p. 95). Bajpai includes bodily safety and personal freedom in his narrow view of human security as they are “the most important” but why other

aspects are not as important is not elaborated upon (Bajpai 2000). King and Murray base their narrow definition on the expectation of years an individual will live without experiencing generalized poverty (King and Murray 2002, p. 594). The arbitrariness of narrowing can be based on a host of different factors, for example, where authors argue one threat is the most important without discussion of the competing threats (Alkire 2003, p. 22). Some choose their criteria for what are deemed to be critical and pervasive threats based on the probability of the threat occurring while others assess the perception of the individuals affected for what they qualitatively feel are the most critical threats (Alkire 2003, p. 22).

Advocates of narrow definitions point to UN support as crucial evidence of its usefulness as opposed to broad definitions not being widely adopted. For instance, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) based its 1997 annual report on human security noting that everyone has a right to security and freedom (MacFarlane and Foong Khong 2006, pp. 171–2; UNHCR 1997). The report also highlights nonmilitary sources of instability but overall, the report focuses on violence. Likewise, the UN secretary-general's 1999 report on the legal protection of civilians in armed conflict resulted in two resolutions from the UN Security Council. In one the UN Security Council indicated "its willingness to respond to situations of armed conflict where civilians are being targeted or humanitarian assistance to civilians being deliberately obstructed, including through the consideration of appropriate measures at the Council's disposal" (UN Security Council 1999, p. 10). Furthermore, the UN Security Council recognized that abuses of humanitarian and human rights law in armed conflict could be deemed threats to international peace and security and so could obstruction of humanitarian assistance (UN Security Council 2000, pp. 5, 8). The UN secretary-general emphasizes that "minimum standards of security are a precondition for development" which arguably supports Canada's narrow split of freedom from fear and want (UN General Assembly 2000, pp. 50). These examples show a historic use of human security in terms of violent conflict but it is noted that the General

Assembly's definition, quoted above, includes both freedom from fear and want, specifically mentioning poverty and the development work that tackles broad, root causes of insecurity.

The broad conception of human security is distinguished by its recognition that a threat to human security can take many forms, from a multitude of sources, and it is more than violence that can do irreparable damage to human life. The contrasting emblematic example is that of Japan who adopted a broad approach to human security in their foreign policy. Initially, however, Japan did focus on conflicts and the starvation and genocide surrounding them (Acharya 2001, p. 446). Later, Japan's approach altered and it did not wish to think of human security as solely a concept that protects the lives of individuals in armed conflict (Acharya 2001, p. 446). Instead it wished to pursue survival and dignity on equal platforms. Dignity can be seen as the broadening factor where development progress equals an increasing life of dignity. Japan viewed human security as "comprehensively cover[ing] all the measures that threaten human survival, daily life, and dignity—for example, environmental degradation, violations of human rights, transnational organized crime, illicit drugs, refugees, poverty, anti-personnel land- mines and other infectious diseases such as AIDS—and strengthens efforts to confront these threats" (Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1999, Chapter 2(3)). Japan also recognized the importance of collaboration between providers of vertical and horizontal protection in encouraging cooperation of states, international organizations, and civil society (Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1999, Chapter 2(3)). Japan's interest in broad notions of human security led to the Japanese government making a sizeable financial contribution to help create the UNTFHS.

The root why broad definitions believe the freedom from fear and freedom from want are inseparable is found in the UNDP's 1994 Report: "Without peace, there may be no development. But without development, peace is threatened" (UNDP 1994, p. iii). The freedom from fear and want are therefore interdependent (Abass 2010, p. 3). Human security also "refers to the condition that enables people to exercise these choices

safely and freely, and be relatively confident that the opportunities they have today will not be lost tomorrow” (Tadjbakhsh 2014, p. 50). This means that instead of setting overly ambitious goals, broad applications of human security seek to address threats and vulnerabilities to establish minimum standards of life and dignity.

Generally speaking, proponents of broad definitions argue that due to the fact human security changes the referent object of security away from the state, inclusion of the issues beyond violent conflict is necessary. Axworthy says that there must be a recalibration to combat the wider range of harms that have been securitized, essentially suggesting it is time to move away from traditional, realist, notions of security (Axworthy 2004). By considering nonviolent threats, broad definitions recognize that national security forces cannot solely resolve insecurity and new actors are needed to cooperate with the state on a multitude of fronts. Consideration of more than violence best reflects postmodern security’s inclusion of nonmilitary threats and the need for regional and global security synergy.

What can be securitized as a broad threat to human security can vary. For Leaning the broad notion of human security includes psychological, political, and economic vulnerabilities to promote the protection of the individual through time (Leaning 2004). Alkire aligns with the Commission on Human Security’s approach where human security concerns the “vital core” that is the essence of life determined by those affected by insecurity (Alkire 2004). The Commission on Human Security gives a range of examples of what may be deemed human security threats that can then be prioritized by those facing insecurity, including economic harm, health crises, crime, post-conflict instability, and poverty (Commission on Human Security 2003).

Thakur claims human security is “the quality of life of the people of a society or polity. Anything which degrades their quality of life – demographic pressures, diminished access to or stock of resources, and so on – is a security threat” (Tadjbakhsh and Cheney 2007, p. 49). Thakur goes on to limit security threats to only be those which create a crisis (Thakur 2004, p. 347). This

includes where environmental disaster or massive migration becomes a crisis. Likewise, Bajpai limits his broad definition by requiring threats to come from “identifiable human agents” and not from structural or natural causes (Bajpai 2004, p. 360). Winslow and Eriksen broaden the interdisciplinary outlook of human security by considering anthropological aspects. They claim cultural and social contexts are important because when people have to work together to rectify a threat or vulnerability, their cultural identity and social structures play a role (Winslow and Eriksen 2004, p. 362). Lastly, Hampson claims that vulnerability is naturally broad and dependent on structural issues and must address threats and build society’s capabilities to combat vulnerability (Hampson 2004, p. 350).

Two features of broad definitions deserve further elaboration. First, most broad approaches have a focus on structural, root causes of conflict emphasizing empowerment building alongside physical protection. In 1992, the UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali highlighted how undermining economic and social development could threaten international peace and security (UN Secretary General 1992, p. 26). Boutros-Ghali requested an early warning system which triggered new discussions on how to promote conflict prevention. Subsequently, Amartya Sen advanced “protective security” that would prevent catastrophic crises (Sen 1999). Sen argued that there must be protection against structural threats, such as sudden deprivation or starvation, to live securely and well (Sen 1999, p. 188). Sen’s capabilities approach and development ideas that subsequently became “development as freedom” clearly played a part in the development of human security in the 1994 UNDP Report. Following this view, if structural issues are only addressed when they trigger violent conflict, under a narrow approach, and not if they simply cause mass deprivation or destruction, then human security fails in the purpose of its title. Second, proponents of a broad approach argue that having a precise definition is not necessary. Using an open-ended, flexible approach which takes into consideration a range of threats that cause more suffering than only violent conflict is a challenge to current power structures in the

international sphere. Tadjbakhsh says that “[i]f security is ultimately a feeling, then human security must be a felt experience” (Tadjbakhsh 2005, p. 7). The broad approach allows actors to build a feeling of security through the avenues most relevant to the people experiencing insecurity.

Interdisciplinary Uses of Human Security

Human security has been argued to provide better ideas for conflict prevention “because it is more realistic and nuanced in terms of its interdisciplinary approach” (Hanlon and Christie 2016, p. 11). Harnessing the concept’s interdisciplinary nature, research in a variety of disciplines has used human security as a lens with which to understand peace and conflict in new lights. By applying the various precepts of human security to a peace and conflict issue or different disciplinary context human security can uncover new linkages and deepen our understanding (Gilder 2020a p. 3). This section recounts some of the many examples of where human security has been used as an analytical lens in a variety of interdisciplinary studies, focusing on examples of international law and human rights.

How human security is utilized, “all depends on what human security is understood to be: a political agenda for governments, a rallying cry that forges *ad hoc* or sustained coalitions of states on single issues, a common concern that brings together single-issue civil society groups under a unifying umbrella, an academic problem, or a new research category” (Oberleitner 2005a, pp. 592–3). Human security is described as a concept by most literature. Therefore, human security is a collection of interrelated ideas and can be a guide to interpretation. Specifically, as an *agenda-setting* concept, it determines what are the most relevant issues and brings to the forefront neglected problems that have previously not been included in national and international security debates or have been on the periphery (Gilder 2020b). As an agenda-setting concept human security can cross disciplinary boundaries and reshape how researchers view disciplinary issues. Hanlon and Christie have restated the importance of human security for other disciplines noting

human security is intimately linked to human rights and “[i]nternational law serves as a basic criteria with which to strengthen work on human security’s objectives” (Hanlon and Christie 2016, pp. 30, 55).

In one of the first studies of human security and its relationship with international law, Gerd Oberleitner claims that “a human security approach to international law can reinforce and strengthen attempts to bring international law into line with the requirements of today’s world” (Oberleitner 2005b, p. 186). Oberleitner argues that most of the values represented by human security are not new to international law and the application of human security to the law can help bring international law closer to meeting the demands of modern crises. He says that implementation of human security “requires overcoming the compartmentalization of security, humanitarian, human rights, and development strategies by focusing on the protection and empowerment of people” (Oberleitner 2005b, p. 188). The current law is not always able to flawlessly interact in unison and therefore Oberleitner suggests further research is needed to see if human security can fill the void between humanitarian law and human rights law during conflicts.

In a 2007 study on human security and international law, Barbara von Tigerstrom said that human security is “a concept that is designed to be used in a variety of ways, including in the interpretation and development of legal norms” (von Tigerstrom 2007, p. 42). von Tigerstrom found that there is not a linear evolution of international law from a law of coexistence to a law of cooperation that enshrines human security (von Tigerstrom 2007, p. 89). Instead, the older, state-centered elements and new human-centered elements coexist in the law. Von Tigerstrom highlights that various international legal regimes that “on the face of it” seem human-centered have been argued to be in fact state-centered and designed to protect state interests.

Following on from the arguments of von Tigerstrom and Oberleitner, Shireen Daft argues that human security can be a “synthesised overarching framework” for international law (Daft 2017, p. 33). Daft says that human security can have legal character by serving as a framework for

the expression of existing norms with human security providing a principled future direction for how international law tackles security threats (Daft 2017, pp. 33, 125). Daft believes this is possible if clear principles of human security are articulated with roots and relevance in existing international law. Daft's argument lends well to the current position of states since many believe human security should be pursued under existing international legal frameworks and not through new legal obligations. For instance, Australia has already advanced the view that human security can provide a normative framework which can ensure collective actions are providing preventative protection, empowerment to build resilience, and direct benefits to populations (UN General Assembly 2012b, p. 10). Other states agreed with, for example, Qatar arguing that by using a framework for human security states will be compelled to be proactive (UN General Assembly 2012b, p. 2). Likewise, India stated that human security can be implemented and used as a framework to respond to current challenges, not only as a policy goal (UN General Assembly 2012b, p. 14). If human security is not to be a legal concept in its own right, Math Nortmann and Cedric Ryngaert have suggested what it can do is harness existing international law to pursue human-centric operational goals (Noortmann and Ryngaert 2014, p. 198).

Also applying a human security lens, but specifically in relation to human rights and vulnerability, Dorothy Estrada-Tanck's study concerns the synergies between human security and international human rights law (Estrada-Tanck 2016). Case studies in the book include violence against women and undocumented (female) migrants. Estrada-Tanck conceptualizes that human security can first promote action on threats and vulnerabilities that do not fall under the traditional grave categories of genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. Second, human security can contextualize threats and responses for specific populations (Estrada-Tanck 2016, pp. 38–9). Estrada-Tanck sees human security as a method for identifying where additional human rights protection is needed. Conversely, Rhoda Howard-Hassmann suggests human security threatens the indivisibility of human rights by suggesting "that there are some human rights that society need not

acknowledge, safeguard and promote because they do not address basic insecurities" (Howard-Hassmann 2012, p. 106). Yaniv Roznai has related concerns when assessing human security in relation to international human rights law in that human rights may be diluted down to *needs* that require fulfilling rather than *rights*, which could detract from state responsibility for domestic human rights violations (Roznai 2014, p. 124).

This section has only been able to touch on some of the many interdisciplinary discussions surrounding human security. The synergies, or lack thereof, between the issues covered by human security and other disciplines can further be developed through inter- and multidisciplinary work that tackles security concerns in a more holistic way.

Conclusion

Human security has suffered from definitional indeterminacy since the proliferation of literature on the concept in the 1990s and 2000s. What this entry has attempted to do is highlight key features of the concept and the two distinct categories of definitions, broad and narrow. Regardless of which category is subscribed to, human security can be said to advance two main tenets: (1) it aims to shift the referent object of security from the state to the individual giving the individual intrinsic value and placing the interests of the individual ahead of the state; (2) it gives rise to a broader view on what can cause insecurity and that many threats are interconnected and reinforcing. Even without agreed definitions authors have operationalized the concept in interdisciplinary research, of which a few are described above, showcasing the usefulness of human security as an analytical tool for enhancing our understanding of peace, conflict, and more.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Civil Society Inclusion in Peace Mediation](#)
- ▶ [Conflict and Hunger](#)
- ▶ [R2P and Prevention](#)
- ▶ [Security-Development Nexus in Peacebuilding](#)

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Humanitarian

- [Unintended Consequences of Peace Operations/Sexual Abuse and Exploitation by Peacekeepers](#)

Humanitarian Assistance

- [Conflicts and Natural Disasters](#)

Humanitarian Disarmament and the Era of Disarmament Without Disarmament

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Synonyms

[Arms control](#); [Disarmament](#); [Non-proliferation](#); [Pariah weapons control](#); [Restraints on war](#); [Weapons governance](#)

Definition/Description

As the discussion below illustrates, there is no settled definition of humanitarian disarmament, or what agreements and initiatives are covered by this term. There is, however, a general consensus on two key defining elements: the application

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of humanitarian norms to questions of weapons control; and the enhanced role and influence of civil society actors in the pressure for, and negotiation of, humanitarian disarmament treaties. The early literature on HD sometimes referred to it as “humanitarian arms control,” but “disarmament” is now the preferred term of art, reflecting in part the emphasis in many (but not all) HD agreements on complete bans on specific categories of weapons. A further feature sometimes cited is the innovative introduction of clauses on remediation and victim assistance in the texts of many (though not all HD agreements). For some, the application of humanitarian norms to weapons control is best reflected in treaties such as the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty, the 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions, and the 2017 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. For others, the influence of a humanitarian sensibility can also be seen in more traditional treaties such as the Chemical Weapons Convention or the Biological Weapons Convention. While observers may differ on what agreements should be included in the universe of humanitarian disarmament, there has been a tendency in much of the literature to focus on the commonalities that link HD initiatives and thus, implicitly or explicitly, treat them as a monolithic whole. This chapter adopts an alternative approach, one that focuses on the differences between the varied forms of HD, and the implications these differences have for our understanding of both the limits of HD and its radical potential.

This entry examines one type of disarmament that has reemerged in the post-Cold War era, that of humanitarian disarmament (HD). It begins by locating HD in a broader typology of disarmament and notes that practices of disarmament (including some decidedly nonutopian ones) are currently more common than those of narrow arms control. HD draws on humanitarian norms of proportionality and distinction between combatant and civilian to make the case for weapons control. Many HD agreements also include provisions for remediation and victim assistance. HD itself can be further subdivided into three different models. The first is associated with the pursuit of total bans on conventional weapons often considered unexceptional elements in the armories of military

forces (e.g., landmines and cluster munitions (CM)). The second is characterized by regulation, short of a ban (e.g., limits on numbers, use, design, or transfer), and includes both weapons-specific restraints (e.g., on the use of laser weapons designed to blind) and expressly humanitarian nonproliferation initiatives such as the 2013 Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). The third model, exemplified by the 2017 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), is associated with bans on “apex” weapons central to the core security logics, security identities, and security subjectivities of states. Many HD initiatives (but not, for example, the ATT) represent a distinct subcategory of “qualitative disarmament,” albeit a variant that foregrounds humanitarian rationales for control and often includes an enhanced role for civil society in negotiating processes. This entry sets out key claims and critiques of HD and should be read in conjunction with the separate entry in this encyclopedia analyzing case studies of HD, namely the ATT and the TPNW.

The key points enumerated below are the following: HD has resulted in a number of landmark treaties, and its emphasis on remediation and victim assistance represents a novel and substantive innovation in approaches to weapon control. However, model 1 bans and weapon-specific restraints under model 2 are constrained in their ability to control the means of violence because humanitarianism gives equal weight to the norm of military necessity, thus legitimizing the institution of war, including war preparation. Consequently, they simultaneously reflect *and* construct a hierarchy of legitimized and non-legitimized weapons – with the vast majority, particularly new so-called precision weapons, in the former category. In theory, model 2 nonproliferation initiatives such as the ATT address this deficiency. However, in the case of the ATT, the connection with humanitarianism facilitated the production of a weak treaty that enshrines the legitimacy of the arms trade in general and a “one export at a time” *risk model* of regulation that permits the trade in all but the most egregious arms exports. The upshot is that the post-Cold War rise of HD, along with the more general ubiquity of disarmament practices, has coincided

with quite significant increases in global military expenditure and the arms trade. The current era is therefore best characterized as one of *disarmament without disarmament* in a more meaningful sense and models 1 and 2 of HD as specific practices of disarmament without disarmament.

In contrast, model 3 HD, with its focus on “apex weapons,” has brought HD into direct contention with the *core* security logics, identities, and subjectivities of major military powers. The TPNW therefore represents both a qualitatively different kind of HD and a more notable achievement, even if it is more of a stigmatization treaty than a disarmament treaty (a further dimension of disarmament without disarmament). At the same time, the very normative frameworks central to humanitarianism may provide discursive resources for nuclear weapons states (NWS) to legitimize their continued possession. Thus, while certainly not inevitable, the seeds of the TPNW’s ultimate failure may well lie in the normative roots of its very success. Despite this, the expansion of an HD agenda to apex weapons illustrates the potential to connect it to a tradition of qualitative disarmament more clearly rooted in a critique of militarism and a commitment to achieving overall reductions in the means of violence. This route offers the greatest promise for the further evolution of HD.

Locating HD in a Typology of Disarmament

Disarmament as a field of action has been both underconceptualized and derided as an exercise in naïve utopianism. This is largely a consequence of the account of disarmament offered by mainstream arms controllers since its emergence in the late 1950s as the hegemonic paradigm for controlling the means of violence. Arms controllers offered a project concerned with *managing* the arms dynamic, rather than reversing or eliminating it. In its narrow version, it focused on the promotion and negotiation of cooperative agreements between antagonistic states, particularly the USA and Soviet Union. The broader version (Mueller 2017) notionally embraced both

nonproliferation efforts (e.g., the 1968 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty) and disarmament initiatives (e.g., the 1972 Biological Weapons Convention (BWC)). The formal goals of arms control were defined as: reducing the risks of war, reducing the costs of preparing for war, and reducing the damage should war occur (Schelling and Halperin 1961: 1; Larsen and Wirtz 2009: 10). In practice, however, arms control theory reflected the assumptions and practices of narrow arms control rather than those of its broader version. The core function of arms control in this context was understood as stabilizing nuclear deterrence rather than eliminating nuclear weapons. Consequently, arms controllers privileged the goal of reducing the risk of war at the expense of the other two goals.

The hegemony of arms control, particularly the narrow version, was also predicated on the association of disarmament with a series of largely failed initiatives: the Hague Disarmament Conferences of 1899 and 1906, the League of Nations Disarmament Conference of the 1930s, and successive proposals for general and complete disarmament (GCD) in the early decades of the Cold War. At the same time, arms controllers were not above reframing successful disarmament initiatives such as the BWC as examples of realistic arms control (Larsen and Wirtz 2009: 4), albeit in its broader conceptualization. Consequently, in arms control theory, disarmament was simultaneously understood as a failed utopian project distinct from arms control (Larsen and Smith 2005: 78–79), as “crude and old-fashioned” (Freedman 2013: 98) and a subset of realistic arms control that produced concrete results. In general, however, arms control theorists leaned more toward the former view, expended little effort on theorizing disarmament, and when they did, it was only as part of an effort to demonstrate the naivety of proponents of GCD, rather than to develop a systematized understanding of disarmament practices (e.g., Schelling 1962; Bull 1959; Bull 1961; 30–64).

Despite the depredations of the arms controllers, disarmament as a *practice* (including some decidedly nonutopian variants) is currently more common than mainstream arms control – a feature

of the global architecture of control that remains largely unacknowledged. At the same time, while *practices* of disarmament have flourished, this has been accompanied by significant rises in global military expenditure and the global arms trade (see below). The present era is therefore better described as one of *disarmament without disarmament* in a more meaningful sense.

The current dominance of disarmament practices is partly due to the fact that classical arms control was plunged into one of its periodic crises by both the hostility of the Trump administration to multilateral cooperation and heightened tensions with Russia. The upshot has been the end of the INF Treaty, US withdrawal from the Open Skies Treaty and the Iran nuclear deal, as well as failure to renew or renegotiate the 2010 New START Treaty. The new Biden administration is more positive about cooperative arms control and is committed to revitalizing New START and the Iran agreement in particular. Nevertheless, the ubiquity of disarmament practices seems likely to remain a feature of the international system, not least because the Iran nuclear deal itself represents a form of coercive disarmament. A further type of disarmament that has reemerged in the post-Cold War era is humanitarian disarmament. Before analyzing the claims and critiques of HD, it is useful to locate it in a broader typology of disarmament. This includes the following:

Pure Disarmament

This is the idea that all arms and armed forces everywhere should be abolished, an idea often confused with General and Complete Disarmament. In reality, few concrete proposals for disarmament have advocated such a position. The nearest equivalent were proposals made by the Soviet Union in the inter-war years, and later in the 1950s, for “total disarmament,” but even these envisaged the retention of internal security forces (Bull 1961: 34).

General and Complete Disarmament (GCD)

This is often associated with pure disarmament in the popular imagination, and even dismissed as a search for zero weapons in some of the academic literature (Martin 1973: 241). In practice, while

proposals for GCD certainly envisaged significant quantitative reductions, they also permitted the retention of substantial force numbers. Indeed, the mechanics of structural disarmament (see below) mean that the armed forces of even quite significant military powers (e.g., the UK) are now substantially below the numbers envisaged in GCD proposals from the 1950s.

Coercive Disarmament

This is a form of disarmament with a long history (Towle 1997). In its modern form, it includes preventive disarmament (e.g., the invasion of Iraq), disarmament of the defeated (e.g., Germany after World War 1, postinvasion Iraq), and disarmament by ostensible neutral third parties to *enforce* peacebuilding in civil conflicts (examples include Somalia and Sierra Leone). It also includes international arms embargoes imposed on states at war, or in violation of core international norms on human rights or weapons proliferation (e.g., the extensive sanctions regime imposed on North Korea).

Structural Disarmament

This is disarmament by default rather than design, where independent factors (changes in the logic of the Cold War or the impact of inflation or recession) lead to reductions in defense spending and/or defense forces (Neuman 1988). The impact can be quite profound. For example, disarmament proposals submitted by the major Western powers at the UN in 1957 (proposal dismissed as naïve and utopian by arms controllers) envisaged a three-stage reduction in manpower for all armed forces, security, police, and paramilitary forces. For Britain, this started at 750,000 in the first stage, then dropped to 700,000, and finally to 650,000 in the final stage (Noel-Baker 1958: 25). Including reservists, British forces today number 193,000 (Ministry of Defence 2020: 4), and UK police numbers amount to 153,000 (Allen and Zayed 2021: 3). In other words, British forces are currently well below the levels envisaged in the 1950s for even third stage disarmament. Falls in personnel have been accompanied by equally dramatic reductions in equipment numbers. In 1950, the UK had 276 frigates and destroyers

and 62 submarines (Cooper 2006: 359). By 2019, it possessed just 19 frigates and destroyers and 10 submarines (Bunkall 2019). Of course, such quantitative reductions have gone hand-in-hand with substantial qualitative improvements in military technology, recent rises in global military expenditure, and what, in many respects, is a deteriorating security environment. Nevertheless, these numerical force constraints may well have had an impact on the nature of the international security environment. Most notably, a defining feature of the modern international system has been the decline of inter-state warfare. This is often explained by reference to the consolidation of normative constraints on war, the economic costs involved, and improvements in international mechanisms of conflict prevention. These are all certainly part of the picture, but it is equally the case that, outside of the major military powers, few states now possess the forces necessary to engage in capital-intensive inter-state warfare on their own. Britain, for example, would almost certainly be unable to rerun the 1982 Falklands War today.

Postconflict Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration of Combatants (DDR)

Although DDR has a longer history, since the late 1980s, it has emerged as a standard element in international peacebuilding operations conducted after – or even during – civil conflicts (Giustozzi 2016). Indeed, one study estimated that spending on all DDR operations in 2006 amounted to almost \$2 billion, and over 1.2 million former combatants were involved in some phase of DDR programming (Caramés et al. 2007). As a technology of governance, it has been largely advocated as a response to civil conflicts in the global south, often by the same major powers that view their own military forces as the exclusive preserve of sovereign decision-making. Disarmament in this context is therefore conceived as “a corrective program for deviant ‘war-torn’ societies not as a general and global obligation incumbent on all States, including the great military powers” (Bolton 2016: 10). DDR as a practice therefore aims to foster domestic peace by entrenching hierarchies of legitimate violence

inside certain states, while endlessly reconstituting a global hierarchy of sovereign rights over the domestic disposition of armed violence.

The Disarmament of Sacred Spaces

This includes not only the creation of demilitarized zones to separate parties from a conflict but also the more general ascription of exceptional status to a space deemed “off-limits” from what are understood at the time as the “normal” armament policies prevalent in the rest of the international system. Examples include the 1963 Limited Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, the 1967 Outer Space Treaty, and the 1971 Seabed Treaty. The most notable examples, however, are the various Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones (NWFZ) that collectively cover the entire southern hemisphere and include 115 states (Hanson 2018: 474). Many of these initiatives can also be understood as geographically specific applications of qualitative disarmament (see below).

Qualitative Disarmament

The philosophy of qualitative disarmament was initially applied in the disarmament provisions imposed on Germany after World War I (Noel-Baker 1958: 394–395), but the concept was more fully developed at the League of Nations Disarmament Conference in the 1930s where it was contrasted with quantitative disarmament (the search for across-the-board reductions in military forces). In another example of cooption, arms controllers subsequently adapted the term, referring instead, to “qualitative arms control” (e.g., Schelling and Halperin 1961: 51). In the context of the Disarmament Conference, qualitative disarmament was concerned with banning or reducing weapons that gave advantage to the offense (Bull 1961: 32). For example, in June 1932, US President Herbert Hoover presented a proposal that included the abolition of tanks, bomber planes, large mobile guns, and chemical and biological weapons, plus substantial reductions in submarines, battleships, aircraft carriers, cruisers, and destroyers (Steiner 1933: 213; Davies 2004; Sommer 1989: 36, Noel-Baker 1958: 398). A more expansive understanding includes

prohibitions on specified weapons, including new (Noel-Baker 1958: 403) and/or immoral weapons. Vagts (2000), for example (though using the term qualitative arms control), includes prohibitions agreed at the Hague Disarmament Conferences on dum-dum bullets, certain kinds of naval mines, and the use of projectiles designed to diffuse asphyxiating or deleterious gasses. More recently, the BWC and the 1993 Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) banned not just the use but the possession and transfer of these weapons.

Models 1 and 3 of HD can therefore be understood as distinct subsets of qualitative disarmament, where actors (including civil society groups) seek restrictions on specified weapons because of their inhumane effects. The same applies to restraints short of a complete ban imposed on specific weapons under model 2 HD. In contrast, an HD initiative such as the ATT is better described as a more broad-based nonproliferation initiative, rather than a disarmament initiative *per se* (yet another dimension of HD without disarmament).

Three Models of Humanitarian Disarmament

Docherty (2010: 7) defines HD as disarmament law that “seeks to eliminate the civilian harms caused by problematic weapons” (weapons that are indiscriminate or inhumane) and suggests it is “the newest type of disarmament” (*ibid.*: 16). Dunworth (2020: 8) identifies two key features of HD. First, the application of a humanitarian lens (as opposed to a state security one) to discussions on whether or not a particular class of weapon should be prohibited or subject to limits on use. This is elevated to the point where disarmament debates “become infused with a humanitarian sensibility.” A second, defining feature is “the participation by, or presence of non-state entities in the negotiation process,” most notably domestic and transnational civil society groups that exercise “bottom-up” power by mobilizing to bring about weapon bans.

The history of attempts to prohibit weapons on explicitly humanitarian grounds stretches back to late nineteenth-century initiatives such as the 1868 St Petersburg Declaration, prohibiting the use in war of explosive projectiles under 400 grams in weight; the (ultimately unratified) 1874 Brussels Declaration prohibiting the use of poisoned weapons and arms calculated to cause unnecessary suffering; and the aforementioned prohibitions on dum-dum bullets, asphyxiating gasses, and balloon-dropped explosives. The potentials and limitations of the humanitarian disarmament approach are illustrated by the St Petersburg Declaration which declares the employment of arms that “uselessly aggravate” suffering is “contrary to the laws of humanity.” At the same time, the declaration also notes the aim of war is to weaken the military forces of the enemy, and it is therefore “sufficient to disable the greatest possible number of men.”¹ In other words, limitations were certainly imposed on the means by which violence was employed but within a framework that permitted mass slaughter of combatants perpetrated with weapons that did not “needlessly” aggravate suffering – a problem characteristic of laws of war more generally (Roberts 2019: 169).

The First Model of HD

For some, a defining feature of HD is the search for outright bans on weapons considered inhumane or indiscriminate, rather than mere attempts to contain them through limits on numbers, design, or use (Docherty 2010: 7–8; Sauer and Pretorius 2014: 246). Key post-Cold War HD agreements in this mode include the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty (MBT) and the 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM). For HD campaigners, the problem with these weapons is not that they are designed to kill *per se*, but that they have particular characteristics which mean their use generates unacceptable levels of civilian harm. In the case of landmines and cluster munitions,

¹ See: <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/applic/ihl/ihl.nsf/Article.xsp?action=openDocument&documentId=568842C2B90F4A29C12563CD0051547C>

for example, it is argued they are incapable of discriminating between combatant and civilian and that they remain long after conflicts are over, thus doubly threatening noncombatants (Grillot et al. 2006: 70). Such initiatives can be classified as the first model of HD, where the aim is to achieve outright bans on new or established conventional weapons, many of which have previously been considered unexceptional elements in the armories of militaries.

The Second Model of HD

Others adopt a more expansive definition of HD that includes “all international weapons regulations and commitments that are explicitly framed as humanitarian” (Benjamin-Britton et al. 2020: 6–7). This captures weapon-specific regulation short of a ban such as the restraints on the employment of laser weapons noted above. It also includes initiatives restricting the trade in conventional weapons on humanitarian grounds (even if more *realpolitik* considerations also shape them). Examples include the 1890 Brussels Act (the first modern multilateral treaty restricting the trade in arms (Cooper 2018)) and the 2013 Arms Trade Treaty, both framed by supporters in humanitarian terms and both accompanied by significant transnational civil society campaigns.

The Third Model of HD

As will be illustrated below, the TPNW might be conceptualized as a form of third model HD – a humanitarian weapon prohibition applied to “apex weapons,” core strategic weapons perceived as not only central to the military plans of possessors, but also integral to their status, security identity, and security subjectivities. It can be argued that the prominence given to humanitarian considerations plus the significant role played by civil society advocates means the TPNW currently represents a unique form of HD. For example, Docherty has suggested the focus on humanitarianism and human security means HD initiatives are not only distinct from traditional arms control, but also distinct from qualitative disarmament initiatives such as the BWC and the CWC. The argument here is that the driver for the latter kind of disarmament represented a

calculation by major military powers that they had a greater security interest in preventing the spread of such weapons to other states than they had in retaining them in their own arsenals. Docherty thus describes such initiatives as examples of “security disarmament” (Docherty 2010: 12). In contrast, Finaud (2017: 25–29) includes both the BWC and CWC in his discussion of humanitarian disarmament, arguing early prohibitions can be traced back to the origins of IHL and that both conventions explicitly reference the notion that disarmament was undertaken “for the sake of all mankind” (p. 25–29). Considine (2017) has also highlighted the similarity in the language of traditional UN disarmament documents and the 2015 Humanitarian Pledge on nuclear weapons adopted by the UN General Assembly (UNGA) in Resolution 70/48. Plesch and Miletic (2020) suggest that humanitarian considerations have always been present in more traditional disarmament initiatives. As this discussion illustrates, the parameters of HD are far from settled, a reflection, perhaps, of its relative infancy as a field of theory. Nevertheless, the TPNW is best situated in the longer history of qualitative disarmament efforts to ban militarily-significant weapons, including efforts at the League of Nations Disarmament Conference and agreements on the BWC and CWC. Finally, it should be noted that HD initiatives may move between these different categories at different times. For example, early action on landmines under the CCW was situated in a model 2 approach focused on regulating use, only later moving to a model 1 ban under pressure from civil society (see below).

Key Claims Made for Humanitarian Disarmament

For supporters, the crucial roles played by civil society and like-minded middle-power states – plus the willingness to move negotiations outside of statist negotiating fora such as the Conference on Disarmament – have led to a democratization of disarmament (Mekata 2018). The voices of people (represented by progressive civil society groups) have been privileged over states, while the

preferences of weaker states have been prioritized over those of major powers. For example, the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) lists some 550 partner organizations spread across 103 countries of the world (ICAN 2019: 6–7), while over 100 NGOs actively participated and contributed to negotiations on the TPNW (something quite unprecedented for nuclear-weapon-related negotiations (Mukhatzhanova 2017)).

Advocates also argue that HD agreements establish powerful international norms capable of constraining the policies of even nonsignatory states. This idea has been taken to its extreme in the campaign for the TPNW, which faced fierce resistance from the NWS who have all adamantly refused to join. For campaigners, however, the ban campaign was less about changing the actual policies of the NWS (at least in the first instance) and more about “changing the normative international environment,” so as to delegitimize nuclear weapons possession and thus increase the reputational costs of possession (Ritchie 2016: 7). This has led Tannenwald (2020a, b: 116; also see Williams 2018) to suggest “the [nuclear] ban treaty is not itself a disarmament treaty. It is a vehicle for stigmatization politics.” This represents another aspect of disarmament without disarmament. Proponents of HD also claim that the normative principles established with regard to a weapon ban can be “grafted” onto campaigns for further bans, meaning the first ban has the potential to engender the next and so on – a kind of rolling normative expansion of the universe of weapons covered by HD restraints (Mueller 2017). This process is perhaps most obvious in the way the landmine ban provided a normative reference point for the campaign to ban cluster munitions, the latter framed by campaigners as *de facto* landmines (Petrova 2018: 639).

Finally, observers highlight the way campaigners have drawn on liberal, constructivist, feminist, and poststructural schools of international relations theory to both explain and inform campaigning strategies (Bolton and Mitchell 2014: 2). Others have described HD activists as engaging in the kind of immanent critique and counterhegemonic resistance advocated by

critical theorists (Petrova 2018; Ritchie and Egeland 2018). Thus, rather like the field of arms control, HD stands out as an arena where theory and ideas in the academic domain have influenced practice. Whether this has taken the form of eclectic cherry-picking as opposed to rigorous theoretical integration is perhaps more of a moot point. For instance, while postpositive insights about the social construction of technology may have informed efforts to produce an “ideational reframing” of landmines etc., these same insights were actually harnessed to the goal of ever more firmly fixing technologically determinist conceptions of such weapons.

The archetype – and originator of the post-Cold War return to HD – is the campaign for the Mine Ban Treaty which involved over a thousand NGOs from 60 countries (Price 1998: 618). Landmine use was already subject to certain restrictions in the 1980 Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), but the convention was weak, fell short of a total prohibition, and was both statist and subject to decision-making by consensus (Thakur and Maley 1999: 283; Dunworth 2020: 112–122). When attempts to strengthen these restrictions at the 1996 CCW review conference were frustrated, NGOs and sympathetic middle-power states convened a series of alternative meetings culminating in Ottawa where the Mine Ban Treaty was adopted.² Agreement on the treaty was grounded in the ability of campaigners to transform what had previously been understood as an unexceptional weapon into an odious one, deemed inherently inhumane, even “evil in themselves” (Bolton 2020: 25). They were similarly successful in questioning the military utility of these weapons (Petrova 2018: 641–642). To date, there are 164 state parties to the treaty (see Table 2), leaving it as the most widely adopted HD treaty. Transfers of landmines appear to have ceased, and 41 states have ceased the production of antipersonnel mines, including 4 not party to the treaty (Egypt, Israel, Nepal, and the USA (International

²Formally titled, Convention on the Prohibition, Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and their Destruction

Campaign to Ban Landmines 2019: 15)). The global stockpile of landmines has fallen from 160 million in 1999 to less than 50 million (International Campaign to Ban Landmines 2019: 17). In addition, the organization Geneva Call (GC), formed in 2000, promotes the ban among armed nonstate actors (ANSAs), 53 of whom have signed GC's "Deed of Commitment" on the mine ban (Geneva Call; also see Abramson 2018). A distinctive innovation in the MBT (also the CMB and TPNW but not the ATT) was the inclusion of provisions for remediation and victim assistance (Docherty 2021). This is perhaps the most unique and substantive contribution HD instruments have made to efforts to control the means of violence. For example, in the 5-year period from 2014–2018, donors have provided some \$2.6 billion in support for mine action (see below) and an estimated 661,491 landmines have been destroyed (Fig. 1).

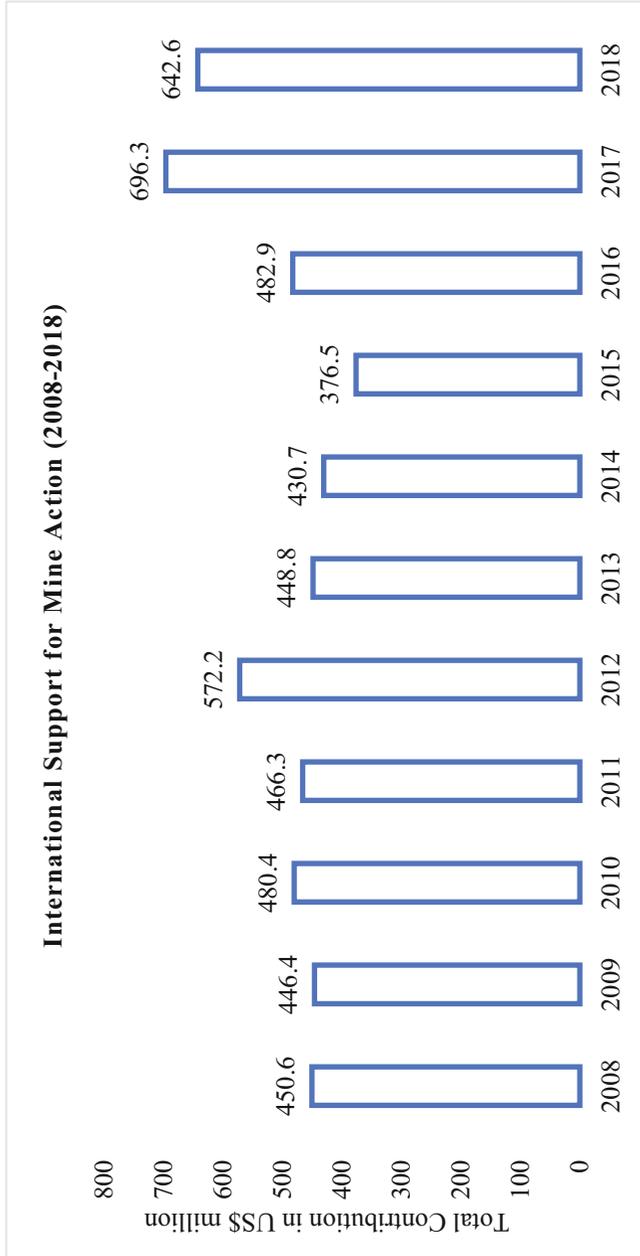
Some Challenges to the Claims Made for Humanitarian Disarmament

The analysis of HD proponents can be challenged on a number of counts. First, identifying HD as "the newest type of disarmament" ignores the extensive history of efforts to impose bans or restrictions on *pariah weapons*. This includes, for example, attempts to impose prohibitions on the use of poison, "Greek fire," the crossbow, and the gun (in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Japan) (Perrin 1979; Mayor 2009; Payne-Gallwey 2007), restrictions often justified in moral or ethical terms (Cooper 2011: 141–143). At best therefore, HD is better understood as a new, explicitly humanitarian, variant of an age-old phenomenon, and explanations for such pariah weapon prohibitions need to be sought in an understanding of the functions these have performed for different societies and cultures throughout history. For example, the articulation of such prohibitions may simply be part of the story martial cultures tell themselves about why their perpetration of organized mass violence is, nevertheless, morally appropriate because it is subject to certain limitations.

Second, a feature of all HD agreements is that formal provisions for monitoring and verification of compliance are weak or absent, although this has been somewhat offset by extensive civil society monitoring of implementation. Third, the supposed contrast with the statism of traditional disarmament agreements requires qualification. On the one hand, a defining feature of virtually all modern HD negotiating *processes* has been the commensurately greater role and influence of civil society. Moreover, key agreements (e.g., the landmines ban) have been explicitly framed in humanitarian and human security terms. However, as Sauer and Pretorius (2014: 246) note, "the humanitarian approach starts from the assumption that a treaty that is supported by a very large group of states in the world sets a new standard." Thus, if HD both challenges statist understandings of security and mobilizes a variety of nonstate actors, it also operates on quite statist assumptions about norm-building processes and the international system. Moreover, some HD agreements have been just as infused with statist influences as more traditional disarmament agreements. Support for the ATT from states in Africa and Latin America reflected statist security concerns (the threat from armed rebels and criminal groups) as much as, if not more than, humanitarian concerns. Such concerns at least partly animated support for prohibitions on arms sales to nonstate actors. Conversely, US security interests and great power influence meant it was both willing and able to veto such proposals (Stavrianakis 2019: 69–70). Moreover, the text of the treaty itself is shot-through with statism – references to the interests of states, the rights of states, the political independence of states, and the domestic jurisdiction of states abound, but one searches in vain for any reference to even human security (see case study chapter). Even the nuclear ban treaty permits a state "exercising . . . national sovereignty" to withdraw where extraordinary events have "jeopardized its supreme interests."³

Fourth, the notion that HD has democratized disarmament also requires qualification. It is

³See: <http://undocs.org/A/CONF.229/2017/8>



Source: International Campaign to Ban Landmines, *Landmine Monitor* 2019, p. 84

Humanitarian Disarmament and the Era of Disarmament Without Disarmament, Fig. 1 International Support for Mine Action (2008-2018). (Source: International Campaign to Ban Landmines, *Landmine Monitor*; 2019, p. 84)

certainly the case that HD campaigns have drawn on impressive international networks of NGOs and like-minded small and medium powers. Activists have also been able to influence negotiating processes in far more substantive ways than was the case in the arms control negotiations of the Cold War. However, while the landmines campaign certainly garnered public and media interest, even supporters have noted it “was never a huge grassroots movement” (Petrova 2018: 650). To some extent, this judgment may underestimate the wide level of public support in countries heavily affected by mines such as Cambodia. However, subsequent campaigns have become more narrowly based around a core of professional campaigning groups and individuals (ibid). Indeed, as Ritchie and Egeland (2018: 23) have noted, this shaped the campaigning strategies of nuclear ban activists: “given the absence of media attention and mass public protest that might galvanise change at the national level, the humanitarian initiative’s architects focused their efforts on the diplomatic level.”

This is even more notable when HD is contrasted with the public campaigns and million-plus petitions that accompanied the Hague Disarmament Conferences, the League of Nations Disarmament Conference of the 1930s (Caedel 1980; Knopf 2012: 175), and the nuclear disarmament movement of the early 1980s. In the latter case, for example, between 750,000 and a million people (estimates differ) attended a 1982 rally in New York in favor of nuclear disarmament – the largest political rally in US history (Wittner 2010; Knopf 2012, 178; Van Voorst 1982). In the same year, disarmament campaigners in the USA placed a nuclear freeze proposal on the ballot in numerous state legislatures, cities, and town meetings. In total, 18 million Americans voted on the freeze proposal, with 10.7 million (60%) voting in favor (Cortright 2008: 146). In October 1983, nearly 3 million people marched across cities in Europe to protest US nuclear missile deployments. This included 300,000 people in London, a million people in the Dutch capital, the Hague, and over a million in Germany’s major cities of Hamburg, Bonn, Stuttgart, and West Berlin (Cortright 2008: 148).

In contrast, the remarkable thing about the TPNW is not that it democratized the antinuclear movement but that it was achieved *without* the kind of sustained mass public engagement that characterized earlier efforts at disarmament often viewed as failures (the extent to which this was the case for campaigns in the 1950s and 1980s is perhaps more debatable (Knopf 1988)). As Tannenwald (2020a, b: 127, also see Gibbons 2018: 36) has noted:

...there is no widespread grassroots anti-nuclear movement the way there was during the 1950s in response to atmospheric nuclear testing or during the 1980s with the nuclear freeze movement. Despite the central involvement of civil society groups in the humanitarian campaign [for the TPNW], the campaign itself was largely an elite and interest group phenomenon. Millions of citizens are not out rallying in the streets to reduce nuclear dangers.

Observers have also highlighted the fact that it is Northern NGOs who have been the principal gatekeepers determining what campaigning issues are prioritized (e.g., landmines versus thermobaric weapons) (Carpenter 2014), while they have been the largest recipients of funding (Stavrianakis 2011: 208; O’Dwyer 2014: 127–133 and 207–220) and have had the largest presence in many HD movements. For example, out of 1,131 organizations involved in the ICBL, the majority (831) hailed from the Northern hemisphere (Grillot et al. 2006: 72). Likewise, over 70% of civil society organizations participating in multilateral disarmament fora are registered in high-income countries, and 95% of civil society statements or presentations delivered in these fora between 2010 and 2014 were by an organization from a high-income state (Minor 2020: 231). The exception here is the TPNW, but this is as much down to the fact that high income NWS and many of their high-income allies effectively boycotted the TPNW negotiations. Furthermore, while Minor’s study of disarmament meetings between 2010 and 2014 found that income disparities in average attendance at disarmament meetings were lower for HD fora (Minor 2020: 232), Hugo and Egeland’s data for 2015–2018 showed less positive trends. Most notably, the average number of low-income and lower middle-income states

attending key disarmament forums in the period 2015–2018 was actually *lower* for HD forums than for more traditional instruments such as the CWC, BWC, and NPT, the only exception being the 2017 negotiating conference of the TPNW (see Table 1). In part, this reflects the fact there has also been greater universalization of the latter treaties compared with HD Treaties (see Table 2). Finally, although the proportion of women attending meetings is broadly the same across all fora, the numbers are marginally higher for traditional disarmament instruments and particularly low for the mine ban treaty (see Table 1). In summary, the broader HD movement still has questions to answer over levels of inclusivity.

Fifth, Vilmer (drawing on the work of Finnemore and Sikkink) argues the strength of a norm is not just a function of the number of states that have signed up to it, but the number of *critical states* (e.g., states without which the achievement of a norms goals is compromised, or states with a

particular moral stature (Vilmer 2020: 6)). This has implications for judgments about the normative strength and potential of different treaties. For example, Finnemore and Sikkink (1998: 901) suggest that in the case of the landmine ban, states that did not produce or use landmines were not critical states, whereas support from landmine producers such as Britain and France facilitated consolidation of the norm. Likewise, South Africa under Nelson Mandela had a moral stature that meant its support for the ban was influential in persuading other states to sign up. Using this criterion, Vilmer argues that (in contrast to the landmine treaty) the TPNW is unlikely to progress beyond the first stage of the norm lifecycle (norm emergence) because it has so little support from critical states. For example, none of the NWS have signed the treaty, nor any NATO states, nor any of the G7 group of states, and nor any of the top ten military powers in the world (who between them accounted for some 75% of global military

Humanitarian Disarmament and the Era of Disarmament Without Disarmament, Table 1 Attendance at disarmament forums (2015–2018)

| | Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (2017 negotiating conference) | Mine Ban Treaty | Cluster Munitions Ban | Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty | Biological Weapons Convention | Chemical Weapons Convention |
|--|--|-----------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Average number of low- and middle-income states attending meetings | 63 | 32.8 | 27.8 | 44.3 | 43.5 | 51.5 |
| Average share of women in meetings (%) | 30 | 23.2 | 30 | 30.8 | 32.4 | 32.6 |

Source: Torbjørn Graff Hugo and Kjølvs Egeland (2020), Patterns of Participation in Multilateral Disarmament Forums, Norwegian People’s Aid: <https://commons.lib.jmu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2431&context=cisr-globalcwwd>

Humanitarian Disarmament and the Era of Disarmament Without Disarmament, Table 2 Number of state parties to key treaties

| | Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons | Convention on Cluster Munitions | Arms Trade Treaty | Mine Ban Treaty | Biological Weapons Convention | Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty | Chemical Weapons Convention |
|---------------|--|---------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| State parties | 51 | 110 | 110 | 164 | 183 | 190 ^a | 193 |

Source: UNODA Disarmament Treaties Database: <http://disarmament.un.org/treaties/>

^a191 including North Korea which announced its decision to withdraw in 2003 but is still listed as a state party to the treaty in UN documents, albeit with its status described as uncertain

Humanitarian Disarmament and the Era of Disarmament Without Disarmament, Table 3 Membership of humanitarian disarmament treaties among states with the highest military expenditure

| Top ten countries by military expenditure (2019) | % share world milex 2019 | % share world arms exports 2015–2019 | 1997 Landmines Ban (Ottawa) Treaty | 2008 Cluster Munitions Treaty | 2013 Arms Trade Treaty | 2017 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|---|
| USA | 38 | 36 | Not signed | Not signed | Signed but “revoked” | Not signed |
| China | [14] | 5.5 | Not signed | Not signed | Acceded | Not signed |
| India | 3.7 | – | Not signed | Not signed | Not signed | Not signed |
| Russia | 3.4 | 21 | Not signed | Not signed | Not signed | Not signed |
| Saudi Arabia | [3.2] | – | Not signed | Not signed | Not signed | Not signed |
| France | 2.6 | 7.9 | Ratified | Ratified | Ratified | Not signed |
| Germany | 2.6 | 5.8 | Ratified | Ratified | Ratified | Not signed |
| UK | 2.5 | 3.7 | Ratified | Ratified | Ratified | Not signed |
| Japan | 2.5 | – | Ratified | Ratified | Ratified | Not signed |
| South Korea | 2.3 | 2.1 | Not signed | Not signed | Ratified | Not signed |
| Total | 74.8 | | | | | |
| Not signed/revoked ATT | 48.3 | 57 | | | | |

Sources: Wezeman et al. (2020a), “Trends in International Arms Transfers, 2019,” SIPRI Fact Sheet: <https://www.sipri.org/publications/2020/sipri-fact-sheets/trends-international-arms-transfers-2019>; Tian, Nan (et al.) (2020), “Trends in World Military Expenditure, 2019,” SIPRI Fact Sheet: https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2020-04/fs_2020_04_milex_0.pdf

expenditure in 2019 (see Table 3)). Likewise, many of the states that traditionally support disarmament initiatives on moral grounds are absent from the TPNW including Japan, Switzerland, and Sweden. In contrast to most other HD treaties, virtually all of Europe (with the exception of Austria, Malta, the Holy See, and Ireland) has yet to sign the treaty. A similar case can also be made for the Arms Trade Treaty. Although a much larger number of critical states have adopted the treaty, including major arms trading states (e.g., China, Britain, and France), the absence of Russia and the USA alone (who between them account for 57% of global arms exports (see Table 3)) means the ATT currently fails to cover the majority of the global arms trade. Moreover, EU states – who were already signed up to the stricter criteria enumerated in the long-standing EU Common Position – accounted for 26% of global arms exports in the same period (Wezeman et al. 2020a: 4). Thus, those states that *have* signed up

to the ATT but were *not* already signed up to the stricter export criteria of the EU Common Position currently account for just 17% of the global arms trade. This may well change if the new Biden administration recommits to the ATT (with or without ratification by Congress), but to date, the normative “value-added” of the ATT has been quite marginal. Even more notably, many states that have signed up to ATT norms, in principle, also operate a system of *norm exceptionalism*, whereby certain exports to certain countries are effectively exempted from the application of ATT norms (UK exports to Saudi Arabia being a case in point (Stavrianakis 2020; Acheson 2019)). Thus, even if the number of critical states supporting the treaty rises, the commitment to ATT norms on arms transfers seems likely to remain both shallow and intermittent at best – a situation facilitated by the wording of a treaty that essentially adopts a permissive approach to arms exports (see below).

The notion of a perpetual normative progression also suggests a determinist teleology of weapons norms and weapons law that is in contrast to a long history of norm retrenchment (e.g., the demise of both the ABM treaty and the INF Treaty) and circumvention. It also downplays the potential for counternorms to be re-enshrined by opponents (the norm of deterrence in the case of the TPNW, liberal market norms in the case of the Arms Trade Treaty, or the norm of “home combatant” protection in the case of “killer robots” (Bode and Huelss 2018: 407; Horowitz 2016)); or for the content of existing norms to simply be reinterpreted. Unsurprisingly, therefore, the reality of established HD agreements is that they have already experienced a mix of normative progression and regression. Thus, while China acceded to the ATT in July 2020, the Trump administration essentially reversed Obama era commitments to the ATT. Moreover, China’s accession and American withdrawal have led some observers to worry that the ATT’s “political center of gravity” is currently moving from the West to the East, with negative consequences for the interpretation of ATT humanitarian norms (Vestner 2020: 18). Such oscillation between moments of progression and moments of regression seems as likely to be a feature of HD as it has been for mainstream arms control.

The landmines ban can probably lay claim to be the most widely adhered and effective HD agreement, but there are even signs of normative retrenchment/circumvention here. For example, although the USA has consistently refused to sign the treaty, supporters have pointed to general US adherence to its principles as a sign of normative influence on nonsignatories. However, the Trump administration replaced Obama-era restrictions on the use of landmines outside the Korean peninsula with a policy permitting the production and use of “non-persistent” landmines (those with

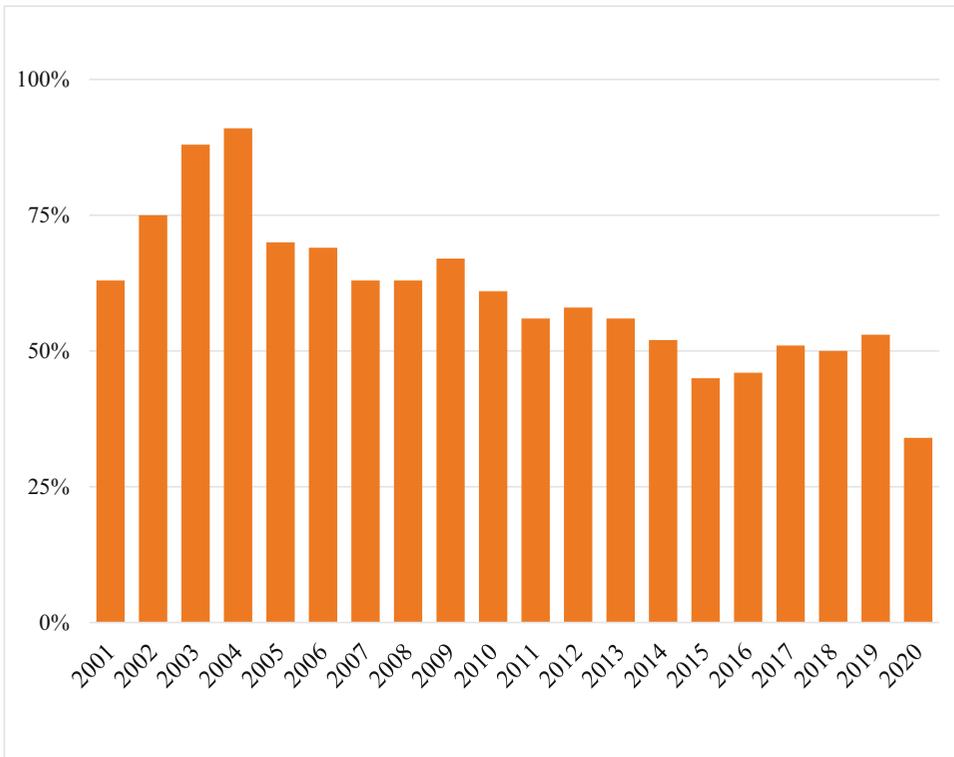
self-destruct or self-deactivation mechanisms). Even more notably, while the number of casualties from mines and explosive remnants of war dropped in every 5-year period through to 2013, there was a significant rise in the period 2014–2018 (see Table 4). Indeed, the casualty rates for 2016 (9,439) were double those recorded in 2013 (3,457), the lowest recorded year for casualties. These rises partly reflect the impact of the Syrian conflict, and the overall numbers may well decline again (at least until the next major conflict) as the influence of Syria on deaths from armed violence reduces. However, they also reflect a significant rise in the number of casualties from improvised mines. Indeed, the figure for improvised mine casualties alone in 2018 (3,789) was higher than the casualties caused by all mine varieties for 2013. As Njeri et al. (2020: 255) have noted, this raises the question of “whether a ban on one of type of weapon may lead some actors to circumvent norms by using other, similar weapons.”

A further area where there has been retrenchment is in the commitment of states to transparency on implementation of key HD agreements. The proportion of states submitting annual reports on implementation of the ATT has steadily declined from a high of 80% in 2015 to a low of 44% (44 states) in 2019. For the landmine treaty, annual reporting rates have declined from a high of 91% in 2004 to a low of 34% in 2020 (see Fig. 2). Moreover, an assessment of ATT reports actually submitted by states in 2017 found only 29 (33%) submitted a publicly available report containing the minimum amount of information necessary to allow a reader to assess its arms transfers (Control Arms 2019: 39). Worse still, 92% of transactions reported were not comparable – as an export did not have a corresponding import of a similar type of weapon (or vice versa (Control Arms 2019: 101)). These declines in

Humanitarian Disarmament and the Era of Disarmament Without Disarmament, Table 4 Number of mine/explosive remnants of war casualties

| | 1999–2003 | 2004–2008 | 2009–2013 | 2014–2018 |
|-------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Number of mine/ERW casualties | 42,858 | 31,789 | 21,540 | 34,558 |

Source: International Campaign to Ban Landmines, *Landmine Monitor 2019*, p. 53. See: <http://www.the-monitor.org/media/3074086/Landmine-Monitor-2019-Report-Final.pdf>



Humanitarian Disarmament and the Era of Disarmament Without Disarmament, Fig. 2 Percentage of states parties to the mine ban treaty submitting annual transparency reports on implementation of the treaty.

(Source: Landmines and Cluster Monitor Factsheet, “Mine Ban Transparency Reporting” (Article 7), June 2020: http://the-monitor.org/media/3148394/factsheet_transparency_final.pdf)

reporting to key HD instruments have also coincided with significant declines in the number of states providing reports to other arms transparency instruments. By 2017, reporting to the UN Arms Register had declined to the point where just 12 states from outside Europe provided reports to the Register (Wezeman 2019). Likewise, participation in the UN Report on Military Expenditure has declined from 81 states in 2002 to just 30 of the 193 UN member states by 2018 (Wezeman et al. 2020b: 10). Those states *not* reporting in 2018 accounted for an estimated 81% of global military expenditure (ibid.). Two reporting instruments in the Americas – the Inter-American Convention on Transparency in Conventional Weapons Acquisition (CITAAC) and the South American Defense Expenditure Registry (SADER) – appear to be no longer active (ibid., 17). Thus, initial HD successes in promoting

norms of transparency have given way to a decidedly more mixed picture.

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An even more substantive problem is that humanitarian weapons law is designed *not* to address militarism and militarization more generally. This is a problem particularly evident in the narrow weapon-specific bans of model 1 HD. To some extent, the achievement of the nuclear weapon ban may provide both a response to this critique and/or evidence that third model HD is evolving to embrace more traditional disarmament logics. At the same time, however, the humanitarian framing of the TPNW may, ironically, represent an obstacle to the achievement of

the very disarmament that is the goal of the nuclear ban.

From the birth of humanitarianism in the nineteenth century, many peace activists viewed both international humanitarian law and organizations such as the Red Cross as unrelated to peace because they aimed not to prevent war, but to humanize it (Mathur 2017: 59; Fry and Nair 2018: 1). More recently, the military historian Michael Howard (2002: 54–55) has suggested the Hague Conferences reflected the fact that liberal internationalists had “abandoned their original objectives of preventing war and building peace in favor of making war more humane for those actually fighting it.” Others have argued the very “fluidity of the language of humanitarianism” means it can be flexibly deployed to support diametrically opposed positions on weapon bans. For example, Chiam and Hood (2019) highlight the way New Zealand and Australia both utilized humanitarian frameworks to legitimize their respective support for, and opposition to, the TPNW.

A key problem is that the emphasis on proportionality and distinction between combatant and civilian at the heart of IHL is offset by the privileging of “military necessity” (a highly elastic term) as a core countervailing norm. Partly because of this, Jochnick and Normand (1994: 50) argue “the laws of war have facilitated rather than restrained wartime violence.” Indeed, the Nuremberg Tribunal concluded as follows:

military necessity permits a belligerent, subject to the laws of war, to apply any amount of and kind of force to compel the complete submission of the enemy with the least possible expenditure of time, life and money. . . It permits the destruction of life of armed enemies and other person whose destruction is incidentally unavoidable. (cited in Jochnick and Normand 1994: 93)

Thus, the umbilical linkage between humanitarianism, IHL, and HD initiatives means the latter are inevitably circumscribed in their ability to constrain the instruments of armed violence because armed violence *per se* is legitimized by humanitarianism. This problem is put into particularly stark relief in the case of model 1 weapon bans such as those on landmines and cluster

munitions. At a minimum, such bans “denounce the weapon without denouncing organized violence” and produce “a resounding *silence* [my italics] about the broader issues of violence and conflict” (Dunworth 2020: 170). However, in the context of a militarized global society, the attempt to stigmatize particular weapons invariably goes beyond silence about militarism to actively produce a hierarchy of nonlegitimized and legitimized weapons that leaves the vast majority of armaments in the latter category. Indeed, bans on landmines and cluster munitions on the grounds they lack the capacity to discriminate between combatant and civilian also function to reinforce the legitimacy of modern so-called “precision weapons” (Zehfuss 2010: 552–553). In short, at least up to the nuclear weapon ban (see below), HD largely abandoned strategic contestation of global militarism in favor of achieving tactical humanitarian disarmament successes – a one-weapon at a time approach to disarmament.

Nor was this simply an accidental by-product of the humanitarian framework. Rather, for many activists, the HD framework was adopted precisely because it was so unthreatening both to the institution of war and to the major military powers. As Carpenter, (2014: 117) drawing on interviews with activists, has observed:

the very concept of “humanitarian disarmament” was developed in part to reclaim disarmament issues from the antimilitarist movement: to make disarmament about civilian protection, a cause that militaries and humanitarian organizations could get behind, rather than about ending war altogether.

Likewise, organizations such as the ICRC have viewed their credibility with governments as “contingent in part on avoiding connections to peace activism. . . the “no tree huggers” rule” (Carpenter 2014: 105). The Executive Director of ICAN has also emphasized the concern to avoid association with the “traditional peace movement” and its “left-wing, anti-military, anti-capitalist” leanings (Fihn interview, in Mekata 2018: 81). Even Ritchie and Egeland’s (2018: 131) depiction of the campaign for a nuclear weapon ban as a counterhegemonic diplomacy of resistance acknowledges the humanitarian

framing was chosen precisely because it was “politically unthreatening.” Of course, in large part, this is *why* the model 1 HD campaigns, on landmines and cluster munitions in particular, were so successful. Activists found a way to mobilize supporters around ostensibly radical proposals for weapon bans while framing such proposals in a way that reassured states they were not going after their military arsenals and military logics *per se*. They have even endeavored to portray what were deeply political initiatives as expressions of an apolitical humanitarianism that everyone should be comfortable with.

On one view, this is simply an example of smart campaigning discursive politics aimed at achieving incremental successes in international weapons law. Alternatively, the adoption of HD, with its more limited aims, can be understood as a tactical response on the part of campaigners to both the decline in public engagement and the diminution of diplomatic space for more radical disarmament agendas; a manifestation of the relative weakness of a disarmament movement contending with a revived post-Cold War militarism, rather than an expression of its strength. It should also be noted that the humanitarian disarmament movement is not monolithic. For example, the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) has actively supported HD treaties while articulating a more general position against militarism (see Acheson 2020). Nevertheless, the center of gravity of HD activism has been focused around efforts to distinguish the problem posed by either individual weapons or specific weapon transfers, rather than militarism and the arms trade *per se*. Inevitably, this legitimizes the very armament dynamics that either enable actors to find alternatives to those weapons deemed off-limits or which ultimately leave weapon bans irrelevant as processes of military modernization roll over them. In the former case, as noted above, the Trump administration declared it was adopting self-destruct or self-deactivating landmines – thus violating the landmines ban while claiming to honor the norm of civilian discrimination at the heart of the ban. In the latter case, as a recent report by the US Congressional Research Service (2019: 7) has noted, “given current and predicted

future precision weaponry trends, cluster munitions might be losing their military relevance.”

Consequently, when judged against the goals of narrow Cold War arms control, model 1 HD weapon bans aim to reduce the damage should war occur but do nothing to reduce either the risk of war or the costs of preparing for war. The contrast with traditional disarmament is even more striking. Up until the end of the Cold War, the preamble of major disarmament treaties described them as a step toward the goal of general and complete disarmament. This includes the 1971 Biological Weapons Convention, the 1977 Environmental Modification Convention, the 1992 Chemical Weapons Convention, and the 1996 Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. Thus, however discrete these specific initiatives may have been, and however formulaic the language, they could also be understood as part of a phased approach to the realization of GCD. In contrast, this ambition is absent from virtually all HD treaties (landmines, cluster munitions, and ATT) apart from the nuclear weapons ban (Bolton 2016: 10).

Ostensibly, model 2 nonproliferation HD instruments address the accommodation with militarism that is a feature of model 1 HD. The ATT, for example, aims to regulate significant elements of the arms trade, and campaigners have hailed it as requiring a “radical shift in behavior by the major arms exporters” (MacDonald 2014). The core of the treaty, and those elements that most clearly deliver on the humanitarian agenda of campaigners, is contained in Articles 6 and 7. However (as elaborated in the accompanying case study chapter), outside of codifying the existing obligations of states (e.g., adherence to UN arms embargoes), the combined effect is to delineate a highly permissive, one export at a time, *risk model* of arms export licensing that tolerates all but the most egregious arms transfers. For example, the treaty does not prohibit transfers to aggressive states, nor to states at war (unless covered by a UN arms embargo), nor to nonstate actors, nor to repressive regimes, and nor to regions characterized by acute security dilemmas. Neither does it prohibit the transfer of new or destabilizing weapons technology to regions.

Rather, it deliberately permits the vast majority of exports to states, societies, and contexts where people remain in fear of armed violence. Consequently, the impact on the actual arms export licensing decisions of states has been marginal at best and transfers to countries where known violations of human rights and international humanitarian law have continued apace (Acheson 2019; Pytlak 2020: 171). Moreover, the adoption of a narrow humanitarian framework, with its concomitant legitimization of militarism, inevitably made the attempt to circumscribe the treaty that much easier.

As the preceding discussion illustrates, HD in model 1 and 2 modes largely abandoned strategic contestation of global militarism in favor of achieving tactical humanitarian disarmament successes. Unsurprisingly perhaps, the impact of HD on either armament dynamics or overall trends in armed violence has been negligible. Between 1998 (the year after the landmine ban) and 2019, global military expenditure (excluding Iraq) rose by some 82% in real terms (see Table 5), while global arms transfers in the period 2014–2018 were 52% higher than for the period 2000–2004. The flow of arms to the Middle East, the world’s most conflict-ridden region, increased by 87% between 2009–2013 and 2014–2018 (Wezeman et al. 2019). Although inter-state conflicts remain historically low, the overall number of all state-based armed conflicts (including inter-state, intra-state, and internationalized intrastate) in 2019 was the highest recorded (54) in the post-1946 period, driven in part by a surge in conflicts in Africa, which also recorded its highest number of conflicts in the post-1946 period (Pettersson and Öberg 2020). The UN Secretary-General’s 2018 *Agenda for Disarmament* depicted a world where:

global military spending and capabilities exceed those seen at any point since the fall of the Berlin Wall...[a world characterized by] unrestrained arms competition...[where] limits on major conventional forces have been left aside...[and where] armed conflicts are more protracted, more lethal for civilians and more prone to regional rivalries and external intervention...In all circumstances, the excessive accumulation of arms...fuel violence. (UN Office for Disarmament Affairs 2018: 3)

Clearly, these conflict trends have their roots in a range of local and international dynamics that HD was never designed to address, albeit quite deliberately so. Nevertheless, for a project and an activist movement centered on preventing the human suffering produced by armed violence, this is not the best evidentiary basis on which to root claims of success.

In contrast, the TPNW can be understood as a *qualitatively different kind of humanitarian disarmament* (see the case study chapter for more detail). In part, this is because the absence of the NWS means the TPNW currently functions solely as a stigmatization treaty, rather than one that actually operationalizes disarmament. However, it is also different because of the nature of the weapons targeted by the treaty. In the case of landmines and cluster munitions, the humanitarian framing permitted activists to carve out critiques of the weapons from broader critiques of militarism and thus made it easier to assemble a coalition of supportive states. Many (if not all) of the world’s leading spenders on defense and the world’s leading arms exporters could safely sign up to these model 1 HD agreements safe in the knowledge that their military establishments would only be marginally impacted. In contrast, nuclear weapons are “apex weapons” perceived as central to the security, prestige, and even identity of NWS states. They are also more intimately connected to the broader logics that sustain war, militarism, and security diplomacy. Given this, the nuclear ban campaign inevitably encountered fierce resistance from the NWS and many of their allies – actors able to wield immense economic and diplomatic power. Furthermore, the focus on nuclear weapons inevitably meant the line drawn in the humanitarian tradition between critiquing specific methods of war, but not war, and militarism itself was at least blurred, notwithstanding the efforts of some campaigners to avoid the association with antimilitarism. This marks out the TPNW as a more signal achievement than either the landmines or cluster munitions bans.

As already noted, however, a fundamental problem with a humanitarian approach to disarmament is that the emphasis on proportionality and distinction is umbilically linked with the

Humanitarian Disarmament and the Era of Disarmament Without Disarmament, Table 5 Global military expenditure (in constant US\$b at 2018 prices)

| | 1998 | 2003 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | % change 1998–2019 |
|-----------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|--------------------|
| GME (excluding Iraq) ^a | 1054 | 1301 | 1637 | 1753 | 1789 | 1794 | 1778 | 1748 | 1743 | 1766 | 1779 | 1800 | 1849 | 1914 | 81.6 |
| GME (including Iraq) | | | 1641 | 1757 | 1793 | 1799 | 1783 | 1756 | 1750 | 1776 | 1785 | 1807 | 1855 | 1922 | |

Source: SIPRI Military Expenditure Database: <https://www.sipri.org/databases/milex>

^aIraq is excluded for certain years because there is insufficient data to make meaningful estimates

equally powerful norm of military necessity and the broader legitimization of war and militarism. The challenges this raises for getting down to nuclear zero are neatly illustrated by the 1996 International Court of Justice opinion on the legality of nuclear weapons. On the one hand, the court recognized the uniquely devastating consequences of nuclear war, noting “the destructive power of nuclear weapons cannot be contained in either space or time” (ICJ 1996: para 35). On the other hand, it ultimately declined to take a position on the legality of nuclear weapons, including their compatibility with IHL. Its conclusion essentially balanced the norms of proportionality and distinction against the norm of military necessity, expressed in this case, as self-defense:

...the threat or use of nuclear weapons would generally be contrary to the rules of international law applicable in armed conflict, and in particular the principles and rules of humanitarian law;

However...the Court cannot conclude definitively whether the threat or use of nuclear weapons would be lawful or unlawful *in an extreme circumstance of self-defense, in which the very survival of a State would be at stake* [my emphasis]. (ICJ 1996: E)

As the ICJ opinion indicates, both the veneration of military necessity and the essentially plastic nature of concepts such as “necessity,” “proportionality,” and “civilian” (Wilke 2018; Lewis and Sagan 2016) provide a route to justify nuclear weapons using exactly the same discursive framework as that deployed by ban proponents. Indeed, as already noted, even the TPNW recognizes the norm of military necessity by stipulating a right to withdraw where “extraordinary events...have jeopardized the supreme interests of a country.”⁴ Thus, while the humanitarian framing was certainly effective in persuading significant constituencies of *non-nuclear* states to sign a ban treaty, it may be less effective against NWS committed both to a *counternormative strategy* centered on revalorizing the norm of deterrence (Tannenwald 2020a, b) and a *norm reinterpretation strategy* based on an alternative understanding of proportionality, distinction, and their correlation with the norm of military necessity

(see case study chapter). Instead, a more traditional qualitative disarmament framework rooted in a more broad-ranging philosophy of antimilitarism might actually provide a sounder basis around which to challenge NWS arguments for continued possession. Such a framework, while still based on a concern about the devastating human and ecological consequences of nuclear war, is not only less open to normative reinterpretation but also provides a stronger basis for addressing the multiple interconnections between nuclear disarmament and conventional armament dynamics, as well as justifications of low-yield NW.

Conclusion: Reflections on the Past, Present, and Future of Humanitarian Disarmament

In conclusion, disarmament practices of various kinds are currently more common than the practices of narrow arms control. However, the hegemony of arms control as a paradigm for controlling the means of violence has meant the contemporary ubiquity of disarmament remains largely unacknowledged. In part, this is because the emergence of arms control rested on the equation of disarmament with pure disarmament or general and complete disarmament. This facilitated its dismissal as failed, utopian, crude, and old-fashioned. At the same time, successful disarmament initiatives such as the BWC or the CWC were reframed as examples of successful arms control. Indeed, a perennial feature of arms control theory has been the persistent refusal to acknowledge that examples of successful disarmament might simply be examples of successful disarmament. Contemporary disarmament includes a range of examples, some of them decidedly nonutopian. The most notable are the following: coercive disarmament (of various types), structural disarmament, DDR, the disarmament of sacred spaces, and qualitative disarmament.

The parameters of HD are contested even by supporters, but three distinct models of HD have emerged. The first seeks outright prohibitions on

⁴See: <http://undocs.org/A/CONF.229/2017/8>

conventional weapons previously considered unexceptional instruments of warfare (e.g., landmines and cluster munitions). The second focuses on establishing regulatory frameworks rather than a blanket prohibition on either specific weapons or arms transfers. The third aims to establish normative prohibitions on “apex weapons.” Most HD practices (with the exception of HD nonproliferation instruments) can be understood as a distinct subset of qualitative disarmament, one that foregrounds humanitarian rationales for control, includes an enhanced role for civil society, and often features provisions for remediation and victim assistance. For supporters, HD has achieved remarkable disarmament successes that have prevented and mitigated human suffering caused by inhumane weapons and irresponsible arms transfers. It has also established powerful norms capable of influencing the behavior of states that remain outside formal HD regimes. Moreover, the enhanced role of civil society and the empowerment of states and voices from the global south has democratized disarmament and enacted a form of disarmament from below, even a counterhegemonic resistance to nuclear and other security logics. However, the content of many HD agreements has also been influenced by statist considerations, even supporters have described it as “politically unthreatening,” public engagement compares poorly with earlier eras of disarmament activism, and (with the exception of the TPNW) actors from the global north still tend to dominate HD fora. State reporting to HD instruments such as the MBT and the ATT has declined, casualty rates from mines and explosive remnants of war have risen, and processes of military modernization may be making the ban on cluster munitions irrelevant. States that signed the ATT, and were not already committed to the EU’s stricter criteria on arms transfers, currently account for just 17% of the global arms trade. This may change if the Biden administration recommits to ATT norms, but irrespective, the actual impact of the treaty on the arms transfer *practices* of states that *are* party to the treaty has been minimal, and this seems unlikely to change, with or without US membership.

More fundamentally, although IHL valorizes norms of proportionality and distinction between combatant and civilian, it also privileges the norm of military necessity, while giving the institution of war a pass. This umbilical linkage between humanitarianism, IHL, and HD means the latter is circumscribed in its ability to constrain the means of violence, because armed violence *per se* is legitimized by IHL. In model 1 mode, in particular, HD establishes a global hierarchy of legitimized and nonlegitimized weapons that leaves the vast majority of weapons in the former category and fails to address the armament dynamics that drive continuous weapon innovation, including the production of alternatives to banned technologies. This leaves model 1 HD potentially engaged in an endlessly recurring cycle of weapons ban “whack-a-mole.” Model 2 nonproliferation instruments such as the ATT are equally flawed. In the latter case, the humanitarian framing facilitated a narrow conceptualization of problem transfers that permits all but the most egregious exports and falls well short of the kind of restrictions that even a human security framework would have made more likely. Unsurprisingly, the era of HD – and the broader ubiquity of disarmament practices – has coincided with significant rises in global military expenditure and the global arms trade. The current era is therefore best characterized as one of disarmament without disarmament in a more meaningful sense, and models 1 and 2 HD as practices of disarmament without disarmament.

In contrast, the TPNW represents a third and qualitatively different model of HD, one focused on banning apex weapons and one that required HD activists to challenge the core security logics and identities of major military powers. The TPNW therefore represents a more signal achievement than other HD agreements, notwithstanding its current status as a stigmatization treaty rather than a disarmament treaty. At the same time, while the humanitarian framing was sufficient to persuade significant constituencies of states to sign up to the TPNW, the reification of military necessity in IHL also provides a route to norm reinterpretation on the part of NWS concerned to defend the status quo. Although by

no means inevitable, the seeds of the TPNW's ultimate failure may well lie in the normative roots of its success.

One final issue concerns the question of whether HD will remain relevant (and if so, which kind) in an era characterized by discrete and interconnected advances in fields such as AI, robotics, cyberspace, remote sensing, microelectronics, biotechnology, and nanotechnology. For example, Rosert and Sauer have argued that the HD "killer robots campaign" to establish a preventive ban on lethal autonomous weapons systems (LAWS) is unlikely to succeed – at least in its original incarnation. In part, this is because "autonomy" is "polymorphic" (a design feature occurring across multiple weapons platforms), so there is no single weapon to be banned and no characteristic injuries of the kind critical to the prohibitions on landmines. But it is also because they may not necessarily violate IHL principles of necessity or distinction. Indeed, defenders argue that future LAWS will be able to "outperform human soldiers in their ethical capacity under comparable circumstances" (Arkin 2010: 339; Rosert and Sauer 2021: 18). Of course, one of the lessons of previous HD campaigns is that weapon technologies, even nuclear weapons, have a thin materiality that leaves their utility, symbolic meaning, and ethical content potentially open to radical reframing by social action. Nevertheless, this materiality still shapes and limits the potentials of social action. Consequently, activists wishing to essentialize LAWS as inhumane killer robots may face greater challenges than those seeking to essentialize landmines or cluster munitions as inherently indiscriminate. Similar arguments can be made with respect to other emerging technologies, whose technical complexity, roots in civilian (dual use) technology, diverse military applications, compound effects, and challenges they present for verification (let alone the secrecy attached to work on novel weaponry) will make the search for model 1 HD agreements difficult to say the least. For example, while humanitarian principles of distinction and proportionality may well be applicable to cyber-warfare, it is hardly a problem resolvable by a ban on the technology – as opposed to agreements eschewing certain kinds

of attacks and/or efforts to establish general norms of behavior (Acton 2020: 145; Korzak 2019). This might suggest that model 2 HD will emerge as a more likely response to the varied challenges presented by new and emerging technologies. Indeed, the debate on LAWS is already moving away from proposals for a simple model 1 ban to proposals for regulation governing how and when *meaningful human control* might be exercised (see Boulanin et al. 2020). Not only is this consonant with military norms emphasizing the importance of the chain of command, but it is returning HD to the more technocratic, more statist, more nuanced, and less activist-orientated realm of traditional arms control. At the same time, generic dual-use technologies such as nanotechnology, AI, or robotics may well give rise to specific *weapon-types* that possess the kind of characteristics suitable for model 1 HD ban campaigns. Either way, however, the failure of model 1 and 2 HD to properly address militarism and armaments dynamics in general means they will always be relegated to the role of palliative rather than panacea. HD may also end up simply as an empty signifier (a phrase that has been emptied of concrete meaning (Mackillop 2018: 190)) and simply become a vague and fuzzy epithet applied to any and all control initiatives propagated by broadly progressive civil society actors. The post-Cold War expansion of HD initiatives from conventional weapon bans to regulation to nuclear bans hints at this possibility, as does the way in which HD and human security are sometimes treated as interchangeable (see case study chapter). More positively, an expansion of model 3 HD to other "apex" weapons would potentially connect it to a tradition of qualitative disarmament more clearly rooted in both a critique of militarism and a philosophy under which discrete initiatives are expressly pursued as part of a phased approach to achieving *overall reductions in* the means of violence in the international system. This, in turn, would require the operationalization of a broader and vaguer humanitarian sensibility, one offended by war itself, and not just its much-disputed "excesses." Whether such a transformation of HD is feasible is perhaps debatable, particularly given the resistance to antimilitarism evinced

even by leading campaigners. Nevertheless, it is this route that offers most potential for the realization of a truly counterhegemonic form of HD – and the most promise for alleviation of the human suffering produced by armed violence.

Summary

Humanitarian disarmament is one of a number of practices of disarmament that are now a more common feature of international arms governance than traditional arms control agreements. HD can be divided into three models: agreements characterized by total bans on particular weapons; regulation short of a ban and bans on “apex” weapons, the latter exemplified by the TPNW. HD has been widely lauded by supporters for its supposedly radical and transformative potential, and the provisions in many agreements for remediation and victim assistance represent a significant innovation in approaches to arms limitation. However, the legitimization of the norm of military necessity at the heart of the humanitarian tradition means that HD, particularly in model one and two mode, has been constrained in its ability to address militarism and armament dynamics more generally. Similarly, while HD is often characterized as synonymous with the pursuit of human security, the humanitarian framing has facilitated a narrower conception of the universe of restraints, particularly in non-proliferation instruments such as the ATT. The post-Cold War re-emergence of HD has therefore coincided with an era of rising global military expenditure and growth in the international arms trade, both of which spur new weapons development and their spread. In contrast, the TPNW aims to ban a category of weapons that are central to the core security logics, identities, and subjectivities of major military powers. Thus, it is potentially a more signal achievement. However, the veneration of the norm of military necessity that is also central to the humanitarian tradition may offer a discursive route to continued legitimization of nuclear weapons possession by the NWS. Ironically, therefore, the ultimate seeds of the TPNW’s failure may lie in the normative roots of its success.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration \(DDR\)](#)
- ▶ [Human Security](#)
- ▶ [Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom \(WILPF\)](#)

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Humanitarian Disarmament II: Case Studies

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Abstract

This chapter examines two prominent cases of humanitarian disarmament (HD) in action: the 2013 Arms Trade Treaty and the 2017 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. In theory, both treaties address a key problem with the HD bans on landmines and cluster munitions – that they exempt the vast majority of military technologies from scrutiny for pressure and restraint. In contrast, the ATT seeks to apply principles of humanitarianism and human rights to the regulation of a range of weapons categories that cover a significant proportion of the global trade in arms. Moreover, elements of the treaty

represented notable victories for campaigners, who generally lauded it as a remarkable accomplishment capable of altering the behavior of actors in the international arms market. However, the humanitarian framing of the treaty also facilitated a narrow conceptualization of problem arms transfers that falls well short of both the original vision for a code of conduct on arms transfers set out by Nobel Laureates in 1997 and proposals to curb the arms trade set out in the 1994 UNDP Human Development Report – the founding document of the human security agenda. Thus, while the ATT may have caused some exporters to revise their *processes* of export approval, evidence that it has substantially altered the arms transfer decisions of states remains thin on the ground. In contrast, the TPNW is a qualitatively different kind of HD, one that brought HD into contention with the core security identities and security logics of major powers. It, therefore, represents a more signal achievement than other HD instruments, even if the absence of the nuclear weapons states means it currently remains more of a “stigmatization treaty” than a disarmament treaty. However, the reification of the norm of military necessity that is so central to IHL may also provide a route to norm reinterpretation on the part of nuclear weapons states. Although by no means certain, the seeds of the TPNW’s ultimate failure may well lie in the normative roots of its success.

Introduction

This chapter accompanies the chapter [Humanitarian Disarmament and the Era of Disarmament Without Disarmament](#). More specifically, it provides case studies of two examples of disarmament in action: the 2013 Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and the 2017 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). To briefly recap the discussion in the preceding chapter: humanitarian disarmament (HD) draws on humanitarian

norms of proportionality and distinction between combatant and civilian to make the case for weapons control. HD itself can be further subdivided into three different models. The first is associated with the pursuit of total bans on conventional weapons often considered unexceptional elements in the armories of military forces (e.g., landmines and cluster munitions). The second is characterized by regulation short of a ban (e.g., limits on numbers, use, design, or transfer), and includes both weapons-specific restraints (e.g., on the use of laser weapons designed to blind) and expressly humanitarian nonproliferation initiatives such as the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). The third model, exemplified by the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), is associated with bans on “apex” weapons central to the core security logics, security identities, and security subjectivities of states. Arguably, the TPNW currently represents the only example of model 3 HD. The emphasis, in many HD initiatives, on remediation and victim assistance represents a novel and substantive innovation in approaches to weapons control. However, model one bans and weapons-specific restraints under model two are constrained in their ability to control the means of violence because humanitarianism gives equal weight to the norm of military necessity, thus legitimizing the institution of war, including war preparation. Consequently, they simultaneously reflect *and* construct a hierarchy of legitimized and non-legitimized weapons – with the vast majority, particularly the new so-called precision weapons, in the former category. In theory, model two nonproliferation initiatives such as the ATT address this deficiency. However, as will be illustrated below, in the case of the ATT, the connection with humanitarianism has facilitated the production of a weak treaty that enshrines the legitimacy of the arms trade in general and a “one-export at a time” risk model of regulation that permits the trade in all but the most egregious arms exports. The upshot is that the era of the ATT (and HD more generally) has coincided with quite significant increases in both global military expenditure and the arms trade.

In contrast, model three HD, with its focus on “apex weapons,” has brought HD into direct contention with the *core* security logics, identities, and subjectivities of major military powers. The TPNW therefore represents both a qualitatively different kind of HD and a more notable achievement, even if it is more of a stigmatization treaty than a disarmament treaty (see below). At the same time, the very normative frameworks central to humanitarianism may provide discursive resources for nuclear weapons states (NWS) to legitimize their continued possession. Thus, while certainly not inevitable, the seeds of the TPNW’s ultimate failure may well lie in the normative roots of its very success. Despite this, the expansion of an HD agenda to apex weapons illustrates the potential to connect it to a tradition of qualitative disarmament more clearly rooted in a critique of militarism and a commitment to achieving overall reductions in the means of violence. This route offers the greatest promise for the further evolution of HD.

A Case Study of Model Two Humanitarian Disarmament: The Arms Trade Treaty

Ostensibly, model two nonproliferation HD instruments address the accommodation with militarism that is a feature of model one HD. The ATT, for example, covers the trade in a significant, if not exhaustive list of defense equipment:

- Battle tanks
- Armored Combat Vehicles
- Large-caliber artillery systems
- Attack helicopters
- Warships
- Missiles and missile launchers
- Small arms and light weapons

Anna Macdonald (2014) director of the Control Arms Coalition has suggested the ATT not only “demands a radical shift in behavior by the major arms exporters” but will “create a strong deterrent for all countries. . . to end uncontrolled

arms transfers.” Garcia has (2014: 425 and 427) described it as a “remarkable diplomatic accomplishment with the potential to improve human security,” one that signaled “progress towards more principled international relations among all states.” She predicted (ibid, 431) it would “likely be nearly universal and generate new behavior.”

The final version of the treaty certainly reflected some notable victories for campaigners. The “reduction of human suffering” was included in the object and purpose of the ATT, language described by Bolton and James (2014: 448) as “a major normative reorientation.” The scope of the treaty includes small arms (a key issue for civil society) and states are required to “take into account” the risk of arms being used to commit or facilitate “serious acts” of gender-based violence. Enloe (2014: 23) has described the latter as a “transnational feminist success.” Sympathetic scholars and civil society advocates argue the treaty establishes global norms on the arms trade that (like the landmines ban) have the capacity to influence the actions of even non-signatories (Garcia, 2014; MacFarquhar, 2013; Bolton and James, 2014).

However, the history of the campaign for an arms trade treaty is also one of radical incremental retreat from the original ambition for a treaty to significantly curb the arms trade. The roots of the campaign date back to the Nobel Peace Laureates call in 1997 for an International Code of Conduct on Arms Transfers (Bromley et al., 2012: 1038). This offered a more expansive definition of arms and stipulated transfers could be conducted *only* if it could be “reasonably demonstrated” they would “not be used” to commit “grave violations of human rights.” Likewise, transfers were only permitted to states: not engaged in or sponsoring “grave breaches” of the laws and customs of war; to states that provided regular access to humanitarian NGOs; and to states that co-operated with relevant international tribunals. There were also clear and restrictive criteria on democracy, development, and the supply of destabilizing weapons. In short, this was an ambitious document that established a *presumption of denial* unless certain criteria for exports were met.

Box 1: Nobel Laureates International Code of Conduct on Arms Transfers: Selected Extracts

Article 1

“Arms include. . . all weapons, munitions, sub-components and delivery systems. . . all types of ammunition. . . sensitive military and dual-use technologies including, for example, encryption devices, certain machine tools, super-computers, gas turbine and rocket propulsion technology, avionics, thermal imaging and chemical irritants. . . Military and security training. . .”

Article 3: Compliance with international human rights standards

“Arms transfers may be conducted only if it can be reasonably demonstrated that the proposed transfer will not be used by the recipient . . . to contribute to grave violations of human rights. . .”

Article 4: Compliance with international humanitarian law

“Arms transfers may be conducted only if the proposed recipient. . . does not engage in, or sponsor, grave breaches of the laws and customs of war. . . provides access on a regular basis to humanitarian non-governmental organisations. . . cooperates with international tribunals, either ad hoc or general, with the power to adjudicate of the rules. . .”

Article 5: Respect for democratic human rights

“Arms transfers may be conducted only if the proposed recipient state: (a) Allows its citizens to choose their representative through free and fairly contested periodic elections that feature secret balloting; (b) Permits its citizens to express their political views through the freedom to speak, disseminate ideas and information, assemble, associate and organise, including the organisation of political parties; (c) Has civilian institutions that determine national security policy. . .”

Article 8: Commitment to promote regional peace, security and stability

“Arms transfers may be conducted only if the proposed recipient state or recipient party in the country of final destination . . . is not involved in an armed conflict in the region, unless it is recognized by the UN as engaged in an act of self-defence. . . or is playing a role in a UN-mandated operation. . . is not . . . introducing weapons beyond those considered appropriate for its legitimate self-defence; or introducing a significantly more advanced military technology into the region. . . does not advocate national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence. . . is not engaged in armed actions or practices which are likely to lead to a significant number of displaced persons or refugees. . .”

Article 10: Promotion of human development

“Arms transfers may be conducted only if the recipient state’s expenditure on health and education combined exceed its military expenditures. . .”

Source: <http://internationalhumanrightsllexicon.org/hrdoc/docs/armsnobel.htm>

The journey from the Nobel Laureates proposal first began with a shift from this presumption

of denial to a *presumption of approval* unless certain “risks” arising from each individual arms transfer could be established (e.g., breaches of IHL). Even after this turn to a “risk model” of assessment, the criteria for assessing risk advocated by NGOs was progressively relaxed from “reasonable risk” and then to “substantial risk.” But even this latter formulation proved unacceptable to the USA, which made inclusion of “overriding risk” a condition of its support for the Treaty (Pytlak and Kirkham, 2013: 2) – and then subsequently disowned the treaty anyway under the Trump administration. It should be noted that the more rigorous risk criteria used by EU states to govern arms transfers (a requirement for “clear risk” to be established) has not prevented states such as the UK and France from supplying large volumes of arms to Saudi Arabia during its conflict in Yemen (Cops and Ducquet, 2019: 6–7), despite extensive evidence of violations of international humanitarian law (Human Rights Council, 2019). Given this, the notion that the ATT formulation of “overriding risk” would impose significant restraints on defense exporters was always difficult to credit, and experience of ATT implementation bears this out (see below).

The core of the treaty and those elements that most clearly appear to realize the humanitarian goals at the heart of HD can be found in Articles 6 and 7. The former prohibits transfers that would violate UN arms embargoes or other international agreements to which a state is Party. This essentially codifies the existing obligations states have signed up to. Crucially, Article 6 also prohibits transfers if “a state has knowledge at the time of authorization” that the arms would be used in commission of genocide, crimes against humanity or “other war crimes as defined by international agreements to which it is a party [italics added]”. If an export is *not* prohibited under Article 6, then Article 7 obliges states to assess the potential that arms:

- (a) Would contribute to or undermine peace and security
- (b) Could be used to:
 - (i) Commit or facilitate a serious violation of international humanitarian law

- (ii) Commit or facilitate a serious violation of international human rights law
- (iii) Commit or facilitate an act constituting an offence under international conventions or protocols relating to terrorism to which the exporting State is a Party; or
- (iv) Commit or facilitate an act constituting an offence under international conventions or protocols relating to transnational organized crime to which the exporting State is a Party¹

When undertaking this assessment states are also required to consider “whether there are measures that could be undertaken to mitigate risks identified in (a) or (b).” If, after going through these various steps (!) states conclude there is still “*an overriding risk*” of the negative consequences listed above, only then are they required to prohibit a proposed export under Article 7. The combined effect is to set a very high bar for restraint. First, the requirement in Article 6 for “*knowledge* at the time of authorization,” requires an evidentiary basis for restraint not always available in cases of human rights abuse or wartime atrocity. This is compounded by the fact that many arms exporting states actively employ what Stavrianakis (2020) describes as strategies of “not-knowing” about IHL violations. For example, in 2016, the British Courts found UK exports to Saudi Arabia were in violation of its commitments under the EU Common Position, highlighting the fact that the government had quietly *removed* a column headed “IHL breach” from a database established to monitor Saudi-led coalition airstrikes (*The Guardian* 20 June 2019). Such strategies of not-knowing were also satirized in the British comedy series, *Yes Minister* (see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cIYfiRyPi3o>). Second, the requirement in Article 7 to assess the contribution of an export to peace and security – inserted at US insistence – leaves open the potential to make a peace and

¹For the treaty text see: <https://unoda-web.s3-accelerate.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/English7.pdf>

security evaluation *in favor* of exports. Third, the obligation to consider risk mitigation measures opens a loophole that can be exploited to legitimize controversial exports.

Moreover, the USA and Russia, which currently remain outside the ATT, accounted for 57% of global arms exports in the period 2015–19 (See chapter on ► “[Humanitarian Disarmament and the Era of Disarmament Without Disarmament](#)”). EU states that were already signed up to the stricter criteria enumerated in the longstanding EU Common Position accounted for 26% of global arms exports in the same period (Wezeman et al., 2020: 4). Thus, those states that have signed up to the ATT but were not already signed up to the stricter export criteria of the EU Common Position currently account for just 17% of the global arms trade. This may well change if the Biden administration re-commits to the ATT but, to date, the normative “value-added” of the ATT has been quite marginal.

Even more notably, the treaty itself has had little impact on the actual arms export decisions of States parties to the treaty. Indeed, even those who campaigned for the treaty now lament that:

... Arms transfers to countries where there are known violations of human rights and international humanitarian law (IHL). . . have continued since the treaty entered into force – such as to Cameroon, India, Saudi Arabia and many others. When it comes to Saudi Arabia, many of the ATT states parties and signatories are engaged actively in war profiteering (Acheson, 2019a: 1).

For some, this reflects a failure of states to implement the provisions of the treaty (Pytlak, 2020: 171). However, the failure to stem controversial transfers is as much, if not more, a function of the very limits built into the treaty. Indeed, the preamble of the treaty contains four separate references to the legitimacy of the trade in arms, two separate references to the right of states to self-defense (common code for the right to purchase arms) and one reference to the sovereign right of individual states to regulate conventional arms within their own territory. In part, such design flaws simply reflect the realpolitik efforts of states to circumscribe the treaty during its negotiation. Certainly, the language of “overriding risk” and

“knowledge at the time of authorization” was quite deliberately crafted to permit virtually any and all transfers (plus addressing more statist concerns about transfers to terrorists and organized crime groups). At the same time, the adoption of a humanitarian framework – with its concomitant legitimization of militarism – inevitably made this work of circumscription that much easier.

A further point to note in this context is that supporters often describe the ATT as realizing *both* a humanitarian agenda and a human security agenda. However, the humanitarian framing of the treaty meant its elements were intimately connected to international human rights law and international humanitarian law. This, in turn, permitted a far narrower framing of issues than required by a human security agenda. The latter concept includes both narrow (freedom from fear) and broad (freedom from want) versions (Chandler and Hynek, 2011; Paris, 2001). The ATT certainly failed to adequately address the intersection between the arms trade and the broader dimensions of the human security agenda such as the arms and environment nexus and the arms and corruption nexus (which states are merely “encouraged” to address) and the arms-conflict-underdevelopment nexus (vaguely alluded to in the preamble but not in the actual Articles of the Treaty). It has also failed to address many aspects of even the narrower freedom from fear agenda. The ATT does not prohibit transfers to aggressive states, nor to states at war (unless subject to a UN arms embargo), nor to non-state actors, nor to repressive regimes, nor to regions characterized by acute security-dilemmas. Neither does it prohibit the transfer of new or destabilizing weapons technology to regions. Rather, it deliberately permits the vast majority of exports to states, societies and contexts where people remain in fear of armed violence. Even apparent successes on this front, such as the requirement to “take into account” (a notably weak formulation) the risk that transfers of the arms covered by the treaty would be used to commit GBV have proved illusory so far. For example, one survey of government officials found that GBV had not been the sole or primary reason for an export denial by any of the states surveyed and respondents found it

difficult to imagine a scenario in which GBV would be the main reason for denial (Control Arms, 2019: 28; also see Acheson, 2019: 1). It is certainly the case that the ATT failed to deliver on most of the proposals to reign in militarism and the arms trade offered in the 1994 UNDP Report – the founding text of the human security agenda. This included phasing out military assistance, the development of a list of sophisticated weapons that should not be exported at all, regulation or elimination of subsidies for defense exporters, a tax on arms sales to finance peacekeeping and using savings from a post-Cold War peace dividend to fund domestic demilitarization such as the conversion of arms factories (UNDP, 1994: 47–60).

Thus, while the conflation of the humanitarian and human security agenda may have been useful from a campaigning perspective, it actually obscured the failure of the ATT to deliver on even a radically circumscribed human security agenda. Indeed, the phrase human security is completely absent from the treaty, whereas references to the interests of states, the rights of states, the political independence of states, and the domestic jurisdiction of states abound. It is a treaty not only shot-through with statism but very deliberately constructed to ignore all but the most egregious violations of human security – and even then, the decision on what violations get over this bar is left to those States Parties that currently make up the 17% of the arms export market not covered by those outside the Treaty or which are already operating under the stricter criteria imposed by the EU regime.

As the preceding discussion illustrates, HD in model one and two modes largely abandoned strategic contestation of global militarism in favor of achieving tactical humanitarian disarmament successes. In the case of model one HD this took the form of individual weapons bans – a one-weapon at a time approach to disarmament that not only left the majority of weapons untouched but indirectly legitimized modern precision weapons constructed as the very antithesis of the indiscriminate landmine and cluster bomb. In model two nonproliferation mode, while the ATT certainly reaffirms the existing obligations

of states to respect UN arms embargoes, at its core, it represents a highly permissive, one export at a time approach to arms transfer decisions that does little to address the broader threats to human security presented by the arms trade.

A Case Study of Model Three Humanitarian Disarmament: The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

The TPNW can be understood as a qualitatively different kind of HD, one that inevitably brings HD into contention with the core security identities and security logics of major powers. The campaign for the TPNW also represented a notable shift from earlier efforts to promote a detailed Nuclear Weapons Convention that included the NWS to promoting a declaratory ban without them. An example of the former was the NGO initiative led by the Lawyers Committee on Nuclear Policy to draft a convention, subsequently submitted to the UN for circulation as an official document in April 1997 (Gibbons, 2018: 13). This was a substantial, sixty-page document that described the threat and use of nuclear weapons use as “incompatible with civilized norms, standards of morality and humanitarian law.”² The Convention prohibited the development, testing, production, stockpiling, transfer, use, and threat of use of nuclear weapons and set out a phased process for the elimination of nuclear weapons (Weiss, 2011: 783–4): taking them off alert, removing weapons from deployment, removing nuclear warheads from their delivery vehicles, disabling the warheads, removing and disfiguring the “pits,” and placing the fissile material under international control. It also set out extensive verification measures, including the creation of an Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons to ensure implementation, a Technical Secretariat (TS), and an International Monitoring System.

²See: <http://undocs.org/A/C.1/52/7>

The roots of the TPNW itself can be traced to the failure of the 2005 NPT (Nuclear-Non-Proliferation Treaty) Review Conference to achieve a consensus. This prompted the group, International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War to establish the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN). The first ICAN office opened in Melbourne in November 2006, the campaign was formally launched at the 2007 NPT Preparatory Committee meeting in Vienna, and in July ICAN presented an updated version of the Nuclear Weapons Convention. However, while the notion of a Convention attracted support from the non-aligned movement (NAM) it failed to gain any notable traction with NWS and their allies. A key moment in the shift away from action focused on promoting a Convention came before the 2010 NPT Review Conference when the ICRC President, Jacob Kellenberger (2010), made a speech framing the problem of nuclear weapons as a humanitarian issue and calling for states “to bring the era of nuclear weapons to an end.” The final document of the Review Conference also included specific language on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons. This would subsequently be cited as providing both a reference-point and legitimization for the humanitarian initiative to ban nuclear weapons.

Crucially, ICAN itself gradually moved from promoting a detailed nuclear weapons convention, which presumed buy-in from the NWS, to campaigning for a treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons (Gibbons, 2018: 18–19). Action on what was now labeled “the humanitarian initiative” was also pursued at three successive conferences held outside the framework of the normal disarmament machinery and involving diplomats from over 125 countries, representatives of ICAN, ICRC, and various UN agencies (Docherty, 2018: 172). The first, in March 2013, took place in Oslo, the second February 2014 meeting was in Nayarit, Mexico, and the third December 2014 meeting took place in Vienna. The latter resulted in a Humanitarian Pledge in which states committed to “stigmatize, prohibit and eliminate nuclear weapons in light of their unacceptable

humanitarian consequences. . . .”³ In December 2015 the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution calling for the creation of an Open-Ended Working Group and the group’s report of August 2016 asked the General Assembly to convene a conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons. Negotiations took place in New York beginning in March 2017 and in July the TPNW was adopted, with 122 governments voting in favor, one against (the Netherlands), and one abstaining (Singapore) (Mukhatzhanova, 2017). The treaty prohibits the acquisition, development, production, manufacture, possession, transfer, receipt, testing, hosting, use, and threat of use of nuclear weapons (Thakur, 2018: 71). On October 20, 2020, the 50th state (Honduras) delivered its instrument of ratification, thus meeting the threshold for the TPNW to enter into force on January 22, 2021.

The TPNW is generally depicted as simply a further iteration of earlier HD campaigns on landmines and cluster munitions, with emphasis placed on the elements of continuity: the humanitarian framing and the similarity in campaigning strategies, key organizations and even individual personnel. However, the nuclear-ban campaign was different in a number of respects. First, while there had certainly been efforts to problematize both landmines and cluster munitions dating back to the 1970s (Dunworth, 2020), the subsequent ban campaigns were essentially faced with the task of inventing a taboo (particularly in the popular imagination) against weapons either considered unexceptional elements in the armory of states – or more commonly, not considered *at all* by the general public. In contrast, the nuclear ban campaign was able to build-on a long-standing, powerful and universal taboo against the threat and use of nuclear weapons (Tannenwald, 2007), as well as an equally powerful norm against their spread (Ruble, 2009).

³Humanitarian Pledge: See: https://www.bmeia.gv.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Zentrale/Aussenpolitik/Abruestung/HINW14/HINW14vienna_Pledge_Document.pdf

Decades of disarmament activism had also created significant constituencies among both states and global public opinion that even viewed possession of nuclear weapons as illegitimate. Of course, this co-existed (and still does) with an equally powerful view of nuclear weapons as central to the security, status, and even identity of NWS. Nevertheless, the ability to draw on and adapt powerful preexisting stigmas around nuclear weapons meant the ban campaign was, in this respect at least, faced with an easier task than that faced by the campaigns on landmines and cluster munitions.

Second, ban supporters have claimed the humanitarian framing “revolutionized” the diplomatic debate on nuclear weapons (Docherty, 2018; also see Ritchie and Egeland: 5), changing the discourse around them from “nuclearism” (under which nuclear weapons and deterrence are viewed as inevitable and acceptable elements of international security) to “humanitarianism” (Hanson, 2018). However, the TPNW is better described as “the culmination of over seventy years of campaigning against nuclear weapons. . . [campaigns which] from the beginning were humanitarian in ethos”, if not explicitly packaged in humanitarian terms (Dunworth, 2020: 180–181). This long-standing discursive heritage provided a foundation for campaigners to build on that was largely absent in the case of landmines and cluster munitions – and to the extent it did exist, was more recent and far less significant.

Third, the nuclear ban campaign was able to draw on constituencies of states with a record of support for disarmament, often couched in humanitarian terms, that long-preceded the launch of ICAN – most notably the Non-Aligned Movement of states and the New Agenda Coalition of States (Wunderlich et al., 2013; Strydom, 2007; Green, 2000; DiFilippo, 2006: 94–109). This contrasted with the campaigns on landmines and cluster munitions. A few states certainly supported efforts to impose restraints on these technologies from the 1970s onwards but both campaigns were still faced with building a meaningful coalition of states largely from scratch.

Fourth, the nuclear ban campaign was able to harness growing frustration among non-nuclear

states at the increasingly glacial pace of action on nuclear disarmament by the NWS and in established disarmament fora. This dynamic certainly echoed the way HD campaigns on landmines and cluster munitions reflected – and magnified – frustration at the failure of more conventional diplomacy to deliver results. However, frustration at the lack of action on nuclear disarmament was more long-standing (dating back to the early years of the Cold War), more widespread, and even more deep-seated. The nuclear ban campaign was therefore able to tap almost 50 years of frustration at the failure of the NWS to deliver on the disarmament commitments enshrined in the NPT and a broader failure harking even further back. Indeed, it is perhaps a moot question whether, given this deep well of frustration, a nuclear ban campaign shorn of its specifically humanitarian framing might have been equally successful.

The most significant point of difference with previous ban campaigns, however, was in the very nature of the weapons targeted for prohibition. In the case of landmines and cluster munitions, the humanitarian framing of the campaigns permitted activists to carve out critiques of the weapons from broader critiques of militarism and thus made it easier to assemble a coalition of supportive states. Many (if not all) of the world’s leading spenders on defense and the world’s leading arms exporters could safely sign up to these model one HD agreements safe in the knowledge that their military establishments would only be marginally impacted. In contrast, nuclear weapons are “apex weapons” perceived as central to the security, prestige, and even identity of NWS states. They are also more intimately connected to the broader logics that sustain war, militarism, and security diplomacy. Given this, the nuclear ban campaign inevitably encountered fierce resistance from the NWS and many of their allies – actors able to wield immense economic and diplomatic power. This alone marks out the TPNW as a more signal achievement than either the landmines or cluster munitions bans (even after taking into account the other factors noted above). Thus, while the campaign may have shared the same discourse, strategies, and even personnel as those on landmines

and cluster munitions, it also represented a *qualitatively different kind of humanitarian disarmament*. In particular, the focus on nuclear weapons inevitably meant the line drawn in the humanitarian tradition between critiquing specific methods of war but not war and militarism itself was at least blurred, notwithstanding the efforts of some leading campaigners to avoid the association with anti-militarism (see chapter X). Whether this signals a more fundamental shift in HD to embrace a more traditional qualitative disarmament agenda rooted in anti-militarism remains to be seen. The answer to this question also bears on the issue of whether the humanitarian framework is actually the most effective vehicle for realizing nuclear disarmament.

The TPNW, Humanitarianism, and the Potential for Norm Reinterpretation by NWS

As Tannenwald (2020: 116) has noted, the TPNW is not so much a disarmament treaty as a stigmatization treaty, one that defers the hard task of getting the NWS down to nuclear zero. As Müller and Wunderlich (2020: 184) have observed, the TPNW “is not the philosopher’s stone to solve all problems of nuclear disarmament” and it “will not move operative disarmament or establish new cogent international law.” At some point, states will therefore need to return to devising either the kind of detailed Nuclear Weapons Convention originally advocated by ICAN and/or a series of phased initiatives (adopted by NWS) and designed to progress nuclear disarmament to global zero (Thakur, 2018: 82). In addition, advocates highlight the need for ratification of the Comprehensive Ban Treaty (CTBT), wider adoption of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAE) Additional Protocol (the most effective framework for verifying civil nuclear activities are not diverted for military purposes) and negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty. These in turn will be difficult – if not impossible – to cordon off from broader discussions about conventional forces, not least because nuclear weapons are used by some powers (e.g.,

Pakistan, North Korea and even Russia) to offset disadvantages in their conventional forces.

Of course, the theory of change advanced by supporters is that the normative power exercised by a humanitarian nuclear ban will shape behavior in the same way as other HD treaties, and the NWS will ultimately feel compelled to abandon their nuclear armories. The reference point here for supporters is the landmines ban and the cluster munitions ban. However, the failure of the ATT to significantly impact the arms transfer practices of major suppliers suggests that other outcomes – particularly where core economic and security interests are perceived to be at stake – might be equally as likely. Moreover, agreement on the TPNW did not necessarily signal full-throated embrace of humanitarianism per se by all of its supporters. Indeed, one of the paradoxes of the TPNW is that states such as Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua that have been consistently skeptical about the application of humanitarian principles in other spheres (e.g., The Responsibility to Protect (Welsh, 2019: 59)) were willing to sign up to it, while those states most associated with supporting them (the USA and its Western allies) have actively opposed the TPNW (Hanson, 2018: 480). This may signal that for states in the former category, support for the TPNW was rooted as much, if not more, in the same traditional concerns about sovereignty and state security that animated skepticism towards RtoP – in particular, the fear that major powers might use preponderant military power to threaten and coerce weaker states.

There is also ongoing debate about whether the TPNW strengthens or undermines existing nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament instruments. Critics argue it fails to even reference the CTBT and undermines the NPT by establishing a competing framework for disarmament – in particular, by subordinating it (in Article 18) to the ban treaty (Vilmer, 2020: 12) and by providing a pretext for TPNW parties to leave the NPT. They also highlight the absence of any reference to the IAEA Additional Protocol. In addition, verification of the “irreversible elimination” of nuclear weapons is left to an unspecified “competent international authority.” This raises the possibility

of a new verification authority, thus further undermining the IAEA while also leaving the question of how disarmament will be guaranteed unanswered. Finally, it is argued that civil society pressure for NWS to sign up to a ban is more likely to succeed in Western democracies, thus undermining extended deterrence, and potentially leading to a China-Russia nuclear oligopoly rather than a nuclear weapon-free world (Ford, 2017; Highsmith and Stewart, 2018: 144; Müller and Wunderlich, 2020: 180).

Ban proponents respond that the TPNW represents a reaction to serial undermining of the NPT and other disarmament instruments by the NWS (Müller and Wunderlich, 2020: 178); that it reinforces the NPT (particularly its disarmament provisions); closes a legal gap in the latter by expressly banning nuclear weapons; and that no party to the TPNW has actually withdrawn from the NPT (Hamel-Green 2018: 442). They also note that parties to the TPNW carry the same verification obligations as they currently possess under the NPT and that the express purpose of the TPNW is to establish a normative prohibition, and a focal point for stigmatization politics (Tannenwald, 2020: 122). The whole rationale behind the treaty was to leave negotiation of a detailed nuclear weapons convention and associated verification provisions for the future (Ritchie, 2017). It is also argued that asymmetric nuclear disarmament by democracies is not only unrealistic but that the TPNW is already stimulating a broad array of nuclear powers to more actively engage with traditional disarmament machinery such as the Conference on Disarmament (Hamel-Green 2018).

As already noted, however, a fundamental problem with a humanitarian approach to nuclear disarmament is that the emphasis on proportionality and distinction is umbilically linked with the equally powerful norm of military necessity and the broader legitimization of war and militarism. The challenges this raises for getting down to nuclear zero are neatly illustrated by the 1996 International Court of Justice opinion on the legality of nuclear weapons. On the one hand, the Court recognized the uniquely devastating consequences of nuclear war, noting “the destructive

power of nuclear weapons cannot be contained in either space or time” (ICJ, 1996: para 35). On the other hand, the court ultimately declined to take a position on the legality of nuclear weapons, including their compatibility with IHL. Its conclusion essentially balanced the norms of proportionality and distinction against the norm of military necessity, expressed in this case, as self-defense (see chapter X). Indeed, as Hood (2020: 21) has noted, the Court’s opinion can even be read as a validation of the status of nuclear weapons as the ultimate weapon for the defense of a state.

As the ICJ opinion indicates, both the veneration of military necessity and the essentially plastic nature of concepts such as “necessity,” “proportionality,” and “civilian” (Wilke, 2018; Lewis and Sagan, 2016) provide a route to justify nuclear weapons using exactly the same discursive framework as that deployed by ban proponents. For example, in its submission to the ICJ, the USA noted “the law of armed conflict governs the use of nuclear weapons – just as it governs the use of conventional weapons” (cited in ICJ, 1996: para 86). More recently, Tannenwald (2020: 117) has highlighted the belief in the US military that plans on nuclear use are shaped by just war principles of proportionality and discrimination in targeting between combatant and civilian. These same principles are also reflected in the representation of new “more discriminating” types of nuclear weapons as less likely to produce collateral damage. For example, the upgraded B61–12 bomb has been described as a “smart atom bomb of great precision” (Broad and Sanger, 2016). It has a guidance system that permits more accurate targeting and a “dial-down” capacity that allows the military to adjust the power of an explosion down to 2% of the power of the Hiroshima bomb (Paltrow, 2017; Broad and Sanger, 2016). As former US undersecretary of defense for policy James N Miller has noted of such innovations: “minimizing civilian casualties if deterrence fails is both a more credible and more ethical approach” (cited in Tannenwald, 2020: 118). The Official US Nuclear Employment Guidance rules state “the United States will not intentionally target civilian populations or civilian

objects” with nuclear weapons and “all plans must be consistent with the . . . principles of distinction and proportionality” (cited in Valentino and Sagan, 2017). Likewise, Valentino and Sagan (*ibid*) have argued that use of a low yield nuclear weapon against the remote, deeply buried Al Qaeda caves in Tora Bora might have met the legal criteria of necessity and proportionality. Indeed, even the TPNW recognizes the norm of military necessity by stipulating a right to withdraw where extraordinary events have jeopardized the supreme interests of a country. This is not to suggest such arguments constitute a valid case for continued nuclear weapon possession, but rather to highlight the way the very norms embedded in IHL provide discursive resources that can be deployed by NWS to legitimize nuclear weapons possession.

Summary

In conclusion, the Arms Trade Treaty and the TPNW represent archetypes of models two and three of HD. In theory, both address the key problem with model one HD: that the focus on individual weapons such as landmines or cluster munitions, exempts the vast majority of military technologies from scrutiny and pressure for restraint. Indeed, to the extent that model one weapons bans effectively reify the use of precision and discrimination as models for the legitimate exercise of military force, they also legitimize the new generation of weapons heralded as exhibiting precisely these characteristics. Consequently, the broader problems of militarism and the arms trade are not just left unproblematized by model one bans, but in many respects, they effectively legitimize the very weapons central to twenty-first-century militarism. The promise of both the ATT and the TPNW is that, in different ways, they address these lacunae in the HD agenda. In the case of the ATT, it seeks to apply a humanitarian regulatory framework to range of generic weapons categories that cover a large proportion of the international arms trade. In the case of the TPNW, the connection of nuclear weapons to the status, identity, security

subjectivities, and security logics of NWS and their allies means that attempts to ban them inevitably challenge militarism in far more fundamental ways than HD one weapons bans. The TPNW therefore represents a more signal achievement than other HD agreements, notwithstanding its status as a stigmatization treaty.

However, as illustrated above, the humanitarian framing of the ATT facilitated a narrow conceptualization of problem transfers that permits all but the most egregious exports and falls well short of the kind of restrictions that even a human security framework would have made more likely. Indeed, while the ATT may have caused some exporters to revise their *processes* of export approval, evidence that it has substantially altered the actual *content* of arms export decisions remains thin on the ground. Unsurprisingly, the era of both HD in general and the ATT specifically has actually coincided with significant rises in the global arms trade. In the case of the TPNW, while the humanitarian framing was sufficient to persuade significant constituencies of states to sign up to it, the reification of military necessity in IHL also provides a route to norm reinterpretation on the part of NWS concerned to defend the status quo. Although by no means inevitable, the seeds of the TPNW’s ultimate failure may well lie in the normative roots of its success.

More positively, an expansion of model three HD to other “apex” weapons would potentially connect it to a tradition of qualitative disarmament more clearly rooted in both a critique of militarism and a philosophy under which discrete initiatives are expressly pursued as part of a phased approach to achieving *overall reductions* in the means of violence in the international system. Admittedly, this would require the operationalization of a broader and vaguer humanitarian sensibility, one offended by war itself, and not just its much-disputed “excesses.” Whether this transformation of HD is feasible is perhaps debatable – not only would it stretch the original link with humanitarianism to possible breaking point but it seems likely to come up against the hostility to anti-militarism evinced by some leading HD campaigners. Nevertheless, it is this route that offers most potential for the realization of a truly

counter-hegemonic form of HD – and the most promise for alleviation of the human suffering produced by armed violence.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Collective Security and Collective Responsibility in International Interventions](#)
- ▶ [Human Security](#)
- ▶ [Humanitarian Disarmament and the Era of Disarmament Without Disarmament](#)
- ▶ [Pacifism and Peace](#)

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Humanitarian Intervention

- ▶ [UN Security Council and International Interventions](#)

Humanitarian Interventions

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Hybrid Courts and Transitional Justice

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Definition

The United Nations defines transitional justice as “the full range of processes and mechanisms

associated with a society's attempts to come to terms with a legacy of large-scale past abuses, in order to ensure accountability, serve justice and achieve reconciliation" (United Nations 2004). It refers to the policies and instruments that deal with past atrocities to overcome social divisions (Costi 2006) caused by past repressive regimes. The central idea of transitional justice is how to achieve justice by providing a just social response to past abuses of human rights and through social transformation. What is just depends on the social context and historical experience of a society and "is contingent and informed by prior injustice" (Teitl 2000). The purpose is to comprehensively address the root causes of conflicts and violations of human rights, which were committed during such conflict (United Nations 2004), to effectively deal with the past and to create just and fair foundations from where to move on as a transformed society.

Introduction

Transitional justice, as a concept, developed in the context of democratization processes that began in response to the collapse of communism and the end of the Cold War primarily in Latin America and Europe. The "transition" is understood as a process of social transformation from "repressive rule or armed conflict" (Costi 2006) to a form of liberal democracy (Teitl 2000; Kora 2010). From an instrument of democratization, good governance, and respect for human rights, the idea of transitional justice has now expanded to become an essential component of any "liberal peace-building operation that addresses a post-conflict situation" (Kora 2010). Criminal trials, including national and international criminal courts, are an essential part of transitional justice (United Nations 2004). More recently, the international community has started to pay increased attention to hybrid courts as a way of addressing past atrocities and delivering on transitional justice. Transitional justice encompasses a variety of instruments. It includes "judicial and non-judicial processes and mechanisms, such as truth-seeking, prosecution initiatives, reparations programmes,

institutional reform, or an appropriate combination thereof" (United Nations 2004). It also involves wide-ranging political, economic, cultural, sociological, and psychological actions, such as "lustration, public access to police and government records, public apology, public memorials, reburial of victims, compensations, reparations, literary and historical writings, and blanket or individual amnesty" (Kora 2010). An optimal transitional justice approach combines different judicial and non-judicial policies and instruments in a holistic approach, as none of the policies and instruments alone are capable of achieving the objectives of transitional justice (Kora 2010).

Key Issues and International Perspectives

Transitional Justice and Human Rights

Respect for human rights and the rule of law are key aspects of transitional justice. In the context of transitional justice, law is the primary instrument for social change (Teitl 2000). The dynamic and transformative character of law is at the forefront of transitional justice. For the United Nations, rule of law rests on the four pillars of the modern international legal system, i.e., international human rights law, international humanitarian law, international criminal law, and international refugee law, all of which represent universally applicable standards (United Nations 2004).

International human rights law emphasizes the importance of criminal investigation and prosecution of crimes committed by past regimes. States do not only have a (negative) obligation to refrain from interfering with human rights without reasonable justification. They have also a (positive) obligation to protect individuals from human rights violations and to ensure the effective enjoyment and fulfilment of such rights. The latter requires states to ensure that individuals have accessible and effective legal remedies (Human Rights Committee 2004). In addition, states have the obligation to investigate and prosecute perpetrators of human rights violations. Failure to investigate and prosecute is in itself a human

rights violation (Human Rights Committee 2004). The establishment of a functioning judicial system and the promulgation of rules and procedures for the investigation and prosecution of criminal offences, which amount to human rights violations, are therefore an essential part of a state's positive obligation to protect and fulfill human rights.

Transitional Justice and Criminal Prosecution

The United Nations emphasizes the importance that criminal trials play in transitional contexts (United Nations 2004). According to the United Nations, criminal trials are important for transitional justice because they would:

- Express public denunciation of criminal behavior
- Provide a direct form of accountability for perpetrators and ensure a measure of justice for victims by giving them the chance to see their former tormentors made to answer for their crimes
- Enable victims to present their views and concerns at trial and reclaim their dignity
- Contribute to greater public confidence in the State's ability and willingness to enforce the law
- Help societies to emerge from periods of conflict by establishing detailed and well-substantiated records of particular incidents and events
- Help to de-legitimize extremist elements, ensure their removal from the national political process, and contribute to the restoration of civility and peace and to deterrence (United Nations 2004, p. 13)

National courts and international criminal courts are responsible for conducting criminal trials. However, in a post-conflict situation, national courts have limited legitimacy because they are usually associated with the past regime that has committed human rights violations (Dickinson 2003). Very often, they are also prone to bias, especially after internal ethnic conflicts. They may also have suffered from loss of personnel and damage of infrastructure, which compromises

their capacity to deliver justice in an impartial and effective manner.

An alternative to national courts are international criminal courts, such as the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), and the International Criminal Court (ICC). These courts were established by the Security Council to prosecute and adjudicate international crimes, i.e., crimes against humanity, war crimes, and genocide. The ICTY operated from 1993 to 2017 and the ICTR from 1994 to 2015. Both were replaced by the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, which follows up on issues not completed by the ICTY and ICTR, such as remaining fugitives, appeal, and revisions of decisions. The ICC was established in 1998 by way of a multilateral agreement. These courts are international because (i) they are established by international treaty or by resolution of an international organization, (ii) they have subject-matter jurisdiction over international crimes, and (iii) there is significant international representation among the judiciary and other judicial officers (Schabas 2014). In contrast to international criminal courts, national courts are established by national legislation; they apply national law and employ primarily national personnel.

The overall impression is that the ICTY and ICTR have played an important role in delivering justice in the former Yugoslavia and in Rwanda, something that national courts at that time would not have been able to do (United Nations 2004). They have also helped in developing jurisprudence in the field of international criminal law, which has led to more legal certainty in respect of defining international crimes (United Nations 2004).

Despite initial enthusiasm for international criminal courts, a "tribunal fatigue" emerged at the Security Council as of the mid-1990s (Scharf 1995). Scharf identifies four reasons why the Security Council did not continue with the establishment of international criminal tribunals:

- A politically cumbersome and time-consuming process of reaching consensus on the structure of the court.

- Permanent members of the Security Council were concerned about their own possible legal exposure.
- Other United Nations member states viewed international courts as unfair, as they shielded powerful states and their allies from legal exposure.
- Financial constraints (Scharf 1995, pp 169–170).

Despite their contribution to international justice, the ICTY and ICTR are criticized for having grown into large institutions requiring large budgets (United Nations 2004) while they were dealing only a relatively small number of cases. The “stark differential between cost and number of cases processed” raised serious questions about the efficiency of these courts and concerns about their ability to “provide for an effective system for delivery of justice” (United Nations 2004). Many trials have taken a very long time to complete which is partly due to complex legal procedures (United Nations 2004). The location of these courts outside the countries where the crimes were committed also raised concerns about their acceptance by the local population. While a location outside the country helped to protect the courts’ security and independence (United Nations 2004), trials in the concerned countries would have allowed for easier interaction with the local population and closer proximity to the evidence and witnesses, and victims would have had easier access to the court and its proceedings (UN 2004). Further to that, the ICTY failed to promote reconciliation between the conflicting parties in the former Yugoslavia where nationalism has re-emerged (Hehir 2019). In Rwanda, a National Unity and Reconciliation Commission had to be established to deal with reconciliation, as the ICTR alone could not achieve this objective.

The establishment of the ICC was also initially praised as a success for international criminal justice. However, it was soon criticized for selective targeting of individuals primarily from African countries while neglecting international crimes committed by individuals who are nationals of great powers and their allies. Failure

by the ICC to initiate prosecutions for international crimes committed in Syria and Yemen and against the Rohingya and the open rejection of the court by the United States have tainted its image as an impartial court. The fact that the United States, China, and Russia are not members of the ICC has also undermined its effectiveness, the former even displaying an aggressive attitude against ICC investigation and prosecution that involves US nationals.

Transitional Justice and Hybrid Courts

The Concept of Hybrid Courts

In response to the shortcomings of the international criminal courts, the international community started to pay attention to hybrid courts as a way of addressing past atrocities (Costi 2006). Hybrid courts is a term used to describe judicial institutions, which combine international and national elements and which due to such combination distinguish them from pure national courts and international criminal courts. The combination of international and national elements in hybrid courts is expected to bring together the strengths of international criminal courts with the benefits of local institutions (Nouwen 2006), to improve their legitimacy among the local population and to strengthen the national justice system (McAuliffe 2011). Hybrid courts would promise at least partial responses to problems of legitimacy, capacity building, and norm penetration which international criminal courts and national courts usually lack (Dickinson 2003). Hybrid courts would also protect fundamental values of the international community as a whole in the context of United Nations post-conflict peace-building activities (Cimiotta 2016). Besides implementing international criminal law and punishing perpetrators, such courts would contribute to developing and improving domestic criminal law systems with a focus on the investigation and prosecution of international crimes (Cimiotta 2016). This particular function would make hybrid courts a separate functional category different from international and domestic criminal courts (Cimiotta 2016).

A major point of criticism is that there is still no generally accepted definition of what would constitute a hybrid court (Muharremi 2018). The concept of hybrid courts would be a creation of academic discourse, which is not reflected in legal practice and case law (Muharremi 2018). The main problem is that every court, which is considered a hybrid, is different in structure (Donlon 2011) and there is no uniform model (McAuliffe 2011). The terminology is inconsistent as such courts are frequently referred to as “internationalized criminal courts,” “internationalized domestic tribunals” (Linton 2001), or “mixed criminal tribunals” (Cimiotta 2016). A further problem is how to distinguish hybrid courts from domestic and international criminal courts (Kjeldgaard-Pedersen 2015). Hybrid courts are considered a special category of courts, neither genuinely international courts nor national courts (Higonnet 2006). Hybrid courts would reflect a “mixed judicial model” in contrast to an “international” and a “national” judicial model (Bassiouni 2012). As a hybrid, they would form a blend of the international and the domestic (Dickinson 2003).

Attempts to establish the legal status of such courts usually focus on the common features of courts, which are considered as hybrid. The key characteristic would be that foreign and national judges would try cases prosecuted and defended by teams of local lawyers working with those from other countries (Dickinson 2003). The judges would apply domestic law that was reformed in line with international standards. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights also defines hybrid courts as courts of mixed composition and jurisdiction, encompassing both national and international aspects, usually operating within the jurisdiction where the crimes occurred (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights 2008). Hybrid courts would be formally an internal matter to the state they belong to, and their legal effect would be primarily on individuals rather than states (Cimiotta 2016). They would use domestic law enforcement authorities to support their judicial functions, the collection of evidence would be limited to the state where such

court is located and where the crimes were committed, and their actions would be legally attributable to a particular state (Cimiotta 2016).

However, a closer look at the different courts reveals that some of the hybrid courts are in fact national courts with some form of international involvement or international courts (Reiger 2012). In addition, with the creation of new “hybrid” courts, with each of them having different structural features, Nouwen (2006) concluded that the “only defining commonality” of hybrid courts would be panels composed of international and domestic judges. The Kosovo Specialist Chambers, which is composed exclusively of international judges, removed even that “only defining commonality.” Other authors try to define hybrid courts by looking at their legal effects. Hybrid courts would have legal effect primarily and directly upon individuals rather than upon states (Cimiotta 2016). International criminal courts would not have such direct effect. This does not seem to be a convincing argument as academic literature provides plenty of evidence that international criminal courts can have direct legal effects on individuals (Lüder 2002).

A different approach is pursued by Williams (2012), who distinguishes between “true” international criminal courts, hybrid courts, internationalized tribunals, and domestic courts depending on the degree of international involvement and the legal basis for their establishment. International criminal courts would be judicial bodies, which are established based on international law, i.e., either Security Council resolution or international agreement, and where international involvement would be maximal, such as the ICC, ICTY, and ICTR (Williams 2012). At the other end of the spectrum would be “pure” domestic courts assisted, usually on an ad hoc basis, by other states or international organizations (Williams 2012) and which are based on national law, and not international law. Hybrid courts and internationalized courts would be conceptually positioned between the two others. Hybrid courts would more closely resemble the international model, and, despite a mix of national and international elements, they would not be part of the domestic legal system as they would be

established based on international law (Williams 2012). The legal basis of the judicial body would thus be essential to characterizing it as internationalized or hybrid. The use of the term “hybrid court” is primarily limited to academic discourse and has little practical relevance. The International Court of Justice (*Arrest Warrant of 11 April 2000, Democratic Republic of the Congo v. Belgium*, 14 February 2002, *International Court of Justice, Provisional Measures, I.C.J. Reports 2000*) and the case law of the SCSL, ECCC, and STL do not use the term “hybrid courts.”

Examples of Hybrid Courts

Hybrid courts were established in East Timor, Kosovo, Cambodia, Sierra Leone, Lebanon, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Iraq. The latest developments are the establishment of the Kosovo Specialist Chambers and the Extraordinary African Chambers within the courts of Senegal as well as proposals for the establishment of a hybrid court for South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Sri Lanka. The United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) established within the District Court of Dili and the Court of Appeal special hybrid panels composed of East Timorese and international judges to try serious violations of international law (Donlon 2011). It also established a Serious Crimes Unit within the East Timor Public Prosecution Service (UNTAET Regulation No. 2000/16) to investigate and prosecute persons responsible for the atrocities committed in East Timor in 1999.

The United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) established *Regulation 64 Panels* (UNMIK Regulation 2000/64) to which it could assign a majority of international judges. UNMIK could also assign the investigation and prosecution for any criminal offence to an international prosecutor (Donlon 2011). In 2008, the European Union established the *European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo* (EULEX) to take over from UNMIK responsibilities in the area of rule of law in respect of Kosovo, including the assignment of international judges and prosecutors. The *Kosovo Specialist Chambers and*

Specialist Prosecutor’s Office (‘Special Court’) was established by Kosovo in 2015 with the mandate to prosecute and adjudicate allegations of certain international crimes which were described in a report titled the “Inhuman Treatment of People and Illicit Trafficking in Human Organs in Kosovo” (the “Report”) endorsed by the Council of Europe in 2011. The judges, prosecutors, and administrative personnel are internationals who are appointed by EULEX (Muharremi 2019). The court has jurisdiction over international crimes, such as crimes against humanity and war crimes.

In 2003, Cambodia and the United Nations agreed to establish the *Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia* (ECCC) to try crimes committed by the Khmer Rouge between 1975 and 1979. The ECCC functioned within Cambodia’s existing court structure, and the majority of the judges were Cambodian nationals. The *Special Court for Sierra Leone* (SCSL) was established in 2002 to prosecute serious crimes against civilians and UN peacekeepers committed during the civil war in Sierra Leone (1991–2002). After the closure of the SCSL in 2013, the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone (RSCSL) was established in 2010 in agreement with the United Nations to manage the ongoing and ad hoc residual functions, such as reviews of convictions and acquittals and requests for compensation. The UN established the *Special Tribunal for Lebanon* (STL) in 2007 to try individuals who were responsible for the assassination of the former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafic Hariri in 2005. The STL is the first tribunal, which has jurisdiction over the crime of terrorism (Ambos 2011).

The *War Crimes Sections* in the Court and Prosecutor’s Office of Bosnia and Herzegovina were established in 2005 as a hybrid judicial mechanism to complement the ICTY, which was to end its work in 2010. They had jurisdiction to investigate, prosecute, and try cases transferred from the ICTY and highly sensitive national cases (Donlon 2011). During a 5-year transitional period from 2005 to 2009, the High Representative appointed international judges to the war crimes sections. In 2003, the Coalition Provisional Authority established the *Iraqi Special*

Tribunal (IST) to try crimes committed in Iraq between 17 July 1968 and 1 May 2003. The Coalition Provisional Authority also established a Crimes Against Humanity Investigations Unit staffed by American prosecutors and investigators to assist investigations and the IST. The *Extraordinary African Chambers* (EAC) within the courts of Senegal was established in 2012 by an agreement between the African Union and Senegal with the mandate to try international crimes committed in Chad between 1982 and 1990 (Cimiotta 2015). The Chambers are composed of Senegalese judges appointed by a commission established by the African Union, and the Presidents of the chambers are nationals of the African Union, other than Senegal (Cimiotta 2015).

Hybrid Courts: An Evaluation

On the positive side, hybrid courts have prosecuted and convicted persons charged with criminal offences within their jurisdiction (Reiger and Wierda 2006), which has contributed to the public perception of at least some accountability for past atrocities (Open Society Foundations 2016). They also seem to have contributed to the removal from power of individuals, who were considered dangerous or obstructive for peace processes (Jalloh 2011). The threat of judicial proceedings and indictments before such courts has, in some instances, reduced the will of conflicting parties to engage in violent political action (Jalloh 2011). Hybrid courts have also contributed to establishing and improving historical records of crimes, which are relevant for subsequent public discourse and education about the causes of past atrocities (Open Society Foundations 2016).

However, a major criticism of hybrid courts is that they are susceptible to national and international political influence. Narrow definitions of the court's jurisdiction would lead to de facto impunity of senior officials with political power and influence (Open Society Foundations 2016). In addition, there are instances of direct national and international political interference with judicial procedures, especially in situations where the accused is important for political stability or

security reasons (Chatham House 2008). Lack of adequate oversight and accountability mechanisms for hybrid courts, and lack of political and financial backing by international actors, such as the UN, would facilitate such political influence (Open Society Foundations 2016). Unchecked prosecutorial discretion who to prosecute would also allow political consideration to influence judicial proceedings and thus establish the perception of selective justice (Jalloh 2011). Hybrid courts have met resistance and lack of cooperation by governments where the prosecution was harmful to their foreign policy or other strategic considerations (Reiger and Wierda 2006). The legitimacy of judicial proceedings was questioned when the prosecution used evidence obtained by government which were politically hostile to the local government or political forces (Humphrey 2011). A further concern is that hybrid courts have not delivered on the promise of enhanced legitimacy, capacity building, and norm penetration as originally expected, especially when they were created on a "top-down" basis without taking into account local norms, beliefs, and practices (Millar 2014). The creation of hybrid courts is very often driven by political considerations, primarily to shield powerful countries from criminal responsibility (Muharremi 2019), which furthers the perception of selective justice and questions the legitimacy of such courts.

Where hybrid courts lack legitimacy among the local population, there is the danger that court proceedings will fuel internal political conflicts which may lead to social instability. A lack of legitimacy leads to resentment and resistance by the local population (Hehir 2019). This may not only negatively affect the willingness of local institutions to cooperate with the court but also compromise efforts to achieve reconciliation and other core objectives of transitional justice (Hehir 2019). Even where criminal prosecutions lead to individual accountability for past crimes, the effect of such criminalization of political violence tends to be controversial and politically destabilizing especially when such criminalization relates to behavior conducted out of a duty toward a particular political community

(Leebaw 2008). While criminal prosecution serves the transitional justice objective of individual accountability and reinforcement of rule of law, it may compromise reconciliation and political and social stability, which may be better served by noncriminal instruments, such as truth commissions (Leebaw 2008). In fact, there is no evidence that hybrid courts have contributed to post-conflict national reconciliation, and in some instances, such as in Sierra Leone, the court has deepened national separation when only one national group was prosecuted (Jalloh 2011; Hehir 2019). While court proceedings have contributed to the collection of historical records, this does not mean that they have also served truth-finding as many of the records were questionable as to the truthfulness of the statements made by witnesses and those indicted (Open Society Foundations 2016). Very often, prosecutorial statements were strategic narratives to delegitimize political actors by constructing their acts as criminal rather than political (Kelsall 2006). Hybrid courts, like international criminal courts, are prone to abuse for political purposes, including the change of historical narratives of conflicts by criminalizing political behavior (Nice 2017), and to create a criminal image of political movements thereby creating the perception of the court being an instrument of political conflict rather than of justice (Kelsall 2006).

Summary

The present proliferation of hybrid courts in different formats indicates that there is a tendency to continue with the establishment of such courts as an alternative to pure international criminal courts, like the ICTY or OCTR. Criminal trials of past human rights abuses and violations will also remain a central element of transitional justice. However, it is important that hybrid courts have domestic support before they are established if they are to be successful (Hehir 2019) and that their structure allows for a meaningful involvement of local actors in order to achieve the objectives of enhanced legitimacy, capacity building,

and norm penetration. Hybrid courts should also avoid the mistakes made by international criminal courts, such as too lengthy procedures, limit public outreach, and a disconnect between court and local population. Special safeguards must be in place to minimize national and international political interference with judicial procedures, or, alternatively, there must be a more realistic assessment when judicial procedures should not take priority over political processes that are important for political stability, peace processes, and national reconciliation. Finally, hybrid courts cannot be used alone as an instrument of transitional justice. They should be complemented with reforms aimed at strengthening local judicial systems and non-judicial instruments, such as truth commissions, review of historical narratives, apologies, and education which aims at changing the mind-set, perceptions, and interpretations of the people in a manner that promotes reconciliation, peace, and stability. Striking a fair balance between, on the one hand, the need for justice and individual accountability for past human rights violations and, on the other hand, political stability and reconciliation will remain the fundamental challenge of any transitional justice endeavor.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Assessment of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Human Dignity and Transitional Justice](#)
- ▶ [Search for Peace, the](#)

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Hybrid Peace

- [Peacebuilding and Postcolonial Subject](#)

Hybrid Political Orders and Hybrid Peace

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Definition

The concepts of hybrid political order and hybrid peace challenge the liberal peacebuilding and statebuilding discourse which has dominated peace and conflict studies and interventionist political practice of international organizations and leading states of the Global North in the post-Cold War era. This discourse evaluated states and peace against a reified and idealized Western notion of peace and statehood. By contrast, the hybrid political orders and hybrid peace approach engage with the complex social, political, economic, and cultural context of the intervened-upon localities and societies. It acknowledges the coexistence, competition, entanglement, and blending of different types of legitimate authority and different understandings and forms of peace (formation). According to this approach, the “emergence of hybridity is the result of the clash and connection of fundamentally different forms of political organisation and community” (Richmond 2011, p. 19).

In hybrid political orders, diverse and competing authority structures, sets of rules, and logics of order coexist, compete, overlap, interact, intertwine, and blend, combining elements of introduced Western models of governance with elements stemming from local indigenous traditions of governance and politics, with further influences exerted by the forces of globalization and associated societal fragmentation (in various forms: ethnic, tribal, religious, . . .). Consequently, these orders are characterized by the closely interwoven texture of their separate sources of origin: they are hybrid (Boege et al. 2009, 2010) – and so are the forms of peace that emerge in the course of the interactions between liberal international interveners and the local

institutions and actors shaping – and being shaped by – hybrid political orders.

Introduction

For more than two decades, international peacebuilding practice has been informed by what has been called the “liberal peace” approach, and the academic debate has revolved around this approach and its critique ► “[Liberal peace](#)”. As a consequence of the extensive criticism it has been subjected to, some commentators “now argue that the idea of a liberal peace is in major crisis or, indeed, already dead” (Kappler 2017, p. 32). Its practices, however, are still pretty much alive (ibid., p. 33). Linked to the discourse on state fragility, liberal peacebuilding was conceptualized as closely linked to statebuilding, with statebuilding following the internationally hegemonic understanding of “the state” as the Western Weberian state, and operationalized as building the institutions of the state and their capacity. Accordingly, a core aim of peacebuilding was the establishment of a “proper” state as the guarantor of internal peace, with a liberal market economy and a liberal democratic civil society as underpinnings of such a liberal state. This paradigm of peacebuilding-as-statebuilding (Richmond 2011) is pursued as an exercise of standardization and homogenization.

The proclaimed aim of statebuilders – both from the national political elite of the country in question and its international supporters – is a state pretty much the same as the model Western liberal state with its monopoly over the legitimate use of physical force as providing the basis for peace and order and the framework for the nonviolent conduct of societal conflicts (Fukuyama’s “getting to Denmark”). This ideal type of the Weberian state is (still) the internationally hegemonic, taken-for-granted, nonnegotiable, and concept of statehood. It “has penetrated deeply into society, even in countries where state practices are widely divergent from this idea. It defines the limits of what can be legitimately said or done” (Eriksen 2017, p. 781). Attempts to enforce this model state, however, in reality are met by a

conglomerate of adoption, adaptation, mimicry, subversion, autonomous counter-organization, resistance, and avoidance, based on the social, cultural, and political-economical specifics of the place that is subjected to those attempts.

In the course of numerous international peacebuilding-as-statebuilding interventions, it turned out that local populations were not just passive recipients of a standardized peace and state delivered to them from the outside. Local people demonstrated agency of their own, often beyond forms of politics familiar to liberal Western views. The concept of peacebuilding-as-statebuilding is thus confronted with the messy realities of governance in the intervened-upon societies.

This reality has been acknowledged by the “local turn” in peace and conflict studies (and the concomitant “ethnographic turn” (Millar 2018)). Local actors have become to be seen as impacting on the internationals’ predetermined peacebuilding/statebuilding agenda and its implementation through various forms of agency, and as capable of appropriating international agendas and resources for their own purposes (Richmond 2011; Richmond and Mitchell 2012; Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013). “The local” is acknowledged as the core arena of peacebuilding, the site of ongoing processes of interchange, entanglement, permeation, reassemblage, and reconfiguration, as co-created and shared by a variety of interacting local, national, regional, and international actors and institutions (Mac Ginty 2015, 2016; Kappler 2014; Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013; Albrecht and Moe 2014).

In this mix, local actors and societal structures and institutions which do not fit into the Western liberal format of “state,” “civil society,” or “business/economy” warrant particular attention: this is the realm of the “local local” (Richmond 2012, p. 6), which first and foremost comprises of indigenous customary networks and their institutions and actors. Mac Ginty’s observation that international peacebuilders and statebuilders have difficulties to engage with the local holds particularly true for this sphere. Internationals are “poorly equipped to see the local” (Mac Ginty 2016, p. 207), not only because of lack of access but

also because of “epistemological biases” (ibid.). Accordingly, in the “local ownership” discourse, which is so fashionable with international donors and peacebuilders, only a rather narrowly understood local is appealed to: “the local that is part of the Western civil society imaginary while the rest is deemed violent and intolerable” (Richmond 2011, p. 153).

This “rest,” however, that is, the societal realm beyond Western conceptualizations of the state, governance, civil society, the economy, and other compartmentalized sections of society, is crucial for the actual processes of peace and state formation. In other words: These processes take place in the context of on-the-ground hybridity of political order, shaped by this order and shaping it, letting hybrid forms of peace emerge.

Hybrid Political Order

Taking note of the “local local,” first and foremost means to acknowledge the importance of traditional, customary societal structures – extended families, lineages, clans, tribes, religious brotherhoods, village communities – and traditional authorities such as village elders, clan chiefs, healers, big men, tribal kings or queens, and spiritual leaders, and the customary law and indigenous knowledge that comes with them, for the everyday maintenance of governance, peace, and order in postcolonial states even today.

Today’s customary or traditional actors, institutions, procedures are of course *not* those of the precontact and precolonial past. Societies everywhere in the world have come into contact with outside influences and have not been left untouched by – originally European – capitalist expansion, colonialism, missionizing, imperialism, and globalization. Therefore, there are no clear-cut boundaries between the exogenous “modern” and the endogenous “traditional” or “customary,” rather there are ongoing processes of assimilation, articulation, transformation, and/or adoption. Nevertheless, the use of the terms “custom,” “customary institutions,” “traditional,” “traditional authorities,” etc. is warranted because they mark specific characteristics, which

are rooted in precolonial/precontact times that distinguish them from introduced institutions which belong to the realm of the state, the market economy, and civil society. It has to be kept in mind, however, that these terms and the social institutions they refer to are not well defined and fixed but contested, fluid, and constantly changing. Custom is not static; it is in constant flux. It adapts to new circumstances, exposed to external “modernizing” factors, and at the same time itself exerting influence on these factors. And these processes of interaction and mutual permeation let hybrid forms of political order, security governance, and peace emerge.

Customary institutions of governance that had existed prior to colonial rule and the subsequent declaration of the independence of newly formed postcolonial states have survived the onslaught of colonialism and “national liberation.” They have been subject to considerable change and had to adapt to new circumstances. They have, however, proven to be remarkably resilient.

By contrast, attempts to consolidate the introduced form of statehood after it had been formally established as a result of decolonization met with manifold obstacles. The import or imposition of the modern Western state structures in the course of decolonization did not lead to the establishment of the “modern” state (that is: a state along the lines of the Western model) – as might have been expected by the former colonial powers and the indigenous political elites who steered their countries towards independence. At the time of independence, “the state” more often than not was nothing more than an empty shell. Many of the newly independent states had no history of pre-colonial unitary rule, and people did not have a sense of shared citizenship and national identity.

For many states in the Global South, even today it is difficult to exercise sovereign control, to deliver effective governance, to guarantee order, and, based on these services, to gain legitimacy. They have not reached out to and permeated the entirety of their territories and their societies. In certain areas (be it remote rural regions or informal settlements at the fringes of urban centers), only “outposts” of the state can be found. For many people, the state is “far away,”

not only physically but also mentally. Its institutions are more often than not seen as a threat rather than as providers of security, peace, justice, and other services.

Under such conditions, one way to make state institutions work is through the utilization of kin-based and other traditional networks. This, however, allows these networks to imbue (incomplete) state structures with their own logic and their own rules of operating. The state is “infiltrated” by “informal” indigenous societal institutions and social forces. This leads to its aberration from the ideal type of what a “proper” (Western, Weberian) state is supposed to look like (hence the lament about neopatrimonialism, nepotism, corruption, etc.).

On the other hand, the partial intrusion of state agencies impacts on non-state local orders as well. Customary systems are subjected to deconstruction and reformation as they have to engage with state institutions. In the course of the interchange with the state apparatus, customary institutions and customary authorities adopt an ambiguous position with regard to the state, appropriating state functions and “state talk,” but at the same time pursuing their own agenda under the guise of the state surface. This, however, also means to change one’s original positionality detached from the state.

The fact that traditional leaders like chiefs are both “state” and “non-state” – that they are “doubly embedded” – comes with the challenge to have to operate in two sociopolitical contexts (Thelen et al. 2014; Holzinger et al. 2016; Kyed 2017). Or, to put it in another way, chiefs are like turtles: The former CEO of the National Council of Chiefs in Vanuatu compares chiefs to turtles, saying: turtles have to live in two worlds, in the water and on land. They have to swim in the water and to crawl on land. They cannot swim on land or crawl in water. They have to adapt to the environment. Chiefs in their locality act according to *kastom*, in the National Council of Chiefs, the *Malvatumauri*, which is a formal constitutional body; however, they have to act according to the laws of the state, the Chiefs’ Act, etc. (The term *kastom*, a Pidgin derivative of the English “custom,” is frequently used today in Vanuatu and

other Melanesian countries, both by people in the villages and politicians in order to stress their cultural heritage and the difference between their own ways and foreign ways of governance, economics, conflict resolution, peacebuilding, etc., often depicting *kastom* as rooted in ancient pre-colonial traditions, a set of rules developed by the ancestors. *Kastom* governance is thus presented as the other of, or even alternative to, introduced state-based governance. At the same time, *kastom* is different from the customs of the precontact and precolonial past. It has developed since the times of first contact and colonization due to interaction and exchange with various external influences, and it continues to change today. In other words: *kastom* is hybrid; Interview with Selwyn Garu, Port Vila 10 April 2011.) Accordingly, the Malvatumauri's CEO has to have one leg in *kastom* and the other leg in the state system. He has a Public Service Commission position but at the same time has to do *kastom* work. The Malvatumauri itself is linked to the Ministry of Justice. Similar arrangements can be found in numerous postcolonial states.

Hence chiefs are not "pure," "non-state," "customary" actors any more. But they are still around. Contrary to the prophecies (and hopes) of all sorts of modernization theorists, "chieftaincy did not wither and die" (Ubink 2008, p. 10) – chiefs and other traditional leaders are still with us today, and they will not disappear any time soon.

So there is change and adaptation in both directions: On the one hand, customary actors and institutions change and adapt in the course of interaction with state institutions, and, more generally, in light of the all-powerful, ever-present, taken-for-granted idea of the state. On the other hand, state actors and institutions change and adapt in the course of interaction with the customary sphere.

This complex nature of governance is further complicated by the emergence of movements and formations whose origins lie in the effects of and reactions to globalization, including warlords and their militias in outlying regions, gang leaders in townships and squatter settlements, vigilante-type organizations, ethnically based protection rackets, millenarian religious movements, transnational

networks of extended family relations or organized crime and religiously motivated terrorism, and new forms of tribalism. Their emergence is not least a result of poor state performance, and their activities can contribute to the further weakening of state structures. Where state agencies are unable or unwilling to deliver security and other public goods, people will turn to other social entities for support. Sometimes such new formations manage to seize power in certain regions of a given state (be it a remote mountainous region or a squatter settlement in the capital). They have the capacity to exert violence against outsiders and to control violence within their respective strongholds. The new formations sometimes manage to capture "bits" of state or infiltrate state institutions, and they are often linked to traditional societal entities and attempt to instrumentalize them for their own goals, such as power and profit. The protagonists of traditional societal entities such as lineages, clans, tribes, or religious brotherhoods, on the other hand, also introduce their own agendas into the overall picture. These agendas are not reducible to political aims, such as political power, or to economic considerations, such as private gain and profit, but include concepts such as "honor," "revenge," or "right to (violent) self-help." Thus non-state traditional actors and institutions, their motives and concerns, and their ways of doing things, blend with new "private" formations and their motives. Clan leaders might become warlords (or warlords might strive for a position of authority in the customary context) or tribal warriors might become private militias (or be incorporated into the state army or police, under the command of their warlord/clan leader), and a political economy based on extensive use of violence might emerge as locally embedded orders increasingly link into the globalized market and global society, for example, via drug trafficking, migration, remittances, trade networks, or religious affiliations. Traditional local entities become integrated into transnational, regional, and even global networks. Again, as in the case of the relationship between introduced state institutions and indigenous customary societal institutions, a situation of coexistence, overlap, and blending emerges.

All these processes of diffusion, interaction, and permeation lead to the hybridization of governance and let hybrid political orders emerge. In hybrid political orders, diverse legitimate authority structures, institutions and actors of governance, sets of rules, logics of order and claims to power coexist, compete, overlap, intertwine, and blend, emerging from genuinely different societal spheres – spheres, however, which do not exist in isolation, but permeate each other (Boege et al. 2009, 2010; Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016; Brown 2018; Hunt 2018; Boege 2018). The specific relations between the various actors and institutions of governance in hybrid political orders differ from place to place and change over time. Hybrid political order is not static but in constant flux.

Hybrid political orders differ fundamentally from (the ideal type of) the Weberian state as the framework for maintenance of peace and order. Peace and order are not based on the state monopoly over the legitimate use of physical force (the core of the Weberian concept of the state), but on the relations and interactions of a plethora of state and non-state (traditional, civil society and private) actors and institutions, with the state/non-state divide blurred, incoherent and in flux.

Hybrid Security Governance

In postcolonial states, everyday peace and order in the local context is more often than not maintained not so much by state institutions, but by village chiefs and clan elders, healers, male and female community leaders, and religious leaders. Their strength is rooted in closely knit communities, with kinship-based networks underpinning social order and well-being and regulating the management of everyday life. By contrast, the police, courts, and other institutions charged with maintaining domestic peace in the fully fledged states of the Global North hardly penetrate the rural areas of these countries. They lack the capacity to make their presence felt in the communities, and, more often than not do not even assume that peace and order is primarily their responsibility. They are happy to leave this duty to local

authorities, and their effectiveness and legitimacy very much depend on good – more or less formal or informal – working relationships with those authorities. Customary authorities deal with conflicts and disturbances by applying the customary law of the particular locality rather than the written law of the state. In many places, customary law is strong and vital, whereas the state judicial system is weak. People generally find customary law easier to understand, more accessible, fairer, cheaper, more transparent, faster, and more efficient, and also more legitimate because it is embedded in local culture. The interface between customary law and state law is often uneasy, characterized by (partial) contestation, (partial) complementarity, and (partial) incompatibility, often with no clear regulation of their relationship.

But it is not just this coexistence of state and non-state security providers and the significance of the non-state actors which characterize “hybrid security governance” (Schroeder et al. 2014). Rather, security actors and institutions straddle the state/non-state boundary, and thus call into question the state/non-state dichotomy. While some entities can be at first sight be seen as “state” (the police, the army, the courts) and some as “non-state” (priests, vigilantes, chiefs), a closer look reveals blurred boundaries and intersections, with intense interactions and relationships: chiefs who are both “state” and “non-state,” community police that are more “state” in some contexts and more “non-state” in others, overlap between vigilantes and police or police and community watch groups, intersection between the formal state justice system and informal customary law. Just to take the last point: Customary law has a specific relationship to the state – it is non-state, distinct from the laws of the state, but at the same time accepted by the state as a source of law in its own right, alongside statutory law. Formally, customary law is often inferior to state law and confined to certain areas of jurisdiction, with serious crimes such as murder or rape being the prerogative of state law. De facto, however, boundaries are fluid, and customary law often reaches beyond its formal restrictions. Moreover, forms of customary law not sanctioned by the state are also practiced, and customary law

covers areas which are not (and cannot) be covered by state law but are of major importance in community life, such as sorcery or witchcraft.

This hybridization of security governance renders obsolete the Western concept of the state as the central overarching entity holding the monopoly over the legitimate use of physical force. Governments might claim or pretend that it does exist, but in reality, there is no central dominance over and control of the huge variety of providers of peace, security, and justice, nor over their relationships and interactions, which are complex, fluid, and constantly changing. Continuous hybridization and processes of emergence are thus the main features of the provision of peace and security, rather than the centrally orchestrated and controlled “building” of a uniform system of peace and order. The endeavors of governments and their international supporters – security sector reform, state capacity-building, justice sector reform, etc. – are only elements in a much broader mix of processes of state and peace formation. It is illusionary to believe that these processes will finally culminate in a Western liberal peace and state based on the monopoly over the legitimate use of physical force. While statebuilding suggests a planned, technical, linear, and predictable endeavor, state formation by contrast is a messy, contradictory, nonlinear, and complex long-term process which involves a wide and diverse range of actors and institutions, be they state, para-state, or “non-state”/“customary”/“traditional.” Statebuilding can only be part of such complex state formation.

Hybrid Forms of Peace

Beyond the provision of everyday peace and order in the local context, customary ways of building and maintaining peace also play a role in the internationally supported peacebuilding endeavors in the post-conflict regions of the Global South (for case studies, see Richmond and Mitchell 2012; Aning et al. 2018).

Customary institutions and actors in many places and on many occasions have proven their capabilities and legitimacy in building peace, preventing and transforming conflicts and

maintaining societal order. Protagonists of liberal peacebuilding and statebuilding, however, have problems engaging with this “local-local” “i.e. what lies beneath the veneer of internationally sponsored local actors and NGOs constituting a ‘civil’ as opposed to ‘uncivil’ society” (Richmond 2011, p. 10). They hesitate to acknowledge and engage with such unfamiliar forms of peace(building) as they cling to their idea of what a proper peace (and state) should look like. But peacebuilding interventions everywhere have to engage with local customary forms of peace(building).

International peacebuilding interventions get entangled in the complex on-the-ground realities of hybrid political orders, and in the course of engagement with these local realities, peacebuilding itself becomes hybridized, letting hybrid forms of peace emerge (Richmond and Mitchell 2012). Intervened-upon societies are not just blank pages on which the international liberal peacebuilding agenda could be written. Peacebuilding is not the “implementation” of a preplanned international agenda, not a unilinear “delivery” of a fixed and homogenous universal peace – the Western liberal peace international organizations and the intervening powers of the Global North hold high and promote as the universal, only valid emanation of peace – but a complex and complicated multifaceted exchange, shaped by fluid and dynamic relations, between interveners and a multitude of local actors and institutions in the intervened-upon hybrid political orders. Locals introduce their custom/kastom way of knowing and doing peace, thus derailing or redirecting preplanned peacebuilding interventions (Millar 2018, p. 4).

Hybridization thus refers to the ways in which local actors “attempt to respond to, resist and ultimately reshape peace initiatives through interactions with international actors and institutions” (Richmond and Mitchell 2012, p. 8). These interactions lead to the emergence of new hybrid forms of peace (Richmond and Mitchell 2012; Mac Ginty 2011). They shape those hybrid forms, and they change in the course of hybridization.

Peacebuilding thus is fundamentally relational and procedural, an ongoing cross-cultural

interchange, characterized by entanglement and mutual permeation of institutions, actors, procedures, worldviews, epistemologies, and norms, taking place at the interface between the local and international. In peacebuilding interventions, more often than not fundamentally different notions of what peace and security actually comprises, collide, and so do fundamentally different conceptualizations of core elements of peacebuilding, such as gender, time, development, religion/spirituality, justice, reconstruction, emotions, memory, and healing. Introduced liberal approaches and local customary approaches coexist and influence each other, at various policy levels, from the local to the high politics of negotiations, peace settlements, and agreements. Usually, in the local context, customary ways prevail, for example, traditional forms of reconciliation and retributive justice, spiritually laden ceremonies, and restoration of relationships. But customary peace processes are also “modernized,” taking on board introduced liberal peacebuilding knowledge and formats, e.g., workshops on mediation and facilitation offered by international NGOs, reintegration of ex-combatants, externally supported rehabilitation and reconstruction. In order to be legitimate, effective, and sustainable, however, these introduced approaches have to be adapted and localized. Hence, peacebuilding in the local context can be described as a local-liberal hybrid, with the local predominating. High-level “political” peacebuilding, by contrast, usually is a liberal-local hybrid, by and large following liberal international templates. Local aspects often are much less visible, but activities and settlements in this context – negotiations, ceasefires, peace agreements, constitution-making, capacity-building of state institutions, democratization, disarmament, security sector reform, . . . – are also infused with local patterns of appropriate behavior, norms, and interests. Hence high-level “political” peacebuilding is also hybridized.

In these processes, both the local customary and the international liberal are transformed, leading to hybrid forms of peace which might differ considerably from the “peace” originally envisioned by international liberal peacebuilders (and from traditional forms of peace as well).

These forms are not necessarily benign, effective, and legitimate and sustainable. The quality and sustainability of hybrid forms of peace very much depends on the local context and the local processes – at the top and at the bottom – the linkages between top and bottom, and between introduced liberal and local customary approaches, and on the –fluid – distribution of power, which may oscillate between an at times almost all-powerful liberal peace approach and “recipients” of that approach which on other occasions might turn out to be more powerful than expected, maintaining autonomy and agency, grounded in the hybridity of political order. Hence the local-international dynamics and interactions “make every form of peace unique, dynamic, contextualized and contested” (Richmond and Mitchell 2012, pp. 1–2).

Hybrid forms of peace emerge in an unplanned manner in the course of peace formation (which itself is always hybridized), behind the backs of the involved actors so to speak, for the most part independent from their intentions and assumptions, determined by power relations. One could imagine, however, a paradigm shift from today’s mainstream liberal peacebuilding to “relational peacebuilding” (Brigg 2016, p. 58) as a deliberately planned relational approach, which would open space for cross-cultural dialogue – dialogue which does not privilege one set of worldviews, values, norms, and practices (the liberal international) over the other. A prerequisite for such a dialogue actually to happen is understanding and engaging with the hybridity of political order and peace. On this basis, the capability and willingness to work with and across difference could evolve, acknowledging that peacebuilding first and foremost is an exercise of working with and across cultural difference.

Summary

The hybridity concept was put forward to grasp complex heterogenous features of governance in postcolonial so-called fragile states, widening the perspective both beyond the “idea of the state” and beyond state institutions (Bonacker et al. 2017;

Eriksen 2017). It challenges the conventional state fragility and statebuilding discourse which evaluates states against a “Weberian” ideal-type (Lemay-Hebert and Lottholz 2016). It encourages a change of perspective: not to focus on deficiencies, on what is lacking, “not yet properly built,” or “already failed again” (statehood in the Western sense) – but on what is actually there (Dinnen and Kent 2015).

The aim of such an approach is not to get rid of “bad” states in favor of “good” hybrid political orders. Nor does it provide an alternative plan, to be applied in interventions in order to do statebuilding better, with hybrid outcomes “as plannable and predictable (...) as one more element of project implementation” (Millar et al. 2013, p. 139). It would be misleading to think of the concept of hybrid political orders as prescriptive and normative, suggesting that hybrid political orders are “better” than states, and that interventions now have to pursue the “building” of hybrid political orders instead of statebuilding, thus coming to the rescue of the liberal peace approach (Millar 2014). Such a way of thinking about hybridity is in danger of instrumentalization of the hybridity approach for purposes of reasserting and intensifying outsiders’ control, incorporating selected elements of “local” culture and governance into standardized formats, in the interest of international interveners, not the intervened-upon locals (Brown 2017; Bjoerkdahl et al. 2016). Against such prescriptive or instrumental readings of hybridity, it has to be stressed that hybrid governance and security arrangements are not and cannot be the outcomes of preplanned interventions. Rather, they emerge in the context of interactions of a host of actors and institutions, in nonlinear, contingent, unpredictable, and unexpected ways, beyond central planning and control (Millar et al. 2013). Furthermore, they are not *per se* benign – they are imbued with power disparities and structures of dominance, they can be oppressive and can marginalize certain societal groups along the lines of age, gender, class, religion, or ethnicity (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016; Bagayoko et al. 2016). But hybridization is what is the case on the ground and hence what has to be engaged with. Only with regard to this

plea to take account of and work with hybridity is the concept normative, not in the sense of declaring hybrid political orders to be the political aim of interventions (Hunt 2017). In other words: hybridity is an “analytical device (...) a way of seeing the world and capturing change and lack of fixity between categories” (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016, p. 223). (Anne Brown makes a useful distinction between “three different ways of using notions of hybridity as a theoretical tool” (Brown 2018, p. 29): (a) as an analytical or descriptive category (the approach taken here); (b) as normative and prescriptive, with hybridity “as something to be aimed at,” with the emphasis on “an imagined outcome – a newly constructed hybridity,” hence hybridity as “a solution” (*ibid.*, p. 32); and (c) as instrumental, focused on management and control, “reminiscent of colonial mechanisms of ‘indirect rule’” (*ibid.*, p. 32). See also Brown (2017), Dinnen and Kent (2015), Millar (2014), Mac Ginty and Richmond (2016).)

A major critique of the hybridity approach, however, is that it reifies binaries (Laffey and Nadarajah 2012; Brigg 2016; Dinnen and Kent 2015; Hunt 2017; Hameiri and Jones 2017, 2018; Kent et al. 2018). This critique points to a dilemma: in order to overcome the state-centricity of the mainstream statebuilding and peacebuilding discourse, hybridity as an alternative approach had to build a case for the focus on the “non-state,” and in doing so, there was the danger of reification of binaries. On the other hand, however, exactly the shift away from monolithic entities and from binaries (such as traditional and modern, formal and informal, state and non-state) is the work that the concept of hybridity is supposed to do, capturing fluidity, relations, interactions, entanglements, mutual permeation, and enmeshment; it can be argued that the concept in fact allows to do both: draw attention to the realm of governance beyond the state, overcoming the state centricity of liberal peacebuilding and statebuilding scholarship and practice, bringing the non-state dimension – as a much wider range of governing institutions, actors, worldviews and ways of knowing – in, at the same time addressing the transgressions of the state/non-state boundary, focusing on relations, interactions, and

enmeshment, in other words: question the fixity of categories and boundaries, take note of the traditional within the modern, the modern within the traditional, the formal within the informal, the informal within the formal, the state within the non-state, the non-state within the state, etc. (Albrecht and Moe 2014).

The concept of hybridization thus allows to acknowledge distinct ways of being and of ordering, it alerts us to fundamental difference and at the same time enables us to think in terms of relationality, fluidity, and process. Talking about the *process* of hybridization in fact allows to shift attention from fixed entities to relations and hence to overcome thinking in static binaries (Albrecht and Moe 2014; Hunt 2018; Albrecht 2018). This shift away from binaries is “the primary appeal of hybridity and hybridization” (Peterson 2012, p. 12). Such an understanding of hybridity can be linked in with the “relational turn” in peace studies, which foregrounds relations rather than entities and captures the fluidity and dynamism of peace and state formation and the emergence of peace and political order as hybridized.

Since the concept of hybrid political orders and hybrid peace was introduced into the peacebuilding and statebuilding discourse more than a decade ago, it has been taken into diverse directions (descriptive, analytical, prescriptive, normative, and instrumental), it has become more and more sophisticated, elaborated, and diversified, and it has become the object of significant critical scrutiny. Most importantly, it has crossed into the policy world – trendy, shallow, tokenistic, and instrumentalized as one might argue (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016). This demonstrates one more time that research findings can be used – misused from the researcher’s perspective – for purposes and by actors that he or she does not agree with or is even opposed to; this to a certain extent has happened to the hybridity approach (Millar 2014). In fact, in the world of realpolitik, the concept is open in both directions: it potentially can lead to more emancipatory peacebuilding and statebuilding practices beyond the liberal peace approach (as the best case) – and/or to a refinement of counterinsurgency strategies (as the worst case).

Although the latter trend gives reason for concern, the good news is that hybrid political orders, hybrid security governance, hybrid peace cannot be instrumentally designed, engineered, crafted, or constructed entirely. Any endeavors of international interveners will always be nothing but – more or less benign or malign, more or less powerful – elements in a complex and fluid web of relationships and interactions in a much broader mix of processes of peace and state formation.

Cross-References

- ▶ Liberal Peace
- ▶ Peace Formation
- ▶ Peacebuilding
- ▶ Statebuilding

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Hybridity

- ▶ [Liberal Peace and Its Critiques](#)
- ▶ [Sources of Peace in a Developing Island State](#)
- ▶ [Stalled Peacebuilding: Dealing with the Violence of Colonization and Its Legacy](#)

I4P

► [Peace Infrastructures](#)

Identifying Stable Solutions to Conflicts

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Synonyms

[Analysis of multiparty multi-issue disputes;](#)
[Stability analysis](#)

Description

Fraser and Hipel (1984) proposed a method for identifying acceptable stable, solutions to multiparty, multi-issue disputes if each disputant is able to rank each issue by relative importance to himself. It is a useful tool for both negotiators and mediators in devising proposals that not only may

satisfy all sides in a conflict but also to prove sustainable.

Method

Consider a couple discussing where to retire. While other couples may have more, fewer, or different concerns, in this case, theirs are limited to whether to live in a large city or small town, minimizing the cost of living because they will be living on a pension and availability of good medical care. As he is 30 years older than her, they rank their importance differently.

First, list the issues in any order; then using 1 to propose and 0 to oppose, alternate 0 and 1 in the first row and then alternate 0011 on the next row. Continue doubling the number of adjacent zeros and ones in each subsequent row until a row appears in which all the zeros appear on the left and all the ones on the right. *Every* possibility is included in Fig. 1:

Next, identify and eliminate absurd combinations. The couple can only afford one home, so eliminate the columns implying two, specifically 0101 1101, 1011, 0111, and 1111. Have each party rank the remaining strategies in preference order from left to right. In a multiparty dispute, if two or more disputants for whatever reason including the possibility of a coalition have identical preferences, eliminate any duplicate arrays.

A sophisticated method for identifying solutions to multiparty, multi-issue disputes likely to prove stable if adopted by the parties, requiring only that the disputants be able to rank the issues by importance to themselves.

Identifying Stable Solutions to Conflicts,
Fig. 1 All possible resolutions

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Large city | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | | |
| Cost of living | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Small town | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Medical care | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |

Identifying Stable Solutions to Conflicts,
Fig. 2 Preference vectors of each party

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|
| Large city | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Cost of living | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Small town | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Medical care | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Her preference vector | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 9 | 8 | 12 | 12 | 12 |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Large town | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Cost of living | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Small town | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Medical care | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| His preference vector | 8 | 12 | 9 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Identifying Stable Solutions to Conflicts,
Fig. 3 Vector analysis for each party

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|
| Large town | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Cost of living | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Small town | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Medical care | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Her preference vector | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 9 | 8 | 12 | 12 | 12 |
| | | | | | 0 | 0 | 0 | | 4 | 4 | 4 | UI |
| | | | | | 1 | 1 | | | 5 | 5 | | UI |
| | | | | | 2 | | | | 6 | | | UI |
| | r | u | u | u | r | u | u | u | r | r | | |
| Large town | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Cost of living | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Small town | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Medical care | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| His preference vector | 8 | 12 | 9 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | | | | | 8 | | | | | | | UI |
| | r | u | r | r | r | r | r | r | r | r | r | |
| | E | | | | E | | | | E | E | | |

Provide each possibility with its own unique identification by converting each column to base ten. To make the conversion, multiply each binomial times the power of two to which the location corresponds, using the top number as the low-order digit. For example, 1001 = 1 * 2⁰ + 0 * 2¹ + 0 * 2² + 1 * 2³ = 1 + 0 + 0 + 8 = 9. Have each disputant rearrange the possible choices in rank order, resulting in a “preference vector” for each as shown in Fig. 2:

Next, identify “unilateral improvements,” designating them with a “u”. These occur if one party can improve its position without provoking the other parties to change theirs. For example, he

can move from strategy 12 to strategy 8 because she assigns the same values to the first two strategies in both instances. They occur whenever the *opponent’s* preferences do not change from left to right. While this is the only unilateral improvement for him, she has several, as indicated in Fig. 3.

The next step is to determine stabilities, there being four possible types. The analysis is a matter of inspection and logic. First, identify situations in which the disputant being analyzed has no unilateral improvement to make from *that* outcome: it is the best possible strategy given the selection by the other player. Figure 3 indicates each one by the

symbol r , meaning a rational stability. In this situation, she has four, while he has nine rational stabilities.

Now, check for sequentially sanctioned stabilities. These occur when a disputant has an improvement that allows the opponent to respond unilaterally and leaves the disputant worse off. Identify them by checking each disputant's unilateral improvements one by one. There are none in the current situation, but to illustrate *if* he switched from 2 to 1, she would then move from 1 to 0, which he would regard as a worse outcome than sticking with 2. Therefore, he is "sequentially sanctioned" against strategy 1.

Third, identify unstable strategies. These occur if a disputant can make an improvement in his position that the opponent cannot respond to without choosing a less preferred outcome for himself. Any strategy not already identified by an r or an s is unstable and can be labeled with a u . Figure 3 indicates them for both parties.

Any outcome rated r or s for *all* disputants (four in this example) is a possible resolution to the conflict and is labeled E for equilibrium.

Rank ordering does not eliminate the intensity and degree of emotion associated with the issues. Methods for resolving disputes and reaching a final choice among the four possibilities—arbitration, conciliation, facilitation, mediation, negotiation, or something else—involve their own "dance." Finally, personalities differ.

Summary

The example illustrates a method to identify solutions to complex conflicts that are likely to prove acceptable by all parties involved and prove stable in the long run. As the parties and issues multiply, a computer soon is required to conduct the analysis.

Fraser and Hipel (1984) provide numerous examples of the method such as the Cuban Missile Crisis, a dispute over water in a river crossing an international boundary, and the Suez Canal Crisis, each introducing additional factors, with detailed

explanations of the method and underlying mathematics as well as suggestions for using the information to reach lasting solutions to disputes with each particular set of circumstances.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Divided Cities](#)
- ▶ [Everyday Peace](#)
- ▶ [Human Dignity and Transitional Justice](#)
- ▶ [Human Geography and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Independent Commissions and Peace Settlements](#)
- ▶ [Negotiation](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding and Spatial Transformation](#)
- ▶ [Stabilization Operations and Their Relationship to Liberal Peacebuilding Missions](#)
- ▶ [Statebuilding in Afghanistan: Inertia and Ambiguity](#)
- ▶ [Urban Peacebuilding](#)

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Identity and Conflict

- ▶ [Cameroon and the Anglophone Crisis](#)
- ▶ [Kashmir Conflict, The](#)

Identity and Political Violence

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Synonyms

[Ethnic conflict](#); [Nationalism](#); [Violent conflict](#)

Definition

This chapter explores the relationship between identity, in particular ethnic identity, and political violence. To what extent are war and violence the outcome of antagonistic identities? And once violence erupts, what impact does it have on how people identify themselves and others? There are two dominant approaches in the literature. The identity-based approach tends to regard conflict and violence as a consequence of preexisting ethnic antagonism. Violence-based approaches, in contrast, have challenged this causality, stressing that ethnic antagonism is often the outcome of violence rather than its direct cause. The chapter argues that both are problematic in different ways: whereas identity-based theories do not take the generative power of violence seriously enough, violence-based theories run the risk of taking it too seriously and often do not pay significant attention to individual agency and people's ability to resist violence. However, it is not only individual responses to violence that differ but attitudes toward violence can also change over time.

Introduction

With the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union, the 1990s witnessed the eruption of several major "ethnic wars," which in many cases resulted in ethnic cleansing and the forced expulsion of people from their homes. This includes the wars in Croatia, Bosnia, and Kosovo, which produced several millions of refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), as well as the lesser known wars in Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and Nagorno-Karabakh that led to the emergence of so-called unrecognized states and the long-term displacement of hundreds of thousands of civilians. But atrocities were not just limited to the European and Eurasian context: there was also the genocide in Rwanda, in which over half of the country's Tutsi population was killed. What these conflicts have in common is not just the brutality with which they were fought, but also the degree of intimacy involved. Often, the people who were fighting each other had a long history of

co-habitation. This raises important questions: how did bloodshed on such a large scale and between people who had been living side by side peacefully for decades become possible? Was this violence the culmination of long-standing ethnic or national cleavages that finally surfaced?

The aim of this chapter is to address these issues by exploring the causal relationship between identity, in particular ethnic identity, and political violence. To what extent are war and violence the outcome of antagonistic identities? And once violence erupts, what impact does it have on how people identify themselves and others? There are two dominant approaches in the literature. The identity-based approach tends to regard conflict and violence as a consequence of preexisting ethnic antagonism. Violence-based approaches, in contrast, have challenged this causality, stressing that ethnic antagonism is often the outcome of violence rather than its direct cause. The chapter argues that both are problematic in different ways: whereas identity-based theories do not take the generative power of violence seriously enough, violence-based theories run the risk of taking it too seriously and often do not pay significant attention to individual agency and people's ability to resist violence. However, it is not only individual responses to violence that differ but attitudes toward violence can also change over time.

The chapter thus highlights the importance of studying violence not simply as epiphenomenal, but as a phenomenon in its own right. By attending to the experience of those affected on the ground, it also goes beyond a more traditional focus on military and political institutions (for a detailed discussion of the relevance of an anthropological approach in peace and conflict studies, see ► "[Culture, Anthropology, and Ethnography in Peace Research](#)"). As anthropologist Carolyn Nordstrom (1997, p. 115) has argued, "to understand war is to understand not only the places where it is formulated and directed, but the places where violence is enacted in the name of war." Such a bottom-up and agency-centered approach not only accounts for the ways in which ordinary people reproduce ethnic antagonism but is also sensitive to people's ability to resist antagonistic

nationalism and violence, both during warfare and in its aftermath.

The sections that follow discuss the two dominant approaches and identify their main gaps and shortcomings. The first section focuses on primordialist and constructivist theories of identity that tend to regard violence as an outcome of either innate antipathies or antagonistically constructed identities. The second section shifts the attention from the role of elites to the sphere of the “everyday,” focusing on how mass violence can profoundly change social realities on the ground. The third section looks at the *postwar* condition and asks: how is coexistence possible once war is over? Drawing on ethnographic research from Bosnia, it demonstrates that even though postwar societies are characterized by a polarized atmosphere, postwar identities are not necessarily unambiguous. The chapter concludes with a brief summary and some reflections.

Violence as the Culmination of Ethnic Antagonism: From Ancient to Modern Hatred

The question of how neighbors turn into deadly enemies has received significant scholarly attention in recent decades. From a rationalist perspective, people are expected to choose peace over war, as the economic consequences of war and violence are usually disastrous. As Rui de Figueiredo and Barry Weingast (1999, p. 262) put it, “the individuals and groups locked in these struggles forgo the enormous benefits of economic and social cooperation in favour of bitter violence and hardship. Why do citizens take actions leading to this negative-sum outcome?”

Some have looked for answers to this paradox in the realm of collective identity, that is, our belonging to a group. Psychologists have argued that it is a natural function of the brain to categorize ourselves and others into collectives (Hogg and Abrams 1998; Hogg et al. 1995; e.g., Tajfel and Turner 1986). According to Michael Hogg and Dominic Abrams (1998, p. 64), “categorization is a fundamental and universal process [...] because it satisfies a basic human need for

cognitive parsimony.” It “imposes structure on the world and our experiences therein” and “brings the world into sharper focus and creates a perceptual environment in which things are more black and white, less fuzzy and ambiguous.” However, while psychological theories have highlighted the cognitive foundations of group identification, they make no assumptions about the kind of group with which people identify.

In recent times, it has been the nation, or ethnic group, that has been singled out as the most meaningful source of collective identification. So-called primordialists conceive of ethnic and national groups as timeless and naturally occurring; they believe “that humanity is naturally divided into separate and distinct nationalities or nations” and that “members of a nation reach full freedom and fulfillment of their essence by developing their national identity and culture, and their identity with the nation is superior to all other forms of identity – class, gender, individual, familial, tribal, regional, imperial, dynastic, religious, racial, or state patriotic” (Suny 2014, p. 870). Applied to war and violent conflict, this thinking has manifested itself in the belief that current conflicts are eruptions of so-called “ancient hatreds” that have existed between certain groups throughout history. These antagonisms are seen as a direct consequence of the unchanging, essentialist nature of the identities of ethnic groups, making them prone to out-group hostility, and ultimately, if too close in proximity, intergroup violence. In short, according to primordialists, “ethnic violence results from antipathies and antagonisms that are enduring properties of ethnic groups” (Fearon and Laitin 2000, p. 849).

Primordialist assumptions, which date back to the eighteenth-century German Romantic philosophers Fichte and Herder, have long lost their credibility in academia and there is hardly a scholar who would apply this label voluntarily in relation to their work (the two names most commonly associated with primordialism are Pierre van den Berghe (1978) and Edward Shils (1957)). Instead, it has become common sense to look at nations – and ethnic groups – not as ancient entities that have a timeless existence in

the world, but as fundamentally modern phenomena. Of particular significance in this context were the ground-breaking works of Ernest Gellner and Benedict Anderson. Gellner (1983) famously argued that nation-states were constructed by elites in order to facilitate industrialization. While he recognized that elites draw on some preexisting “stuff” in their construction of the nation, he did not regard any *specific* preexisting material as necessary; as he put it, “[t]he cultural shreds and patches used by nationalism are often arbitrary historical inventions. Any shred and patch would have served as well” (1983, p. 55). Anderson (1991, p. 6), on the other hand, has referred to the nation as an “imagined political community” – a community that is based on communicative practices that create an “imagined” bond between people who are, in fact, strangers. Both Gellner and Anderson regard nations as top-down constructions that rely on the homogenizing power of educational and cultural institutions, and – in Anderson’s case – the media, in particular.

Anderson’s focus on language paved the way for post-modern and post-structuralist approaches that highlight the power of discourse in creating a sense of “we-ness.” In his book *Banal Nationalism* (1995), Michael Billig turned to the production of a national common sense through symbolic practices. Whether it is a sports event or the weather forecast, “in so many ways, the citizenry are daily reminded of their national place in a world of nations” (1995, p. 8). Seemingly banal practices of “flagging,” such as the flashing of an emblematic flag on the screen when a television newscaster mentions a foreign country, instill a deep-seated natural division of the world into “us” and “them,” as they “continually remind us that we are ‘us’ and, in so doing, permit us to forget that we are being reminded” (1995, p. 175). Billig’s emphasis on the power of language as something that does not simply describe but *constitutes* reality thus further dismantled the idea of groups as natural and timeless and highlights the constitutive role of discursive practices. As critical discourse theorists have argued, the “group” is not a real thing in the world, but an object of constant discursive re-creation and re-negotiation – and manipulation (Wodak et al. 2009, p. 9).

Despite certain differences, what both modern and post-modern approaches to nationhood and nationalism agree on is that the nation is fundamentally a social construct that in some way or another serves the interests of those in power. Against this background, scholars of political violence have moved away from the “ancient hatred” model and instead focused on how elites invoke a discourse of centuries-old nationhood to mobilize the public in favor of violent interventions. Stuart Kaufman (2001), for instance, has argued that ethnic conflict is the outcome not of ancient but “modern” hatreds – modern in the sense that they “are renewed in each generation by mythologies that are typically modern revisions of older stories with quite different messages” (2001, p. 11). He thus distances himself from the primordial conception of ethnic groups as timeless and naturally occurring, but is also critical of so-called elite manipulation approaches which sharply differentiate between the interests of elites and that of the masses (e.g., Brass 1991, 1997). Instead, Kaufman aligns himself with the tradition of ethnosymbolism, which views nations as modern constructs that have their origin in premodern ethnic communities (so-called ethnies) which provide the basis for the myths, symbols, memories, and key values that, according to ethnosymbolists, define modern nations (Smith 1986, 2009). Ethnosymbolism thus stresses the relationship between elites and masses as a two-way street, and, in doing so, seeks to explore “the ‘inner world’ of the members of nations” (Smith 2015, p. 2).

From this perspective, ethnic symbols are indeed used by manipulative elites, “but they only work when there is some real or perceived conflict of interest at work and mythically based feelings of hostility that can be tapped using ethnic symbols” (Kaufman 2001, p. 12). What is essential for the outbreak of violence is a combination of hostile myths, ethnic fears, and a window of opportunity to act on them. An example is the to date unresolved Georgian-Abkhaz conflict (for a detailed discussion, see ► [“Georgian-Abkhaz Conflict”](#)), which, according to Kaufman, was fueled by two mutually exclusive myths: whereas Georgians stressed that Abkhazia was a

historical part of Georgia and therefore belonged to the Georgian state, ethnic Abkhazians grounded their claims for independent statehood in their own self-understanding as the indigenous inhabitants of the region. Perestroika provided the opportunity for these ambitions to be voiced more prominently. While elites initially tried to restrain mobilization, “violence quickly resulted anyway because hostile feelings and attitudes led the groups to rule out compromise” (2001, p. 86). Yet, the hostile myths at the heart of the conflict were not simply “ancient” but served a contemporary purpose: to claim exclusive territorial ownership, a notion that was significantly strengthened by the Soviet territorialization of national identity through homeland republics (Kaiser 1994). As Donald Horowitz (1985, p. 99) has noted, although “history can be a weapon, [...] a current conflict cannot generally be explained by simply calling it a revived form of an earlier conflict.”

Everyday Ethnicity and the Transformative Power of Violence

The approaches discussed in the previous section demonstrate that there is nothing – or at least not much – “natural” about national consciousness and that group antagonism is more often than not the result of certain political interests or policies rather than innate differences or antipathies. However, while there is an abundance of studies on how elites construct or reinforce – often antagonistic – identities, much less is known about ethnicity as “lived experience,” that is, how people on the ground engage with these policies and practices.

In fact, although the scholars discussed in the previous section are generally critical of primordial assumptions and stress the constructed nature of ethnic or national identity, their focus on “state-sponsored ethnicity” as a representation of “the sum total of ethnic meaning in all of social and political life” (Fujii 2009, p. 11) runs the risk of taking the existence of stable “ethnic groups” for granted. For instance, grand theories like Gellner’s and Anderson’s show how national

identification is produced through certain institutions and practices, but they do so without paying much attention to the individual agents themselves, and in particular their *strength* of identification; instead, “it [the nation] appears to exist above and beyond the agency of any of us as individuals” (Thompson 2001, p. 20). But ethnosymbolists are not immune to this criticism either, for even though they claim to explore the “inner world” (Smith 2015, p. 2) of the members of an ethnic or national community by paying attention to myths, memory, value, traditions, and symbols, they similarly tend to assume rather than reconstruct the power of nationalism on the ground. Thus, accounts that start off as constructivist all too quickly fall into a primordial mode, for once “constructed,” national identity is conceived of as supreme, monolithic, and unchangeable.

As Eric Hobsbawm (1992, p. 10) has argued, although nations are “constructed essentially from above,” they “cannot be understood unless also analyzed from below, that is in terms of the assumptions, hopes, needs, longings and interests of ordinary people, which are not necessarily national and still less nationalist.” To counter the top-down tendency of the literature on nationalism and ethnicity, sociologists such as Rogers Brubaker and Jon Fox have developed an everyday approach that, instead of inferring the meanings ordinary people ascribe to and the uses they make of the nation or ethnic group from the intentions and meanings that elites impose on them, examines “the actual practices through which ordinary people engage and enact (and ignore and deflect) nationhood and nationalism in the varied contexts of their everyday lives” (Fox and Miller-Idriss 2008, p. 537). This approach has important implications for both how to study group identities and the way we understand identities. Methodologically, it shifts the focus from the study of texts and utterances to contextually situated social interactions. Where discourse analysts would include interviews and focus groups to understand *how* individuals talk about the nation, analysts of the everyday are equally if not more interested in the *when*: “When called upon, ordinary people can call forth and articulate

their more-or-less taken-for-granted assumptions about what the nation means to them. But *when* are they called upon? Just because people *can* talk about the nation doesn't mean that they *do*" (2008, p. 540).

Conceptually, the everyday approach replaces the traditional view of groups as "discrete, concrete, tangible, bounded and enduring" (Brubaker 2002, p. 167) with attention to *groupness*, that is, "phases of extraordinary cohesion and moments of intensely felt collective solidarity" (2002, p. 168) and *group-making*. To study *groupness* as a variable, Brubaker proposes a distinction between ethnic *groups* as bounded collectivities, on the one hand, and *categories*, which are "at best a potential basis for group-formation or 'groupness'" (2002, p. 169), on the other. Ethnicity, then, is no longer conceptualized as something that we "have," but something that we "do." As Brubaker and his colleagues (2006, p. 208) observed during their fieldwork in Romania, "although we routinely speak of them as *being* Hungarian or Romanian, we might more aptly speak of them *becoming* Hungarian or Romanian, in the sense that 'Hungarian' or 'Romanian' becomes the relevant, operative description or 'identity' or self-understanding at that particular moment in that particular context."

Consequently, an everyday approach can advance our understanding of ethnicity by paying attention to when ethnicity matters, how it matters, and when it does not (and why not). Yet, it does not necessarily treat the "everyday" as a sphere of unconstrained individual agency. Rather, it aims to uncover "the different options that actors may pursue to react to existing boundaries, to overcome and to reinforce them, to shift them to exclude new groups of individuals or include others, or to promote other, nonethnic modes of classification and social practice" (Wimmer 2013, p. 46). The notion of the "social situation" is particularly helpful to conceptualize agency in this context. Instead of a narrow focus on "the macroscopic political, administrative, and economic structures," social situations reveal the "different courses of action actors may then pursue according to their understanding of their personal circumstances within this framework"

(Okamura 1981, p. 453). The everyday perspective is therefore closely linked to the situational approach to ethnicity within anthropology, which, drawing on Max Gluckman's (1940, p. 29) notion of situational selection, sees ethnic salience in a given situation as dependent on the different values, interests and motives of individuals, allowing them to assert "either their primary ethnic identity or other social identities, such as those derivative of class or occupation" (Okamura 1981, p. 460).

But what are the kinds of "situations" in which ethnicity can become salient? According to Brubaker (2002), violence – whether from above or below – is one of the most effective strategies of turning categories into groups. Writing about how the attacks by the Kosovo Liberation Army on Serb policemen provoked massive regime reprisals that ultimately led to a vicious cycle of attacks and counterattacks and thus significantly increased *groupness* on both sides, he argues that ethnic polarization was largely the result of violence, not its cause. For even though *groupness* was relatively high before the attacks were carried out, there was still significant scope for conscious "group-making" strategies: "Certain dramatic events, in particular, can serve to galvanise and crystallise a potential group, or to ratchet up pre-existing levels of *groupness*. This is why deliberate violence, undertaken as a strategy of provocation, often by a very small number of persons, can sometimes be an exceptionally effective strategy of group-making" (2002, p. 171).

Over the past decades, an increasing number of works both in anthropology (e.g., Appadurai 1998; Feldman 1991) and civil war studies (e.g., Kalyvas 2008; Sambanis and Shayo 2013; Wood 2008) have indeed shown that highly antagonistic identities are often the result of violence and not the other way around. These studies have criticized identity-based approaches for paying little attention to violence in its own right, that is, why it happens in a particular place and how it then impacts the communities (and identities) where it occurs. One of their key findings is that violence itself does not have to be "ethnically" motivated; however, once it unfolds, it can have powerful "ethnicizing" consequences. For example, in his

ground-breaking study of the genocide in Rwanda, Scott Straus (2006) has argued that it was not preexisting ethnic animosity that caused Hutus to kill Tutsi. Rather, it was a climate of insecurity following the assassination of president Juvénal Habyarimana and the renewed onset of war that triggered a process of antagonistic collective ethnic categorization, whereby “a whole category of people is blamed for the actions of one or a few” (2006, p. 165), paving the way for genocide.

The concept of “antagonistic collective categorization” put forward by Straus was further developed by historian Max Bergholz (2016) in his in-depth study of the dynamics of violence in Kulen Vakuf, a small town in rural north-West Bosnia, where a massacre took place in 1941 in which 2,000 people were killed. In this work, he shows that deep-seated ethnic cleavages on the ground are not a necessary precondition for mass atrocities to erupt. Rather, it is often situational factors – such as greed – that motivate micro-level actors to pursue violence on an ethnic axis. However, once violence is employed, it can have “a deeply polarizing effect on intercommunal relations, leading to a rapid transformation of neighbors into collective categories of enemies, and calls for retaliation along such lines” (2016, p. 111). What is remarkable about Bergholz’s work is not only that he, like others before him, demonstrates how situational violence has the power to produce highly antagonistic ethnic identities, but that he also uncovers instances of interethnic rescue where intercommunal friendship was not suspended by violence but instead grew even deeper, suggesting that “contexts of extreme inter-ethnic violence, which often produce the antagonistic collective categorization that may further intensify violence, can simultaneously strengthen inter-ethnic social ties, or create new ones” (2016, p. 137).

To account for individual variations, political scientist Lee Ann Fujii (2009, p. 12) has conceptualized state-sponsored ethnicity as a “script” for violence, that is, a “dramaturgical blueprint” that is typically created by threatened elites in the center and then diffused through various channels – such as the mass media, meetings, and rallies – to local elites, which then create their own local

version of the “production” that fits local needs and allows them to consolidate their power. The realization of the script, however, depends on the actors, whose skills, motivations, interests, and level of commitment can be expected to be of different degrees. What follows is a variety of performances, where “some actors will follow the text closely, such as when killers go after Tutsi and only Tutsi. Some will stray from the text as when killers target Hutu as well as Tutsi for killing. Some may abandon the script altogether as when killers help Tutsi instead of hurt them” (2009, p. 13). The notion of the script thus provides an alternative lens that shifts attention to “the directors and actors, and by doing so, provides the possibility for agency at every level, not only on the part of leaders, but also among their supposed followers” (2009, pp. 13–14). This demonstrates that while it is indeed important to take the force of violence seriously, one should also be careful not to take it for granted, for even if violence is successful at generating high levels of groupness, it does not suspend individual agency and alternative forms of solidarity altogether.

Beyond the “Event”: Identity After Violence

But there is another important question: How does groupness develop when war is over? Just like it is necessary to ask what there was before violence broke out, it can be equally insightful to ask what happens after. Yet, while many studies have focused on how war and violence produce high levels of groupness, fewer studies have adopted a longer-term perspective and investigated changing levels of groupness beyond the immediate experience of war and violence. The implicit assumption seems to be that, once identities are “hard,” it becomes almost impossible to soften them. However, that experiences of violence produce highly cohesive “ethnic groups” does not imply that those “groups,” once formed, are then unchangeable – believing so would be just another case of “groupism,” that is “the tendency to take discrete, sharply differentiated, internally homogeneous, and externally bounded groups as

basic constituents of social life, chief protagonists of social conflicts, and fundamental units of social analysis” (Brubaker et al. 2004, p. 45). As Brubaker (2002, p. 177) has noted, “once ratcheted up to a high level, groupness does not remain there out of inertia. If not sustained at high levels through specific social and cognitive mechanisms, it will tend to decline, as everyday interests reassert themselves, through a process of what Weber (in a different but apposite context [1968 (1922): 246–254]) called ‘routinization’ (*Veralltäglichsung*, literally ‘towards everydayness’).”

Some answers can be found in the literature on reconciliation and postwar reconstruction, in particular in the former Yugoslavia, as well as the literature on everyday peace (e.g., Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013; Mac Ginty 2014). Much of the scholarship on reconciliation supports the assumption that identities remain “hard”: For example, in Bosnia, where the war ended in 1996 with the Dayton agreement, which stipulated not only the right of internationally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees to return to their place of origin but also to have their property restored (e.g., Stefansson 2006), many chose not to return, and those who did faced significant challenges. As political geographers Gerard Toal and Carl Dahlman (2011, p. 174) observed, returning not only meant “confronting a landscape of trauma and fear where one’s persecutors were most likely still in charge” but also unemployment and economic hardship. In their assessment, “violence and war had not only ethnically divided Bosnian space but also broken its infrastructural coherence, legitimated its material division, obstructed movement, and implanted fear and dread in the minds of the displaced. Bosnia-Herzegovina’s partition ran deep” (2011, p. 174).

Adopting a more localized lens, anthropologist Anders Stefansson (2006) has described the estrangement and isolation that many Muslim Bosnian repatriates experienced in the once multiethnic town of Banja Luka that was now Serbian-dominated. Although the international community saw repatriation as essential to postwar reconstruction, in reality, people who returned not only felt culturally estranged but were often fearful to leave their houses. The house thus

“functioned as a sort of ‘prison’ because the returnees perceived the society beyond the protective walls of the house or the local neighbourhood as a ‘Serb’ and non-homely place” (2006, p. 125). According to Stefansson (2006, p. 132), “war and mass displacement bring profound changes to society, and it is illusory to believe that all those transformations can be, and perhaps should be, reversed after the signing of peace agreements.” Gëzim Visoka (2020) has described similar difficulties in Kosovo, where Albanians wanting to return to the Serbian-dominated north as well as Serbs returning to other parts of Kosovo are often faced with peace-breaking acts of what he calls “everyday vernacular nationalism,” such as hate crimes, robbery, or property damage. According to Visoka (2020, p. 442), “[t]hese vernacular acts can serve as bottom-up signals for mobilising populist sentiments and side-lining efforts for reconciliation. They demonstrate that nationalism is not only found in the actions of ethnic elites, but it is also prevalent in the wider population.”

Yet, amid widespread segregation and isolation, scholars, especially those working on Bosnia, have also noted cases of interethnic engagement. For example, Stefansson (2010) observed instances of renewed interethnic contact between the Bosniak (Muslim) returnees and displaced Serbs who moved to Banja Luka from their homes in other areas and thus shared the experience of displacement. Although these encounters were based on economic interest, initial economic transactions were often followed by coffee visits. Interethnic cooperation was thus not only driven by material gains but “also provided a first and seemingly quite ‘neutral’ stage for social interaction between members of different ethnic groups on which a measure of respect, civility, and tolerance for the Other had to be publicly displayed” (2010, p. 68). Similarly, Torsten Kolind (2007, 2008), who conducted ethnographic research among Muslim returnees in the Bosnian town of Stolac, noticed that even in the aftermath of war, people continued to employ a variety of categorizations to identify themselves and others. In the everyday lives of the returnees, moral qualities such as decency – that is, behaving like a “decent” person even in the context of war – were just as important as ethnicity.

As anthropologist Stef Jansen (2010, 2015) has argued, people in postwar Bosnia have in many ways been much more concerned with re-establishing “normal lives” than with issues of identity. When Bosnians engaged in interethnic encounters after the war, this was not usually perceived “as moral acts in a reconciliation process” (2010, p. 45), like abstract, foreign-imposed notions of reconciliation would suggest, but as a process of securing a sense of normality or a “normal life.” Like Stefansson, Jansen stresses the importance of avoiding controversial issues through “selective silence” in order to make these “normal” encounters possible (for a detailed discussion of the different roles that silence can play in conflict-affected societies, see ► [“Silence and Peacebuilding”](#)). Although this might cast doubt on the prospect of ever reaching reconciliation in a “thick,” idealist sense that foregrounds the restoration of relationships through dialogue, empathy, and forgiveness (e.g., Amstutz 2005; Lederach 1997), these studies nevertheless demonstrate the ability – and to some extent even the willingness or desire – of postwar actors to engage with those associated with the enemy on the basis of non-ethnic bonds of neighborhood or gender, among others. Hence, without denying the reality and strength of ethnic cleavages in the wake of war, they also highlight the multiplicity of social entanglements on the ground. As Kolind (2008, p. 40) noted, “violence plays a part in constructing a general polarised atmosphere of ‘us and them’, but this does not say anything about how people react or relate to such a dichotomised space of identity.”

Summary and Concluding Reflections

The aim of this chapter was to explore the causal relationship between identity and political violence. In the first section, it outlined “identity-based” approaches which tend to conceive of violence as a by-product of antagonistic identities. As the chapter stressed, it is no longer common sense in academia to look at ethnic and national groups as timeless entities; instead, it has become widely accepted to view groups as social and political constructs. To say that violence is the outcome

of “antagonistic identities” therefore not necessarily refers to innate antipathies that ancient-old nations hold vis-à-vis each other, but invites us to take a closer look at how identities are socially and politically constructed in a way that can foster violent conflict. From this perspective, then, identities are not essentially primordial, but can be constructed in a primordial way.

However, the problem with this view is that it does not sufficiently attend to ethnicity as lived experience. While it is tempting to think of the ethnic wars of the 1990s as mere “escalations” of politically constructed animosities, a closer look at the social realities on the ground often reveals a more ambiguous picture that complicates clear-cut categorizations into “us” and “them.” But if there was no widespread and deep-seated hatred that turned people into enemies, what was it? To answer this question, the chapter looked at approaches that argue that the causal relationship between identity and violence is reverse, conceiving of violence as the cause, not the result of ethnic antagonism. Often, violence is less an “escalation” than facilitated by certain situational factors. For example, in the case of the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict, the war did not start with the escalation of micro-level unrest but with the decision to send troops to Abkhazia that was taken on the level of the republican center in Tbilisi. Even Kaufman (2001, p. 126), who, as shown earlier, stresses the highly symbolic nature of the conflict, concedes that “in many ways the war in Abkhazia was highly artificial. [...] In sum, if mass passions were driving political conflict and personal confrontation, individual leaders’ decisions turned those elements into war.”

Therefore, while war does not have to be triggered by ethnic passions, mass violence certainly has the power to transform realities on the ground and “construct actors or meanings or relationships that did not previously exist” (Gagnon 2004, p. 12). For those who survive atrocities or have lost family members or friends, the experience of extreme violence can instill a trauma that goes so deep that it becomes almost impossible to undo. In this sense, antagonism can become imprinted into the psyche and thus very “real.” As Kate Brown (2003, p. 2010) has noted, during war identities are “not simply ‘imagined,’ but [...] bestowed,

dispensed, and forged through violence.” Thus, without wanting to negate the significance of nationalist or ethnic sentiments, the chapter urges to treat mass violence not as epiphenomenal, but as a phenomenon worth looking at in its own right.

However, while the chapter highlights the generative force of violence, it also stresses the significance of human agency. Not only can individuals respond differently to violence, but people’s attitudes toward past events might change over time, depending not only on their personal histories and experiences but also on their interests and concerns in the present. It thus invites those with an interest in violent ethnic conflict to look beyond the “event” of war and attend to the many ways in which ethnic antagonism continues to be resisted by postwar actors. Torsten Kolind (2007, p. 124), for example, has described everyday life in the Bosnian town Stolac as marked by “a constant tension between a nationalistic discourse informed by war – excluding the ethnic other in general and arguing for the impossibility of future co-existence – and local modes of identification related to concrete situations – rejecting ethnic stereotypes and trying to facilitate co-existence and rebuild everyday life.” Hence, what defines postwar and post-violence societies is not necessarily a lack of ambiguity, but complexity, flexibility, and inconsistency.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Culture, Anthropology, and Ethnography in Peace Research](#)
- ▶ [Georgian-Abkhaz Conflict](#)
- ▶ [Silence and Peacebuilding](#)

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Identity Politics – Politics Centred on Leadership Figures, Sectarian and Other Groups

► [Evolution of Practice in United Nations Peace-keeping Operations](#)

In Search of Justice, Peace, and Reconciliation in Northern Uganda

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Synonyms

[Peace agreement](#); [Peace deal](#); [Peace negotiations](#); [Peace process](#); [Peace talks](#)

Definition

More than a decade after the collapse of the Juba peace talks in South Sudan between the Lord's Resistance Army/Movement (LRA/M) and the government of Uganda (GoU) to end the northern Uganda conflict (see "[► Conflict](#)"), the journey toward achieving justice for the victims and survivors and reconciliation (see "[► Reconciliation](#)") and building durable and sustainable peace in the region has been fraught with disagreements and challenges. Although justice is often seen as a prerequisite for reconciliation and lasting peace (see "[► Peace](#)"), there is no agreement among the users of the concept on what it means to call a situation just or unjust. In the case of northern Uganda, for those who support the International Criminal Court (ICC), justice entails retribution and punishing those who committed the most serious crimes against civilians, what has been called retributive justice. However, in post-conflict northern Uganda, advocates of retributive justice have come into conflict with the locals, the majority of them the Acholi and the most affected by the conflict, who have advocated the use of traditional justice mechanisms to cope with the aftermath of the conflict. Such traditional justice is based on the traditions, customs, and cultures of the people and are restorative in nature. Restorative justice (see "[► Restorative Justice](#)") is a paradigm of justice that aims at addressing some of the

inadequacies of retributive justice. Lederach (1997, 2003) has shown the importance of transforming relationships in deeply divided societies.

The common goal of the traditional justice systems in various communities of northern Uganda is the restoration of social cohesion and of the relationship between the offender and the victim and with the community at large in accordance with their worldviews. In this regard, the harm resulting from wrongdoing impacts negatively the relationships between the parties involved, and as such, it becomes important to work out on ways that would address the harms done through involving all the parties including the society at large. Traditional justice also plays a significant role in reintegrating the offender into the community, something that retributive justice mechanisms such as the ICC and national courts tend to ignore. However, the social suffering being experienced in post-conflict northern Uganda calls for the need to go beyond justice related to the armed conflict between the LRA and the GoU, to include dealing with structural violence (socioeconomic injustices).

Like justice, the concept of peace does not have a universally accepted definition. Various definitions of peace exist ranging from a narrow definition which associates peace with the absence of war (see "[► War](#)") or overt violence, what has been called negative peace, to a broader and positive definition which is more than the absence of violence (see Galtung 1985). Positive peace is established through efforts that promote social justice and eliminate structural violence. Galtung introduced the term structural violence to refer to situations where "injustice, repression, and exploitation are built into the fundamental structures in society, and where individuals or groups are damaged due to differential access to social resources built into a social system" (cited Parlevliet 2002, p. 8). Positive peace is much more difficult to achieve than negative peace, and as such, it should be viewed more as "an ongoing process rather than discrete outcome" (van Willigen and Kroezen 2013, p. 105). The International Center for Transitional Justice

(ICTJ) conducted a study on the attitudes about social reconstruction, justice, and peace in northern Uganda in which a total of 2875 people were interviewed. The study showed multiple definitions of peace among the respondents, and it found that the majority of the respondents defined peace as the “absence of violence” (negative peace) and others associated it with human development, a return to their home villages, and return of the LRA, reconciliation, and education (2007, p. 30). In addition, like other African societies, traditional societies in northern Uganda perceive peace as based on morality and order with ancestors believed to act as guarantors and the basis of social order, security, and peace. As the author of this entry has noted elsewhere (Tom 2017), in general, in order for ancestors to guarantee individual and social peace as well as security, the living ought to maintain harmonious relationships with fellow members of the community, ensuring that they do everything possible to address threats or breaches for the purpose of maintaining such relationships. Moreover, it is vital for community members to respect social norms and values. Failure to do so is believed to attract punishment from ancestors. Peace in this case is conceived as a gift from ancestors.

Like the other two concepts (justice and peace), despite the concept of reconciliation being acknowledged as significant in post-conflict situations, there is no universally accepted definition of the term. The term means different things to different people. This has been attributed to the fact that reconciliation is both a goal or an end state (something that needs to be achieved) and a process (a way to realize that goal), not an event (Bloomfield 2003). For instance, Lederach understands reconciliation to be “dynamic, adaptive processes aimed at building and healing the torn fabric of interpersonal and community lives and relationships” (2001, p. 842). He further notes that reconciliation is:

a process of change and redefinition of relationships [...] pushes beyond the resolution of a particular issue and toward a framework that embeds that issue in the context of the broader system and the root causes that underlie the symptomatic expression of the conflict. (Lederach 2001, p. 846)

In the *IDEA Handbook*, reconciliation is defined as “a process through which a society moves from a divided past to a shared future” (Bloomfield 2003, p. 12). Moreover, the search for forgiveness, truth, healing, and justice is considered an essential aspect of the process. This entry considers reconciliation as a many-sided concept that “revolves around the complex relationships among trauma, truth, history/politics and justice” (Weinstein 2011, p. 7). Given the contested nature of the concepts of justice, peace, and reconciliation, the entry proposes an integrated approach to promoting justice and reconciliation and achieving lasting peace in post-war northern Uganda.

Introduction

In July 2006, the Juba peace process commenced in Juba, the capital of South Sudan. The peace negotiations were aimed at bringing to an end two decades of a brutal armed conflict in northern Uganda between the GoU and the rebel movement, the LRA. However, in 2008, the talks collapsed as Joseph Kony, the LRA leader, refused to sign the final peace agreement demanding the withdrawal of the ICC arrest warrants against the top LRA commanders. The ICC intervention in northern Uganda generated a lot of controversy as it was seen as an impediment to peace in the region, and the local community had its own understanding of justice, which was seen as essential in promoting justice, reconciliation, and peace. Traditional justice mechanisms have been used to foster peace and reconciliation as well as the reintegration into the community of LRA returnees. However, 12 years after the collapse of the Juba peace process, challenges and disagreements have remained negatively impacting on achieving justice, reconciliation, and lasting peace in the north. In order to reduce the stigmatization of LRA returnees and promote their reintegration as well as create conditions for achieving justice, reconciliation, and lasting peace, this entry proposes the designing of holistic, integrated interventions, which among others are sensitive to the local culture, history, and conditions.

A Brief Background to the Conflict in Northern Uganda

The LRA war in northern Uganda is the continuation of a series of insurgencies in the region against the GoU which began in 1986 soon after Yoweri Museveni and his National Resistance Movement (NRM) came into power through a coup. The insurgencies include the West Nile Bank Front (WNBFB), Uganda People's Democratic Army (UPDA), Uganda People's Army (UPA), Holy Spirit Movement I (HSM I), Holy Spirit Movement II (HSM II), and Allied Forces (ADF). Museveni overthrew Tito Okello, who in the previous year had overthrown Milton Obote. Okello's Acholi ethnic group, at the time, formed the backbone of the Ugandan military. The creation of an Acholi military ethnocracy in Uganda can be traced back to British colonial rule, which forced the Acholi and other northern ethnic groups to do most of the country's manual labor and came to have the greatest concentration of fighters, while southern ethnic groups, especially the Baganda, were encouraged to develop economically and politically (see Bainomugisha and Tumushabe 2005).

There is an intense debate about the root causes of the northern Uganda conflict. Finnström (2006) has identified two strands in this debate. One strand argues that those from the north started the conflict in an attempt to regain political power that they had lost to Museveni (see Bainomugisha and Tumushabe 2005). Following the demise of Idi Amini (a Kwaka) who came from northwestern Uganda, two of Uganda's former leaders, Milton Obote (a Lango) and Tito Okello came from the north (Finnström 2006). As Finnström further writes, "[w]ith Museveni's takeover, the presidency was handed over to a Ugandan from the south (Museveni is a Munyankole), and this, it has been suggested, people from the north simply could not accept" (2006, p. 202).

Another explanation of the root cause of the war is more contextual as it pinpoints to the realities on the ground (Finnström 2006). Museveni's coming into power witnessed the deployment of undisciplined National

Resistance Army (NRA) soldiers, the military wing of the NRM, into northern Uganda. The deployment of the NRA aimed at pursuing Acholi soldiers who had served in the former government and had retreated to the north. The NRA was brutal to civilians in northern Uganda, and to escape this brutality, "some of the Acholi ex-soldiers took up their weapons again and went into the bush to join the newly founded UPDA [Uganda Peoples Defence Army]" (Behrend 1991, p. 165). Besides committing atrocities, the NRA soldiers and the Karamojong warriors from northeastern Uganda, with the support of the Museveni regime, looted cattle from northern Uganda. As Finnström notes, "an additional experience of the war, the mass looting of cattle, was especially painful in the eyes of middle-aged and elderly Acholi, and elders and other influential members of Acholi society were eventually to be instrumental in the increased recruitment of young people to rebel ranks" (2006, p. 203). This was confirmed by the LRA representatives at the Juba peace talks who cited "persecution of the northern and eastern tribes" and "cattle rustling and destruction of property" as some of the reasons for the insurgency (Ssemujju 2006, p. 11). Between 1988 and 1990, the NRA defeated several rebel groups from the north including the Uganda People's Defence Forces, Alice Lakwena's HSM I, and Severino Lukoya's HSM II (Apuuli 2006). The defeat of Alice's HSM saw Joseph Kony succeeding her. Joseph Kony became the commander of the new LRA, comprising of the HSM remnants.

The Northern Uganda Conflict

The LRA was able to establish bases in southern Sudan with the support of the Sudanese government. It has been noted that the Sudanese government supported the LRA rebellion for the following two reasons: one, it needed the support of the LRA to fight its war against the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), a rebel group in Sudan; and two, it linked Museveni's government with the SPLA rebellion (Akhavan 2005).

The LRA rebel movement thus became strong militarily and logistically. As a result, it was able to launch its attacks in Uganda.

The LRA not only waged a war on the GoU but also targeted civilians, the majority of them their own tribe, the Acholi. The severely affected districts in northern Uganda were Gulu, Pader, and Kitgum, where the primary ethnic group are the Acholi. The war was characterized by widespread and systematic violations of human rights against civilians, including mass killing, mass displacement, rape and sexual abuse, amputations, and abductions and forced recruitment of thousands of children and young adults who were forced to commit atrocities. For instance, on February 21, 2004, the LRA rebels massacred 200 people, including children at Barlonya camp (Allen 2006). However, serious human rights violations in the north were also attributed to government forces, the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF). Human Rights Watch (2003) reported that the UPDF committed human rights abuses, including rape, torture, summary executions, and child recruitment among others. However, it is not clear whether the government soldiers' atrocities toward civilians resulted from a deliberate government policy as the government did not publicly call for the targeting of civilians.

In 2003, the then United Nations (UN) Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Jan Egeland described the situation in northern Uganda as "one of the worst humanitarian crises in the world" (UN 2003), thus helped bring international attention to the conflict. In the following year, he briefed the UN Security Council about the humanitarian situation in northern Uganda leading the Council to issue a statement strongly condemning the LRA and demanding the rebel group to stop immediately all acts of violence against civilians (UN 2004a). The Security Council further stressed "the importance of exploring all peaceful avenues to resolve the conflict, including through creating a climate in which a solution based on dialogue might be found" (UN 2004b).

The GoU responded to the armed conflict through direct military action and peace negotiations as well as offering general amnesty to the LRA rebels. Furthermore, it adopted a counter-

insurgency policy in which it forced the civilian population to move out of their villages for their own safety to internally displaced people (IDP) camps, which the UPDF guarded on behalf of the state. This brought untold suffering to the inhabitants of the camps as the GoU failed to provide adequate support and protection to them against the LRA, hunger, and communicable diseases. In addition, as noted earlier, the UPDF were also accused of committing atrocities in the camps against the very people they were supposed to protect.

In light of the global War on Terror (WoT), in March 2002, the GoU enacted an Anti-Terrorism Act "making membership of the LRA a criminal offence, a year after the US State Department had posted the LRA on its 'B-list' of 'other terrorist organizations'" (Dolan 2010, p. 8). This was a major blow to ongoing grassroots peace initiatives in the north as civilians attempting to promote conflict resolution through dialogue became exposed to treason charges, and it also raised the stakes of any governments considering supporting them (Dolan 2010). However, these strategies were not effective in bringing the conflict to an end.

In December 2003, the GoU formally referred the situation in northern Uganda concerning the LRA to the ICC claiming that this would bring peace and justice to the war-ravaged region. In July 2004, the ICC opened investigations focusing on alleged crimes against humanity and war crimes in the context of the northern Uganda conflict since July 2002. Following the investigations, in 2005, arrest warrants for top five LRA commanders were unsealed. However, the ICC was accused of bias for its failure to investigate and prosecute members of the UPDF who allegedly committed atrocities in the north. Questions were raised whether it was fair for the ICC to hold to account only one side in the conflict. In 2010, the former UN Under-Secretary for Children Olara Otunnu who had argued that the UPDF was equally capable for war crimes and crimes against humanity as the LRA met the then ICC Chief Prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo and gave information regarding the alleged atrocities committed by the UPDF. However, shortly after his meeting with Otunnu, Moreno-Ocampo said that

the ICC selected the gravest cases in northern Uganda, and it was a fact that the LRA committed most of the crimes in the region (Ntale 2010). In addition, he pointed out that most of the complaints against the UPDF were from before the ICC came into existence, and the ICC had no jurisdiction to investigate such crimes. The indictment of the five LRA leaders sparked a fierce debate in Uganda and the international sphere over the best approach to bring justice and peace in the north. At the time, the LRA had withdrawn its forces from southern Sudan to Garamba National Park in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) resulting in the security situation in northern Uganda improving significantly.

The Juba Peace Negotiations

In late 2005, church leaders in northern Uganda and South Sudan requested Pax Christi, an international Catholic peace movement, to look into the possibilities of a political solution to the conflict (Paxi Christi 2006; also see Simonse et al. 2010). Following this, communication links with the LRA top leadership were initiated eventually leading to the LRA's decision to participate in the peace negotiations. Riek Machar, the then vice president of South Sudan, agreed to mediate the peace talks between the LRA/M and GoU, which offered the best opportunity to end Uganda's longest running conflict. This was the first time during the war that an external mediator who had vested interests was helping find a solution to the conflict – the LRA posed a security threat to the new government of South Sudan and its citizens (Atkinson 2010).

The Juba peace negotiations took place between July 2006 and December 2008 in the context of the ICC arrest warrants against top LRA leaders. The agenda of the talks was arranged around five items: cessation of hostilities; comprehensive solutions; accountability and reconciliation; disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration; and a formal ceasefire. The GoU and representatives of the LRA/M signed agreements on the five agenda items. The August 2006 cessation of hostilities agreement between the

GoU and the LRA/M resulted in an increase in security in the north as LRA attacks had declined. Furthermore, the GoU and humanitarian organizations could access conflict-affected populations in the region. There was a significant improvement in the situation in the region bringing hope to the people of the north. However, in 2008, the talks collapsed when Kony declined to sign the final peace agreement. Kony argued that he would only sign the peace deal if the ICC arrest warrants against him and his top commanders were dropped and also if all the LRA soldiers were integrated into the UPDF (*New Vision* 2008). In December 2008, Uganda, DRC, and South Sudan forces with the support of the USA launched a joint military offensive against LRA dubbed Operation Lightning Thunder targeting the rebels' main camp in Garamba National Park in the DRC. The military objective of the operation was to defeat the LRA. However, while the GoU claimed that Operation Lightning Thunder was a military success, the operation failed to destroy the LRA or to capture Kony and his top commanders, and more than a decade later, Kony remains at large.

The Peace Versus Justice Debate During the Juba Peace Process

When the Juba peace talks formally commenced on July 14, 2006, the "peace *versus* justice" debate – whether to try war criminals or to end the violence without trials – became a central theme in discussions on the politics of international criminal justice in the context of northern Uganda. Despite the ICC arrest warrants, in July 2006 the government of Uganda offered to grant a blanket amnesty to the indicted LRA leaders if peace talks between the two warring parties succeed. President Museveni argued that it was against African culture to arrest Kony after granting him amnesty: "This is not part of our African culture. Once you give your word that is your word" (Nyanzi 2006, p. 2). As Mazrui has contended, the most important cultural resource that Africans have that may be tapped to help contain or end conflict is "Africa's short memory

of hate” (1995, p. 86). For example, despite being tormented by the White colonial regime, at independence in 1980, Prime Minister Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe displayed this traditional more of limited memory of animosity when he said:

If yesterday I fought you as an enemy, today you have become a friend and ally with the same national interest, loyalty, rights and duties as myself. If yesterday you hated me, today you cannot avoid the love that binds you to me and me to you. Is it not folly, therefore, that in these circumstances anybody should seek to revive the wounds and grievances of the past? The wrongs of the past must now stand forgiven and forgotten [...] Our majority rule could easily turn into inhuman rule if we oppressed, persecuted or harassed those who do not look or think like the majority of us [...]. (De Waal 1990, pp. 48–49)

Instead of seeking revenge, Mugabe sought reconciliation and urged White Rhodesians, including the former Prime Minister of Rhodesia Ian Smith, to stay and help rebuild Zimbabwe. While this traditional more of limited memory of animosity is not celebrated internationally, Africans have frequently displayed it (Mazrui 1995). However, since the liberal view, which places emphasis on retributive justice, remains dominant, it is not surprising that the ICC rejected Museveni’s amnesty offer pointing out that the arrest warrants against the LRA’s top commanders could not be withdrawn. The ICC further stated that Museveni’s offer was illegal as it violated the Rome Statute that created the ICC, which the GoU had ratified. Moreover, the Court reminded Uganda, the DRC, and Sudan of their legal obligation to implement the arrest warrants if the LRA’s senior commanders are in their territory. Furthermore, the then UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, and the French and the US governments disapproved Museveni’s amnesty offer to the LRA leadership. For instance, the then US Embassy Public Affairs Officer in Uganda, Alyson Grunder, pointed out that the US government supported the ICC indictments against the LRA top commanders:

While the United States appreciated that the initiative of the government of Southern Sudan to broker peace talks between the LRA and Kampala was based on the hope that these talks would put an end to the insurgency, the US government expected

Museveni to cooperate with the ICC in apprehending Kony to answer charges of crimes against humanity. (*Daily Monitor* 2006, p. 2)

The language that the ICC and supporters of its actions, such as the US Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, used placed a strong emphasis on international law and “a specific way in which crimes, and their relative levels of seriousness were defined,” a kind of language that was unfamiliar to many people in Uganda, including the victims of the civil war (Hovil 2011, p. 5). While local actors were divided on the issue, a number of them including the Refugee Law Project, the Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative (ARLPI), the Acholi traditional leaders, and politicians (including some in the GoU) opposed the ICC intervention. As Nnyago (2006, p. 10) pointed out, “Opposition groups and government are united, at least for now, in giving peace a chance.” ICC intervention in Uganda was seen as an obstacle to peace in the north, and there were fears that this would exacerbate violence and prolong the conflict. Contrary to this, Richard Dicker from the Human Rights Watch argued that “When there is impunity for these kind of crimes, for those responsible, then the peace that follows can at best be fragile” (Nyanzi 2006, p. 2). Similarly, the then French Ambassador to Uganda, Bernard Garancher, also wanted the LRA leaders to be arrested arguing that it was vital not to ignore such crimes for the sake of lasting peace. Furthermore, the then ICC Chief Prosecutor, Luis Moren-Ocampo, expressed that “[w]e believe the best way to stop conflict and re-establish security in the region was to arrest the top commanders” (Nyanzi 2006, p. 2). Due to its claims of universal justice which follows a retributive justice framework, the ICC showed intolerance to legal (e.g., the Uganda Amnesty Act 2000) and non-legal alternatives to dealing with serious human rights violations committed during the northern Uganda conflict.

However, opponents of the ICC intervention in Uganda like Archbishop John Baptist Odama, then chairman of the Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative (ARLPI), urged the Court to “keep away as far as possible from the Juba talks” pointing out that “[w]e don’t want to lose

this golden chance again. Our people have suffered enough. They are tired of staying in camps” (Odongo 2006). Concerned about the ICC intervention and its implications for peace in the north, in March and April 2005, the ARLPI sent delegations to the ICC in The Hague to lobby against its involvement (IRIN 2005a). Such opponents of the ICC intervention wanted local mechanisms for conflict resolution and reconciliation to take precedence over trials. Local mechanisms were considered more appropriate in promoting social reconciliation and peace than the ICC. The ICC, in this case, was seen as a neo-colonial intervention divorced from local realities, which ignores the understandings of the local, including the victims. Furthermore, there were concerns that the Court was sidelining traditional justice mechanisms in the north. As Sriram rightly pointed out, “[...] citizens of countries emerging from civil war [...] may rightly view the relationship between peace and justice differently” from those in established democracies such as the USA and the UK where “the linkage of peace and justice appears quite logical” (2004, p. 1). The desire for “peace first, justice later” in northern Uganda is understandable given the suffering civilians in the region went through due to the war. At the same time, the call for traditional mechanisms to deal with the situation is evidence that victims of the conflict also “desire some type of justice or accountability for the losses they sustained” (Sriram 2004, p. 1). It is crucial to note that the peace and justice debate on the northern Uganda crisis showed that religious and traditional leaders and a number of victims preferred restorative justice over retributive justice to end the conflict.

A year before the start of the Juba peace talks, the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) (2005) conducted a study in four northern districts of Lira, Gulu, Soroti, and Kitgum, which among its objectives included capturing the attitudes and opinions of the victims of the conflict about specific transitional justice mechanisms like traditional justice, truth commissions, trials, and reparations, as well as to obtain views on the relationship between justice and peace in northern Uganda. Prior to this study, several qualitative studies had examined factors influencing peace

and justice considerations in the region drawing primarily on interviews with traditional and religious leaders, former LRA members, humanitarian workers, Ugandan government officials, and others (ICTJ 2005). The ICTJ work provided extremely important data showing that people at the grassroots wanted peace more than anything, but they also wanted some accountability, especially for the leadership of the LRA. However, it is crucial to point out that a spectrum of opinion existed among respondents about what exactly needed to be done about atrocities committed during the war (ICTJ 2005). The study also showed that although respondents considered justice and peace as a complex relationship, they did not see them as mutually exclusive.

In 2007, ICTJ conducted a population-based survey in eight districts most affected by the war with an objective to capture attitudes about social reconstruction, justice, and peace at the time the Juba peace talks were taking place. The study showed that the majority respondents (90%) believed that peace could be achieved through engaging in dialogue with the LRA or through pardoning them for their crimes (86%) (ICTJ 2007, p. 3). Similar to their 2005 findings, in 2007, ICTJ found that the majority of the respondents (70%) wanted those responsible for committing violations of international humanitarian law and human rights in the north to be held to account. ICTJ further found that half of the respondents wanted LRA leaders to be held to account, while 48% wanted all LRA rebels. In addition, 70% of the respondents pointed out that UPDF had committed human rights abuses and war crimes in the north with 55% wanting those responsible for committing atrocities to be put on trial. Furthermore, according to the ICTJ, unlike in 2005, respondents also emphasized truth-seeking as essential for the victims, and there was also “an increased willingness to compromise through amnesties or pardons in order to allow the peace process to succeed” (2007, p. 3). In regard to the relationship between amnesty, criminal justice, and peace, the study found that the 80% of the respondents favored peace with amnesty. Furthermore, most respondents wanted those offered amnesty to apologize first to the

victims before returning to their communities (ICTJ 2007). The study further found that while many respondents considered the ICC as a useful source of pressure on the LRA to engage in the peace, they did not want the court to act as a stumbling block to a peace agreement that would bring the conflict to an end and create conditions for lasting peace. From this study, it shows that the Juba peace process had brought a lot of hope for peace in the north, and the ICC was largely perceived as contributing negatively to the peace process as the LRA demanded that the arrest warrants be withdrawn for them to sign the peace agreement. It also showed that there seemed to be an agreement that some type of justice needed to be done in northern Uganda. However, parties interested in the conflict appeared to be conceptualizing justice differently and how sustainable peace could be achieved in the region.

Traditional Justice in Northern Uganda: *Mato Oput*

As noted in the previous section, the GoU's referral of the northern Uganda situation in 2003 saw traditional justice mechanisms increasingly gaining prominence in the country as mechanisms through which transitional justice could be implemented in the north. Such mechanisms were seen as "alternatives or compliments to the ICC" (JRP and IJR 2011, p. 1; Tom 2006). For instance, in support of traditional justice, the GoU spokesman for the Juba peace talks, Captain Paddy Ankunda, said that:

We will have to convince them (ICC) that traditional justice will be put to use to ensure that there is no impunity and to make sure there is reconciliation between the rebels and community [...] What will happen is that the rebels will apologise, there is a cleansing ceremony and reconciliation like it has been done in the post apartheid South Africa [...]. (Matsiko et al. 2006, p. 2)

In northern Uganda, traditional justice mechanisms include the various customary and traditional practices that different ethnic groups in the region have used over centuries for conflict resolution and maintaining social order. Clause 3.1 of

item 3 of the June 2007 Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation between the LRA/M and the GoU provides that traditional justice mechanisms "as practiced in the communities affected by the conflict shall be promoted, with necessary modifications, as a central part of the framework for accountability and reconciliation." Between November 2010 and February 2011, the Justice and Reconciliation Project (JRP) and the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation (IJR) engaged in a series of consultations with conflict victims in northern Uganda focusing on traditional justice, truth-telling, gender justice, and reparations in the context of Uganda's transitional justice processes. JRP and IJR (2011) found that among the grassroots, many considered traditional mechanisms that could promote healing and reconciliation within conflict-affected communities. Traditional justice mechanisms practiced in northern Uganda that the Agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation referred to include *Mato Oput*, *Ailuc* found among the Madi, *Toni ci Koka* among the Madi, *Culo Kwor* among the Acholi and the Lango, and *Kayo Kuc* among the Langi. Uganda's *National Transitional Justice Policy* of 2019 also recognizes that these traditional justice mechanisms play an invaluable role in dispute and conflict resolution especially among disadvantaged communities in conflict and post-conflict situations (Uganda, Ministry of Internal Affairs 2019, p. 10). However, in northern Uganda *Mato Oput* appears to be the most popular. For instance, many respondents in the 2007 ICTJ study wanted the LRA returnees to participate in traditional ceremonies with *Mato Oput*, receiving the highest level of support. Such people opted to promote restorative justice rather than retributive justice, to create conditions for ending the war and promote reconciliation and community building.

Mato Oput is a community-based traditional mechanism for promoting justice and reconciliation among the Acholi people. In the Acholi language, *Mato Oput* literally means "to drink a bitter potion made from the leaves of the oput tree" (New Vision 2005). It is both a process and a ritual ceremony the Acholi used in cases of accidental killings or intentional murder encompassing "the

same principles of truth, accountability and compensation, and restoration of relationships as other justice processes” (Lui Institute for Global Issues 2006, p. 3). The ceremony, which is conducted by elders, aims to restore relationships between the victim and offender and the community at large.

Although the *Mato Oput* ceremonies vary across clans, there are some commonalities: “Most of involve sacrificing a sheep or goat, conducting ritualistic separation such as a mock fight, and then sharing the sacrificed animal or food” (Cline 2013, p. 118). Furthermore, a ceremony involving the drinking of a bitter drink is normally conducted. Drinking of the bitter herb by both the perpetrator and the victim implies that both parties have accepted the bitterness of the past and promised never to taste such bitterness again, which symbolizes forgiveness and reconciliation. Following the ceremony, the victim is compensated for the wrong done, the payment of which can be in the form of cows or sheep. Compensation by the offenders is considered a core element of the *Mato Oput* ceremony. Retired Bishop Macleod Baker Ochola II, one of the founders of the Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative, pointed out that unlike the court system, which is “retributive, promotes polarization, alienating both sides. . . [*Mato Oput*] brings restoration to broken human relationships, transforms lives and heals the hearts of those involved” (Nzwili 2017). As such, formerly abducted persons (FPAs) including ex-child soldiers are said to have been reintegrated in the community through the traditional methods of forgiveness and reconciliation, such as *Mato Oput*.

Stigmatization and the Reintegration of LRA Returnees

While it has been argued that *Mato Oput* helps in restoring broken relations, promotes reconciliation, and transforms lives, numerous studies and reports show that in northern Uganda former LRA rebel returnees, many of them forcibly recruited or abducted, often confront multiple challenges in their daily lives because of their past (Mukasa 2017; Ndossi 2011; IRIN 2005b; Denov and

Lakor 2017; Okiror 2018; Bogner and Rosenthal 2017; Kiconco and Nthakomwa 2018; MacDonald and Kerali 2020). Such challenges include socioeconomic marginalization, rejection, violence, resentment, and stigmatization by their family and the community, which can hinder their reintegration and recovery. For instance, in 2005, an ex-LRA abductee, Jacqueline Auma, aged 14 at the time, confessed: “We go through the ceremony and we are told we have been forgiven. But the truth is people can never forget what we have done. People still call me a killer, and few of my peers will even talk to me” (IRIN 2005b). Similarly, Agnes Acayo, a returnee mother, who was abducted by the LRA at the age of 9, describes how the community generally perceive them and their children:

When the community knows you are a former rebel fighter, people finger-point and look at you as a killer. You are called all sorts of names. Rebel, rebel, Kony and killer, killer. Our children face the same situation. They can’t play and interact with other children freely. They are always harassed and abused. The children are seen as a curse and burden to the community. (Okiror 2018)

Stigma against female LRA ex-abductees as testified by Agnes also negatively affects their access to vital community relationships, such as marriage, thus hampering social and economic opportunities essential for reintegration and recovery (Kiconco and Nthakomwa 2018). Furthermore, research supports Agnes’s claim regarding the labelling and stereotyping of children born in LRA captivity, which impedes their integration into the community. Denov and Lakor’s recent study on the post-war experiences of children born in LRA captivity found that they are often portrayed as “rebel children” and “dangerous,” having “bad behavior” and possessing “bad spirits” (*cen*) of the dead that they brought with them from the bush (2017, p. 260). Because of the post-war community stigma and rejection resulting from being born in LRA captivity, many of them wish to return to the bush and re-join the rebel group (Denov and Lakor 2017). As a strategy to manage their stigmatization, LRA returnees conceal their past in the bush, including relocating to urban centers such as Gulu for

anonymity (Bogner and Rosenthal 2017). Given this, can we talk of genuine reconciliation, forgiveness, and reintegration in post-war northern Uganda? It is not surprising that a number of the ex-combatants who have gone through *Mato Oput* feel that the process of forgiveness is superficial (IRIN 2005b). In an attempt to address the issue of stigma against LRA returnees, various actors, including religious organizations and NGOs, have engaged in community sensitization programs.

However, MacDonald and Kerali have criticized such interventions for failing to seek to understand, before all else, “how and why stigmatization functions in social relationships and ‘local words’” (2020, p. 20). While all LRA returnees may be vulnerable to stigma due to their association with and having being part of this rebel group, not all of them experience stigmatization. MacDonald and Kerali observe that stigmatization is profoundly entrenched in the “moral experience” of post-conflict Acholi “local worlds,” which serves to manage the presence and behavior of LRA returnees so as to restore “normality” in a situation of continued social suffering:

Depending on “what matters most” and “what is crucially at stake”, it can happen as part of the “moral experience” of appeasing *cen*; protecting community members from physical attacks; guaranteeing access to land; regulating village governance or a combination of these things. (2020, p. 20)

Their study suggests that a broader understanding of stigmatization would show that while it is usually carried out as a form of “social control,” it is also “based on cultural ideas related to the importance of cleaning and/or shame in resocializing individuals after wrongdoing,” and therefore, its purpose can be reintegrative rather than merely exclusionary (MacDonald and Kerali 2020, p. 3). As such, for them, anti-stigma interventions which draw on a narrow understanding of stigmatization miss the multiple functions and many sides of stigmatization among the Acholi, including its reintegrative function. This does not imply that the exclusionary function of stigmatization in this case should be ignored.

It is not surprising that local communities often resist dominant approaches to ending

stigmatization that pay little attention to the local culture, history, beliefs, and realities. Traditionally, the Acholi believe in the world of divine spirits and of what Mbiti (1969) calls the “living-dead” who are believed to actively participate in the world of the living creating “communities of both the living and the dead” (Kopytoff 1971, p. 129). Mbiti (1969) has noted that the world of the “living-dead” is a world of spirits and in that world, they are not dead. They are also not dead in the world of the living human beings because the living continues to remember them and communicate with them asking for assistance from them in the event of trouble or sickness. The Acholi’s belief in this world plays a significant role in shaping how they see justice, peace, and reconciliation.

According to the Liu Institute for Global Issues and the Gulu District NGO Forum, “Jok (Gods or divine spirits) and ancestors guide the Acholi moral order, and when a wrong is committed, they send misfortune and illness (*cen*) until appropriate actions are taken by Elders and the offender” (2005, p. 10). As a result, the Acholi discourage an individual from being a troublemaker since the individual’s actions can have grave consequences for his/her whole clan. This notion of *cen* reflects the significance of “relationships between the natural and the supernatural in Acholi, the living and the dead, the normative continuity between an individual and the community” (Liu Institute for Global Issues and Gulu District NGO Forum 2005, p. 72). The “living-dead” play an active role and have a lot of influence in the world of the living. This illustrates that despite the fact that most Acholi people acknowledge that, for example, many ex-LRA female returnees were forcibly abducted or recruited, they view them as having participated in killings during the war and contaminated with the evil spirits of their victims (Kiconco and Nthakomwa 2018). Whereas humanitarian NGOs may view returning children and young adults as innocent, their families and communities, however, perceive them as potentially dangerous. As such, those seen as carriers of bad spirits are required to undergo cleansing rituals as in local practices what matters most is that returnees live in

harmony with others and do not pose a danger to the community.

However, as noted earlier, a call to consider the various functions of stigmatization among the Acholi, including its integrative role, does not mean that the harmful effects of the stigmatization of LRA returnees should be ignored. A study by Schneider et al. on the prevalence of stigmatization in a large number of LRA war survivors, including a significant number of formerly child soldiers and abducted individuals, found that “the experience of stigmatization and discrimination combined with trauma load is associated with PTSD prevalence, the likelihood of spontaneous remission and therapy success” (2018, p. 8). They, thus, recommended the development of programs that raise awareness in the community about the negative impacts of stigmatization and highlighting the necessity of reducing it and discrimination so as to enable survivors to recover and reintegrate into the community. However, as research has shown, intervention programs which fail to take into account the multiple functions of stigmatization among the Acholi, including its reintegrative purpose, are met with resistance from the local community (MacDonald and Kerali 2020). As such, they have proved not very effective in ending the stigmatization of the LRA returnees in northern Uganda. It is therefore vital that the perspectives of the returnees and those of the community are taken into account when designing programs aimed at reducing stigmatization and promoting reconciliation and reintegration.

Summary

Post-conflict northern Uganda has seen some improvement in security and in the lives of its inhabitants. However, more than a decade after the LRA withdrawal from the region, the search for justice, reconciliation, and durable peace continues to be fraught with challenges in the midst of social suffering. The LRA leader Joseph Kony remains at large and continues to wreak havoc in central Africa, where he and his LRA retreated to. External attempts (as in the case of the ICC) at promoting retributive justice in the hope that this

will act as deterrent and eventually lead to peace have often faced resistance in northern Uganda. Such interventions are seen as neo-colonial and divorced from local realities. In addition, NGO interventions aimed at sensitizing the community about the negative impacts of stigmatization on the LRA, and their reintegration needs to also engage local culture and needs in order to understand the various functions of stigmatization among the Acholi. This is vital in designing intervention programs that are more effective in reducing stigmatization and promoting reintegration, reconciliation, and peace. As such, interventions that take into account the various functions of stigmatization, culture, local history, traditional and formal justice mechanisms, the needs of the community, and community fears as well as the interests and needs of former combatants may be useful in designing holistic, integrated, and effective approaches vital for creating conditions for proper reintegration of former LRA combatants and abductees, reconciliation, justice, and lasting peace in the region.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Conflict](#)
- ▶ [Peace](#)
- ▶ [Reconciliation](#)
- ▶ [Restorative Justice](#)
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Inclusion

- ▶ [Consociationalism and Peace After Conflict](#)
- ▶ [Intersectionality and Peace](#)
- ▶ [Peace and Feminist Foreign Policy](#)
- ▶ [Women’s Organizations in Post-Conflict Contexts](#)

Inclusive Mediation

- ▶ [Gender and Mediation](#)

Independent Bodies

- ▶ [Independent Commissions and Peace Settlements](#)

Independent Commissions and Peace Settlements

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Synonyms

[Independent bodies](#); [Independent committees](#); [Non-majoritarian institutions](#)

Definition

How do independent commissions operate in post-conflict societies? Commissions, which possess and exercise some specialized public authority but are neither directly elected nor directly managed by elected officials, are crucial elements of peace settlements as they are mandated to carry out vital tasks including monitoring ceasefires or overseeing elections (see chapter “► [Post-conflict Elections](#)”). The successful completion of such tasks is vital to the sustainability of peace accords. The use of independent commissions is not restricted to post-conflict contexts; rather they have been an increasing popular tool of governance in North America and across Europe. Such bodies

- (a) Possess and exercise some grant of specialized public authority, separate from that of other institutions.
- (b) Are neither directly elected by the people nor directly managed by elected officials. They exclude state powers organized within the bureaucracy, when the exercise of such powers is placed under the direct control of ministers and the civil service but includes a specialized organ or agency that may be linked to a ministry in certain formal ways, so long as that body is not merely a department or administrative office of a larger bureaucratic entity (Thatcher and Sweet 2002).

Introduction

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Despite concerns about the legitimacy of such bodies due to their unelected and arguable unaccountable nature, their use is widespread in both post-conflict and non-conflict environments. This is the result of their ability to help the principals (i.e., the executive or/and legislators with existing legislative power in an area to (a) overcome commitment problems, (b) overcome technical complexity, and (c) lower the cost of decision-making). While being developed to explain delegation in non-conflict contexts, all three of these logics can account for delegation in post-conflict contexts.

The “credibility hypothesis” argues that “political sovereigns are willing to delegate important powers to independent groups in order to increase the credibility of their policy commitments” (Majone 2001). The long-term credibility of policies is undermined by competing preferences among politicians. This justification for establishing independent commissions is convincing in explaining the bodies in the post-conflict context. Conflict parties frequently have differing preferences in relation to a wider range of policies. Even where a peace agreement has resolved the core issues which led to conflict, the parties may still have different preferences with regard to the specifics of reforms to be implemented in certain sectors. In this environment the delegation of powers to an independent body can overcome logjams which could otherwise become serious obstacles to political progress. Yet, political leaders will only delegate powers to such a body if it has confidence that it will not work in such a way as to undermine their interests.

Delegation of certain tasks to independent commission is also explained by its ability to lower the political cost of making decisions. Certain decisions may be unpopular with important constituents of the principals while being beneficial to wider society. It can be very difficult for principals to take these decisions, regardless of their desire to enact the policies which benefit the majority, as such decisions can be damaging or fatal to their careers. Delegation allows principals to place the “blame” for such decisions on the agents and insulate themselves from political fallout (Walsh 2015). This explanation for the use of independent commissions may be particularly applicable to the post-conflict context where leaders are reluctant to become directly connected to concessions or compromises which are often central to peace agreements.

Theories of delegation have little to say about the composition of independent bodies, beyond stressing the role of technical expertise as discussed above. However, when operating in a post-conflict context, the group identity of commission members has the ability to either support or undermine the work of the body. Conflict

parties will only agree to the delegation of significant issues to an independent commission if they can be confident that the body will include representation from their group and that such members will have a real impact on the work of the commission.

Independent Commissions: Power-Sharing and Power-Dividing

Power-sharing in general, and consociationalism in particular, advises against simple majoritarian decision-making as it facilitates the permanent exclusion of certain groups. Instead consociationalists advocate for proportional representation of different groups in important institutions and for anti-majoritarian mechanisms such as qualified majority voting (Lijphart 2004). Policy-makers have implemented such recommendations widely, including by structuring independent commissions according to such principles (Walsh 2015, 2016). Commissions and bodies across a range of areas including judicial, military, economic, and culture have all been established to reflect these norms. For example, the National Petroleum Commission in Sudan provided for in the 2004 Agreement on wealth sharing during the pre-interim and interim period in Sudan and the Independent Commission of Inquiry provided for in the 1992 National Pact in Mali.

In non-conflict contexts the behavior of independent commissions is often viewed as legitimate as a result of the expertise of its members. As many policy areas become increasingly technical, independent bodies are used to mitigate against the inability of politicians to have necessary expertise across a wide range of policy areas. Where an independent commission is composed of recognized experts in a particular field, its work is viewed as legitimate, as representing best practice in that sector. In such an environment, politicians are often content to leave such technical issues to commissions and view their work as being non-partisan. In post-conflict contexts, the contentious nature of intergroup relations often results in matters which are non-controversial in other environments becoming contested and issues that are somewhat controversial in other contexts being extremely

sensitive. Against such a backdrop, independent commissions need not only to be composed of recognized experts to be viewed as legitimate, but they also need to be seen as taking the needs of different groups into consideration. Thus, both their membership and operational procedures need to recognize the sensitive nature of the post-conflict context.

The use of independent commissions in post-conflict societies also draws on Roeder's power-dividing theory; while he focused on the traditional separation of powers, he also referred to the possible role of "independent special purpose administrations" highlighting that "by creating independent organs with specialized decision-making authority, power-dividing balances efficient decision-making in specific areas against the dangers of tyranny by a single majority across issue areas" (Roeder 2005). Current literature on independent commissions focuses on independent bodies which provide a regulatory function. Given the very different environment independent commissions provided for in peace agreements tend to be assign different types of tasks. The commissions can be divided into three categories based on the role which they are assigned: monitoring and verification, implementation, and administrative.

Types of Commissions

Conflict parties in divided societies often have negative past experiences of interacting with each other. They usually do not have a history of cooperation or reciprocal compromise; rather there may have been atrocities committed by both sides and long-standing patterns of discrimination. This creates a deficit of trust. Even where the parties feel that the provisions within a peace accord are preferable to continued violence, they may not trust that the accord will endure, each conflict party not trusting the others to uphold their commitments. This creates a need for a mechanism to oversee and validate the implementation of the peace agreement. Without such a mechanism, conflict parties will not have any confidence that the agreement is being faithfully implemented, and fears about possible renegeing can even lead to parties pre-emptively

withdrawing from peace processes. Commissions can be mandated to supervise and authenticate the implementation of the peace agreement in its entirety or be directed to focus on specific elements of the agreement. Those tasked with monitoring ceasefires or verifying weapons decommissioning and demobilization are central. As Walter has argued, when conflict groups disarm or make other concessions, they become more vulnerable – both physically and politically. This increasingly tense situation makes parties more sensitive to real or perceived defections from other actors and makes it increasingly less likely that they will fulfill their obligations. This can lead to conflict parties returning to war even if the agreement has provided a meaningful resolution to the conflict issues (Walter 1999). Commissions monitoring and verifying disarmament, demobilization, or other concessions can help to overcome the potential destabilizing effect of this phase.

Implementation commissions are mandated with applying principles agreed in peace accords; see, for example, the Joint Implementation Committees provided for in the 1999 Memorandum of Agreement between the Government of Lesotho and the Interim Political Authority (IPA) and the 1999 peace agreement between the government and Revolutionary United Front in Sierra Leone. It may be argued that if the terms of the peace agreement were clearly specified, the implementation phase would simply involve the logical and smooth execution of these terms. But implementation of agreements is not usually a straightforward process. This is due to both the role of "constructive ambiguity" in reaching agreement and the fact that the depth and breadth of reforms needed in a post-conflict society mean that it is difficult if not impossible to specify every element in a formal agreement. "Constructive ambiguity" refers to the way in which certain actors may selectively interpret a peace agreement in order to make its provisions more attractive to its constituents. In some cases, the source of ambiguity is deliberate ambiguity in the text; in other cases, the text may be clearer, but actors may still engage in a degree of interpretation. As Bekou (2003) argued, a review of case studies shows

that there is a gap between the concessions promised in peace agreements and the smaller steps needed to realize those provisions.

Administrative commissions in post-conflict societies align most closely with the use of independent commissions in non-conflict contexts. They may be assigned tasks which are associated with the peace agreement and associated reforms, such as establishing new electoral registers. Electoral commissions have been provided for in peace agreements in a large number of countries including Bosnia, Liberia, Mozambique, and Togo. However, much of their work is ongoing and mirrors work carried out in other contexts, such as managing elections. While such work is also carried out in non-conflict contexts, this work has a greater tendency to become controversial in the sensitive and divided post-conflict environment, and thus the work of these commissions has a greater potential to become contested than their equivalent in other contexts.

The mandates of independent commissions can be carefully constructed to ensure that they have the necessary powers to manage or overcome specific challenges. It can be difficult to predict what powers a commission will need, so commissions provided for in peace agreements – or shortly before or after – may need to be given latitude in their remits to ensure that they can manage the challenges. While there are dangers that a commission may exceed the expected remit if there is too much latitude, this can be avoided if members have appropriate professional experience. International members who have previous experience working on similar bodies (see below) can be particularly useful in this area drawing on these experiences to appropriately interpret mandates. It may appear easier to wait and set up such bodies on an ad hoc basis. However, the inclusion of these bodies in a peace agreement may be necessary to convince conflict parties to accept an agreement in environments of low trust, and commissions established after a peace agreement may be viewed as less legitimate than those established by agreements that have popular support. For example, in Northern Ireland, the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning in Northern Ireland had to be

established before multi-party peace negotiations could even begin in order to provide some assurance to unionist political parties that the Irish Republican Army (IRA) would disarm as part of a peace process. Their establishment ensures conflict parties that the interpretation of ambiguity and the implementation of reforms will be overseen by an even-handed commission. Furthermore, being provided for in widely accepted agreement increases the legitimacy of commissions. It is easier for groups to dismiss bodies set up later if they act in ways which they do not like. For example, also in Northern Ireland, the Independent Monitoring Commission was criticized by Sinn Féin on the basis that it was not provided for in the 1998 peace agreement and as such is not a valid part of the peace process. That is not to say that commissions should not be set up if new needs emerge but rather that commissions set up at the time of agreement are preferable.

International Involvement and Independent Commissions

International involvement in peace agreements is a widespread practice. International organizations, third-party states, or high-profile individuals act in a wide range of roles: from the early stages of the peace process where they may help in negotiating ceasefires to overseeing elections and helping to re-build human and physical infrastructure in the peace-building stage. All three main theories of conflict resolution (consociational and integrative power-sharing and power-dividing) envisage a role for such actors, though they differ as to what this role should be: power-dividers see a limited, transitional role for them; advocates of both consociational and integrative power-sharing embrace them more willingly as facilitators and guarantors of settlements.

Independent commissions provide a vehicle through which international actors can remain involved in peace processes providing important post-agreement support to domestic parties. They allow for the level of international involvement to be adapted depending on need. Newly reached peace agreements are most vulnerable, they cannot rely on historic acceptability, and the lack of trust between local parties may be greatest as the legacy

of the conflict is fresh. As trust grows, hybrid commissions provide for an institutionalized process where international actors can gradually withdraw. If the peace process suffers a setback due to a specific incident or a number of events, these mechanisms offer opportunities for international actors to reengage until the situation stabilizes.

External guarantor theory focuses on the role of international actors as verifiers during the implementation stage of a peace process. During the implementation of peace settlements, the international community can act as necessary verifiers of compliance (Walter 1999). Pronouncements by such an actor that one of the conflict parties has violated an agreement will carry significant weight, even without any material sanction. Such claims will be much more difficult for the accused party to dismiss than similar charges levied by domestic competitors. This suggests that international actors should have a strong role to play on independent commissions tasked with monitoring and verification duties.

Implementation bodies can also include international actors. This inclusion may be necessary where the coordination of policy or implementation of agreed reforms has a cross-border element. Neighboring states, regional powers, and other states with particular historical links to conflict parties may be particularly affected by changes instigated; by an agreement for example, where there are refugee flows or issues around diasporas from the conflict parties residing in other states. International members of these bodies can also be a valuable resource, they can be perceived as an honest broker, and can enjoy a high status as a result of personal expertise in a specific area or the leverage which they can exercise due to their home country.

Administrative commissions may also make use of perceived neutrality, expertise, or leverage of international actors. However, the permanent design of these institutions makes it less likely that international actors will be involved in their long-term operation. Both improving domestic circumstances and the wider international system make long-term commitment of international actors to peace processes difficult. Binder's study of the UN Security Council finds that the Council's

interventions are directly correlated with the level of humanitarian suffering (Binder 2015). This is very understandable but it also suggests that the international community may turn their attentions to more acute crises and be less willing to intervene in the long term where the acute human suffering has dissipated.

International involvement can also sharpen the traditional criticism of delegated bodies, that they are unelected and unaccountable. Hampson argued that broad international intervention in peace agreements can lack legitimacy and the involved actors may be viewed as acting to progress their own interests in the state or region (Hampson 1997). Internationals may also be viewed as having insufficient understanding of the local circumstances. External involvement in domestic institutions can raise concerns over the legitimacy of internal commission processes, for example, in relation to simple majority voting processes, externals can have equal power to the arguably more legitimate domestic actors. Concern over the legitimacy of including internationals independent commissions is also sharpened if external members are seen as favoring a particular conflict party. Furthermore, excessive reliance on international actors to promote or incentivize domestic actors into arrangements can be indicative of lack of a domestic spirit of cooperation or accommodation (Roeder and Rothchild 2005). Such failures can lead to excessively lengthy international involvement in domestic institutions.

Summary

Independent commissions are mandated to carry out tasks which are central to peace-making, peace-building, and long-term governance. They can carry out monitoring and verification, implementation, or administrative roles. A lack of democratic accountability can raise questions as to the legitimacy of their work. However, in both post-conflict contexts and, more widely, delegation logics and the expertise of members can provide these institutions with legitimacy. Furthermore, the inclusion of representatives of previously conflict parties can ensure that different

perspectives are considered in the commissions' work. International actors may also be members of commissions which can provide expertise that may be lacking domestically and allows internationals and local actors to work together to forward certain policies.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration \(DDR\)](#)
- ▶ [Negotiation](#)
- ▶ [Peace Operations, Principles, and Doctrine](#)
- ▶ [Post-conflict Elections](#)
- ▶ [Troubles, The: The Northern Ireland Conflict](#)

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Independent Committees

- ▶ [Independent Commissions and Peace Settlements](#)

India

- ▶ [Maoist Conflict in India](#)

Indigenous Approaches to Peace

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Synonyms

[Aboriginal conflict management](#); [Indigenous diplomacies](#); [Indigenous peacemaking](#)

Definition

Indigenous approaches to peace are emplaced and relational processes designed to move challenging and conflictual dynamics toward balance and harmony. They do not often feature in peace and conflict studies scholarship or conflict resolution practice because dominant political systems have actively disavowed Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing. To engage with Indigenous approaches to peace therefore involves grappling with challenging knowledge politics. Although characterized by remarkable diversity linked with place-based ways of being, Indigenous approaches to peace tend to share similar underlying ontological and epistemological patterns and characteristics. These include networked relationality beyond the human and

the pursuit of balance and harmony that nonetheless acknowledges and works with agonism and conflict. Examples of Indigenous conflict management, ranging from inter-person to inter-nation and inter-species processes tend to link personal self-regulation with broader relational-cosmological ordering. Accessing and engaging with Indigenous approaches to peace raises challenging questions about the effect of dominant political orders that peace and conflict studies is only beginning to recognize.

Introduction

Indigenous peacemaking continues to guide Indigenous individuals, communities, and nations despite often severe colonial impacts and the ongoing challenges of living amid dominant political orders. Many Indigenous nations have maintained their traditional peacemaking and conflict management processes in the face of oppression (see Indigenous Peacemaking Initiative, *n.d.*; Bluehouse & Zion, 1993; Graham, Brigg & Walker, 2010). Others are recuperating and revitalizing culturally based approaches to peace, drawing on traditional values and teachings to create robust, sustainable processes designed to address contemporary challenges (see Brigg et al., 2017; Huber, 1993; Vaai, 2019; Walker, 2013). Indigenous approaches to peace are remarkably diverse because context and experience are crucial to Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing. There are thousands of Indigenous peacemaking processes and techniques around the world, with no pan-Indigenous paradigm. Sustaining this multiplicity is central to who Indigenous people are.

Peace and conflict studies scholarship seldom engages Indigenous approaches to peace because Indigenous peoples and their ways of knowing, being, and doing have been disavowed in the establishment and consolidation of dominant political orders. This produces worldview blindness and ethnocentrism that generates risks of assimilation and tokenism in current engagements with Indigenous peacemaking. Respectful and ethical engagement with Indigenous approaches

to peace is not a matter of simply adding to the peace and conflict studies field, incorporating elements of Indigenous peacemaking, or revealing what may be seen as “ancient wisdoms”. These moves commit epistemological violence by attempting to understand Indigenous approaches or incorporate them within the terms of the dominant society. Adequately considering Indigenous approaches to peace requires engaging with colonialism, the politics of knowing in colonized contexts, and with how Indigenous lives are entangled with the nation-state and the accompanying dominant ways of conceptualizing peace and addressing conflict. This is a significant challenge that the peace and conflict studies field has only begun to recognize alongside recent efforts to engage with cultural difference (see, e.g., Väyrynen, 2001; Brigg, 2010; Avruch *Culture and Conflict Resolution*).

Given the challenges of colonial impacts, diversity, and the politics of knowledge, this entry is invariably perspectival and partial. The authors write, respectively, from Australia and Turtle Island (North America). More specifically, the authors, one of settler-descent and the other of Tsalagi descent, do not have the authority to speak that is usually claimed in dominant social science. It follows that this entry resists social science demands for definitive and generalizable knowledge. Instead, it aims to evoke rather than specify, and to suggest rather than define.

Despite remarkable diversity, Indigenous peoples tend to share a strong orientation to land and place, often as the first peoples of a place and as people tightly bound with it. This makes it possible for this entry to discuss Indigenous approaches to peace as broadly informed by thoroughgoing relationalism that binds humans with diverse beings, entities, and forces that constitute the cosmos. The entry then discusses the central influence of the pursuit of balance and harmony in Indigenous approaches to peace. Finally, it provides some exemplification of the operation of Indigenous approaches. The entry also considers how peace and conflict studies might face the challenges of engaging with Indigenous approaches, including by addressing the politics of knowledge through epistemological pluralism.

Relationalism

Indigenous relationalism arises out of the emplacement of human beings in a living cosmos. The origin and development of human life tends to be conceptualized through origin narratives in which diverse beings and entities (including humans) form and come into existence. Examples include “Sky Woman and Turtle” (Kimmerer, 2020) in the North American context and many “Dreamings” in the Australian context (Stanner, 1979 pp 23–40). Ontogeny is thus spiritual and existential. Persons are not primarily separate individuals who have relations with others, but *relational* beings who are intrinsically networked and called into existence with others. One result is that people tend to be intimately and inextricably connected with ancestors, other beings, and landscapes. Humans are thus always related in Indigenous cosmologies and are sometimes considered to be the younger, less experienced, and less knowledgeable relations of others. Becoming a good relation worthy of one’s ancestors, and becoming an ancestor oneself, requires responsible and reciprocal behaviors with others and the cosmos.

The possibility and maintenance of order – cosmological, social, and political – lies in attending carefully and persistently to the foregoing relations, including to accompanying patterns, contingencies, and ethical obligations. Peace is often described as a form of balance and harmony among all the relations that make up the cosmos (see Belt, 2009; Bluehouse & Zion, 1993). The patterning and durability of certain sets of relations – including those around trade, marriage, and kinship and ceremonial responsibilities – serve as guidelines for peaceful interaction among groups, and these may be more or less didactic or strict depending upon the group. However, these patterns tend not to be fixed or inflexible. While certain realms such as the cosmic or ancestral time may be seen as enduring and unchanging, these are also periodically renewed and recast in the present (LittleBear, 2000). The idea of any people or set of relations having a fixed or unchanging character tends not to resonate among Indigenous peoples. One result is that the balance and harmony sought is not static but

involves constant movement, seeking harmony amid the flux of the cosmos (LittleBear, 2000; Cajete, 2000) and the natural tensions of social existence.

Disrespect of the mutually recognized patterns and relations that are deemed necessary for balanced life is seen as a key underlying cause of conflict. Efforts to maintain, repair or renew these relations – whether through the advice and direction of senior knowledge holders, interactive processes from discussions to ceremonies, or personal reflection and self-regulation – are integral to managing conflict and building peace. It is impossible to precisely specify the principles that inform diverse Indigenous peoples’ pursuit of peace, but in broad terms one key principle may be approximated as the seeking of balance and harmony among diverse beings, entities, and forces that constitute the cosmos.

Balance and Harmony

The multiple connections borne of relationalism bring into play concepts of balance and harmony, yet this does not indicate a state of perfection devoid of conflict. The pursuit of balance and harmony must not be conflated with their presence. Conflict is assumed to be a natural part of the human condition, and people therefore seek balance and harmony on an ongoing or processual basis rather than in pursuit of an end state. Constant movement toward balance can be seen in Navajo peacemaking ceremonies, designed to support “hozho,” a harmony in which “everything is in its proper place, functioning well with everything else” (Yazzie, 2004, p. 130). Aboriginal Australian philosophy also emphasizes balance, with one formulation being that all perspectives are “valid and reasonable,” although not equal in weight or authority, with balance at times being restored through performatively managing contested viewpoints (Graham, Brigg & Walker, 2010, p 82). In Aboriginal Australian conflict management balance does not require emotional restraint, but rather encourages people to “be real” in expressing their emotions so that balance can be restored and conflict managed in a sustainable manner.

In dealing with the complexity and challenge of seeking balance in networked relationalism, people may draw on humor to remind individuals to find ways of seeking balance amid unexpected challenges. Native peoples in Turtle Island draw on trickster stories and performances in which the trickster figure behaves in ways that are unsanctioned, representing the flux of the cosmos, and reminding people that creative and flexible responses are often required to restore balance within the expansive network of relationships. Humor may also be used to balance heaviness and grief occasioned by conflict.

Balance is also established, calibrated, and restored by being emplaced in relationships of respect and reciprocity with the natural and spiritual worlds. Being emplaced diminishes human concerns of being isolated or estranged (Graham, 1999). People do not always behave in ways that demonstrate respect or support reciprocity, thus generating imbalances, but by engaging respectfully within an emplaced network of relationships, balance can be restored. Indigenous peacemaking is founded in a balance that supports both physical and mental health. Related processes include participants dancing, singing, or engaging in other performative rituals that extend beyond those physically present, including honored elders who have died, with many Indigenous forms of peacemaking beginning by ritually calling in the ancestors.

Seeking Relational Peace

Pursuing relational balance and harmony takes a wide range of forms, though these are less institutionalized and formalized than dominant peace and conflict studies tends to expect. Because people are already-social and relational beings who exercise personal autonomy vis-a-vis others and the relational systems they inhabit, there is no need for a centralized state or authority structure to direct conflict management. Persons and groups may be set against others in conflict situations, but cross-cutting or connecting ties are typically also accessible. Because persons inhabit a relational and relatively non-hierarchical cosmos, they are either already their own representatives or

have very direct access to political participation through kinship or similar networks for the purposes of conflict management. This does not imply that people are equal. Individuals are differentially positioned – most commonly by age, gender, skill, and experience – both as conflict protagonists and as those who might assist with conflict management and processing.

Conflicts may be processed through particular institutionalized processes such as those of the “Great Law of Peace” of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy (Williams, 2018) on Turtle Island or the *Jardiwarnpa* fire ceremonies in Aboriginal Australia (Curran, 2019; Landers & Perkins, 1993). Yet ceremonies typically have multiple purposes so rather than being dedicated solely to conflict resolution among protagonists they may also serve to reopen or restore relations more broadly. Leaders, elders, or kinship-based senior people often have specific roles in such processes, yet individuals are also expected to self-regulate and self-manage in ways that will help to restore balance, much as they are expected to do to manage conflict more generally in the contexts of the suggestions, directions, or counsel of elders or kin. The relatively non-hierarchical nature of Indigenous political life enables extensive participation and deliberation in the pursuit of balance in Indigenous conflict management processes but achieving a balanced consensus or compromise can be tense, frustrating, agonistic, hostile, and time-consuming. There tends to be no expectation that coming to a decision or resolution should be subject to a timetable or to other expectations such as those of the more powerful players.

While Indigenous approaches to ordering and peace are emplaced, a related key feature – the place of other species and the world – also means that they are expansive. In Aboriginal Australia other species are totemic ancestors that are routinely represented and manifest in ceremonial processes that “travel” across the continent. In Turtle Island (North America), many Plains Native Nations refer to horses as The Great Horse Nation (West, 2006), while Lakota and other Native Nations acknowledge the status of the Buffalo Nation (Eiring, 2020) and Star Nation (Howe, cited in, Lockett, 2018) to reference relations throughout the universe. These relations create

expansive networks, including those mobilized in The Buffalo Treaty, an intertribal alliance that aims to restore bison to 6.3 million acres of tribal and non-tribal lands on lands crossed by the United States/Canadian border (The Buffalo Treaty, n.d.).

Such expansiveness means that Indigenous approaches to peace are not only for use by and among Indigenous peoples. Indigenous peoples have routinely sought to restore balance in relationships with colonizers. Aboriginal people have revealed sacred objects to settlers and opened conflict resolution ceremonies to them to invite settler responsibility and rebalance relationships with settlers (Berndt, 1962, Brigg & Tonnaer, 2008). The Buffalo Treaty involves settlers and government officials in attempts to redress the previous attempted annihilation of bison by the United States government and settlers (The Buffalo: A Treaty, n.d.). And Nimipu leaders see the restoration of “the way of the horse” to their people as a significant aspect of the conflict transformation that has occurred over an extended period between the Nimipu, the United States Army, and settler descendants following the massacre of Nimipu horses at the end of the War of 1877 (Winfried Scott, Nimipu & Horace Axtell, Nimipu, personal communication [Walker] 2009).

Even though Indigenous peoples live amid asymmetric relations of dominance beset with worldview blindness and ethnocentrism that risk assimilation and tokenism in engagements with Indigenous peacemaking, there are options for engaging appropriately and respectfully with Indigenous approaches to peace. One possibility is to develop collaborations of integrity (Maryboy et al., 2012) that incorporate “two way seeing” (Lee, 2021), including by re-centering previously disavowed Indigenous epistemologies. Two way seeing does not attempt to blend different approaches together, a practice that has often proceeded at the expense of Indigenous ways of knowing. It pursues an active engagement with both ways of knowing, engaging resonances, and grappling with dissonances, thus creating a “mutualism of knowledge” (Kimmerer, 2020). This is a positive process that pursues collaboration while respecting difference. In the idiom of some

Aboriginal Australian thinkers, it is “Together, but not mixed up” (Miyarrka Media, 2019, p.54).

There is somewhat unexpected evidence for the possibility of two way seeing on the colonial frontier. Before the marginalization and disavowal of Indigenous approaches to peace in Turtle Island and Aboriginal Australia through military domination, colonists sometimes engaged with and made use of Indigenous approaches to conflict and diplomacy in order to navigate relationships. When the balance of power shifted in favor of colonists, settlers forced Indigenous peoples to engage in Western style political ordering and power relations, including making many Indigenous ceremonial peacemaking processes illegal. This exacerbated worldview blindness that has impacted knowledge politics and settler understanding of Indigenous peacemaking. Indigenous peoples have meanwhile held open the possibility for engaging Indigenous approaches to peace amid colonial domination. Possibilities are also suggested by more recent openings to engage in the peace and conflict studies field. The United Nations *Guidance for Effective Mediation* (2012), for instance, suggests drawing on “indigenous forms of conflict management and dispute resolution.”

Summary

Colonialism and the location of Indigenous peoples within dominant political orders has damaged many Indigenous peacemaking processes. These same dynamics have gravely compromised the scope for expressing the ideas underpinning and recuperating Indigenous approaches to peace. Indigenous peoples are nonetheless sustaining and revitalizing Indigenous approaches and grappling with the accompanying tensions and dilemmas.

Indigenous approaches to peace connect persons and their conduct with socio-relational processes that link humans with diverse beings, entities, and forces in the cosmos. Indigenous conflict resolution and diplomacy is thus simultaneously personal, locally grounded, and cosmologically expansive. The connections that are

forged are enduring yet flexible; they are bound with place(s) and the time of ancestors, and yet persons are responsible for how they interpret and enact the relational requirements of existence in the present. They may be mobilized in conflict management through the guidance of an Elder or in conflict resolution ceremony, but it is persons who are responsible for their conduct and moving relations toward harmony and balance.

Western conflict resolution has until recently tended to either participate in a wider colonial disavowal of Indigenous approaches or their selectively appropriation as inspiration for developing alternatives or modifications to its own practice. These moves perpetuate worldview blindness and ethnocentrism or risk assimilation and tokenism. Engaging with Indigenous approaches to peace requires facing and dealing with these historical tendencies: the challenging politics of knowledge accompanying Indigenous approaches to peace cannot be avoided.

Despite the challenges of engaging ethically with Indigenous peoples and their approaches to peace, there are ways forward. There are sound foundations and impetus for engaging with Indigenous approaches to peace if peace and conflict studies scholars and practitioners are interested and willing to engage in epistemologically pluralistic processes.

Cross-References

► Culture and Conflict Resolution

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Indigenous conflict resolution

- ▶ [Armed Conflicts in Africa and Indigenous Conflict Resolution](#)

Indigenous Diplomacies

- ▶ [Indigenous Approaches to Peace](#)

Indigenous Peacemaking

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Infrastructures for Conflict Transformation

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Infrastructures for Peace

- ▶ [Peace Infrastructures](#)

Insights from Complexity Theory for Peace and Conflict Studies

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Synonyms

Complexity; Complex adaptive systems; Conflict resolution; Peacebuilding; Emergence; Self-organization; Adaptation; Uncertainty; Resilience

Description

We often hear it said that a particular conflict is complex or that conflict resolution and peacebuilding are a complex undertaking. Beyond this commonsense use of the term, complexity theory, applied to the social world, can offer insights about social behavior and relations that are highly relevant for peace and conflict studies. Complexity theory offers a theoretical framework helpful for understanding how complex social systems can prevent, manage, transform, or recover from violent conflict. Insights from complexity theory about how best to influence the behavior of complex systems, how such systems respond to pressure, and how to avoid

unintended consequences should thus be valuable for peace and conflict studies.

Introduction

The use of complexity theory is growing in political science and international relations (Axelrod 1997; Rosenau 1990; Jervis 1997; Kavalski 2015). It has had a faster uptake in related fields such as development studies (Rihani 2002; Jones 2008; Ramalingam 2013), and it is increasingly applied to international conflict resolution and peace and conflict studies (Hendrick 2009; Körppen et al. 2011; Millar 2019). Apart from those that consciously make use of complexity theory, many others have been influenced by the premises and insights derived from the study of complexity. These influences can be traced, among others, by the contagion throughout the social sciences of many of the key concepts of complexity such as feedback, bifurcations, self-organization, and emergence.

Peace and conflict studies are ultimately about influencing the behavior of social systems that have been or are at risk of being affected by violent conflict. A society is managing to self-sustain peace when its social institutions are able to ensure that political differences are managed peacefully and that no significant social or political group uses violence to achieve its ends (Caplan 2019, p. 22). Peace and conflict studies want to assist societies to prevent and mitigate the risk of violent conflict. When violent conflict has erupted, the United Nations or others may intervene through stabilization or peacekeeping operations that attempt to influence the behavior of those opting to use violence through persuasion, inducement, and coercion (Howard 2019). This can, however, at best only serve as a short-term alleviation of the problem. For peace to be self-sustainable, the society needs to have sufficiently strong social institutions to identify, channel, and manage disputes peacefully.

Insights from complexity theory about how best to influence the behavior of complex systems, how such systems respond to pressure, and how to

avoid unintended consequences should thus be valuable for those involved in understanding and undertaking conflict resolution and peacebuilding (Clemens 2001; Hunt 2017; Ramalingam and Jones 2008).

Complexity

Complexity theory describes the characteristics and functions of a particular type of holistic system that has the ability to adapt and that demonstrates emergent properties, including self-organizing behavior. Such systems emerge and are maintained, as a result of the dynamic and non-linear interactions of its elements, based on the information available to them locally, as a result of their interaction with their environment, as well as from the modulated feedback they receive from the other elements in the system (de Coning 2016, p. 168; Cilliers 1998, p. 3).

Societies, or social systems, are empirically complex (Byrne 1998). This means that they demonstrate the ability to adapt and that they have emergent properties, including self-organizing behavior (Kaufmann 2013). As social systems are highly dynamic, non-linear, and emergent, it is not possible to find general laws or rules that will help us predict with certainty, how a particular society or community will behave (Cilliers 2002). We cannot undertake a project, for example, a reconciliation initiative in Somalia, and predict with any certainty what the outcome will be. Nor can we use a model that was assessed to have performed well elsewhere, for instance, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa and expect that it will have the same effect in another context, or even in the same country, but in a different context.

This uncertainty is an intrinsic quality of complex systems, not a result of imperfect knowledge or inadequate analysis, planning, or implementation. Recognizing this uncertainty when attempting to influence complex social systems has significant implications for the way we think about peace and conflict and undertake conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

Until fairly recently the peace and conflict community were confident in its ability to diagnose the problems affecting a society emerging from conflict and to prescribe the steps such a society needed to take to achieve peace (World Bank 2011). The outcome was believed to be more or less guaranteed if the design was followed, and uncertainty was seen as a risk that could be managed with good planning (Eriksen 2009, p. 662). Complexity provides us with the theoretical framework for understanding the hubris of these assumptions. Recognizing uncertainty as a starting point is what Barnett refers to as cultivating “a spirit of epistemological uncertainty” (quoted in Benner et al. 2011, p. 225). Hughes (2012, p. 116) specifically applies it to the peace and conflict context and argues that “an explicit, reflexive awareness of the incompleteness of our understanding is (...) vital so that decisions are taken with a large degree of caution (and humility) while at the same time demanding that we think through the possible ramifications.”

Peace, Complexity, and Epistemology

One of the primary insights from complexity is thus the recognition that our ability to gain knowledge of the complex social systems we are dealing with is inherently limited (Byrne 1998). Insights from complexity indicate that the study of complex systems may improve our understanding of social systems but cannot help us to predict or control the behavior of a specific complex system (Cilliers 2002). Complexity reminds us that any insights or knowledge we may have gained about any given complex system is provisional, because the non-linear and highly dynamical nature of complex systems implies that the system will continue to change in unpredictable ways.

In hindsight it may be possible to connect the dots; however, it remains impossible to predict future events, even if the circumstances appear similar to others already encountered, because complex systems are non-linear and dynamic (Cilliers 1998). In other words, causality can be traced looking back, but it cannot be used to project forward into, or to predict, the future – at

least not beyond a very short horizon. Complexity does not generate definitive answers to policy problems. In fact, it clarifies why, in the context of complex phenomena, the search for definitive answers and the pursuit of imagined definitive solutions are flawed. Coleman (2004, p. 226) notes that one contribution of a complex systems approach is “that it shifts our understanding away from static, simplified views of conflict” and helps us to appreciate the “complex, multilevel, dynamic, and cyclical nature of these phenomena.”

It is not just the conflict systems that are complex; the international peacebuilding instruments share the same messy characteristics (de Coning 2016). It needs to be recognized that the international peacebuilding system does not have a superior claim to knowledge about managing specific transitions. There are no off-the-shelf solutions, and neither is there a single theory of change or model of state transformation, such as the liberal peace model, that can claim universal applicability. Complexity reminds us to be skeptical of results and findings, regardless of the method used to obtain them, because all methods are limited when considering highly dynamic and non-linear phenomena (Cilliers 1998).

Insights from complexity suggest that one should not see peace as a problem to be solved. Peace does not, in any given context, have a stopping rule. There is no one right or wrong peace. Instead, from a complex systems perspective, peace is emergent and thus has to be context specific. Making choices about a “good enough” peace and determining whether specific policy choices have resulted in a better or worse outcome can thus ultimately only be done by those embedded in a given context. From the perspective of a particular peacebuilding agent, one can perhaps talk about an undesirable state based on the negative impact such a state is perceived to have on, for instance, a society or parts of that society. One can also talk about better or worse approaches, i.e., a scale of policy responses that range from having improved the situation from the perspective of what the policy set out to achieve on the one end of the scale, to policy approaches that made things worse, on the other. In all these

cases, it will be important to consider who the agents that make these decisions are, and especially whether such judgments are made by the societies themselves, or by others on their behalf. The overall point, however, is that when it comes to complex social conflicts, one cannot talk about problems and solutions as if there is a right, correct, or best solution for a problem that is just waiting to be discovered (Brusset et al. 2016).

Peace, Complexity, and Practice

Peacebuilding is essentially about stimulating and facilitating the capacity of societies to self-organize. Self-organization in this context refers to the various processes and mechanisms a society makes use of to manage its own peace consolidation process, i.e., the overall ability to manage its own tensions, pressures, disputes, crises, and shocks without relapsing into violent conflict (de Coning 2016). The robustness and resilience of the self-organizing capacity of a society determine the extent to which it can withstand pressures and shocks that risk a (re)lapse into violent conflict. Peacebuilding should thus be about safeguarding, stimulating, facilitating, and creating the space for societies to develop robust and resilient capacities for self-organization (de Coning 2018).

International peacebuilding interventions should provide security guarantees and maintain the outer parameters of acceptable state behavior in the international system, and they should stimulate, facilitate, and create the space for the emergence of robust and resilient self-organized systems. However, international peacebuilding interventions should not interfere in the local social process with the goal of engineering a specific outcome. Trying to control the outcome will, in all probability, produce the opposite of what peacebuilding aims to achieve; it will generate ongoing instability, and dependence, and it will undermine self-sustainability (de Coning 2016).

Many international peacebuilding interventions to date have made the mistake of interfering so much that they ended up undermining the

ability of the local society to self-organize. The key to successful peacebuilding thus lies in finding the appropriate balance between international support and local ownership.

Local ownership cannot be reduced to a type of hybridity where the international community gives some space to the local society to add local flavor to an internationally-designed model. Local ownership is not power, authority, and legitimacy given by international peacebuilders to the local society (Donais 2012). Local ownership is the recognition that peace can only be achieved if it is emergent from the local society. For peace to be self-sustainable, it has to be home-grown. Local ownership, therefore, is an essential precursor for self-sustainable peace.

The role of international peacebuilders needs to be negotiated in every specific case to suit that particular context. They can have almost no role, as in South Africa's transition, a minimum role, such as in Rwanda or Ethiopia, or a significant role, such as in Liberia or South Sudan, but they cannot have a dominant role, such as in Afghanistan and Iraq, because that is incompatible with self-sustainable peace.

Hybridity may thus be reframed to refer to the role that would be appropriate for the international community to have in any given peacebuilding process. Local ownership needs to be understood as a necessary, but not necessarily a sufficient, condition for self-sustainable peace. In some cases, the assistance of the international community may be needed. The critical difference between this approach to hybridity and the approach most generally associated with hybridity (Mac Ginty 2011; Richmond 2011) is that it is not the degree of local ownership that is regarded as the variable that defines the degree of hybridity in a given case but rather the level of international interference.

There may be cases where external parties have such a strong interest in seeing a particular norm adhered to, or a particular state of affairs maintained, that they are willing to sacrifice the goal of self-sustainability and accept the cost of continued interference. However, such a type of intervention could not be categorized as peacebuilding, even though, for political reasons

of legitimacy and credibility, the countries involved may choose to frame it as “peacebuilding” and may include references to “self-sustainability” in their stated goals. One thus needs to draw a distinction in some cases between peacebuilding rhetoric aimed at creating a legitimizing narrative for an intervention that is aimed at norm enforcement, or that may pursue some other overriding national interest, and peacebuilding interventions that genuinely pursue self-sustainable peace consolidation.

In addition, there may, of course, be exceptional situations where the international community chooses to intervene against the wishes of some parts of the local society in order to stop or prevent genocide, severe abuse of human rights, or war crimes, such as was recently the case in Darfur, Libya, and Cote d’Ivoire. These exceptional powers are provided for under the enforcement articles of Chapter VII of the UN Charter. The interventions that flow from such authority are not peacebuilding interventions but are aimed at the protection of civilians, the atrocity prevention, and the stabilization of affected societies. However, once such situations have been sufficiently pacified, they typically change into a new phase where self-sustainable peace consolidation becomes the new goal of the operation, and when this happens, there has to be a significant shift in the ownership of the process from the international to the local for it to be successful.

The essential difference between the complex systems approach and a determined-design approach like the liberal peace model is that, under the latter, the solution is understood to come from the outside. The agency to solve the problem resides in the international capacity to assess the situation and to design a solution and to then undertake an intervention where the solution is applied. The insight from complexity for peace and conflict studies is that, for any society to live sustainably in peace, it needs to generate its own capacity to self-organize. This is a process that can be facilitated and supported by external peacebuilders, but it ultimately has to be a bottom-up and home-grown process. Self-organization cannot be imposed. Any attempt to make a society self-organize will constitute interference and

disruption in the system, and the more you intervene, the more you will undermine the process of self-organization (de Coning 2016).

The essential difference between these two approaches is thus the recognition that self-sustainable peace is directly linked to, and influenced by, the extent to which a society has the capacity, and space, to self-organize. For peace consolidation to be self-sustainable, it has to be the result of a home-grown, bottom-up, and context-specific process. In this understanding, the art of peacebuilding lies in pursuing the appropriate balance between international support and home-grown context-specific solutions. The international community has, to date, failed to find this balance. In the process, many peacebuilders have contributed to the very weaknesses and fragilities in complex social systems that they intended to address.

Peace, Complexity, and Ethics

Our understanding of how complex systems function has important ethical implications for interventions in social systems. Complexity holds that we cannot predict the future and cannot control future behavior, but it also argues that this does not mean that we are somehow powerless or without agency. Woermann (2010, p. 121) explains that a complexity approach implies a shift from trying to discover “the Truth” about given situations, to a process of making choices and developing strategies for living and acting, and for dealing with the often-unexpected outcomes of these strategies. An uncertain future can be meaningfully anticipated, influenced, adapted to, and engaged, but such engagement needs to be informed by an awareness of the limits of anyone’s ability to ultimately fully know complex systems, and that awareness has important implications for the ethical status of interventions into such systems.

No party can claim moral superiority based on predetermined models or lessons learned elsewhere, nor can anyone hide behind ignorance, because it is known that complex systems are non-linear and dynamic. Therefore, peacebuilders

need to be careful, cautious, and self-critical when considering and reflecting on the choices they make, because their actions may have negative consequences for the people affected by those decisions and actions (Aoi et al. 2007).

The dynamic and non-linear nature of complex systems implies that competing theories of change need to be contextualized before their validity and applicability can be judged. Choices will thus have to be made by taking a range of factors into account and the selection of a given approach ultimately would need to be a local and context-specific informed choice.

It is the local societies who have to live with the consequences of peacebuilding operations, who have to pay the cost of any lapses into violent conflict, and who are best positioned to make such judgments. They should thus have the ultimate right to make decisions about their own future. Rights also imply responsibility, but local societies can only have that responsibility if they have agency over the outcome. The international community cannot expect a local society to take responsibility for the peacebuilding process when they continue to insist on a predetermined end state. Local ownership implies taking ethical responsibility for the process and its results and thus implies that the international community must be willing to give up control over the outcome of the process.

The acknowledgment that the decisions made when choosing a given peacebuilding approach are the product of a deliberate choice, as opposed to a choice based on a proven optimal model, represents a significant shift in locating ethical responsibility for the outcomes of a peacebuilding intervention squarely with those exercising such a choice (de Coning 2018). The ethical responsibility thus clearly shifts from the perceived predetermined virtue of a proven model or theory of choice to those that have the agency to choose which model or theory of change will be applied in a given context.

However, any local society is also part of the international system and, as such, cannot exist in isolation. While the local society has the right and responsibility to control its future, it should also be recognized that their freedom to choose future

paths is constrained by the international parameters set for responsible behavior in the international system. The international system will act to prevent, and may even use force to stop, mass abuse of human rights, genocide, and war crimes.

The implications are that the international peacebuilding agents have a role in assisting local societies to develop the capacity to become responsible members of the international community, but this role does not give them the agency to make decisions on behalf of the local society. The exception would be those extraordinary circumstances where local behavior crosses the parameters set for acceptable behavior in the international system, i.e., in cases where genocide, severe abuses of human rights, or war crimes result in an internationally sanctioned intervention to protect civilians. However, when such a situation has been sufficiently stabilized and the focus shifts to self-sustainable peace consolidation, the agency has to shift again to the local.

The notion of local ownership raises several valid concerns, such as that local societies are not necessarily well informed about their options and that there seem to be persistent and challenging questions about who can legitimately speak on behalf of these local societies (Donais 2012). These are legitimate concerns that need to be addressed, but the fact that it has been challenging to operationalize local ownership does not imply that the principle lacks an ethical foundation. The soundness of the principle, now also supported by the perspective of a complexity theory-informed analysis, should inspire policymakers and practitioners to find new ways of engaging with, empowering, and giving space to local societies, so as to give practical meaning to the notion of local ownership.

This does not exclude international actors from having a role in assisting local societies in understanding their choices and otherwise supporting and facilitating their transition, but it does imply that such actors offering assistance should stop short of taking decisions on behalf of local societies based on superior claims to knowledge about what is in the best interest of those societies. Hence, a much clearer understanding needs to be developed of what are, and are not, appropriate

degrees of influence for international peacebuilders and how intrusive peacebuilding should be.

Complexity thus implies that the peacebuilders, local and international, have to take responsibility – ethically – for their choices and actions. Taking responsibility means that peacebuilders need to think through the ethical implications of both their macro-theories of peacebuilding and their specific choices and actions in any given context. They cannot base their decisions on the claimed superiority of one or other theory of change, because no one model, e.g., the liberal peace model, can be held up as inherently superior. They have to understand the choices they make and the potential consequences of their actions for each specific context and take responsibility for them (de Coning 2018).

Adaptive Peacebuilding

Conflict resolution and peacebuilding are delicate processes. There is an inherent tension in the act of promoting a process of self-organization from the outside. Too much external interference will undermine self-organization. From a complexity perspective, one can say that every time an external peacebuilder intervenes to solve a perceived problem in the local system, they interrupt the internal feedback process and thus deny the local system from responding to its own stimuli. The result is a missed opportunity to contribute to the development of self-organization and resilience, and in its place such interruptions build dependency. Each external intervention thus comes at the cost of depriving the local system of an opportunity to learn how to respond to a problem or challenge itself. State and social institutions develop resilience through trial and error over generations. Too much filtering and cushioning slow down and inhibit these processes. Understanding this tension – and the constraints it poses – helps us to understand why many international conflict resolution and peacebuilding interventions have made the mistake of interfering so much that they ended up undermining the ability of the local system to self-organize.

The Adaptive Peacebuilding approach provides us with a methodology for navigating this dilemma. It provides us with a process where peacebuilders, together with the communities and people affected by the conflict, actively engage in a structured process to sustain peace and resolve conflicts by employing an iterative process of collaborative learning and adaptation (de Coning 2018).

The adaptive approach for coping with complexity in conflict resolution and peacebuilding can be summarized in the following six principles of Adaptive Peacebuilding:

- First, the actions taken to influence the sustainability of a specific peace process have to be context- and time-specific, and they have to be emergent from a process that engages the societies themselves.
- Second, Adaptive Peacebuilding is a goal-orientated or problem-solving approach, so it is important to identify, together with the society in question, what the peacebuilding project should aim to achieve.
- Third, Adaptive Peacebuilding is agnostic about how best to pursue its goals, but it does follow a specific methodology – the adaptive approach – that is a participatory process that facilitates the emergence of a goal-orientated outcome.
- Fourth, one half of the key to the adaptive approach methodology is variety; as the outcome is uncertain, one must experiment with a variety of options across a spectrum of probabilities.
- Fifth, the other half is selection; one has to pay close attention to feedback to determine which options have a better effect. Adaptive Peacebuilding requires an active participatory decision-making process that abandons those options that perform poorly or have negative side-effects, while those that show more promise can be further adapted to introduce more variety or can be scaled-up to have a greater impact. At a more strategic level, this implies reviewing assumptions and adapting strategic planning.
- Six, Adaptive Peacebuilding is an iterative process. It is repeated over and over because, in a

highly complex context, our assessments are only relevant for a relatively short window before new dynamics come into play.

In the Adaptive Peacebuilding approach, the core activity of a conflict resolution or peacebuilding intervention is one of process facilitation. Conflict resolution and peacebuilding are about stimulating the processes in a society that enable self-organization and that will lead to strengthening the resilience of social institutions that manage internal and external stressors and shocks. It is not possible to direct or control self-organization from the outside; it has to emerge from within. However, conflict resolution and peacebuilding agents can assist a society by facilitating and stimulating the processes that enable self-organization to emerge (de Coning 2016, p. 175).

It is crucial, as captured in the first principle of the Adaptive Peacebuilding approach, that the societies and communities that are intended to benefit from a conflict resolution or peacebuilding intervention are fully involved in all aspects of the initiative. In other words, as highlighted in the 2nd principle of the Adaptive Peacebuilding approach, the affected community should be sufficiently represented in the processes that determine the aims and objectives of the initiative, as well as in all choices related to the analysis, assessment, planning, monitoring of effects, evaluation, and selection processes.

While international or external peacebuilders can influence complex social systems by enabling and stimulating the processes that enable resilience and inclusiveness to emerge, the prominent role of self-organization in complex system dynamics suggests that it is important the affected societies and communities have space and agency to drive their own process (Burns 2007). This is why local adaptation processes are ultimately the critical element for inclusive political settlements to become self-sustainable. Adaptive Peacebuilding cannot be free or distinct from the dynamics of politics or power. The process is not technical or abstract. It is a process that engages with all aspects and elements of societal change that is needed for self-sustainable peace to

emerge, and it lends itself to a relational approach that seeks to account for how power is distributed through and within relationships (Day and Hunt 2020).

The Adaptive Peacebuilding approach thus requires a commitment to engage in a structured learning process together with the society or community that has been affected by conflict. This commitment comes at a cost, in terms of investing in the capabilities necessary to enable and facilitate such a collective learning process, in taking the time to engage with communities and other stakeholders, and in making the effort to develop new innovative systems for learning together with communities as the process unfolds.

Complex systems cope with challenges posed by changes in their environment by co-evolving together with their environment in a never-ending process of adaptation (Barber 2011). This iterative adaptive process, captured in the third, fourth, and fifth principles of the Adaptive Peacebuilding approach, utilizes experimentation and feedback to generate knowledge about its environment. This is essentially the way natural selection works in the evolution of complex systems. The two key factors are variation (the fourth principle) and selection (the fifth principle). There needs to be variation, i.e., multiple parallel interventions, and there needs to be a selection process that replicates and multiplies effective interventions and discontinues those that do not have the desired effect.

The analysis-planning-implementation-evaluation-selection project cycle is already well established in the development and peacebuilding communities. However, these communities of practice are not good at generating sufficient variation. They are also notoriously bad at selection based on effect, and they are especially poor at identifying and abandoning underperforming initiatives (Rosén and Haldrup 2013). To remedy these shortcomings, the Adaptive Peacebuilding approach utilizes structured and iterative (the sixth principle) adaptation to help generate institutional learning.

An Adaptive Peacebuilding approach recognizes the role of entropy and cultivates an awareness that those interventions that appear to be

effective today will not continue to be so indefinitely. Even successful programs need to be monitored for signals that may indicate that an intervention is no longer having the desired effect or is starting to generate negative side effects. Jervis (1997, p. 6) observes that we often intuitively expect linear relationships. For example, if foreign aid increases economic growth, we tend to expect that more aid should produce greater growth. However, complex systems often display behavior that cannot be understood by extrapolating from the units or their relations, and many of the effects generated are unintended. Non-linearity, in this context, thus refers to behaviors in which the relationships between variables in a complex social system are dynamic and disproportionate (Kiehl 1995). One must thus not only monitor for intended results but also unintended consequences and be ready to take steps to try to deal with the perverse effects that may come about due to an intervention (Aoi et al. 2007).

Summary

The insights from complexity for peace and conflict studies that were introduced in this chapter suggest that the way in which knowledge about any particular complex social system is generated needs to be based on the recognition that such systems are empirically complex and that our ability to fully understand complex systems is thus inherently limited. Peacebuilding itself also needs to be understood as complex and that this implies that we need to recognize that any particular peacebuilding system will be self-organized and emergent. This has implications for how assessments, planning, coordination, leadership, and evaluating specific peacebuilding interventions are undertaken.

Complexity helps us understand how social systems lapse into violent conflict, how they can prevent or recover from conflict, and what can be done to strengthen their resilience. For a peace process to become sustainable, resilient social institutions need to emerge from within, i.e., from the local culture, history, and

socioeconomic context. External actors can assist and facilitate this process, but if they interfere too much, they will undermine the self-organizing processes necessary to sustain resilient social institutions.

The most fundamental implication of complexity for how we understand and approach conflict resolution and peacebuilding is the realization that for a peace process to become self-sustainable, a social system needs to develop its own institutions so that it has the resilience to manage its own internal conflicts peacefully. The key to successful conflict resolution and peacebuilding thus lies in finding the appropriate balance between international support and local self-organization, and this will differ from context to context. A complexity-informed approach to peace and conflict studies suggests that those engaged in conflict resolution and peacebuilding limit their efforts to safeguarding, stimulating, facilitating, and creating the space for societies to develop resilient capacities for self-organization.

Adaptive Peacebuilding is an approach that can help to navigate this delicate balance. It is an approach where peacebuilders, together with the communities and people affected by the conflict, actively engage in a structured process to sustain peace by employing an iterative process of learning and adaptation. The Adaptive Peacebuilding approach is aimed at supporting societies to develop the resilience and robustness they need to cope with and adapt to change, by helping them to develop greater levels of complexity in their social institutions.

We have to be sensitive to how complex systems process information, self-organize, and adapt. Adaptive Peacebuilding can assist external peacebuilders to purposefully co-evolve with the systems they are attempting to influence. However, one needs to be very cautious of the assumptions that are made about the framing of borders and boundaries and that the extent to which local societies can be judged to be fully self-organized and self-sustainable in a highly globalized and interconnected world is a matter of degree, rather than of absolute categories.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Conflict Resolution](#)
- ▶ [Deconstruction in International Interventions](#)
- ▶ [Hybrid Political Orders and Hybrid Peace](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding](#)

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International Organizations and Statehood Conflicts

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Synonyms

Conflicts of *de facto* states; Conflicts of unrecognized states; Intergovernmental organizations; Regional organizations; Secessionist conflicts; Separatist conflicts; Sovereignty conflicts; Territorial conflicts

Definition/Description

Statehood conflicts are conflicts emanating from incompatible claims to and substantial efforts at statehood over the same territory. The main actors involved are the different claimants to statehood, usually but not always a recognized state and a group that seeks secession from it. While often defined by intractability, typical solutions of such conflicts include forceful or peaceful (re)integration to the parent state or, more rarely, independent statehood. International organizations are usually involved through conflict prevention, management, and resolution and, by doing so, constitute major external actors to such conflicts. Their involvement carries important consequences for statehood conflicts, specifically which statehood claims are supported or not.

Introduction

International organizations matter for statehood conflicts, and statehood conflicts matter for international organizations. Perhaps the clearest way in which organizations are important for this type of conflict is because they often lead international efforts at their management. The other way round, conflicts matter because they pose challenges to

international peace and security, whose promotion lies at the heart of the mission of many international organizations. One way in which statehood conflicts are particularly important for international organizations is because they emanate from competition over principles that are fundamental to these bodies, not least sovereignty, territorial integrity, and self-determination. This entry, therefore, is not a holistic account of the role of international organizations in such disputes. Rather, the focus is on how certain statehood-related principles and issues, which are so central to this type of disputes, shape the responses of international organizations. International organizations are hereby understood as including regional organizations (see also Butler 2009; Edwards and DiCicco 2018). For illustration purposes, this entry concentrates more on major intergovernmental organizations like the United Nations (UN), the EU, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the African Union (AU), and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) – this approach rests on the assumption that such all-encompassing international organizations based on *state* membership (such as AU for all African states, or the UN for all states) are more useful for reflecting on matters of statehood and conflicts over them (as opposed to more functional/thematic bodies like the World Trade Organization). However, this is not to undermine the significance of nongovernmental organizations for security and for statehood conflicts in particular, as also reflected in the final part of this entry.

The next section offers a reflection on the ways in which international organizations respond via conflict management and resolution, followed by a more detailed discussion of how statehood issues and principles shape those responses: international organizations seem to engage with statebuilding activities in territories whose group is seen as having a right to external self-determination and independence. Oppositely, where international organizations prioritize the sovereignty of a parent state, their engagement seeks to respect this and other associated principles, such as territorial integrity, for example,

via reintegration of the independence-seeking group. What is more, issues of statehood, such as territorial control and recognition, also shape the position, strategies, and day-to-day engagement of international organizations. The final section reflects on a series of ideas for further avenues for researching statehood conflicts, including more focus on how the role of international organizations is shaped by external rather than just internal dimensions of statehood, a more extensive investigation of the relationship between international conflict management and resolution and the interrelationship between international governmental and nongovernmental organizations, and, finally, a more in-depth look into methodological challenges and opportunities for researching the role of international organizations in statehood conflicts.

International Organizations and Statehood Conflict

Statehood conflicts are covered elsewhere (“► [Statehood Conflicts](#)” section), but as a summary, these are conflicts that arise from the incompatibility of the simultaneous efforts of different groups to claim and pursue statehood over the same territory. Therefore, the main actors involved in these conflicts are the different claimants to statehood, and these are usually a statehood-seeking group and the parent state, which the group tries to separate from, for example, Chechnya seeking to separate from Russia in the 1990s (see, e.g., Hughes 2007) or Tamil Eelam from Sri Lanka (see Welhengama and Pillay 2014). Less often, there are more than two statehood claimants. Also, sometimes conflict occurs between sides that, unlike the parent state, did not enjoy *de jure* sovereignty over the area before. For example, the early phase of the conflict over Western Sahara involved the Polisario Front, Morocco, and Mauritania competing for territory previously belonging to Spain. Finally, these conflicts are rarely local-only. They involve a variety of regional and international actors – take, for example, the conflict in Eastern Ukraine which involves the separatists in

Donetsk and Luhansk and the Ukrainian government locally, Russia and the European Union (EU) more regionally, the USA and NATO more internationally (see, e.g., Maass 2020).

International organizations, often seen as a configuration of the international community (Zaum 2007), have a major role to play in the management of statehood conflicts. Many studies have offered important insights into the management of conflicts including statehood conflicts from international organizations, such as the UN (Thakur 2016), the AU (Badmus 2015), the EU (e.g., Hughes 2010; Whitman and Wolff 2012), the OSCE (Sandole 2007), or the ASEAN (Oishi 2019). Efforts to deal with conflict are hereby categorized into conflict management and resolution. Conflict management has been seen as the effort to contain an existing conflict, when a resolution does not seem probable or eminent (e.g., Butler 2009; Lutmar and Miller 2016), and often includes peacekeeping elements (e.g., Bellamy et al. 2010). Conflict management is conceptualized as including conflict prevention, which refers to efforts to prevent a conflict from re-/occurring (e.g., Zartman 2015) during its early stages or pre-stages. Such a conceptualization reflects similar approaches of international organizations that see conflict prevention in the context of their involvement in already existing but often “frozen” conflicts (see, e.g., UN 2006). Finally, conflict resolution (often also known as conflict settlement or peacemaking) occurs after a conflict has started, and it is the most ambitious of approaches (e.g., Walter 2002; Wallensteen 2015; Ramsbotham et al. 2016). In this sense, mediation can be seen as an extension of peaceful conflict resolution (Greig and Diehl 2013). Peaceful here denotes approaches that are not coercive, unlike, for example, sanctions or interventions. The difference of mediation to negotiations is that the former suggests the presence of a third party, which often is an international organization.

The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the AU is a good example of an umbrella organ for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflicts. More specifically about the subcategories of conflict management, a good example of conflict prevention is the OSCE’s Berlin Mechanism,

which outlines measures that can be applied in the case of serious emergency situations that may arise from a violation of one of the principles of the Helsinki Final Act or as the result of major disruptions endangering peace, security, or stability, and which has been activated with reference to statehood conflicts (by 2011 it was activated five times: four times during the dissolution of Yugoslavia and one with reference to Nagorno Karabakh). Examples of the role of international organizations in conflict management also include the EU Mission in Georgia, which, *inter alia*, aims at ensuring there is no return to hostilities, facilitating the resumption of safe and normal life for the locals along typical lines of conflict management (for more, see Dobrescu and Schumacher 2020). Finally, conflict resolution examples include various UN-led or UN-supported efforts at mediation to secure an agreement between the different parts of the conflicts, such as the Dayton agreements that, among else, resolved the conflict involving Republika Srpska or various agreements for the Bougainville conflict.

As shown in the next section, the management and resolution of statehood conflicts in specific is impacted by statehood-related principles, particularly sovereignty, territorial integrity, and self-determination, which are often constitutionally safeguarded in many international organizations. This means that these bodies are on paper against any instances in which these principles might be challenged, such as by secession. For example, Article 2 of the UN charter provides that “all Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state.” The ASEAN declaration also subscribes to the UN charter. Similarly, the (Arab League 1945) aims at “co-operation between members and the “safeguard[ing] of their independence and sovereignty.” At the same time, the principle of self-determination is also important for international organizations, such as the AU, whose establishment drew a lot on the process of decolonization that gave many members their independence. Interestingly, sovereignty and related norms are virtually absent from all EU

treaties, but the recent Global Strategy for Foreign and Security Policy (2016) is an exception: “The sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of states... are key elements of the European security order. These principles apply to all states, both within and beyond the EU’s borders... Russia’s violation of international law and the destabilisation of Ukraine, on top of protracted conflicts in the wider Black Sea region, have challenged the European security order at its core.” This rare EU mention of sovereignty and territorial integrity is especially important for our discussion because it is explicitly linked to statehood conflicts in the post-Soviet space. Finally, the OSCE Helsinki Act is a very interesting example of the principles of territorial integrity and self-determination coexisting in the same document. The Act provides that “the participating States will respect the equal rights of peoples and their right to self-determination, acting at all times in conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and with the relevant norms of international law, including those relating to territorial integrity of States.”

Between Internal and External Self-Determination

Let us now bring together the themes presented so far and explore how conflict management and resolution by international organizations is affected by statehood-related principles and issues. Here, there are schematically two broad categories of how the resolution of statehood conflicts is approached, in relation to self-determination (see also Table 1). International organizations look at the satisfaction of self-determination in two main ways: through internal self-determination, i.e., within the confines of a state (usually via some degree of autonomy for the group that seeks self-determination), or through external self-determination, i.e., through independent statehood for the group in question (Seymour 2011).

In the first instance, international organizations might seek to contribute to the resolution of the conflict via a peaceful, negotiated (re)integration

International Organizations and Statehood Conflicts, Table 1 International organizations and statehood conflicts

| | | |
|----------------------------|--|--|
| Conflict management | Conflict prevention E.g., OSCE's Berlin Mechanism Peacekeeping E.g., UN in Cyprus | |
| Conflict resolution | Mediation E.g., AU in Western Sahara | |
| | <i>Statebuilding</i> toward independence E.g., EU in Palestine | Statebuilding toward (re)integration (+ possible <i>engagement without recognition</i>) E.g., UNTAES in Croatia |
| | ↑ Recognition of claim to statehood (external self-determination) | ↑ No recognition of claim to statehood (internal self-determination) |

of the independence-seeking group back to the parent state (see also Anderson 2011; Csergo et al. 2017). The contribution of international organizations can take the form of mediation, for example, the OSCE mediation in the conflict between Gagauzia and Moldova, and/or international transitional administrations seeking to help (re)integration to the parent state, for example, the 1996–8 UNTAES administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja, and Western Sirmium in Croatia (see also Šimunović 1999). This approach usually seeks to respect the sovereignty of the parent state, as evident, for example, in the UNSCR 1037 (1996) which established UNTAES.

In a different instance, international organizations might endorse the efforts of a group towards independence. Major international organizations have issued statements and resolutions that have recognized a right to statehood, either for a type of cases (e.g., the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, adopted by the General Assembly resolution 1514 of 14 December 1960) or for specific state-seeking groups. Interestingly, some claimants to statehood have extensively based their campaigns on such support from international organizations – one prime example here is the Palestinians (e.g., Abbas 2019), while campaigns for the independence of East Timor also centered on the respect of UN resolutions that condemned Indonesia's occupation of the territory (McCloskey 2000, 7). In this scenario, which is generally rarer, international organizations might be involved with

statebuilding, i.e., assisting the emergence of a state where they see statehood as a way in which the right to (external) self-determination must be satisfied. Many times, such statebuilding efforts are explicitly within the framework of conflict resolution, and there are a few studies on this and international organizations in specific (e.g., Caplan 2012; Lemay-Hébert 2013; Cebeci 2020). A prominent example here is UNTAET, which prepared Timor-Leste for full independence. In this case, the administration was given power to exercise all legislative and executive authority, including the administration of justice in order to provide security and rule of law, establish an effective administration and assist the development of public services, ensure the coordination and delivery of aid, support capacity-building for self-government, and assist in the establishment of conditions for sustainable development (for more, see Lemay-Hébert 2012). Although not technically an international administration, the EU's involvement in Palestine is based on a similar logic of resolving the conflict via fostering a Palestinian state, which is envisaged to exist alongside Israel.

In this regard, where international organizations acknowledge a right to external self-determination, there seems to be a willingness to recognize and even help fulfil statehood aspirations. This also relates to instances in which the international community conditions recognition of independence upon statebuilding efforts, such as with the “standards before status” approach in Kosovo (Ker-Lindsay and

Economides 2012) or the performance-based “roadmap for peace” that aimed at Palestinian statebuilding towards resolving the conflict via a two-state solution (Turner 2011). Where international organizations see the right to self-determination as one that should be satisfied internally, then independence movements are not endorsed and solutions for the reintegration of that group in the parent state from which they try to separate are supported, like with the examples in Moldova or Croatia mentioned above. Therefore, in these two different approaches, i.e., statebuilding vs. (re)integration to the parent state, the fundamental principles of territorial integrity and of self-determination seem to be playing out in very interesting ways.

Two further points are worth mentioning here. First, there have been instances in which international organizations have linked the violation of the right to internal self-determination (e.g., via suspension of autonomy arrangements) to a more positive view of the right to external self-determination via independence – for example, this has been argued to be the case in Kosovo by a NATO report (Kumbaro 2001). This echoes the Canada Supreme Court *Secession of Quebec* Judgment of 20 August 1998 that provided that international law establishes that “the right to self-determination of a people is normally fulfilled through internal self-determination – a people’s pursuit of its political, economic, social and cultural development within the framework of an existing state” but also that a right to external self-determination is generated also “where a people is oppressed [. . .] or where a definable group is denied meaningful access to government to pursue their political, economic, social and cultural development.” Secondly, there are cases in which international organizations might support both options of internal and external self-determination at the same time. For example, efforts at resolving the conflict in Western Sahara supported by the UN and others, such as the Peace Plan for Self-Determination for the People of Western Sahara, have provided for a referendum with a choice between independence (external self-determination) and integration into Morocco (internal self-determination).

Navigating Statehood Conflict

Statehood-related principles and realities influence not only the options for conflict resolution outlined so far but also the way in which international organizations develop conflict management, including more operational dimensions of their role. Firstly, the involvement of international organizations in statehood conflicts creates a range of diplomatic challenges precisely because of the sensitive and contested issues of statehood at the heart of such disputes. Most often, international organizations lend their support to the sovereignty of the parent state (which is often their member), although this does not mean a blank check to any type of action or position. But, at the same time, this support results in international organizations facing particular challenges in engaging with the other side of the conflict, when they do not recognize their claims to and efforts at independent statehood. Also because they often enjoy *de facto* control of territories at the heart of the dispute (see, e.g., OSCE 2014, 48), these groups need to be engaged for many reasons, such as for facilitating humanitarian aid or for taking part in peace talks. However, engaging with these parties runs the risk for international organizations to recognize these groups “by implication.” This problem seems to be particularly acute where the statehood-seeking group has managed to introduce state-like institutions that the international organizations need to avoid legitimizing by interacting with them (Kyris 2018).

A constantly growing literature is focusing on the so-called engagement without recognition, which refers to how international actors engage with unrecognized states in a range of political, economic, social, and cultural issues but in a way which is different to normal diplomatic practice and without recognizing independent statehood. This approach has been used towards many conflicts, not least those of the post-Soviet space. Studies have focused on the benefits of this type of engagement by international organizations (Fischer 2010; Caspersen and Herrberg 2010), their more specific

practices and approaches in this context (e.g., Axyonova and Gawrich 2018; Coppieters 2018; Relitz 2019), the impact of this approach on conflict resolution (Kyris 2018), or how does it compare to statebuilding (Bouris and Kyris 2017). Indeed, in some respects, engagement without recognition can be seen as a mirror image of international statebuilding, in the sense that, unlike the latter that aims to help a state emerge, it seeks to “avoid” the state (Kyris 2020) and deny its legitimacy (both terms in italics in Table 1). Furthermore, it is also often the case that where international organizations see the pursuit of independence as a threat to the territorial integrity of the state to which the territories *de jure* belong, the parent state will be the base of their operations. This is the case with many missions of international organizations such as the EU Monitoring Mission, which is based in Georgia.

Here, therefore, statehood-related issues, such as territorial control, seem to be impacting, if not obstructing, the way in which international organizations engage with such conflicts – for example, territorial control by unrecognized states makes it more difficult for international organizations to engage in those territories. The so-called engagement without recognition is a way in which external actors, including international organizations, have sought to overcome some of the particular challenges present in statehood conflicts. While constructive in the short term, such an engagement risks undermining the neutrality of international involvement, especially where a part of the conflict is member to that organization (see, e.g., Heraclides 1991). This makes cooperation from the group that is perceived as biased against (most often the secessionists) difficult. Especially when considering the role of international organizations in the longer term, there is some evidence that engagement without recognition actually makes the achievement of conflict resolution more difficult, for example, by pushing the nonrecognized towards intransigence in the negotiations or by taking away motives for the recognized part to cooperate towards resolution (Kyris 2018).

Further Research Avenues

There is considerable literature on issues of internal statehood and especially state institutional solutions that might provide a framework for resolving statehood conflicts, e.g., via assisting the building of a state for a state-seeking group or facilitating its (re)integration into the parent state. With reference to the second option, a few institutional frameworks for self-governance have been discussed in the literature. However, statehood conflicts are also about more external dimensions of statehood, and here more research is welcome. For example, the relevance of international organizations for recognition has been less explored, possibly as a result of the fact that international law perspectives tend to dominate the discussion (Ker-Lindsay 2017), therefore rendering international organizations as irrelevant in what is seen as a state-centric process of recognition. However, international organizations *are* important for recognition, even if this is in a more political rather than legal way (see also Wydra 2020). As noted earlier, ways in which international organizations are important for recognition include their positioning (e.g., via statements and resolutions) on whether a group has a legitimate right to statehood or not, as well as their missions on the ground that might assist or “kill” the actualization of statehood, via statebuilding or the (re)integration into the parent state, respectively. Furthermore, the discussion will benefit by a more detailed look into internal dynamics of international organizations, including potential differences between recognition-related positions of intergovernmental and more supranational organs (for a rare account, see Fernández-Molina 2016).

Related to this is a need to problematize more the relationship between conflict management and resolution. Statehood conflicts are notoriously difficult to solve, and, as such, they pose challenges to international organizations that often have the promotion of international security at the heart of their objectives. This entry elaborated on how issues of statehood influence the solutions that international organizations support (e.g., the realization of independence via statebuilding, or

putting an end to independence aspirations by assisting reintegration into the parent state; see earlier). The impact of statehood issues on conflict management and the more immediate engagement of international organizations was also explored. However, it seems that these more immediate approaches might carry consequences for the longer-term resolution of the conflict – for example, engagement without recognition might undermine conflict resolution by creating intransigence in the negotiations. In this regard, more research is welcome on the relationship between the more immediate nature of conflict management and the longer-term objective of conflict resolution by international organizations in statehood conflicts.

While this entry focused on intergovernmental international organizations, there is room to reflect on nongovernmental organizations and their relevance to the statehood conflicts. Like with other types of conflict, they are often important for providing aid and relief – prominent examples of such statehood conflicts here include Somaliland, where a range of humanitarian NGOs, such as the International Committee of the Red Cross, were the first internationals to respond before intergovernmental organizations (Bradbury 2008, 47), or Eritrea (Smith 1987). Elsewhere, local NGOs were proven instrumental in raising international awareness of the independence plight – for example, the East Timor Action Network (Scheiner 2000). Even more important for statehood conflicts, studies suggest that nongovernmental organizations might be important *because* of the contested nature of the statehood claims. There is, for example, evidence that nongovernmental actors are quite central in some engagement without recognition approaches, in the sense that international organizations choose to work with such non-state actors instead of authorities of the state in order to not endorse the legitimacy of the latter (Kyris 2013). Therefore, more research is needed on the relationship between intergovernmental international organizations and nongovernmental organizations and actors in more general, including a potential shift in the balance of power in favor of the latter ones.

Finally, more reflection is needed into methodological opportunities and challenges of researching the role of international organizations in statehood conflicts, which could contribute to some already fruitful discussion on conducting conflict-related research (e.g., Rivas and Browne 2018; Browne 2020). What do the specificities of this particular topic mean for the conduct of research? Does, for example, the contestation of territories and legitimacy, which is so central to these disputes, impact the prospects, nature, and findings of research? How credible is data collected via fieldwork in such hotly contested territories? Given the diplomatic minefield that international actors walk, can interviews with people working in international organizations be considered as a reliable source of information? For example, it has been shown that international organizations do not issue press releases when they meet with *de facto* authorities of secessionist entities in order to avoid controversy and accusations that they recognize those authorities by implication (e.g., Kyris 2018). Based on this, one could assume that interviewees might not be keen to confirm such meetings or other contacts with a researcher during an interview. In this instance, could interviews be better for triangulating findings collected otherwise? Are other data collection techniques, like observational fieldwork, particularly conducive for researching the role of international organizations in statehood conflicts? The significance of physical elements to statehood conflicts, such as borders, refugee camps, or buffer zones often administered by international organizations (e.g., UN-supported refugee camps for Palestinians or the buffer zone in Cyprus), might suggest that this is the case. A more inward look into *how* we get to know about the role of international organizations in statehood conflicts will contribute to *what* we know about the topic.

Summary

Statehood conflicts continue to be some of the world's most intractable disputes. As such, they have seen the extensive involvement of

international organizations, which have tried to contribute to local, regional, and international security via the resolution of these disputes. In doing so, the role of international organizations is often informed by specific statehood-related principles, especially sovereignty, territorial integrity, and self-determination. For example, the respect of sovereignty has informed solutions based on the (re)integration of contested territories to a parent state. More rarely, the right to self-determination has led to the support (and assistance) for independent statehood. Although successful in some cases, the role of international organizations is impacted significantly by the very competition over statehood that lies at the heart of such disputes, for example, issues of state recognition often mean that international organizations have a very fine balancing act to perform locally in trying to engage both sides of the conflict, including those statehood claimants that are not recognized. Our understanding of international organizations in such conflicts will benefit by more research on the significance of external rather than just internal dimensions of statehood (such as recognition), the relationship between international conflict management and resolution but also the study of international organizations alongside nongovernmental organizations and, lastly, a greater reflection onto methodological issues of such research.

Cross-References

► Conflict Fieldwork

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International Peace Architecture

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International Peace Architecture, Blockages, and Counter-Peace

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Synonyms

Balance of power; Critical approaches;
Decolonisation; Global justice; Liberal peace;
Statebuilding

Introduction

During the last century, the construction and evolution of an “international peace architecture” has spanned the local, state, and global scales of international relations. This architecture is far more extensive than the UN Peacebuilding Architecture this term is usually used to refer to. It spans a wide range of international, state, and nongovernmental actors, civil society, and social movements and has gathered pace since at least the seventeenth century (though it predates this period in theoretical and practical terms, of course).

Every political system requires complex systems to maintain itself, consciously or subconsciously, against threats, risks, and paradoxes. Systems require knowledge, power, innovation, intergenerational maintenance, and very significant investment in long-term institutions that reflect everyday political claims for order and sustainability (Tainter 1988, p. 37). In the case of the international peace architecture, this is represented by a wide, political formulation, spanning at least the last 300 years. It formed through twin processes to combat war and violence: frameworks that are historically linear (Whiggish state, legal, and institutional development)

(Mazower 2009, 2012) and rhizomatic (the critical development of rights according to the expanding subaltern claims) (Deleuze and Guattari 1987).

This has occurred in the context of a world order subject to multiple forms of civil, state, and international violence and war (Rosenau 1997). The architecture represents an attempt to respond to the aftermath of different types of war, to support the construction of a social state and international framework capable of overcoming war’s causal roots, and to support a dynamic peace from a subaltern perspective that transcends old injustices, losses, boundaries, and hierarchies (Foucault and Miskowicz [1984] 1986; see also United Nations, General Assembly 2016).

The most successful international and state level peace architecture in modernity was the liberal peace framework, which depended upon on a long-standing geopolitical balance of power or hegemonic support. Yet, soon after its post-Cold War apogee, the liberal peace system was reshaped from above and below by international and local actors engaged in peacebuilding and a range of other peace-related activities; Roland Paris (see, e.g., Paris 2004), among others, outlined the course of this argument early on in the post-Cold War debates, based on a critique of liberal peace because of its unsuitable political and economic dimensions. This was essentially an argument for a more trusteeship-oriented approach to liberal peacebuilding (see also Richmond 2005, for an early critique of liberal peace and the subsequent stages; Richmond 2011, on the postcolonial development of the everyday and hybrid peace). Subsequent discussions of everyday and hybrid peace took a very descriptive ethnographic or prescriptive policy turn in numerous scholarly and policy publications, but the author’s own work turned to the impact of local peace formation processes on state formation (see Richmond 2014, 2016; Richmond and Pogodda 2016). The post-Cold War peace-related activities incorporated military intervention and liberal democratic and capitalist state reform of conflict-affected states, in many countries as diverse as Cambodia, Timor Leste, Sierra Leone, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Liberia, El

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Salvador, Bosnia, and Kosovo (see for more Richmond and Franks 2008; Chandler 2017). However, mounting dysfunctionality and resistance drove the subsequent “local turn,” which investigated everyday and hybrid forms of peace from a postcolonial perspective. This approach has been divided between descriptive, prescriptive, and emancipatory approaches.

Much evidence was then found for the development of hybrid peace processes driven by local agency, determined to reclaim some version of an emancipatory peace in the subsequent marriage of institutional and ethnographic research as an emancipatory response to more dominant problem-solving approaches or more banal descriptive approaches. This process in turn has led to a discussion in the academic and policy literatures of postcolonial and intersectional questions of everyday and critical agency, micropolitics, justice, power, and the encounter of everyday peace formation with international peacebuilding actors, along with the mediating role of local and global civil society. The “local turn” has once again turned attention to the deficiencies of the international system, power relations and related injustices, and the need for substantial reform in the light of the recent “Sustaining Peace” agenda of the UN.

These debates illustrate how a much grander edifice has emerged, from local to global scales, which, though fragile and unstable, offers some prospects for further development. It raises a range of long-standing questions about the evolution and integrity of what might be called an international peace architecture. This is a term that has begun to appear in the context of peacebuilding in the UN (e.g., the UN Peacebuilding Commission) (see Cavalcante 2019, p. 222) with the African Union’s strategy related to peacebuilding across the sub-Saharan region (Zondi 2017, p. 110)—as well as a term referring to the broader constellation or alphabet soup of international actors, from transitional civil society to the UN system, the EU, OSCE, NATO, other regional actors, the international legal system, and the IFIs.

The emergence of an international peace architecture is partly a consequence of a historical

evolution to combat war and associated forms of political violence in its evolving forms, through which there have been six main stages or layers, often overlapping. The development of each stage is also a response to the failures of the previous stage as well as representing attempts to engage with global structural change and new forms of conflict and violence that are constantly emerging. Most importantly, each stage is a vehicle for the expansion of subaltern and human rights claims across the international system, which has influenced the development of the social contract, the nature of the state, and international order itself. This entry uses the concept of rights claims to span political claims for basic human rights and their expansion through several further generations of rights, including the right to have rights (Cohen 2012). Each stage carries its own ontologies, epistemological framing, and empirical examples and methods. This entry first offers an overview of the international peace architecture in theoretical and practical terms, before examining each stage in its development. It outlines some of the challenges and “blockages” this system has faced, especially with the development of stage five in the context of the war on terror and state-building. It then outlines the implications for a new stage which has to deal with new modes of violence in IR. It concludes with an evaluation of the architecture’s functionality and stability and discusses what it means for how contemporary peace has developed as a concept.

An Overview of the International Peace Architecture

Though very opaque, it is possible to see in the debates about peace in international relations over the last century, an approximation of a systematic approach, even if it is only the sum of a range of micro-tools such as diplomacy, peacekeeping, mediation, law, peacebuilding, state-building, and global governance. During the last 100 years, the liberal peace model has been by far the most dominant concept of and institutional framework for peace. However, a much broader international

architecture has emerged in various stages, of which the liberal peace is just one component.

Overall, it comprises a range of concepts, methods, and theories that are ontologically framed by Western assumptions inherent in thinking about war and peace in several stages. They effectively represent sedimental layers, such as a palimpsest (in which a previous text is visible under a newer, overwritten text), built up over time over broadening forms of intervention created to maintain an ever more complex international peace architecture. The use of the term “architecture,” though mentioned in academic circles previously, appeared to enter common UN parlance, albeit in a more limited way by 2016. It is mainly focused on prescriptive policy frameworks emanating from agencies such as the Peacebuilding Commission (see United Nations, General Assembly 2016). Each layer redresses a previous set of conflict igniters and coexist with (or contradict) the new layers that emerge for later forms of conflict, such as feudalism, imperialism and colonialism, capitalism and industrialism, the national state, cold war, ethnic and religious conflict, and “new wars” (Kaldor 1999). Underlying this essentially unplanned evolution is both a linear process and also fluid and rhizomatic dynamics (Deleuze and Guattari 1987; Hurrell 2008, p. 69).

There has always been a long-standing local and international political dream of a positive peace, one that transcends coexistence and builds a new ethical framework for cooperation and equalization of widely divergent human populations. As Kant wrote, in a universal community, wrongs committed in one place are felt everywhere (Kant 1795; see also Archibugi 1992). Much of the body of thinking and practice has come into view in order to deal with different types of conflict: civil wars; revolutionary wars; colonial and imperial conflicts; wars over territory, power, and resources; industrialized conflicts over ideology as in the twentieth century; and wars over ethnic identity and self-determination as seen regularly since the 1960s or after the end of the Cold War. The sheer variety and scale of such violence indicates points to the existence of a much more sophisticated peace

architecture than generally thought. A much broader and multidisciplinary view illustrates this epistemological and methodological weakness.

Different critical understandings of this architecture emerge from different positionalities: the subaltern points to basic needs, identity, sustainability, and mobility; the state to its interests and communitarian ethics; and the international to global norms, duties, and responsibilities in the light of global problems. Norms, institutions, and law, across the international, state, and civil society, reflect both the need to respond to wrongs as well as reflecting power. Inequalities of many (but not all) sorts have increasingly been seen as “wrongs,” meaning the nature of political legitimacy at the global level has now irrevocably changed. Similarly, matters of social, environmental, and intergenerational legitimacy have now made their appearance on the international scene. In this sense, legitimacy needs to be understood in broader, social and global, intergenerational terms, not just in terms of law, process, and efficiency. Legitimacy is related to the social provision of consent through consensual systems of political decision-making on a wider scale than ever before (see for more Brassat and Tsingou 2011). It connects with the broader questions of sustainability raised by the problem of global justice.

Six overlapping stages of historical and theoretical development in the international peace architecture can be identified as follows:

- (i) A geopolitical balance of power designed to deal with the clash of interest in elite-led industrialized states and empires
- (ii) A “pluralist” Westphalian system of discrete sovereign states designed to deal with nationalism caused by stage (i) through the liberal democratic peace and a liberal cosmopolitan postwar architecture, run mainly by the USA, UK, and latterly the donor system and EU, designed to deal with the slow decolonization of the imperial world and its systemic clashes, as well as nationalism and ethnonationalism

- (iii) A Marxist-derived critique of both realist and liberal versions of peace designed to produce international equality and solidarity
- (iv) Liberal peacebuilding in its later iterations, informed by a postcolonial and hybrid, multilayered framework of international relations designed to expand rights while maintaining the previous layers of the international architecture (Brasset and Tsingou 2011, p. 2; see also Bull 1977)
- (v) Neoliberal state-building, a reversion to securitization, and a focus on state security, complemented by global capital
- (vi) The newer “digital” dynamics of international relations (as opposed to the analogue system of industrial modernity and the states-system represented by i–iv), which offers the potential of extending the agency of global civil society and further expanding rights, or constraining political claims through a form of digital governmentality

Stages One to Four: From the Balance of Power to Agenda for Peace

The sensitivity of the international peace architecture to the vagaries of political hegemony and subaltern claims can be seen in its uncertain evolution. Stage one, relating to the balancing system of nineteenth-century geopolitics, allowed progress to be made on the basis of a fragile, imperial balance of power but one that was devoid of rights-based thinking being focus on the diplomatic balancing of interests:

...the want of an habitual confidential and free intercourse between the Ministers of the Great Powers as a body; and that many pretensions might be modified, asperities removed, and the causes of irritation anticipated and met by bringing the respective parties into unrestricted communications common to them all, and embracing in confidential and united discussions all the great points in which they were severally interested. (Webster [1925] 1931, p. 56)

The Congress and Concert systems aimed at maintaining the European balance of power through elite diplomacy began to betray a concern with the broader stability and sustainability of an

international order susceptible to constant wars, following the thought of Kant:

For these reasons there must be a league of a particular kind, which can be called a league of peace (*foedus pacificum*), and which would be distinguished from a treaty of peace (*pactum pacis*) by the fact that the latter terminates only one war, while the former seeks to make an end of all wars forever. (Kant [1795] 2003, p. 14)

Yet, such thinking, perhaps obvious, now was controversial as Palmerston famously noted in the House of Commons in 1848 (also reflecting contemporary cynicism about international cooperation and multilateralism):

We have no eternal allies, and we have no perpetual enemies. Our interests are eternal and perpetual, and those interests it is our duty to follow. When we find other countries marching in the same course, and pursuing the same objects as ourselves, we consider them as our friends, and we think for the moment that we are on the most cordial footing; when we find other countries that take a different view, and thwart us in the object we pursue, it is our duty to make allowance for the different manner in which they may follow out the same objects. (Treaty of Adrianople—Charges Against Viscount Palmerston 1848)

This rather confused understanding of the pros and cons of international cooperation laid the basis for stage two (Jervis 1986, pp. 60–61; Taylor 1954) including the International Court of Justice’s initiation at the 1899 Hague Conference and its implications for a wide acceptance of international law and new institutions to support order and progress in “international society.” This also drew on the emergence of an interest in humanitarianism, with the foundation of the ICRC in the 1860s, as well as the problem of disarmament. Further steps were taken after WWI with the liberal internationalist system that was built with the emergence of the League of Nations, following US President Wilson’s argument in his speech in Omaha, Nebraska, 8 September 1919 (as cited in Baker and Dodds 1927, p. 36) that, “I can predict with absolute certainty that within another generation there will be another world war if the nations of the world do not concert the method by which to prevent it.”

Indicative of the difficulties in consolidating the second stage or layer of the international

peace architecture, the League of Nations was more or less immediately curtailed in 1919, given that the USA did not join. Yet, the Locarno agreements of 1925 appeared to confirm the progress that was being made, normalizing relations in Europe (including the UK) with the Weimar Republic and also reviving elements of the Concert system according to Georges-Henri Soutou:

As early as 1921 the Europeans began to react against the far too abstract Wilsonian vision, realised that the League of Nations would not be very effective, and thought of reinstating, without acknowledging it, the Concert of Europe. This was achieved with the Locarno agreements, which reintroduced Germany into the Concert of Europe and which basically and beyond their actual content bestowed on France, Germany, Great Britain and Italy a leading role in the European system, as well as establishing among them a permanent forum for concerted meetings and action. It was actually a return to the former concert of the major powers, though one which of course took into account the new circumstances, at least as far as the implementation of ‘collective security’ was concerned. For some, for instance Aristide Briand, the Locarno system had to go beyond the return to the Concert of Europe and should promote the real political and economic organisation of the Continent, in order to balance both the United States and the Soviet Union. (Baker and Dodds 1927, p. 337)

The Permanent Court of International Justice in 1920, the Kellogg-Briand Pact to abolish war in 1928, as well as the attempt to codify international law at the Hague Codification Conference in 1930 were important steps, but they all faced significant opposition (Nardin 2019, p. 157).

Yet, never before in history had there been so much progress in building an international peace architecture than during the 1920s (this being perhaps faint and damning praise), culminating in slightly futile attempts to outlaw war:

The real struggle today, just as in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, is between a view of the world termed liberalism or radicalism, for which the primary object of government and of foreign policy is peace, freedom of trade and intercourse, and economic wealth and that other view, militarist or rather diplomatic, which thinks in terms of power, prestige, national or personal glory, the imposition of a culture and hereditary or racial prejudice. (Keynes [1978] 2012, p. 370)

The growth of international law, the emergence of new forms of diplomacy, and growing multilateralism were seen as markers consolidating peace architecture in the early twentieth century (Morgenthau 1940; Nicolson 1954). They were to be brought together under an expanding institutional framework throughout the twentieth century, according to an American-driven conglomeration of the development of liberal global order, vision for the state and the international system, to cement the peace, especially after decolonization and again after the end of the Cold War. This “liberal hegemony” was based to a large degree on popular acceptance of American exceptionalism after 1945, implying a mixture of realist and liberal approaches. It provided the basis for more significant activity after the end of WWII when the UN system, the Bretton Woods Institutions, the International Court of Justice, and, much later, the International Criminal Court emerged (Nardin, *The international legal order 1919–2019*, Nardin 2019, p. 158). The UN Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 also gave rise to an expansionary dynamic, leading to the Helsinki Accords in 1975 as a challenge to existing power relations (Reus-Smit 2013, p. 38). Of course, the 1945 postwar settlement represented perhaps one quarter of the world’s population, depending on how one counts the proportion of signatory states (numbering 51) versus the world’s population. It represented an elite and victor-based, fairly centralized consensus, such as was epistemologically and politically possible in its era, perhaps opening the way for a globally collaborative, social and relational, consensus (Desmond 2014). Thus, the international architecture, as well as the state, by stage two of the international peace architecture had been formed through war, the exercise of hegemony (as well as capital) (particularly American), as well as social forces looking for recognition, emancipation, and rights over the *longue duree* (Reus-Smit 2013, p. 2).

Part of this phase of the international architecture was based upon the moral purpose of the state being to augment individual potential, organized around liberal versions of sovereignty, legislative justice, and contractual international law, all

within a multilateral umbrella supposed to support property rights within and of states (Reus-Smit 2013, p. 7) (Ruggie 1993).

Stage three in the development of the modern international peace architecture challenged liberal internationalism by underlining the very limited rights it propagated after 1919 and 1945. Stage three spanned the Marxist challenge to imperialism, capitalism, and liberalism, drawing on the revolutionary philosophies of the French and American Revolutions, as well as the growing demands made by newly colonial states by the 1960s (including the Non-Aligned Movement this spurred). As Marx and Engels ([1848] 2018, chapter 1) wrote:

The bourgeoisie has through its exploitation of the world market given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country... In place of the old wants, satisfied by the production of the country, we find new wants, requiring for their satisfaction the products of distant lands and climes. In place of the old local and national seclusion and self-sufficiency, we have intercourse in every direction, universal inter-dependence of nations. And as in material, so also in intellectual production. The intellectual creations of individual nations become common property. National one-sidedness and narrow-mindedness become more and more impossible, and from the numerous national and local literatures, there arises a world literature.

The very tense dialogue between stage two and stage three during the Cold War was also connected to decolonization by Kwame Nkrumah (1963):

Never before in history has such a sweeping fervour for freedom expressed itself in great mass movements which are driving down the bastions of empire. This wind of change blowing through Africa, as I have said before, is no ordinary wind. It is a raging hurricane against which the old order cannot stand [...]. The great millions of Africa, and of Asia, have grown impatient of being hewers of wood and drawers of water, and are rebelling against the false belief that providence created some to be menials of others. Hence the twentieth century has become the century of colonial emancipation, the century of continuing revolution which must finally witness the total liberation of Africa from colonial rule and imperialist exploitation.

In 1964 the first UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) was supposed to

provide a response, repeated over the coming decade (see also Pearson 1969). The New International Economic Order proposals of 1973 were the heavily contested result (United Nations, General Assembly 1974). It:

[s]olemnly proclaim[ed] our[its] united determination to work urgently for the Establishment of a New International Economic Order based on equity, sovereign equality, interdependence, common interest and cooperation among all States, irrespective of their economic and social systems which shall correct inequalities and redress existing injustices, make it possible to eliminate the widening gap between the developed and the developing countries and ensure steadily accelerating economic and social development and peace and justice for present and future generations. (United Nations, General Assembly 1974, preamble)

US hegemony after 1945 helped make global relations and networks even denser than multilateralism suggested might be possible, expanding into civil society, science and technology, trade, law, conventions, and treaties. This was partly as a consequence of a transfer of American “New Deal” thinking into the international sphere to create a stable institution national and international symmetry during the postwar era, according to Burley (1993), plus the emergence of global civil society, much of it drawing on the stage three critique of stage two liberal internationalism. This dialogue provoked a substantial response that forced liberal internationalism to expand the peace framework that it offered for a transition toward a stage four framework, to redress the challenges raised by stage three, particularly relating to the continuation of colonialism, the circumscription of rights, and inequality. The beginnings of this process could be seen in the Helsinki Accords of 1975, which connected foreign policy, human rights, and the reemergence of a European and potentially global order, which capitalized on the evolving international peace architecture (see for more Soutou 2000).

The Helsinki Accords, signed by the USA, the Soviet Union, and most European states, linked state sovereignty, international and regional organization, law, and economic and social development with human rights to Western foreign policy (Conference on Security and Co-Operation

in Europe Final Act 1975). In this way, it provided a platform to bring the previous stages of the international architecture together and to resolve some of its inconsistencies in the emerging stage four:

Recognizing the close link between peace and security in Europe and in the world as a whole and conscious of the need for each of them to make its contribution to the strengthening of world peace and security and to the promotion of fundamental rights, economic and social progress and well-being for all peoples. (Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe Final Act 1975, preamble, see also Chapters I-IX, emphasis in the original)

Thus, stage four in the evolution of the international peace architecture, drawing on a long tradition of the expansion of rights in the West, stabilized the existing layers of the architecture while enormously expanding its overall scope. It required a much higher set of standards than there might have been post-World War II or in the early Cold War period (United Nations, General Assembly 1948, 1966; United Nations, General Assembly, Security Council 2018; DeGooyer et al. 2018; Arendt 1951; Bailliet and Larsen 2015, p. 9; Sassen 2006). “Agenda for Peace,” published by the UN Secretary General in 1992, later captured some of the developments, in that it linked “. . . social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom” with prevention, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding as well as disarmament, drawing stages one to four together:

The sources of conflict and war are pervasive and deep. To reach them will require our utmost effort to enhance respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, to promote sustainable economic and social development for wider prosperity, to alleviate distress and to curtail the existence and use of massively destructive weapons. (United Nations, General Assembly, Security Council 1992, para.3,5)

Responsibility to Protect (R2P) in 2005 was to become a logical outcome of this path (Bellamy 2015), but it was not until 2018 that the UN issued a document that captured the full implications of these debates, including prevention, root causes, expanded rights and a reconceptualized understanding of the state, inclusion and gender issues, and questions of social, economic, and global

justice. There was a dawning realization of the fuller dimensions of the international peace architecture (UN documents were also beginning to use the term “peacebuilding architecture”) required to deal with such a broad form of peace:

The scale and nature of the challenge of sustaining peace calls for closer strategic and operational partnerships among the United Nations, national Governments and other key stakeholders, including international, regional and subregional organizations, international financial institutions, civil society organizations, women’s groups, youth organizations and the private sector, taking into account national priorities and policies. In today’s complex world, those partnerships need to harness the energies of all sectors of society. The United Nations is one partner among others, and all partners need to come together in support of the efforts of Governments. (United Nations, General Assembly, Security Council 2018, para.6)

The consequence was the creation of a relatively fairer, more stable, and prosperous state and international environment than so far ever seen in history, even when seen from the perspective of the subaltern. Indeed, the latter “subaltern perspective” was to become even more significant as a result. Many of the ideas now widely accepted in stages two to four about the qualities of contemporary peace and order had first emerged in long series of anti-war and humanitarian, developmental, or standard-setting conferences, workshops, and conventions, often driven by civil society actors spanning the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Debate and pressure coalesced in the fourth layer of the international peace architecture, including institutions such as the UN and its agencies, NATO, the EU, AU, other regional organizations, the international financial institutions, the various international courts and law, the donor systems, and a range of NGOs. Even so, with the emergence of this layer, progress was slow and heavily biased toward the global north and to the remnants of imperial, sovereign, and authoritarian power (Nicolson 1946; Kissinger 1957; Little 1989; Jervis 1986; Mearsheimer 2019; Nardin 2019; Doyle 1997).

One can see, nonetheless, in this historical evolution the social construction of the international and the states-system, partially aligned with

social claims for security, rights, welfare, and justice. This process positioned a layer of liberal internationalism, democratization, and human rights, upon the nineteenth-century balance-of-power system, smoothing the way for the mitigation of imperial and state-centric war, as well as civil war. Through this process subaltern claims were represented in several waves (Reaul-Smit 2011) through stages three and four to the degree allowed by existing knowledge-power structures. Public goods developed to maintain peace and order through institutions, law, development, and legitimacy across local to global scales. Overall, stage four hybridized liberal and social welfarist versions of peace (such as the New Deal and Marshall Plan), as well as everyday and post-colonial versions (see, e.g., United Nations, General Assembly 1960, 1966) (such as from the Non-Aligned Movement of the 1960s). Practical association was to follow function and form, eventually giving rise to a hybrid international society, much of which can now be historically observed (Nardin 1983; Buzan 1993). It provided the framework for a substantial, postwar international peace architecture, realized in mix of geopolitics and liberal architecture, captured in the alignment and density of the international peace architecture by stage four. It was more resilient in terms of its institutional and legal architecture and perhaps more responsive to subaltern claims.

Thus, the UN and Bretton Woods system, postwar, has overseen enormous, though unequal, gains in security and human welfare, supported by NATO, regional organizations such as the EU, and an expanding list of donors, IFIs, INGOs, and NGOs, as well as many other related organizations. Yet this architecture is paradoxical and unstable, as any system of checks and balances tends to be. The state was seen as both the nexus for peace at the elite, diplomatic, and international level and a key blockage for the kind of transformation necessary from the subject, individual, or subaltern perspective (Wallerstein 2002). There was a similar pattern in relation to security and capital. Hence, the emergence of global institutions and international law, as well as democracy and human rights, as practical and normative elements of stage four. Transnational and local civil

society saw itself as separate to the state and the international and vital to the codependent development of both (Pyykkönen 2015, p. 11; Keck and Sikkink 1998). The system is deeply rooted in the evolution of Western hegemony, just as in general institutions and power relations are deeply rooted in any society's past (Acemoglu and Robinson 2012, p. 44). Yet, it is also supposed to offer a Parsonian natural equilibrium (Reed and Harvey 2007, p. 365), under global governance and Western hegemony. Often a "far from equilibrium" situation was therefore put down to localized cultural, social, and historical deficiencies, meriting interventionary practices for peace and development (Reed and Harvey 2007, p. 366).

Internal Contradictions, Blockages, and Counter-Peace

The internal tensions in the different elements of the international peace architecture, its state-centric nature (drawing on nineteenth-century geopolitics), and elite political, economic, and social power also mean that the architecture has become more entrenched and difficult to reform as it expands. This is partly because it simultaneously provokes revanchist and counterrevolutionary forces associated with systems of geopolitics, nationalism, race, class, gender, and capital. Indeed, at every step along the way, the development of peace and its related architecture has involved confronting and challenging existing vested power structures, residing in society, in empires and the state, the economy, the military, oligarchy, and ideology, among other locations of power.

The architecture's capacity is very much reactive—peace is formed after the event of war and conflict due to a mix of social and elite forces, and it is not able to anticipate the nature of future wars because of its limited capacities and the fact that new wars tend to shift character. This is made worse by the opposition between social and elite approaches to peace, security, and order. The early "hybrid peace" of empire and sovereignty has given way to other forms of hybrid peace, increasingly associated with a state-mediated version of local and international politics (mediated by custom, identity, liberalism, neoliberalism, and the

influences of global networks). However, this path has not been smooth, because of Western suspicion about the counter-discourses of the development world, especially after the Bandung Conference after 1955 (Devetak et al. 2016). The West saw claims for decolonial demands for liberty and global justice as producing revolutionary resistance to its dominance at a risky moment in the Cold War, rather than developing a more appropriate response to ever-expanding rights claims as everyday subaltern political claims became clearer in international politics. Elite power and social actors have both been instrumental in such mediation over history, indicating how the evolution of the international peace architecture has been inevitably entangled with its nemesis: a counter-peace architecture.

The international peace architecture has thus suffered something of a “death of a thousand cuts,” on critical and conservative “counterrevolutionary” fronts (Posen 2014, p. 175). This has partly been because of the challenge of inconsistency in maintaining a common, normative order (see the cases of Syria since 2011 and Rwanda in 1994 versus say Kosovo and Bosnia in the late 1990s) and partly because of what Michael Mann (1984) called the challenge of the autonomous power of the state: the way in which it uses infrastructural power to divide and penetrate civil society, supporting the territorial centralization of state power rather than the expansion of human rights. This has in turn been altered by neoliberalism and the current digital shift and their influence on the overall architecture. The relationship between postcolonial sovereignty and human rights, as well as the requirement of a state to enforce human rights, has been uneasy, to say the least. Indeed, as Huntington (1968) argued in the 1960s, political systems decay and break down when they are no longer able to meet evolving or emerging challenges. The authoritarian impulse is never far away under such circumstances, especially in view of the fact that emancipation, justice, and rights claims are an inevitable challenge to entrenched and failing power structures, which will resist them (Pugh 2005). Even now the numbers of democratic states appear to be declining or shifting toward

authoritarian capitalism. Thus, the international peace architecture is evolving precisely because it is entangled with the very forces of war and violence it was supposed to tame. A counter-peace framework is also emerging which opposes its influence in international relations.

The example of peacebuilding in Bosnia-Herzegovina is illustrative of stage four and its limitations. The dominant process over the period since the 1995 Dayton Peace Accords has not merely been UN, OSCE, and EU supported peacebuilding and the peace process (Caplan 2000; Chandler 2000; Woodward 1996) although some progress has been made (Confidential Source, personal communication, August 9, 2017). Dominant power structures have revived. These have blocked reforms, stopped the expansion of civil society, and pushed back the rule of law. They have also limited the scope for action of the Office of the High Representative, making it very difficult to move beyond the Dayton Agreement (Confidential Source, personal communication, August 9, 2017). Neither the EU or the USA has been able to build their version of peace, and the UN has been similarly ineffective in the face of local and regional politics (Confidential Source, personal communication, August 9, 2017). Bosnia’s progress toward EU accession has stalled, as has civil society’s localization (Confidential Source, personal communication, August 9, 2017). The offending power structures were based upon the rents they receive from ethnic conflict and tension, ethnonationalism, territorialism and boundaries, secessionism, militarism, as well as the gains made from unregulated capital (Belloni 2020, p. 81). The peacebuilding elements of the Dayton Peace Accords were merely contained in an Annex, after all (United Nations, General Assembly, Security Council 1995).

The UN, EU, and other organizations appeared to be trying to build a more sophisticated peace but, in the end, have supported stabilization-type policies (Belloni 2020, p. 235). The peacebuilding process enabled continuity in public office, institutions, and clientelistic elites, who subverted democracy, rights, development, and civil society in their interests in a complex double moment (Belloni 2020, p. 81). This made international

actors think they had control while devolving power on a growing basis to local actors and civil society. This produced dependence and a negative peace based upon ethnonationalism, power-sharing, and neoliberalism (Belloni, pp. 82, 204). By 2017, senior international actors thought “local ownership” strategies had failed (Confidential Source, personal communication, August 9, 2017). Civil society began to develop a familiar critique based on class, human rights, and social democracy, one which was not audible to the international community, thus replaying important elements of Yugoslavian history but without the resolution Tito once achieved or the more recent focus on democracy of human rights. These dynamics offer an insight into the counter-peace framework:

Peacebuilding become increasingly hijacked by local gate-keepers bent on continuing the exploitation of economic and political opportunities afforded to them by permissive neo-liberal economic policies. . . they achieved mostly superficial changes that did not impact [upon] either the deeper societal structures or the domestic elites’ power base. (Belloni 2020, p. 231)

In addition, the state’s resources were being plundered within the same framework, as well as its labor being appropriated by multinational interests, leading to social unrest and the formation of attempts to govern from below with limited results (Belloni and Ramović 2020; Ramović 2018). Yet, it is still common to hear from international actors that more privatization is required, even though this has tended to hand power to various oligarchs (Confidential Source, personal communication, August 9, 2017). These counter-peace dynamics challenged and neutralized the liberal peacebuilding framework of the 1990s. They undermined its social, political, economic, and legal frameworks, as well as attempts at regional and international governance through the EU, OSCE, UN, and donor system.

International actors themselves were also very divided, both within and outside the Western alliance framework, by interests and normative and practical approaches to maintain a coherent position (Confidential Source, personal communication, August 9, 2017). The EU has been suffering from “accession fatigue” in the region, and

Republika Srpska would prefer a regional alliance with Serbia and Russia. Thus, geopolitics is rearing its head along with ethnonationalism once again (Confidential Source, personal communication, August 9, 2017). Space has been created for both by the deadlock within political community over state reform and international support. Thus, taking a counter-peace perspective underlines how stage one of the international peace architecture has not solved geopolitics in the region and stage two is deadlocked because democracy is in stalemate, partly because of geopolitics but also because of the failure of development policies. The expansion of rights has been uncertain (as the civil protests in BiH of 2014 illustrated) and cannot work without the other layers operating too, especially through external support. This has meant that reconciliation has been replaced by entrenchment on a mass scale.

The Emergence of Stage Five

The more the complexity of the international peace architecture, the more it risked failure as it challenged the geopolitical power structures of stage one in the international peace architecture and raised expectations of expanded rights and intervention to promote political order in stages two to four. The commensurate and receding gradations of sovereignty and agency from north to south have long been noted (Hobson 2012, p. 19). This undermined the complex processes of security, institutionalization, rights, and development, effectively undermining common projects and misallocating “surpluses” in the evolving architecture (Tainter 1988, pp. 37, 190). This meant that by stage four the international peace architecture ran on a very low margin of reserve capacity under the conditions of global capitalism and the neoliberal state model. Its surpluses were run down, blocking reform (as discussions of UN reform have long illustrated) (Tainter 1988, pp. 60, 122; Chesterman 2011). Intervention (in the form of peacekeeping, mediation, peacebuilding, and development), the reform of the state, and civil peace formation processes were reactive rather than proactive processes. They operated within the framework of preserving states and only the most basic of rights (Cohen 2012, pp. 159–222).

Since the neoliberal shifts from the 1970s, the global north's hegemonic states along with authoritarian states in the south slowly retreated from the expansion of rights and equality as a political solution for war and violence. To some degree progress already made has helped mitigate the historical cycle of war, occupation, colonization, tribute, and trusteeship. Yet, systems of war and violence became increasingly complex and opaque (even despite their growing academic exploration). They were no longer analytically legible through the state or a liberal international states-system. In parallel, the growth of complex systems of governance designed to prevent local, state, and international conflict by redressing social, economic, and territorial grievances was now consuming vast amounts of energy, resources, and political will. Much of the peace work of the last two decades has been status quo oriented, as "stabilization" approaches appeared to replace peacekeeping and peacebuilding (as in Syria since 2011) (Brown 2018). A loss of energy and political will due to a decline in marginal returns for the liberal peace and neoliberal state-building pointed to a loss of legitimacy and a concurrent growth of complexity (Tainter 1988, p. 116).

The 2000s saw the rise of an authoritarian and neoliberal peace in stage five of the international peace architecture. It was focused on state-building and regional security, supported by global capital, in the hope that this would buttress the development of legitimate authority in conflict-affected environments such as Afghanistan and Iraq:

The long-term vision for international engagement in fragile states is to help national reformers to build effective, legitimate, and resilient state institutions, capable of engaging productively with their people to promote sustained development. (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development 2007)

It was often supported implicitly by the West for reasons of security and a lack of political will or by the newer powers, such as China, for reasons of trade and regional influence. This process has been careless with both the local and global legitimacy of the existing international peace architecture, as Toby Dodge (2006, pp. 188–189) states:

To quote Condoleezza Rice, then US National Security Advisor and Bush confidante: 'The concept was that we would defeat the army, but the institutions would hold, everything from ministries to police forces.' . . . The unpredicted collapse of the state in the immediate aftermath of the seizure of Baghdad dramatically changed the nature and extent of the USA's involvement in Iraq. . . Attempts at rebuilding the state in Iraq, not the original plan for limited reform, have proved to be far more complex, requiring much greater expertise and resources than anyone in the US government had anticipated or planned for.

What emerged with stage five was an unstable version of the victor's peace, mirrored by the case in Sri Lanka after the collapse of the Norwegian-backed peace process in 2002 and the rise of President Rajapaksa's nationalist and militarist regime as well as his ongoing incursions into the state while in political opposition (Perera, personal communication, 17 November 2015; Perera, Seminar, Manchester University, 13 December 2018) and at the far end of the scale the tragic case of the Syrian war since 2011.

Growing Instabilities in the Overall International Peace Architecture

The contradictions of the global north's stage four and stage five frameworks in the international peace architecture soon emerged between territoriality, borders, rights, and capitalism, as well as its paternalistic and ideological overtones, which have undermined its global legitimacy and progressive goals. Its capacity to build legitimacy and oversee the handover of power peacefully through elections was not in doubt, but the political agenda that dominated reform templates in conflict-affected societies have been powerfully challenged. To quote Habermas (2015, pp. 47–49) "One size fits all fits no one." Rather than an alignment of power through multilateralism in stage four, global governance in stage five turned to neoliberal, technological, and military hegemony rather than human rights or social justice (see, e.g., Pegram 2015, p. 585) (not to mention global justice), undermining the entire architecture as well as the micro-processes within it (e.g., peacekeeping, peacebuilding, and mediation). Indeed, global governance diffuses and fragments

the power needed to achieve rights and social justice from a subaltern perspective.

Immanuel Wallerstein, through his core-periphery perspective, argued that the world faced a structural crisis as a consequence of such tensions (Wallerstein 2002, pp. 3, 5). War is now experienced as a piecemeal, disaggregated, multiple phenomena: from the complex, regional, and civil war in Syria, guerrilla warfare as recently ended in Colombia, to urban violence as in Latin America, in particular, and the environmental and structural violence that global capital enables in its “misallocation of resources” toward multinational, oligarchical, and authoritarian actors as in the MENA region or sub-Saharan Africa (say in the DRC) or South East Asia (as perhaps in Cambodia). This echoes the old problem that transformative movements and processes often end up close to the stance they were trying to redress (often because power is persuasive and seductive, with an obvious advantage), as well as the old issue of whether transformation, reform, and emancipation are possible from within the status quo, or outside (i.e., a revolutionary or radical social movement aimed at broader forms of global justice). Empirically, as Wallerstein pointed out, there were periods in the twentieth century when radical movements were in the ascendancy, but they did not manage to *directly* transform the world (Wallerstein 2002, p. 5). Furthermore, more recent discursive theories discourage deep analysis of contemporary structural problems, focusing attention on communicative dynamics instead, which identify but do not redress injustice. Structural analyses, on the other hand, have since Marx suggested that power was needed to mitigate threats to social peace and order.

For example, mediation, peacekeeping, and peace processes were reserved from the 1950s for the most egregious threats to the Cold War balance, but with the arrival of peacebuilding doctrine in the 1990s, broader strategies were expected to deal with deeper instabilities and injustices by expanding the liberal international order. However, the international peace architecture by the 1990s was under great pressure to expand further to accommodate not just post-colonial conflicts but also post-Soviet and

developmental conflicts. This meant that substantial elements of the international peace architecture (e.g., stage one to five preserved the northern-dominated hierarchy) were increasingly opposed to the structural changes required to stabilize the international order and in tension with other elements such as the expansion of rights and concerns with justice (in stages three and four). This shift toward more decentralized forms of globalism, pluralism, and localism has had the unintended consequence of fragmenting the power and agency needed to make peace. It is dependent upon ever broader tools and programs of intervention (Buzan and Lawson 2015, p. 273). Many of these interventions govern consequences rather than causes, and this can be seen in numerous Research Council calls in the UK, as well as in a more general appeal for more applied research to be carried out using large data sets or new technologies, while disguising the relationship between peace, power, and knowledge and narrowing emancipatory practices to a minimalist level. As Chandler (2015) has argued, the focus of intervention has moved from the causes of conflict to managing its effects.

Potential for the Architecture: Stage Six

“We cannot continue to work with twentieth-century tools in the twenty-first century”

Herve Ladsous, Head of UN Peacekeeping (UN peacekeeping chief wants more drones 2014)

Holsti offered an early notion of the need for multiple elements necessary for a viable peace system, including legitimate authority and governance and the capacity for peaceful change and conflict resolution (Holsti 1991). This has been increasingly reflected over time in the development of the UN; donor, regional, and INGO system; international law; and expanded notions of rights. These have been crucial in the reconstitution of sustainable political order as it developed across layers of the international peace architecture (Schwartz 2010, p. 8). Stage six of the architecture inevitably requires constant intellectual innovation and material and geopolitical investment, as well as support for its rights expansion and transversal dynamics. As a global framework

its global legitimacy is paramount: yet the "... undermining of the landmarks of modernization" is well underway (Cerny and Prichard 2017, p. 380). As Beck (2013, p. 26) argued so cogently, the international peace "project" (or in his case the European peace project) needs to address the problem of how the architecture might be improved. Perfecting the state now means expanding rights into temporal, environmental, and thus material areas to reflect subaltern claims. Democratizing the international adds a concern with global inequalities and long-term sustainability, as raised by global civil society networks, as well as emancipatory global governance linked to global justice. Such a trajectory challenges geopolitics and geo-economics, excavates socio- and anthropocentric versions of politics, and points to deep relationality across societies and the deep structures of the environment or commons (Connolly 2017, p. 121).

The social content of security, peace, rights, development, and order is foregrounded under these new structural conditions, rather than the empirical nature of the state, security, or economy, these now being components of a twenty-first-century peace rather than its main priority. This reaffirms the local, social, and micro "turns," which have recently gained ground (Solomon and Steele 2017) and are actually extensions of a long process of "rights seeking" across cultural, political, social, and economic terrains by populations around the world since the nineteenth century. This process, associated with the emergence and expansion of human rights, has led to historical structural change which in the recent "decolonial epoch" has been associated with pushing beyond a core-periphery colonial or economic system (Dhawan 2014, p. 70; Wallerstein 2002).

Thus, it would be expected that a version of peacebuilding in the new stage six framework would deal with underlying power structures, represent social practices and build transversal, trans-scalar, and transnational political, institutional, legal, bureaucratic frameworks. This would advance the previous state-centric, multilateral, international law and trade networks, as well as deepening global civil society.

Firstly, it requires a viable international political architecture with the capacity to manage and resolve the conflicts of the day. It would be made up over the long term of multiple, sedimental layers of actors, dynamics, laws, institutions, and networks, which firstly neutralize each era's war and conflict dynamics. Secondly, these layers should maintain themselves in relation to the other layers of the architecture, providing stability in the long term. Thirdly, taken all together they must be sufficiently stable to offer a platform for the expansion of future layers of the architecture as new conflict types emerge.

This social construction rests from local to global scale to some degree on an Aristotelian realization that political community from the local to the global is an association or many relational entanglements. It is made up of cooperative relationships aimed at justice, security, and rights, as well as emancipation and equality. It does not merely represent a Hobbesian contracting out of self-preservation through a social contract to a Leviathan state (and international system) or a Lockean conversion of natural rights into civil rights under the paternalistic state (or international hegemony). This perspective brings together realist, liberal, constructivist, and critical views of the history of IR, following Gilpin's (as cited in Ikenberry 2013, p. 3) observations about the connection between governance and hegemony, order formation, and the foundations of international order. It indicates that the international architecture has been formed through two processes: first, a linear process of liberal institution and constitution building, perhaps leading to some sort of global federation, and second, partly by the micro-powers that actualize subaltern political claims, which is a far more networked, transversal process, leading to more decentralized systems of governance.

If such a path were to come to fruition, this would point to peace with reconciliation, equality, justice, and sustainability, across issue areas, networks, and scales. This new layer is also shaped by practices, emotions, and everyday spatial, historical understandings of complex agency, which is mobile and networked (Lefebvre [1947] 1991). It is transversal, trans-scalar, post-nationalist, and

concerned with long-term sustainability, foreshadowing complex frameworks of global justice. This means the further expansion and enhancement of rights in the light of new structural global conditions, subjectivity, and political claims and a new and broader understanding of legitimacy, which has emerged especially at the social level, if not at the international or state levels (from Arendt 1951; DeGooyer et al. 2018, p. 4). Mobility, relationality, and networks (assemblages which cannot be defined solely as local or global) (Sassen 2006) underpin this shift through which critical agency at the social level engages with power structures at the state or global levels while doing their utmost to avoid domination (see, e.g., Foucault 1980). The former aims to provide a relational and pluralist ontology for international relations (IR) that is far more stable and sustainable than the older notions of the territorial sovereignty or cosmopolitan/Eurocentric norms, state encompassment, and vertical hierarchy (Ferguson and Gupta 2002, p. 988).

An Alternative Path: Stage Six as Digital Governmentality

More negative alternatives are also on the horizon, such as the possibilities of a *Pax Technica* (see Howard 2015), a hybrid of neoliberalism and new technologies of power, extending many of the older, predatory patterns of elite political power, which might be termed “digital governmentality.” “*Pax Technica*” is a new empire drawing on a technical rationality that emerges from networked devices, networked power, and networked society. It undermines the states-system and democracy, as well as the concept of the state as a self-determining unit, as such concepts are transcended by a range of networks [Howard (2015), pp. xx, 1, 33, 35; see also Marcuse (1968) as cited in (Duffield 2018, p. 41)]. This highlights recent tendencies for de-liberalization following authoritarian instincts, reinforcing the hierarchical international architecture of relatively exclusive territorial states, as incidentally illustrated by UNDP’s Human Development Index. This rejects Polyani’s (Polyani et al. 1957) argument that redistribution is the basic function of political order and instead deploys new tools to maintain

political and economic inequality and injustice to buttress public reason and existing power relations through the search for “. . . an experimental tool in a terrestrial struggle to covert history and politics in to information and data” (Duffield 2018, pp. 153–154).

There is a “counterrevolutionary” tendency inherent in this new layer, pushing back at expanded rights and scientific claims about sustainability and global justice. Older concerns with land and territory, as well as material resources, still represent the base of modern direct, structural, and governmental power. This means that the development of the stage six toward justice and sustainability would be almost immediately blocked by digital governmentality, which deflects stage six and allows stage one to reemerge, drawing on the blockages and the counter-peace that began to reemerge in stages four and five.

Summary

The international peace architecture offers different and often contradictory sediments or layers of contemporary IR—between geopolitics, capitalism, law, rights and norms, cooperative institutional development, and the search for a deeper justice and sustainability. Firstly, the history of global power relations and hegemony has produced an informal and public political and economic architecture, which might be equated with the evolution of negative peace in international relations. Secondly, the victor’s peace, the liberal peace, and the neoliberal peace have been the recent historical forms under European and US trusteeship and tutelage, brought together in a second layer, the liberal peace. Thirdly, this provided a platform for the “rights of the governed” to expand, as the subject was valorized and protected, both supported and restrained by the state and international law as in stage four. Each new step opened up further possibilities in view of the broad goals of emancipatory peace thinking (Goulder 2015, pp. 16, 20). Finally, there are also emerging neoliberal retrenchments and digital and technological forms of conflict, which

shape stages five and six. They need a “peace” response and a new layer of the international peace architecture to respond to them.

The direction of the development of the concept of peace in broad terms suggests a journey from the victor’s peace (imperialism), a social peace (based upon political, social, and economic rights), the liberal peace (liberal democratic states, rights, trade, and international law and organization), a neoliberal peace (state security and global trade), to peace with global justice. The latter, as reflected in the recent UN SDGs and Sustaining Peace agenda, connects peace with environmental sustainability, gender, and distributive and historical justice, suggesting an agonistic yet consensus-based form. This could be described as new framing of peace related to global justice, beyond state-centric and liberal public reason and in a postcolonial framework.

This architecture, spanning from “Plato to NATO” (or the warfare state to the internationalized welfare state, the liberal peace and onward to the globally governed neoliberal state), needs stabilizing and augmenting by global justice dimensions, raising the question of how to overcome blockages to peace and a subsequent counter-peace system, a general loss of legitimacy, and the growing confusion over ad hoc sovereign responses to global problems (see for example BRICS Information Centre 2014). The theoretical-historical architecture this exploration of the international peace architecture denotes is unstable, torn by its internal contradictions and a changing global environment. It represents a complex and exceptionally fragile interlocking framework of norms, tools, institutions, laws, rights, and balances, related to the evolution of international order, often developing retrospectively after its many breakdowns. Stage six is bifurcated between conceptions of global justice, which connect peace processes, peacekeeping, peacebuilding, and conflict transformation, with historical and distributive forms of justice, and digital governmentality. The scene is set for further developments to stabilize the existing layers of the architecture and produce new layers designed to deal with the changing dimensions of war and conflict.

Cross-References

- ▶ Culture and Conflict Resolution
- ▶ Liberal Peace in Peace Operations
- ▶ Liberal Peacebuilding in a Transitional International Order
- ▶ Peace and Political Unsettling
- ▶ Peace Infrastructures
- ▶ Peacebuilding and Postcolonial Subject
- ▶ Peacebuilding: Utopia and Reality
- ▶ Phenomenological Peace

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Interpersonal

- [Reconciliation in Northern Ireland](#)

Intersectional

- [Feminist Peace Research](#)

Intersectional Approach

- [Peace and Feminist Foreign Policy](#)

Intersectionality and Peace

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Keywords

Intersectionality · Gender · Race · Class ·
Peace research · Peacebuilding

Synonyms

[Inclusion](#); [Interconnection](#)

Definition

Intersectionality refers to how multiple factors or systems of power and oppression – such as gender, race, class, age, and sexuality – intersect in defining the societal structures and people’s lived experiences. In conflict-affected societies, intersectionality helps in understanding not only the kinds of violence people might suffer but also the varied interests, needs, agencies, and views toward what constitutes inclusive and sustainable

peace. This approach, however, has so far largely been absent in both peace research and peacebuilding practice.

Introduction

Originally coined by Kimberlé W. Crenshaw (1989), a US critical legal race scholar, intersectionality was deployed to bring to the fore the experiences of oppression of women of color and how these experiences were based on multiple intersecting axes of social division, in particular race, gender, and class. In her work, Crenshaw (1989, 1991) showed how women of color were often unable to access the protections of race and sex discrimination legislation as their experiences were seen to not fully conform to either. In this way, Crenshaw (1989, p. 140) argued that “any analysis that does not take intersectionality into account cannot sufficiently address the particular manner in which Black women are subordinated” as their experiences were not wholly dictated by either racism or sexism. Since then, intersectionality has generated a wealth of literature across disciplines and has been understood as a theory, a method, and a heuristic device.

These ideas at the core of intersectionality are not, though, confined to North America or the Global North more broadly, nor have they been unexplored before Crenshaw’s articulation of intersectionality and its subsequent gaining prominence. Indeed, people in the Global South have long conceptualized intersectionality and used it as an analytical tool, even if they did not use the specific term. (The Global South–Global North distinction is used in reference to the political and economic divide between countries in the world, whereby the two terms do not depict geographic locations per se, but rather uneven global hierarchies of power rooted in colonial histories of exploitation and appropriation. Definitions vary, but the Global South generally includes Africa, developing Eurasia, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Middle East/North Africa, the Pacific, and South and Southeast Asia.) For instance, in *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New*

Mestiza, Anzaldúa (1987), and then, in *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*, Moraga and Anzaldúa (1981) center the Chicano and Latino experiences, as well as the experiences of women of color, whose subjectivities and identities have been shaped through gender, race, colonialism, and sexuality, among others. There is also a significant body of literature that attests to prior delineation of how interlocking and intersecting factors shape human experience, most notably, but not only, by Black activists and feminists and post-colonial, Indigenous, Latina, and queer scholars (Collins 1990; Combahee River Collective 1977; hooks 1981; Valdes 1997).

Since the emergence of intersectionality as a specific term in women’s studies and beyond, there have been a number of debates on its definition (Crenshaw 1991; Staunæs 2003; Yuval-Davis 2006). It is unsurprising that people understand intersectionality in many different ways. Some view it as a theory, others as a method, still others as a reading strategy for (feminist) analysis (Davis 2008, p. 68). The most common use, nevertheless, is as a concept, a heuristic device or an analytical tool (Collins and Bilge 2016, p. 17). To that end, Davis (2008, p. 78) convincingly argues that it is precisely the concept’s “lack of precision and its myriad missing pieces that have made it such a useful heuristic device.” She further argues that it is intersectionality’s encouragement of complexity and creativity that motivates scholars to raise new questions, explore uncharted territories, and engage critically with their own assumptions (Collins and Bilge 2016, pp. 78–79). For the purposes of this piece however, we find Collins and Bilge’s (2016, p. 14) definition useful, as it discourages an understanding of inequalities as bound by a single axis of social, political, economic, or other division. Instead, an understanding of power as mediated through multiple lines of power and identity is necessary:

Intersectionality is a way of understanding and analysing the complexity in the world, in people, and in human experiences. The events and conditions of social and political life and the self can seldom be understood as shaped by one factor.

They are generally shaped by many factors in diverse and mutually influencing ways. When it comes to social inequality, people's lives and the organisation of power in a given society are better understood as being shaped not by a single axis of social division, be it race or gender or class, but by many axes that work together and influence each other. Intersectionality as an analytic tool gives people better access to the complexity of the world and of themselves.

Despite the ambiguities and the diversity of understandings and approaches, Collins and Bilge (2016) identify six core themes and ideas that (re)appear across the different uses of intersectionality. While these ideas are not always present in all research, nor do they appear in the same manner, they do provide useful guideposts for thinking through intersectionality (Collins and Bilge 2016, p. 40). The first one is social inequality, which within intersectional frameworks is recognized as based on interactions among different factors, thus moving analysis beyond a class-only or race-only approach, for example (Collins and Bilge 2016, p. 40). The second one is power, in the case of which intersectional analyses focus on the interlocking, mutually constructing, or intersecting systems of power, such as race, class, gender, ethnicity, age, religion, sexuality, and others, that shape people's lives and identities (Collins and Bilge 2016, p. 41). Another common idea is relationality, which "rejects either/or binary thinking and embraces a both/and frame instead," therefore allowing for the analytical gaze to be directed at the interconnections, rather than the distinctions between entities and systems (Collins and Bilge 2016, p. 42). The fourth theme that Collins and Bilge highlight is social context, the attention to which grounds any intersectional analysis (Collins and Bilge 2016, p. 43). The fifth and the sixth core ideas are complexity and social justice. The former points to intersectionality aiming to grasp and analyze the complexity of the world (Collins and Bilge 2016, p. 43). The latter, on the other hand, is perhaps the most contentious of the six ideas, since it is not a requirement, but intersectionality has been used as an analytical tool for social justice as well (Collins and Bilge 2016, p. 45).

Intersectionality in Peace Research

The use of intersectional analysis in understanding peace is necessary for many reasons, not least of which is that the individuals and institutions engaged in both peace research and peacebuilding are constituted by intersectional identities and experiences. Moreover, as Phoenix and Pattynama (2006, p. 187) rightly note, intersectionality acknowledges and approaches social positions as relational, and it sheds light on the complex power relations that shape everyday life. It pushes against "hegemonic disciplinary, epistemological, theoretical, and conceptual boundaries" (Dhamoon 2011, p. 230) and thus challenges assumptions that can be problematically (re)produced within peace research.

In contrast, both peacebuilding practice and mainstream peace studies literature have predominantly approached the examination of post-war societies in a static and unidimensional manner, portraying events, practices, and actors as fixed in space, time, and identity. Namely, scholars and practitioners have often used a "snapshot" approach (Kappler 2015) in analyzing conflict-affected societies, where experiences, contexts, and identities are flattened, and a high degree of homogeneity is assumed. This has sometimes resulted in communities not being analyzed within their specific historical, social, and political context, as well as interests, needs, and experiences of certain groups being assumed as homogenous.

In that *snapshot* approach, peace and reconciliation have often been understood as a mirror image of the preceding war. For example, when a conflict is characterized as a clash between different ethnicities, peace is viewed as a state of those ethnicities reconciling or at the very least tolerating each other, which is then reflected in the decision- and policy-making processes. This understanding, using the prism of *groupism* (Brubaker 2002, p. 164) whereby (ethnic) groups are analyzed as the primary societal actors, ascribed with particular characteristics and agency, presupposes homogeneity of the groups in question. In so doing, it disregards the various intra-group struggles and the fluidity of social

identities beyond ethnicity. Furthermore, it also cements ethnicity or another single category as the most, if not the only, important political cleavage to reconcile after war.

This tendency contributes to particular dynamics, social practices, and intersubjectivities remaining unrecognized as important to understanding peace, especially gendered and intersectional peace – what constitutes it and how it might be achieved. The tendency is often present in peace agreements and various forms of conflict settlements. For instance, the Dayton Peace Agreement which marked the end of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina recognizes ethnicity as the single most important system of organizing the post-war society, with the three dominant ethnic groups (Bosniaks, Serbs, and Croats) being explicitly recognized and given governing power (Stavrevska 2016). This approach not only renders other ethnic groups invisible, but it also fails to acknowledge the differences within ethnic groups, be they along class, gender, sexuality, age, geographical, war experiences, political views, or any other lines. The implicit assumption, therefore, is that the interests, needs, and preferences for peace within the ethnic groups align. Using an intersectional approach, on the other hand, helps us understand what peace, in the positive sense, can mean, acknowledging the plurality of subjectivities, systems of oppression, and agencies that are created and enacted as a result.

The issue of intersectionality is, therefore, at the very core of understanding peace, who gets to define it, how that definition or vision is implemented and studied, and, ultimately, whose voices, experiences, and agencies are marginalized and silenced in these processes. In other words, intersectionality offers us the possibility to reflect not only on the peace knowledge that is produced but also on the systems within which that knowledge is produced. For instance, as Azarmandi (2018, p. 69) notes, while in much of peace studies literature violence and conflict are emphasized as problems of the existing world system, the analyses of power therein “continue to use notions of sovereign power, which is exercised by a particular subject(s) or systems,

and understood as repressive and monolithic to unpack questions of violence.” The understanding of peace and violence, therefore, must engage in an analysis of the violence and conflict that exist within and are (re)produced by power structures, be those economic, racial, or gendered (Azarmandi 2018, p. 69). In that vein, he reminds us that true peace will remain an impossibility if coloniality is not addressed (Azarmandi 2018, p. 69).

With this in mind, intersectional and decolonial critiques of peace studies bring to the fore Frantz Fanon’s (1963) theorization of peace as “peaceful violence” – that is, violence and peace intersect and co-exist, rather than stand as distinct or opposed conditions of being. A good example of this is the violence enacted by colonial states in subjugating populations under colonial rule, indeed often done in the name of “peace.” Using the formulation of “peaceful violence,” Fanon suggests that peace “can be understood as the regulation and normalisation of violence” rather than as its absence (Shroff 2018, p. 148). Similarly, more recent critiques have called for feminist and queer lenses in peace studies to challenge the erasure of experiences and interests that fall outside singular or monolithic assumptions about both peace (who benefits and how) and societies (Confortini 2006; Mizzi and Byrne 2015; Moolakkattu 2006). They too highlight the problematic use of homogenizing categories, such as “women,” and particularly in peace studies the collapsed portrayal of “third world women” (see Mohanty 1991) as either passive victims or “agents of change” in conflict-affected places (Shepherd 2016). This means that women’s complex roles, contributions, and experiences in conflict – especially those that fall outside these assumptions – are overlooked in peace process (see “► [Women’s Community Peacebuilding in the Occupied Palestinian Territories \(OPT\)](#)” and “► [Female Combatants and Peacebuilding](#)”).

Feminist and intersectional peace theories challenge the binary epistemology of liberal and post-liberal peace theorizing (Smith 2019, pp. 138–157). A good example here is that of the international-local and the way each dimension of this binary is understood. Even the concept

of hybridity (see “► [Hybrid Political Orders and Hybrid Peace](#)”), introduced as a beyond-binary analytical device in building and understanding peace, with emancipatory claims and numerous caveats otherwise, reproduces a binary between constructed categories of local and non-local (Hameiri and Jones 2018). This binary reproduces and relies on Orientalist narratives that deploy a particular conception of “the local”; that is, the “local” as an intelligible category is deployed and positioned as distinct to the liberal/international. (Orientalism (Said 1978) refers to a system of thought that perpetuates a view of “the absolute and systematic difference between the West, which is rational, developed, humane, superior, and the Orient [Said highlighted the Orient as primarily the Middle East and Islam], which is aberrant, undeveloped, inferior” (Said 1978, p. 300). Through such essentialist framings, Orientalism presents “the Orient” as something “either to be feared . . . or to be controlled (by pacification, research and development, outright occupation whenever possible)” (Said 1978, p. 301).) Theorizing a “hybrid peace,” for example, and seeking means to institute one produces and relies on an understanding of “local” actors that is homogenized through being inherently non-liberal/international. This is evident in the descriptions of what constitutes the local and how hybridity is seen to come about in peace interventions:

[because] liberal peacemaking was forced to deal with its own positionality and biases, as well as recalcitrant nationalists, religious conservatives, kleptomaniac governing elites, stubborn locals and peoples whose worldviews was not organized along a left-right secular political continuum. . . The result has been hybrid political orders (and disorders) in which Western ideas of how a society, polity and economy ‘should’ be run reach a sometimes uneasy accommodation with local mores and practices. (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2016, p. 222)

The latter part of this quote explicitly delineates “hybrid” peace in binary terms which occurs when a non-west/non-liberal other finds balance or accommodation with “western ideas of how a society should be run.” Taking intersectionality as an analytical framework would challenge these assumptions though, highlighting instead the

complex axes of power that shape identities, ideas, experiences, and ultimately outcomes.

What intersectional critiques highlight then is the necessity for peace studies to dismantle not only the “groupism” blinders noted above but also the false binaries, such as peace/violence, perpetrator/victim, non-liberal local/liberal international, and so on. An intersectional analysis allows us to recognize the multiplicity of violences that occur and power structures that exist; remove the blinders on the role that gender, class (Iñiguez de Heredia 2018), race (Azarmandi 2018), coloniality (Berlowitz 2002), and other systems of power play; and, relatedly, also acknowledge the possibility for (a) plural peace(s).

Intersectionality and Peacebuilding Practice

An intersectional lens is also imperative in peacebuilding practice, whether it be conducted by institutions, governments, civil society organizations, or individuals. While many have emphasized intersectionality’s contribution in terms of recognizing multiple dimensions of identity that mediate individual experience, intersectionality also crucially exposes how institutional structures are implicated in the marginalization of some groups and individuals.

It is not that some individuals or groups have more or less “categories” of identity/experience but rather that some experiences are more readily acknowledged and then in turn generalized. In Crenshaw’s (1989, 1991) initial formulation, for example, anti-sexism discrimination legislation in the USA that was formulated based on the experience of White women was unable to extend the same protections to Black women as it did not reflect their experiences of sexism, which often mingled with experiences of racism. These experiences then were taken to not be wholly sexist and thus not legitimately within the realms of protection the legislation was supposed to offer (Crenshaw 1989, 1991). The assumptions that institutions make then are important for who may or may not be able to access the stated

benefits of their work, and this is true in peacebuilding processes as well.

One area that has garnered significant attention from a critical intersectional lens is the adoption and implementation of gender mainstreaming in United Nations (and other) peacebuilding practice. With the adoption of Resolution 1325 in 2000, the UN Security Council committed to incorporating a Women, Peace and Security Agenda into its peace and security activities and assessments, primarily through a framework of “gender mainstreaming” (Cohn 2008; see “► [Gender Justice and Peacebuilding](#)”). These policy frameworks were significant gains for activists and advocates who had been lobbying the UN, particularly the Security Council, to recognize women’s experiences of armed conflict and their marginalization from formal peacebuilding processes (Cohn 2008).

In implementation however, gender mainstreaming and Women, Peace and Security has often fallen short (Smith 2019; Martin de Almagro 2017; Basu et al. 2020, p. 6). One criticism of the WPS agenda and its implementation of gender policy (such as through Gender Units in peacekeeping missions, the institution of Gender Advisors, and so on) is that it has rested on a limited understanding of gender which relates to biological sex; that is, “gender” is used synonymously with “women” and even then only a select cohort of women (Martin de Almagro 2017; Haastrup and Hagen 2020; see “► [Masculinity and Conflict](#)”). WPS has done poorly to take account of class, race, religion, age, ethnicity, sexuality, and coloniality and how these might also be “gendered concerns” or, even if understood narrowly, how they also mediate women’s experiences in conflict, post-conflict, and peacebuilding situations.

Gender policy can only have limited and circumscribed impacts where it fails to take account of intersectional experiences and hierarchies of power. While gender mainstreaming in peacebuilding has been effective at bringing light to some experiences and issues, it has largely eschewed an intersectional framing and positioned gender as a “single-axis” issue – a problem that feminist theorists have long demonstrated is

more likely to obscure and perpetuate discrimination and oppression rather than overcome it (Cho et al. 2013; Crenshaw 1991). Applying an intersectional lens to gender policy in peacebuilding exposes how “gender” in policy frameworks often seeks to rectify only “unidimensional notions of discrimination” (Cho et al. 2013; Crenshaw 1991) and thus marginalizes women’s (and men’s) experiences that fall outside these frames.

There have been, nevertheless, some exceptions. For instance, the Gender Sub-Commission during the peace negotiations between the Government of Colombia and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) advocated that the Peace Accord includes a so-called differential approach to building peace (Bouvier 2016). This approach recognizes that gender, race, class, age, sexuality, ability, geographic location, and other factors play a role during conflict and in its aftermath. To that end, the differential approach acknowledges that different societal groups, such as women and girls, Indigenous peoples, children and adolescents, communities of African descent, small-scale and family farmers (campesinxs), displaced people, LGTBI persons, people with disabilities, and so on, have faced different forms of violence and have suffered differently during the conflict (Stavrevska 2020). The differential approach, in that sense, lays the foundation for multiple experiences and agencies to be recognized. At the same time, however, there have been critiques that despite the differential approach, Colombia’s Peace Accord does not assume an intersectional perspective, as it recognizes experiences of, for instance, women and Indigenous peoples, but not explicitly those at the intersection of the two, Indigenous women (Acosta et al. 2018).

With that in mind, taking insights from intersectional feminist work further, it is not simply an issue of multiple experiences and oppressions (and thus a practice of inclusion or acknowledgment), but also requires critical reflection on the structures within which oppressions are produced. This view “reveals how the intersectional lens looked beyond the more narrowly circumscribed demands for

inclusion within the logics of sameness and difference. Instead, it addressed the larger ideological structures in which subjects, problems, and solutions were framed” (Cho et al. 2013, p. 791). This is to say that intersectionality should not be understood by policy- and decision-makers merely as a demand for adding diversity to the group around the table, but rather as a lens that helps examine the structures on which the table rests.

Summary

Intersectionality, as an understanding that people’s identities, experiences, and agencies are affected by multiple, intersecting systems of power and oppression, has gained prominence in both academic and activist discussions in the last couple of decades. However, this critical concept and the perspective it provides, with notable exceptions, has largely been absent from peace research and peacebuilding practice. As the case studies discussed here demonstrate, peacebuilding, conflict resolution, and peace research need to account for a multiplicity of experiences – as well as how power operates across and within assumed social divisions – in order to understand and build a more meaningful and sustainable peace. In looking at institutional operations as well, the chapter has shown that intersectionality is not merely, or only, a reference to identity categories but that structural and institutional approaches that rest on homogenized and generalized assumptions can compound rather than alleviate oppression, even where the goals may be social justice. That is, intersectional analytic frameworks argue the need to see power as mediated through the terms of racism, sexism, classism, and so on *in combination*, not as distinct lines that operate separately or in parallel. In peace research specifically, the chapter argues that a “static” (non-intersectional) understanding of conflict and conflict-affected societies collapses important inequalities that shape and are shaped by conflict and indeed can erase recognition of conditions of structural violence that prevent “peace.”

Cross-References

- ▶ [Female Combatants and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Gender Justice and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Hybrid Political Orders and Hybrid Peace](#)
- ▶ [Masculinity and Conflict](#)
- ▶ [Socioeconomic Justice and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Women’s Community Peacebuilding in the Occupied Palestinian Territories \(OPT\)](#)

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Intervention

- ▶ [Unintended Consequences of Peace Operations/Sexual Abuse and Exploitation by Peacekeepers](#)

Intractable Conflict

- ▶ [Maoist Conflict in India](#)

Ireland

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- ▶ [Troubles, The: The Northern Ireland Conflict](#)

Islam and Peace

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Jurisprudence · Justice · Mysticism · In-out approach

Synonyms

Instrumentalization of religion; Islamic fundamentalism; Jihad; Mysticism; Peace within to peace without; Political Islam

Introduction

The advent of Islamist fundamentalism and the terrorist attacks of the 2010 decade have highlighted the need for a better understanding of the concept of peace in Islamic teachings. The traditional training of scholars and practitioners in the West appears somewhat obtuse and thus prejudicial to a multifaceted assessment and appreciation of the more intransigent outlooks in the Islamic faith. In the light of the cultural clashes propounded in the last years of the last millennium (Huntington 2011), it is important to have a more comprehensive outlay of discursive peace in Islam, where the radical interpretation of the faith can be understood and thus critiqued and countered.

Definition

Both Islam and peace are interpreted differently by various religious and political groupings, schools of thought as well as independent scholars. Various paradigms in International Relations also consider peace differently thereby broadening the spectrum beyond the mere silence of the guns.

The etymology of Islam refers to the word *salm* meaning peace. *Salm* and its derivatives have been used in the Quran around 140 times. The word also denotes the concept of surrender, which indicates that in Islamic context peace is achieved through submitting to the will of the Almighty. A Muslim is thus someone who is elevated to a state of peace through surrendering to God. Numerous citations in the Quran, the holy book of Muslims, can be understood to refer to the same, e.g., “*O believers, come to full submission to God [peace]. Do not follow in the footsteps of Satan your acknowledged foe*” (Quran, 2:62).

Another term used in the Quran to denote peace is *solh*. There are some 180 occasions, where either *solh* or one of its derivatives have been used. They have always been utilized in a praiseworthy fashion, e.g., “*And when it is said to them: Make not mischief on the earth, they say: We are only peacemakers*” (Quran 2:11) and “*For their Lord displeasure is the opposite of peace and tranquillity*” (Quran: 70:28). In this connection, it is also notable that the term faith in Arabic (*iman*) shares the same roots with the expression for safety (*aman*), the very cause that renders peace desirable in the first place.

In the more jurisprudential narratives in Islam, war and peace are usually understood in their classical combative/noncombative framework. Accordingly, only external peace and its confrontational/nonconfrontational aspects are focused on. The terms *dar-ol solh* [abode of peace] and *dar-ol harb* [abode of war] reflect such an outlook, which is incognizant of structural violence, harming the individual and/or violating social security (Galtung 1996). Breach of security-based peace and tranquility is therefore not in the remit of jurisprudence. Appearances and external manifestation of the faith as defined by the jurist comprise the foundational stone upon which peace or war can be decided. One of the most noted jurists in this respect was Ibn Taymiyyah (1263–1328 CE), whose teachings have turned out to be the bedrock of the conservative as well as radical interpretations of Sunni Islam. He asserted that Muslims should be ruled only by strict adherence to *shari'a*, the legal code of Islam.

Ibn Taymiyya was perhaps one of the very few scholars/jurists who took up arms to fight for what he preached, i.e., he took part in battles against the invading Mongolian army. His ultra conservative and at times radical views were also infused with a dose of expediency (*maslaha*). Hence his views that the Mongolian liking for wine should not be derided as consumption of alcohol lessen the chances of Mongolians killing and pillaging Muslims (Polka 2018, note 64). He remains one of the main jurisprudential authority for many radical Muslims, who believe in violence to achieve their goals (Holtmann 2013).

Harmony and tranquility within, however, are the foundation of peace discourse in Islamic mysticism. Shams, the sage of the Iranian Muslim mystic Rumi, states the conformity of the faith with peace in his book when he narrates, “He claims he has faith but he does not. He says he is ‘peace’ but he is not.” (Shams 2007, 242). The approach of mysticism in Islam differs sharply from that of jurists. Muslim Sufis, such as Rumi, believe in peace starting from within the minds and hearts of people before it can be extended onto the external environment. Conversely, individuals ridden with frustration, anger, and disharmony can only project conflict and turmoil in their environment. “*Wheat grows from wheat, barley from barley.*”

*Contemplate the same grievous war in thyself
Why, then, art thou engaged in warring with
others?* (Rumi 1990, VI:64)

The general approach of Muslim mystics to life and humanity including peace is, unlike the conventional paradigms in International Relations, nonsystemic. The core elements of contentment and tranquility in life are located inside the hearts and minds of the individual and do not fall exclusively within the domain of the sociopolitical structures. The individual has the ability to deconstruct and then create a new social and political reality by a conscious and ideational outlook that constructs the external “objective” world (Gibran 2019).

It is thus a more inside-out view of serenity that characterizes peace in mysticism and distinguishes it from the outside-in outlook on peace

promoted by jurisprudential scholarship and radical Islamists.

Historical Background

Muhammad, the messenger of Islam, experienced some 100 battles less than a third of which he participated in personally. Though many of them were defensive in character, there were those that are believed by some scholars to have been initiated by Muslims out of necessity. Distinction between offensive and defensive wars is made in the Quran by using different terminology. The word *jihad* (literally meaning struggle or striving for) is used axiologically to denote all Godly acts including combat in defense, “*They swear by Allah their most solemn oaths that if you O Prophet were to command them, they would certainly strive for [jihad] in Allah’s cause. Say You do not have to swear; your obedience is well known! Surely Allah is All-Aware of what you do*” (Quran, 24:53). Also we note, “*Strive for [jihad] the cause of Allah in the way He deserves, for it is He Who has chosen you, and laid upon you no hardship in the religion—the way of your forefather Abraham!...*” (Quran, 22:78).

Two other terms, *harb* and *ghital*, are adopted only to describe war per se without necessarily referring to the context, e.g., “*If you do not, then beware of a war [harb] with Allah and His Messenger! But if you repent, you may retain your principal—neither inflicting nor suffering harm*” (Quran 2:279). In another verse, it is observed, “*They ask you O Prophet about fighting [ghital] in the sacred months. Say, fighting [ghital] during these months is a great sin. But hindering others from the Path of Allah, rejecting Him, and expelling the worshippers from the Sacred Mosque is a greater sin in the sight of Allah...*” (Yusuf Ali 2006, 2:217).

Nowadays, however, *jihad* has come to mean violence in all shapes and forms initiated by religious vigor and ruling. The instrumentalization of this precept by religious and political leaders has chiefly been responsible for that. The last significant edict exhorting Muslims to *Jihad* was issued by the Ottoman

religious leader *sheykh ol-Islam* in WW I in alliance with Germany and against the Allies.

Peace and Justice

The significance of justice in peace accords is attested to by thinkers in the East and the West. "Peace without justice is tyranny, no matter how you sugar-coat it with expediency," said the English scientist and philanthropist, William Allen (2021). Peace based on flagrant violations of human rights can only be termed as an "unjust order." The following verse refers to this principle. "*And if two groups of believers fight [ghital] each other, then make peace between them. But if one of them transgresses against the other, then fight [ghital] against the transgressing group until they are willing to submit to the rule of Allah. If they do so, then make peace between both groups in all fairness and act justly. Surely Allah loves those who uphold justice*" (Quran, 49:9).

In the Islamic belief system justice and balance are quintessential aspects of creation and should be maintained in social and political lives of communities. "*As for the sky, He raised it high, and set the balance of justice*" (Quran, 55:7). "*O my people! Give full measure and weigh with justice. Do not defraud people of their property, nor go about spreading corruption in the land*" (Quran, 11:85).

Differences in the very definition of justice, however, can stir conflict within and between communities. This is observed in history on numerous occasions including the cases of "just war" and "jihad," where opposing parties believed they were fighting on the side of justice. In Islamic literature, Imam Ali's interpretation (Imam Ali 2005), the fourth successor to Muhammad and also his cousin and son-in-law, locates justice in the placement of all things in their proper order (Motahhari 1982, 59–67). Absent a proportionate arrangement of affairs and a fair settlement of disputes, the ensuing order cannot be justified as peaceful for it embodies structural violence that inhibits the realization of human potential. Therefore, an inseparable trait that goes hand in hand with peace is the precept of justice.

In mystic discourse, peace starts within and then permeates without. Tranquility inside the mind and the heart will radiate the very same in the surrounding environment.

*Everything beckons its like in the world
Warmth attracts warmth and cold draws cold
(Rumi, II:81)*

Upon the fall of Adam and Eve from paradise, the Quran narrates, the fundamental trait of earthly life would be enmity between humans. "*We said: Get ye down, all (ye people), with enmity between yourselves. On earth will be your dwelling-place and your means of livelihood – for a time.*" (Quran, 2:36). A return to the Divine condition of life in paradise therefore requires overcoming the inimical character of earthly living by establishing peace and fraternity among humans. Satan, the principal character responsible for the expulsion of humans from paradise, is depicted as a figure who aims to stir hatred in human community, i.e., keep mankind remote from the Godly condition of peace. "*Indeed, Satan spurs (discord) between them; indeed, Satan has always been, to man, an evident enemy*" (Quran, 17:53).

Summary

The Preamble to UNESCO Charter reads, "Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed." Quintessentially, that is the approach of Islamic mysticism. By contrast in Islamic jurisprudence, and in common with classical *realism*, peace is depicted more as an external and tangible quality that is detached from the state of mind and hearts of its stakeholders. The latter axiomatically disregards the significant input of the individual in the external environment and ties the plight of the people in a hierarchical structure predicated on the views of an unaccountable class claiming to represent the Deity. The people are therefore disenfranchised, and the dictates of the religious jurist decide the final outcome: peace or war. In this *realist* process of instrumentalizing Islam for political gain, the

vice regent of God on earth – human being – is reduced to an agent of the Satanic scheme to stir hatred in the human community (Mirbagheri 2012).

The words of Rumi ring true throughout history as they do in many wars fought in the name of Islam:

*The wars of the people, like children's fights
All meaningless, empty and vile
The battles fought with wooden swords
All their purposes vain and futile* (Rumi, I:3435–3436)

*From a whim springs their war and peace
On a caprice is based their honour and shame.* (Rumi, I:71)

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Just War Theory Across Time and Culture

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Synonyms

Aristotle; Augustine; Carl von Clausewitz; Cicero; Fetial code; Hugo Grotius; *Jus ad bello*; *Jus ad bellum*; *Jus in bello*; *Jus post bellum*; Just war theory; Muhammad; Thomas Aquinas

Definition

The question of when war is “just,” meaning morally acceptable however undesirable, has similarities and differences among nine cultural traditions.

Introduction (Baumann 2010; Brunsletter and O’Driscoll 2017; Churchman 2013; Lee 2011, 2015, Melton and Baumann 2010; Nardin 1996; Walzer 1997)

Discussion of Just War Theory tends to be dominated by and limited to the extensive tradition originated by Catholics (and largely followed in Western Europe and in the Americas so here called Western), but it hardly is the only tradition. Greek Orthodox, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Jain, Buddhist, Chinese, and Japanese cultures developed distinct traditions summarized below that deserve attention if for no other reason than to more fully understand how wars are interpreted and judged in cultures that often are in conflict. Even before them, a few individuals in ancient Sumer (Kramer 1956) and Egypt (Cox 2017) and a few individual thinkers in Classical Greece and Rome raised related issues, the latter having some influence on the earliest developers of the Christian tradition.

Forerunners: Major Classical Thinkers

While Greek thinkers such as Herodotus, Plato, Socrates, and Thucydides and Roman ones such as Cato the Younger, Julius Caesar, Livy and Polybius, and others wrote about the wars common in their day, Aristotle and Cicero are the most influential precursors of Just War Theory.

In *Politics* (Aristotle and Jowett 2000) and *Nicomachean Ethics* (Aristotle and Irwin 1999), Aristotle (384–322 BC) introduced to the frequently warring Greek world the concept of war as a last resort that included prohibited conduct that would make restoration of a peace difficult or impossible. Generally, he understood it as necessary to avoid enslavement – in other words, defensive war. Despite this, he permitted warfare to enslave non-Greeks for whom it was “natural” and which if abolished would undermine civic freedom.

In *De Officiis* (Cicero and Walsh 2008) Cicero (106–43 BC) foreshadows several defining issues further developed in Western Just War Theory. In

Rome, war and treaty-making fell under the *ius gentium*, the “law of nations,” innate moral obligations recognized and followed by all but a few such as pirates and illegal combatants who neither fought nor were protected by it. Laws for initiating, conducting, and ending a war were prescribed in the Fetial Code, which was overseen by priests. The man not legally a soldier had no right to fight. Resort to war required a just cause such as repelling invasion or retaliation for pillaging, and even if ultimately fought for supremacy, the initial motivation must have been defensive. Only a properly constituted government could wage war and no war was just unless discussion had failed and it was preceded by a warning and a formal declaration made. Furthermore, postwar, consideration must be showed those conquered, those who surrender must be protected, and any punishment should be limited, sufficient only to prevent repetition of the initial offence and to deter others from doing so as well (Polybius, Walbank and Scott-Kilvert 1979).

The Western Tradition (De La Casas 1992; de Montesquieu 2002; Elshtain 1992; Kant 1983; de Vattel 2009; Walzer 1997)

Western Just War Theory evolved from these classical thinkers along with Old and New Testament influence beginning with Saints Ambrose (c. 340–397) and Augustine (354–430). Subsequent thinkers developed it into a highly influential theory. St. Thomas Aquinas’s (c. 1225–1274) *Summa Theologica* divided the question of morality with respect to war into three main issues.

The first, *Jus ad bellum*, concerns *when* war is just. St. Augustine specified six requirements that have changed little in 17 centuries. First, a government must explore all other options before choosing war, the last option. But, as Michael Quinlan has written, “To place military action at the very end of the line may mean invoking it only when matters have reached a desperate pass, and when its scale is larger than its robust use earlier might have entailed. The passage of time is not neutral” (Elshtain 1992). Furthermore, the “last

resort” is difficult, perhaps impossible, to identify objectively and unambiguously and often subject to interpretation long after the fact. Ultimately, it is a matter of judgment reinforced by the evolution of international law, which had its precursor in the Roman concept of *ius gentium* (see above) but in its modern form traditionally is dated from the 1625 publication of Hugo Grotius’s (2010) *Rights of War and Peace*.

St. Augustine’s second requirement was that the only just war defends against actual or eminent aggression against one’s own nation or that of an ally. Eminence often is difficult to distinguish conclusively and has been used as an excuse to attack.

Third, only a properly constituted government can wage war and then only if it is openly declared in advance of hostilities. One difficulty here is that it prohibits citizen revolt against a tyrannical government. Another is that it is not always clear what constitutes a nation.

Fourth, right intention requires that a war restores justice rather than advance national interests. Wars of aggrandizement, conquest, conversion, or plunder are unjust. One difficulty is that some wars can both restore justice and advance national interests, and ruling out a war that does both may leave the injustice in place.

Fifth, there must be a reasonable prospect of victory. Wasting lives and resources is wrong if defeat is likely. However, war involves so many unexpected events and intangible factors that even careful, reasonable estimates sometimes have proved wrong.

Sixth, the force employed must be proportionate and reasonable. The concept, which has its parallel in limits on the force an individual can use to defend against an assailant, allows the state to use more force in defense than the aggressor uses in attack, but not excessively so. The actual line between reasonable and excessive has proven impossible to define clearly in advance in every circumstance, so it too is a matter of judgment and debate in specific cases, most prominently the continuing argument over the use of atomic bombs to end WWII.

Following from this sixth requirement, the second main issue, *jus in bello*, fighting justly, has

changed with society, time, and technology and is likely to continue to do so. It has two important components. Proportionality repeats concern with how much force is appropriate. Discrimination requires targeting only enemy combatants. In feudal Europe, war was at least hypothetically fought chivalrously – although the code often was ignored when fighting heretics or non-Christians. Intentionally attacking noncombatants except those who make war matériel was prohibited.

Collateral damage as an unintended result of a legitimate military operation is not *just* but is *justifiable*, although *understandable* seems a better word. The distinction effectively disappeared with indiscriminate aerial bombing during the Spanish Civil War and World War II, partly to rationalize area bombing but more fundamentally because nations mobilized every resource for war, making the distinction between combatants and noncombatants ambiguous. Capture in enemy uniform, or fighting or spying while dressed as a civilian, traditionally legitimates the death penalty.

The third and final main element of Just War Theory, *jus post bellum*, ending wars justly, has received relatively little attention until recently beyond the principle that the victorious can punish but must not humiliate the vanquished. Both the purpose and the target of punishment remain unsettled. Possible purposes include deterrence, reform, restraint, and retribution. It is unclear whether to punish particular individuals or the aggressor state itself, and if the latter, if it might have unintended consequences. Many put much of the blame for the outbreak of World War II on the humiliating punishment imposed on the Germans at Versailles. Of course, aggressors cannot be punished until they are captured or defeated. Victory does not prove righteousness, nor does the righteous nation win every war.

The immensely influential *On War* (von Clausewitz, Howard and Paret 1976) anticipates the concept of individual responsibility for war crimes and provides guidance on conduct, raising the issue of the responsibility of the individual soldier. After World War II, individual Germans and Japanese were found guilty and executed for issuing or failing to resist illegal orders, but

charges against Admiral Doenitz were dismissed when Admiral Nimitz pointed out that US submarines had used the same tactics. Questions remain as to how terms are defined, the level at which responsibility is fixed, which orders which ranks should know to be illegal, and what individuals must do to resist illegal orders. Resistance risks immediate punishment by one's own government; failing to do so risks punishment by some international tribunal long after the fact.

Recently, theorists such as Brian Orend (2006) have focused on *jus post bellum*. He has proposed seven principles that provide a starting point for discussion:

- A state may terminate a war if there has been a reasonable vindication of the rights violated and if the aggressor is willing to negotiate terms of surrender that can include formal apology, compensations, war crimes trials, and rehabilitation.
- A state may end a war if just goals are unreachable at all or without using excessive force.
- A victorious state must apply the same level of objectivity, and investigation into any war crimes its own armed forces may have committed.
- Only legitimate authorities can make and accept the peace terms.
- Punishment must be limited to those individuals directly responsible for the conflict.
- Truth and reconciliation may be more important than punishment.
- Terms of surrender must be proportional to the rights initially

The Greek Orthodox Tradition (Harakas 1981; Norwich 1990; Ostrogorsky 1957)

Cooperation between state and church inaugurated by Constantine (ruled 306–337), the first Byzantine emperor, brought mutual benefits and unintended consequences. The church unified the state and supported imperial absolutism. In return, the state provided generous endowments and supported missionary activities. However,

political controversies often became intractable theological disputes and vice versa, most famously over icons in the eighth century, worshipped by some and considered “graven images” forbidden in the Bible by others. Some disputes led to repeated schisms climaxing with that of 1054 that permanently divided Roman Catholic from Greek Orthodox Christians.

In the Orthodox view, war is considered a sin and can never be just. The Orthodox canon contains none of the thinking about entrance into or behavior during war found in the Western tradition. However, this assessment is coupled with an acknowledgment that war might be necessary and that military service is a legitimate requirement of citizenship. Because any act of violence contradicts the ethics and principles of the Kingdom of God, clergies are to be pacifists and are not to be involved in any military activity or even to enter military camps.

St. Basil (c. 330–379), Archbishop of Caesarea, established the doctrine that although killing in war was not murder, veterans were to abstain from communion for 3 years in penance. Six hundred years later, the church refused Emperor Nicephorus II Phocas's request to grant martyrdom to soldiers killed in battle as inconsistent with this requirement.

Orthodoxy requires pursuit of peaceful resolution of conflicts without limit. However, the church recognizes that pacifism makes for easy victims and increases the likelihood of attack. Government with its duty to protect cannot always meet the requirements of the gospels. For Orthodox Christians, “just war” is an oxymoron.

The Jewish Tradition (Nelson and Sons 1952; Ravitzky 1996; Solomon 2009; Walzer 1996)

Jewish thought about war originates with the Old Testament and largely from Deuteronomy (especially 20:10–15 and 19–20). Whereas Catholic thought originated in a period of collapse and chaos, Jewish thought originated at a time when tribal leaders suddenly found themselves governing a new state. The result was a very different theory as to what is just.

Deuteronomy distinguishes types of war and regulates conduct in each. Wars of conversion are to be fought only with the approval of the Great Sanhedrin, the combined judicial and legislative body of ancient Israel. Enlarging national borders, protection of reputation, or pursuit of greatness were legitimate goals. Deuteronomy was concerned with practical issues such as who should serve, be exempt, or be prohibited from service in Jewish armies (Deut 20:1–10) and with how wars should be fought. “When thou draw near to a city to fight against it, offer terms of peace to it” (Deut. 20:10). Acceptance of the terms leads to enslavement and adherence to Jewish law (Deut. 20:11), while refusal leads after a Hebrew victory to killing all the males (Deut. 20:13) and taking all else as spoils of war, with some limits on the treatment of women (Deut. 21:10–14).

Divinely commanded wars are fought in self-defense on the authority of the king alone or against six specified nations (Deut. 20:16–17). These are wars of extermination against “the cities of these peoples that the Lord your God gives you for an inheritance. Save alive nothing that breathes, but you shall utterly destroy them. . . as the Lord your God has commanded; that they may not teach you to do according to all their abominable practices” (Deut. 20:16–18). In both types of war, food trees can be harvested but not destroyed, while nonfood trees can be cut down in support of a siege (Deut. 20:19–20). The Bible is not shy about guiding the Jewish people into war, even wars of extermination, although it does have moderating moments. At the same time, it condemns martial excess. David was prohibited from building the temple because he had shed so much blood. Isaiah suggests beating swords into plowshares and is a key figure in the evolution of modern concepts of morality (Isaiah 1:12–17).

The prophets sometimes identify other nations, particularly Assyrians and Babylonians, as God’s instrument to punish religious failings of the Jews. Much of the book of Amos condemns Judah and Israel for what we would call war crimes. Quite different from Deuteronomy, these seem based on an implied code to moderate the incessant fighting. Don’t violate treaties, don’t seek territorial

expansion, don’t kill civilians, and don’t exile entire populations.

Medieval European Jewish scholars stressed ethical and universal issues. Maimonides (1135–1204) mirrored the classical distinction between wars of self-defense and wars of conquest. The sole aim of a Jewish king “should be to uplift the true religion, to fill the world with righteousness, to break the arm of the wicked, and to fight the battles of the Lord.” Nahmanides (1194–1270) identified 613 commandments regarding war in the *Torah*. Some medieval Jewish scholars suggested that killing civilians was immoral, and tried to mitigate, since they could not repeal, biblical commandments. For example, some argued that the commandment requiring slaughtering the enemy had lapsed as it only applied to the “idol worshippers of Canaan,” who no longer existed.

Contemporary rabbis continue to reinterpret such passages, for example, prohibiting wars of extermination on the basis that the six nations targeted no longer exist and limiting environmental damage by extrapolating from the prohibition on destroying fruit trees. Some even reinterpreted “conquest of the land” to mean farming it. That there no longer is a divinely ordained Jewish king permits bringing traditional Jewish philosophy into line with current thinking about imperialism.

There now seems general recognition among Jews of the following principles for *jus ad bellum*:

- Competent authority must decide if preemptive war is justified.
- Defending allies that have been attacked is just but not mandatory.
- Defending the nation against attack is mandatory.
- International law is independent of religious authority.
- It is unacceptable to impose religion by force.
- Nations are entitled to self-rule, but what defines a nation is ambiguous.
- Negotiation free of duress is preferred for settling international disputes.
- One cannot always distinguish combatants from noncombatants.
- The only just wars defend national territorial or citizen safety.

- Wars to deter or prevent attack are less justifiable but not prohibited.

As to *jus ad bello*:

- Casualties should be minimized in attaining objectives.
- Destruction of the environment should be avoided if possible.
- Hostages should not be taken.
- Minimizing casualties may mean maximizing force, as short wars cause fewer casualties.
- Noncombatants should be spared, but not at the price of defeat.
- Prisoners' have rights that should be respected.

The Muslim Tradition (Arberry 1955; Gibb and Kramers 1961; Hashimi 1996; Hitti 2002; Kelsay 2009; Lewis 1995, 2002)

Muhammad is the only founder of a major religion who led troops in battle. Like the Hebrew Bible, parts of the Qur'an justify, even advocate, war. But, as in the Bible, there also is a theme of peace and tolerance. As did Judaism and Christianity, Islam proliferated into numerous sects, each with its own doctrine.

Eighty percent or more of the world's approximately 1.5 billion Muslims are Sunni, their beliefs resting on the Qur'an and *hadith* (the reported words and actions of Muhammad, although there are differing collections). There is no central authority and no empowered clerical class, although there are *ulama* (see below). Sufis, most but not all regarded as Sunni, seek direct personal experience of God through asceticism and mysticism, trends also found in Christianity. Salafis (including Wahhabis) are ultraconservative Sunni Muslims roughly similar to "fundamentalist" Christians in their reliance on holy texts.

Shia Muslims believe in the leadership of infallible imams descended from Ali (the fourth caliph) who rule by divine appointment and hold absolute civil and spiritual authority. Shia divide into three sects (then into sub-sects) based primarily on

which line of imams they accept. First and most numerous are the Twelvers, dominant in Iran. Second are the Ismailis (occasionally called Seveners) whose most prominent sub-sect follows the Aga Khan. Third are the Zaidis (occasionally called Fivers), who are a plurality in Yemen.

Beyond these major divisions, Islam includes additional sects such as pacifist Ahmadiyyas concentrated in India, Ibadis concentrated in Oman, and Yazidis who combine Sufism with traditional Kurdish beliefs. A substantial number of additional sects rose up and died out, such as the Barghwata in Morocco who synthesized Islam, Judaism, astrology, and paganism. The Kharijites raised *jihad* to a sixth pillar of the faith beyond the traditional five of almsgiving, fasting, pilgrimage, prayer, and profession of faith acknowledging Allah and Muhammad as his prophet. They became the first Islamic heretics in 657 AD when Ali submitted a dispute to arbitration rather than make a decision. They became increasingly fanatical, branding all who disagreed with them as worthy of execution. Over time, "Kharijite" came to mean those who justify killing innocent people in the name of religion. The generalizations about just war that follow do not hold for every subdivision of Islam.

Before that discussion, one must have some understanding of two Muslim ideas. First, over the centuries the *ulama* – recognized theological scholars who often served as a curb on excessive government power – elaborated the concept of a world divided. In the *dar al-Islam* [house of Islam], a *caliph* [successor to Muhammad] was supreme in religious and political matters. The rest of the world was the *dar al-harb* [house of war] until its inevitable incorporation into the *dar al-Islam*. One duty of the caliph was to call all humans to Islam. Refusal of the invitation was a just cause for war, although it had to be preceded by a declaration of war in the path of god by the caliph. Thus, Islam has an equivalent of the *ad bellum* criteria of just cause, righteous intention, last resort, and legitimate authority – but, it justifies offensive war. The impact is similar to Jewish teaching about the difference between obligatory wars of defense and optional wars of empire.

The second idea is that of *jihad* [struggle]. Without getting into the subtle differences within each sub-sect of Islam, you may hear of four main types:

- *Jihad bil lisan* [of the tongue] is concerned with speaking truth and proselytizing the faith.
- *Jihad bil qalb* [of the heart], sometimes termed the “greater jihad,” is concerned with maintaining one’s own faith.
- *Jihad bil yad* [of the hand] is concerned with doing right and combating injustice.
- *Jihad bis saif* [of the sword], sometimes termed the “lesser jihad,” is concerned with war in the way of Allah.

Bernard Lewis (2002) argues that the military meaning is by far the most common in the Qur’an (e.g., Surah 2: 186–90; Surah 9: 5, 29, 39, 122; Surah 47: 35), the *hadith*, and the classic manuals of Islamic law. Where verses in the Qur’an appear to be contradictory, most scholars argued that latter verses abrogate earlier ones. Thus, the “Verse of the Sword (Surah 9: 5)” abrogates those advocating peacefully settling conflicts with non-Muslims and apostates:

Then, when the sacred months are drawn away,
slay the idolaters wherever you find them,
and take them, and confine them, and lie in wait
for them at every place of ambush. But, if they
repent, and perform the prayer, and pay the alms, then
let them go their way.

David Cook (2005) notes that the supposed primacy of the “greater” jihad of the tongue, heart, and hand comes primarily from Western scholars who study Sufism, work in interfaith dialogue, or are Muslim apologists trying to present Islam in the most innocuous manner possible. Whether the Qur’an sanctions defensive warfare only or commands war against non-Muslims depends on the interpretation of the relevant passages in the Qur’an, which do not explicitly state obligatory aims of war.

Muhammad and the classical manuals of Islamic law prohibited attacking children, slaves, women, the elderly, lame, blind, and insane who did not fight. Injury to them was regrettable but

justifiable so long as it was unintended. Treachery, mutilation, and damaging cultivated or residential areas were prohibited. All this is very similar to the restrictions in the Hebrew and Western traditions. However, Muhammad did not identify weapons that may or may not be used, the focus of proportionality in the Western tradition.

Defensive *jihad* appeared with the First Crusade (1095–1102), the first invasion of *dar al-Islam*. Al-Sulami (d. 1106) wrote that every able-bodied man must help defend against the invaders. Citing his contemporary, al-Ghazali (d. 1111), this meant that if a town under attack could not defend itself, neighboring Muslims were to help under their own leaders and on their own authority.

Radicalization of defensive *jihad* stems from six key individuals, all outside the mainstream of Islamic scholarship (Habeck 2006). Ibn Taymiya (1263–1328) maintained the distinction between combatants who may be the direct target of military action and forbade targeting noncombatants. However, similarly to Western tradition, he defines spies, those who transport munitions, or those who fight with words as combatants. Furthermore, he taught that Islam required absolute hatred for all that God proscribes, which includes all non-Muslims including apostates and hypocrites and any Muslim who did not participate in fighting them.

Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab (1703–1792) emphasized God as Absolute Will and sole law-giver. He had little impact until his twentieth century followers allied with the House of Saud.

Abul A’la Maududi (1903–1979) believed that the decline of Muslim world power was a consequence of tolerating infidels. In 1941, he founded the Jamaat-e-Islami party in Lahore that incorporated communist ideas of revolution, justified suicide bombing and attacks on civilians, and was a factor in the bloody partition of India and Pakistan.

Hassan al-Banna (1906–1949) urged a struggle against a West that he saw as destroying the spirit and soul of Muslims. His Muslim Brotherhood would cleanse the *dar al-Islam* of infidels, beginning with his native Egypt.

Sayyid Qutb (2006) (1903–1966), also Egyptian, taught that Muslims who did not live “authentic” Islamic lives were as bad as Jews, Christians, and unbelievers, all of whom deserved killing. Qutb applied Maududi’s example to Egypt, joined the Muslim Brotherhood, and wrote books drawing on sections of the Quran to call for violent overthrow of all secular government everywhere. In *Milestones* (2006), he wrote, “We must return to that pure source from which those people derived their guidance which is free from any mixing or pollution. We must return to it to derive from it our concepts of the nature of the universe, the nature of human existence, and the relationship of these two with the Perfect and Real Being, God Most High. From it we must also derive our concepts of life, our principles of government, politics, economics, and all other aspects of life.”

Ayman Zawahiri (1951–), also Egyptian, extended these ideas based on five principles. First, any territory whose population is (or in some versions ever was) Muslim is part of the *dar al-Islam*. Second, eliminate any non-Islamic presence within the *dar al-Islam*, regardless of how or why it is there. Third, all Muslims have an individual duty to take part in this struggle so need not wait for commands from leaders. Fourth, any method is acceptable, including attacks on noncombatants. Fifth, any country that supports non-Muslims in the *dar al-Islam* is an aggressor, making their citizens legitimate targets. These assumptions lie behind much of what we heard from Bin Laden, who claimed his attacks were defensive and that the USA was the aggressor.

Mainstream Islamic tradition, much like the Western tradition, limits the use of armed force to legitimate governments, requires just cause, recognizes limits as to whom may be targeted, and limits the means that may be used. The radical doctrine of *jihad* advanced as the justification for terrorism violates these traditions. Any war against unbelievers is morally justified. When Muslims wage war for the defense or dissemination of Islam, it is a just war. When non-Muslims attack Muslims, it is unjust (Tibi 2012).

The Hindu Tradition (Brekke 2009; Dalal 2010; Dikshitar 1948; Jones and Ryan 2007; Rosen 2002)

There are two major traditions about war among Hindus. The first rooted primarily in the epics *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* (DK 2017) which contains the often separately published *Bhagavad Gita* (Lombardo and Davis 2019) and, containing approximately 1.8 million words in over 200,000 lines, is by far the longest epic poem known. The *Mahabharata*, usually attributed to Vyasa, is thought to date from the eighth to ninth centuries BC although the oldest texts are about 400 years later. Reminiscent of the European chivalric code, five royal brothers discuss individual heroes fighting according to *dharma*, a code for conduct in peace and war, which is to say the equivalent of *ius in bello*. Fighting at night or during the monsoon is forbidden. Cavalry may only fight cavalry and infantry only infantry, barbed or poisoned arrows are prohibited, captives and the wounded must be given fair treatment, and third parties must not intervene in a battle between equal opponents. A king must not use deceit, magic, or trickery in war. These are rules for individuals fighting duels to save kidnapped maidens (the *Ramayana*) and the like, rather than wars fought for purposes of state. The primary concern is with heroism, individual behavior, and proper conduct according to *dharma*.

The second Hindu perspective on war is focused on statecraft and is found in Kautilya’s (350–275 BC) *Arthashastra*. In India, the four traditional life goals were enjoyment (*kama*), justice and righteousness (*dharma*), liberation from the cycle of rebirth (*nirvana*), and worldly gain (*artha*). Kautilya believed *artha* the most important of the four in managing a kingdom. Kings exist to insure the security and prosperity of their kingdoms, which sometimes required war. However, Kautilya advises caution rather than heroism (useful only to the extent it makes winning likely) and, because of the risks, advises the king to avoid war if possible, making it close to a last resort. Kautilya believed in alliances and, touching on *ius post bellum*, in benevolence toward and preservation of the way of life of the conquered. He speaks

little about how to fight but if it comes to that advocates any tactics needed to win. Killing an enemy through deceit or trickery is acceptable.

The two Hindu traditions are diametrically opposed. The first, rooted in epic literature, sees *dharma* as fundamental; the second, rooted in experience, sees *artha* as the goal of statecraft. The first sees war as an end to itself, kingship as divine, extols courage and fighting for its own sake, and trickery as reprehensible. The second sees kingship as responsibility calling for prudence, praises doing whatever is necessary to win, and advises prudence and action based on *raison d'état*. In a word, the first ignores *jus ad bellum*; the second ignores *jus in bello*.

The Jain Tradition (Brekke 2009; Dundas 2002; Fohr 2015; Long 2013; Lorenzen 1978; Wikipedia 2019)

Jainism is a nontheistic religion with an estimated 5 million followers consolidated by Mahavira about the fifth century BC. It has four main premises, the most fundamental of which and the one that most concerns us here is *ahimsa*, non-violence. However, violence is not defined by actual harm in the ancient texts, but by intent. Jain texts emphasize that one must not intentionally kill another living being, nor cause another to do so, nor consent to any killing, and emphasize non-violence in actions, speech, and thought. *Hinsa* [violence] occurs in four categories:

Aarambhi [unavoidable]: resulting from household work

Sankalpi [deliberate]: deliberately killing a living-being

Udyogi [occupational]: resulting from one's work in agriculture, trade, manufacture, etc.

Virodhi [defensive]: safeguarding the country or fight injustice

Of the four, *Sankalpi Hinsa*, deliberately killing even an insect, is totally forbidden. The other three are permissible under specific conditions. To most Jains, *ahimsa* does not merely prohibit doing harm, but also means doing good, by promoting charity, compassion, forgiveness, freedom, justice, kindness, and tolerance. Finally, while

Jainism forbids deliberate killing of even a tiny creature, Jainism, believing that a strong army is a deterrent to invasion and the resultant violence, allows war for self-defense and for justice. Thus, Jainism allows adherents to join the military and fight in defense of their country and religion or for justice; it should be avoided if possible and opposes all wars of aggression, hatred, or revenge.

The Buddhist Tradition (Bartholomeusz 2006; Brekke 2009; Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai 1989; Dhamasiri 1989; Nhat Hanh 1999; Stroble 1991)

Siddhartha Gautama (c. 563–483 BC), the founder of Buddhism, turned unambiguously against war based on direct experience of it. The first principle of Buddhism is *ahimsa* (do no harm). Buddhism is unmistakably pacifist in its teaching. Nowhere is there support for war. Buddhism teaches that dependence on war for any reason leads to more violence, a sign of societal collapse that will fail in the long run. Only refusing to respond in kind will break the cycle.

Faced with the undeniable existence of kings and armies, Buddhism defined the ideal king as one who rules and triumphs by righteousness rather than force, and does not turn to violence to attain lawful order. The noble duties are to provide for and protect all. Buddha, like Marx later, looked forward to states becoming irrelevant and disappearing.

Much as when Rome later turned to Christianity, problems emerged when rulers who never gave up the right to make war converted to Buddhism, bringing with it responsibility for the protection of the faith by the state. Buddhism, somewhat like Greek Orthodoxy, attempted to resolve the difficulty by holding priests and monks to a higher standard than laymen while recognizing that the duties of the latter sometimes require violence but restricting it to defense limited to the minimum force necessary. In some forms, Buddhism asserts that aggression is, but self-defense is not, violence. Despite the restrictions, this led in turn to monks such as the Shaolin, famous and widely admired for their effective and rather spectacular acrobatic fighting style.

The Chinese Tradition (Brekke 2009; Lewis 2000, 2009; Sun Tzu 1963; van de Ven 2000)

Chinese thought focuses primarily on *jus ad bellum*. The “Mandate of Heaven” that originated with the Zhou Dynasty (1046–256 BC) became the basis for frequent violent overthrow of dynasties throughout Chinese history. In effect, this led to the Chinese focus on *jus ad bellum* and the idea that primary responsibility of the ruler to this day was as lawgiver, judge, and protector of social order. Having justified violence, war against barbarians and rebels was conducted without moral constraint, unless commanders found it tactically useful in specific situations.

Sun Tzu is both the presumed author and the title (usually translated as *The Art of War*) of the famed early classic of military theory and political realism. Dated to the early Warring States period (481–221 BC), it assumes that security and power rather than ideals or ethics motivate states. It is a comprehensive manual for commanding armies taking up tactics, strategy, and related matters such as logistics and espionage. It asserts that “all warfare is based on deception,” and, where it does speak of “moral influence” as one of five fundamental factors in war, it really means morale “that which causes the people to be in harmony with their leaders, so that they will accompany them in life and unto death without fear of mortal peril.” There is little in *Sun Tzu* that is concerned with just or unjust war.

In contrast, Mozi (also Mo Tsu, Mo Di, or latinized as Micius, 470–391 BC), founder of Mohism, permitted defensive but not offensive war, challenged the inevitability and nobility of war, forbade offensive, and reluctantly accepted only defensive war if it could not be eliminated.

Rejecting the Mohist doctrine that only defensive warfare is permissible; the *Lu Shi Chun Qiu* [roughly, *Mr. Lu’s Annals*] (Qin Dynasty, 221–207 BC) argued that punitive war to ensure order required offensive campaigns. They were only proper to punish wrongdoing, defend small states from aggressors, or preserve order if declared by a legitimate ruler. Wars to annex territory or for material gain were improper. Furthermore, “righteous troops” should only attack the enemy ruler

and soldiers and avoid pillage and harm to civilians to win them over and prevent their active intervention. To the same end, the campaign should employ propaganda, punish malefactors, and reward joining the rightful ruler.

The Japanese Tradition (Brekke 2009; Cleary 1999, 2005; Friday 2009; Nitobe 1969; Skya 2009; Walker 2018)

In Japan, the equivalent to a just war tradition is *Bushido*, the way of the warrior, concerned only with *jus in bello*. It is a moral code requiring the enumerated virtues of courage, frugality, honesty, honor, loyalty, mastery of martial arts, rectitude, and respect. Originating in the ninth century with precursors that refer to the ideal of a warrior-poet, and formalized under the Tokugawa dynasty (1603–1867), it draws on Confucianism, Shinto, and Zen Buddhism. Nitobe (1969) saw in *Bushido* the sources of the personal qualities most admired by the Japanese, adding calm in the face of danger, compassion for non-enemies of lower status, justice, politeness, propriety, self-control, and sincerity to the growing list of requirements. *Bushido* became a government propaganda tool emphasizing obedience, duty, and self-sacrifice in the name of the state. It was militarized in the twentieth century to inspire soldiers to fight to the end rather than surrender. Japanese treatment of POWs was notorious and led to convictions in postwar criminal trials. However, the first proposals for suicide attacks for which Japan became infamous during WWII were resisted because *Bushido* calls for the warrior to be aware of but not to view death as the purpose of war.

Summary (Bryant 2015; Crowe 2014; De La Casas 1992; de Montesquieu 2002; Fisher and Wicker 2010; Elshtain 1992, 2003; Kant 1983; Stassen 2008; Temes 2003; de Vattel 2009; Walzer 1997)

There are both similarities and differences across time and culture as to what constitutes just grounds for or conduct of war. They address with varying emphasis legitimate war-making

authority, just cause, right intention, right conduct, the treatment of civilians, and the manner in which wars should be resolved. Beginning in the mid-sixteenth-century Europe, the premises began to shift from religion to international law. Francisco de Victoria's mid-sixteenth-century essays *On the Law of War and On the Indians* foreshadowed the trend toward secularization. Bartolomé de Las Casas's *Brief Account of the Devastation of the Indies* (1542) initiated anti-colonialism, noting that the Spanish colonization of the New World brought more suffering than salvation to the Indians. He argued that exploiting natives and slaves was wrong although denunciation then and for years to come had no effect. The elimination of slavery had to wait for the Industrial Revolution, which made it uneconomic (except in a few places where it still exists, ironically to include parts of Africa). The seminal book was Hugo Grotius's *On the Law of War and Peace* (1625). Secularization continued with de Montesquieu's *Spirit of the Laws* (1748), Emmerich de Vattel's *Law of Nations* (1758), and Immanuel Kant's *Perpetual Peace* (1795).

Just War Theory encourages choosing alternatives to war and limiting violence if it does occur. There is general if not quite universal agreement that aggression is unjust, although this may not prevent so much as lead to camouflaging it. Aggression can take the form of an attack against one's own or an allies territory, embassies and consulates, ships at sea, airplanes in flight, satellites in space, overseas citizens, or even "national interests," at best a slippery concept.

Unless the aggressor loses a war, punishment may not be possible, but if it does lose, Just War Theory argues that it can be punished but must not be humiliated, if only for the practical reason that the latter is likely to lead to a subsequent war. Furthermore, it is unclear as to whether to punish one or both responsible officials and the state itself, and if the latter, how. Possible purposes for punishment are deterrence, reform, restraint, and retribution.

Self-defense is just and preemptive defense can be. Article 51 of the United Nations Charter provides that "nothing...shall impair the inherent" right of self-defense. Aggressors trying to appear

just in their actions sometimes claim to be acting defensively, provoke others into attacking them, or even as Germany did in attacking Poland in 1939 fake an enemy attack to justify their aggression.

War should be the "last resort," but there is no objective means of determining if that point has been reached, leaving it to the judgment and experience of national leaders.

The UN derived a right of rebellion against colonial powers from the requirement for just war that denies sovereignty to a tyrannical government, adding to its Charter that "Nothing...can prejudice the right to self-determination, freedom, and independence, as derived from the charter...particularly of peoples under colonial and racist regimes or other forms of alien domination; nor the right of these peoples to struggle to that end and to seek and receive support." The right to "seek and receive support" effectively allows other nations to intervene wherever their strategic interests dictate and to ignore cases where the right of rebellion is exercised against a power too dangerous to confront or too distant from resources and trade routes to be a national interest. That a nation has the right but not the obligation to go to the aid of a nation under attack creates a third type of war. That is, just wars should be fought, unjust wars should never be fought, but some wars are optional – wars that one could rightfully fight but might be imprudent to do so.

With respect to how wars are fought, the Geneva Protocol of 1925 and subsequent conventions (e.g., 1972, 1997) banned biological, chemical, then nuclear weapons, although the first two have been used subsequently by terrorists and rogue states.

The anti-colonial period following World War II, the more-or-less simultaneous Cold War period, and more recently the emergence of terrorism and attacks from non-state actors provide the complex context in which the just war tradition continues to evolve.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Culture and Conflict Resolution](#)
- ▶ [Perpetrator Research](#)

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Kashmir Conflict, The

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Synonyms

[Identity and conflict](#); [Secession and self-determination](#); [Statehood conflict](#)

Description

The Kashmir conflict has two intertwined aspects: firstly, it involves the struggle of the people of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) for their right to self-determination (see ▶ [“Secession and Self-Determination”](#)). Secondly, it involves an

interstate militarized contestation and sovereignty claims between India and Pakistan over the disputed Himalayan region and the erstwhile princely state of J&K, covering 85,000 sq. miles (Snedden 2013, pp. 240–43). Hence, there is the conflict in Kashmir (involving people of J&K and the Indian state) and the interstate conflict between India and Pakistan over Kashmir.

In terms of the interstate contestation, India and Pakistan have fought three wars on J&K – the 1947–1949, the 1965, and the 1999 war – but that did not change the status quo. Since the mid-1950s, Kashmiris ran a nonviolent political movement (see ▶ [“Nonviolence and Civil Resistance”](#)) under the banner of the Plebiscite Front to press for the implementation of the UN-mandated referendum in the region. Indian government, however, suppressed the movement and jailed its leaders and co-opted others. Delaying the referendum favored India’s interest, as it was “already in the possession of the most desirable portion of Kashmir” (McMahon 1996, p. 34), and allowed it to buy time to extend its laws and annex the disputed region through “occupational constitutionalism” (Duschinski and Ghosh 2017). After the Kashmiri self-determination movement took a militant turn in the late 1980s, New Delhi deployed thousands of troops to quell the popular armed uprising in J&K. Relations between New Delhi and Islamabad further deteriorated, as Pakistan continued to provide financial, material, and diplomatic support to the anti-India armed groups fighting in Kashmir and Indian

forces engaged in brutal counterinsurgency operations, leading to severe human rights abuses.

According to some estimates, approximately 500,000 India security personnel remain deployed in J&K, making it one of the most militarized zones in the world (Structures of Violence 2015, pp. 10–17; OHCHR 2018, p. 10), though exact figures of its total troop strength in Kashmir have never been publically disclosed by the Indian government. In the last 30 years of violence by state and non-state actors, estimated 50,000 people have been killed and countless others injured in J&K (Bose 2013, p. 278). Human rights organizations, like the Association of Parents of Disappeared Persons (APDP), have reported around 8000 cases of enforced disappearances and nearly as many cases of sexual violence against Kashmiri women by Indian security personnel, who enjoy legal impunity under the Armed Forces Special Powers Act or AFSPA (OHCHR 2018, p. 11). In 2009, human rights group International People's Tribunal on Human Rights (IPTHR) also reported unmarked mass graves across J&K, containing around 3000 bodies (South Asia Human Rights Documentation Center 2012).

As India and Pakistan engaged in a dialogue process in the early 2000s, a number of conflict-related incidents in J&K gradually decreased, from 3401 in 2003 to 708 in 2008 (Datasheet Jammu and Kashmir – SATP). Yet, the lack of any political breakthrough on the Kashmir issue led to the resurgence of the armed movement, particularly after the state forces violently crushed the post-2008 youth-led anti-India uprisings by killing, maiming, and torturing the Kashmiri protestors. By 2015, a full-blown “new age militancy,” where social media played a prominent role in recruitment and propaganda, had come to being. The new political generation of Kashmiris also widely employed social media as a tool to contest the state. To wean the Kashmiri youth away from the resurgent self-determination movement, Indian state, parallel to its policy of harsh policing, also adopted the policy of “engagement” that involved training and job placements for the Kashmiri youths outside the state in private companies, sports activities, and educational

scholarships (Ganie 2019). This policy had only marginal outcome. Kashmiri youth continued to support and join the armed movement.

Through the military campaign of “Operation All-Out” (launched in 2017), the Modi government attempted to stem the rising tide of the new age militancy that had received further boost after the killing of iconic young militant commander Burhan Muzaffar Wani on July 8, 2016. However, despite killing hundreds of rebels every year (around 640 between 2017 and 2019), local recruitment to the armed groups continued. In February 2019, hostilities broke out between India and Pakistan after a Kashmiri militant affiliated with a Pakistan-based armed group attacked Indian paramilitary convoy in the Pulwama district, killing 40 Indian troopers. India launched a cross-border air strike, targeting a militant camp inside Pakistan, thus setting off a major military crisis. Timely intervention by major powers (China, EU, Russia, Saudi Arabia, and the USA) defused the escalating situation and averted the imminent war between the two nuclear powers of South Asia.

On August 5, 2019, the Kashmir conflict once again took a dramatic turn. After imposing an unprecedented military siege, the Hindu-nationalist government led by Narendra Modi unilaterally revoked Article 370 of the Indian constitution, which retained a semblance of Muslim-majority J&K's semi-autonomous status. The Modi government also dismembered and relegated the disputed region into two federally controlled “Union Territories” – Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh. Wider geopolitical ramifications followed this move. Indian government not only faced international criticism for its harsh measures in Kashmir, but neighboring China also reacted sharply against what its spokesperson Hua Chunying described as India undermining “China's territorial sovereignty by unilaterally changing its domestic law” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, August 6, 2019). A year later, in May 2020, Chinese and Indian armed forces were locked in a deadly brawl in the Ladakh region that borders China. The situation still remains tense even after several rounds of talks at the highest level.

After the Modi government amended the domicile law of J&K in late March 2020, the local Muslim population of the disputed region of J&K fear demographic flooding through settler colonialism. With political and civil liberties severely restricted under the hardline policy of the BJP government, their political responses to the threat remain limited. Pro-India Kashmiri politicians, who opposed the revocation of Article 370, have been silenced, while the dissident organizations have either been banned or their members jailed or kept under strict surveillance. Local media is also facing unprecedented pressures from the state, with journalists being intimidated and harassed and threatened with draconian laws, such as the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (Reporters sans Frontieres, August 5, 2020). For severely curtailed civil and political liberties, J&K's status has, consequently, declined from "Partly Free to Not Free," according to the Freedom House Report 2020.

Introduction

J&K had been under the monarchical rule of Dogra Hindus of the Jammu province since 1846. The people of J&K militated against the British installed ruler in a struggle that ran parallel to Indian struggle for independence. When Britain departed from its South Asian colony in August 1947, the people of J&K faced the unexpected turn in events and the choice of acceding to either Hindu-majority India or Muslim-majority Pakistan. Between 1947 and 1949, these newly independent dominions engaged in a war over the strategically important Himalayan region. Ultimately, the war resulted in the division of J&K after the UN-brokered cease-fire came into effect on January 1, 1949. Since then, India controls nearly two-thirds and Pakistan one-third of the disputed region.

According to the 2011 Census of India, the total population of Indian-controlled J&K was 12,541,302, (12.5 million) with 68% Muslims, 28% Hindus, 1.8% Sikhs, 0.9% Buddhists, and other religious groups. Muslims form the overall majority in 17 out of 22 districts of J&K (Census

of India, 2011). While most Muslims of J&K favor either independence or accession with Pakistan, most Hindus wish to remain with India (Dawn 2007; Bradnock 2010; Nair and Sambanis 2019; Misgar 2020). Ethnically and religiously heterogeneous, Indian-controlled J&K is divided into three areas: The most populous region, the Kashmir Valley, has ten districts with nearly 6.9 million inhabitants (97% of whom are Muslims). The Jammu province has 5.3 million inhabitants, but out of its 10 districts, 4 (Jammu, Kathua, Samba and Udhampur) are Hindu-majority, while the rest (Doda, Poonch, Kishtwar, Rajouri, Ramban, and Reasi) are Muslim-majority. Larger in area size but sparsely populated, Ladakh has two districts: Buddhist-majority Leh (133,487) and Muslim-majority Kargil (160,514). Overall, Muslims constitute 46%, Buddhist 39%, and Hindus 12% of Ladakh's population (Census of India, 2011). This complex demographic composition of the state is one of the factors that makes the Kashmir conflict complicated and had, arguably, also impeded an independent J&K state in 1947. Although Dogras ruled J&K for nearly a century, they did not attempt to unify the different ethnic and religious groups of the state under an overarching national identity. Like most other rulers and princes of South Asia, the last Dogra ruler of J&K Hari Singh too "had not moved with the times by converting themselves into popular administrators running robust economies, empowering their subjects, and able to withstand losing the unequivocal, often uncritical, British support that had nurtured and protected their regimes" (Snedden 2013, p. 153).

India's claim over the erstwhile independent kingdom of J&K rests on the contentious Instrument of Accession, signed by the last Dogra monarch, Hari Singh, with the Indian Union on October 26, 1947. However, citing the Muslim-majority character of the state (which at the time comprised of 77% Muslims out of the total population of 4 million), Pakistan challenged this claim and argued that since the 1947 Partition was accepted on the principle of "religious-based two-nation theory," J&K must become part of Pakistan. The Pakistan state, thus, stressed on the principle of popular referendum as a

mechanism to ratify the accession of J&K to either dominion.

The UN Security Council Resolution 47 (of April 21, 1948) on the “India-Pakistan Question” recognized the right of self-determination of the people of J&K and established a commission for conducting a free and impartial plebiscite to let them decide whether they wanted to join India or Pakistan. Delay, and later denial, of this promised plebiscite by India led to popular discontent within J&K, where people consistently demanded implementation of the UNSC Resolutions. Fearing of losing their previous influence in the new setup, Hindu landlords of the Jammu province wished to integrate with India and started an agitation under the banner of Praja Parishad soon after the UN-mandated cease-fire. The Praja Parishad were aided by paramilitary Hindu-nationalist group Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). Although the leading political party of J&K, National Conference (NC), and its popular leader Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah sided with India on the question of Accession, by the early 1950s there was a fallout between Abdullah and the Indian establishment, resulting in the ouster of Abdullah as the first Prime Minister of J&K. In 1955, Abdullah’s supporters formed a nonviolent political organization, Plebiscite Front, that sought to fight for the implementation of the UNSC Resolutions on J&K. The Plebiscite Front became the central platform for ideologically varied dissident groups and emerged as the most important organization that mobilized Kashmiri public against Indian rule. Indian government, however, suppressed the movement by jailing and exiling its members. In 1971, the Indian state outlawed the organization.

Scholars cite Indian state’s centralizing tendencies, interference, and manipulation of Kashmir’s politics and institutions and systematic erosion of its autonomy as some of the main factors that pushed the Muslim-majority population of the state to intensify their political resistance against India (Bose 2003; Ganguly 1996; Noorani 2011), though the fundamental cause of the conflict between Kashmir and India can be attributed to the “structural paralysis” that characterizes the

relationship between the two entities (Cockell 2000). This structural paralysis is borne out of the incompatibility between how Kashmiris perceive their political identity and sense of group security (see ► “[Conflict, Peace, and Ontological Security](#)”) and how the Indian state views the demand for Kashmiri self-determination. The state-institutional approach of the Indian state refuses to recognize the Kashmiri self-determination demand outside the framework of the Indian constitution, while Kashmiris wish to determine their political future under the auspices of UN-mandated referendum.

After the 1971 India-Pakistan war (that led to the creation of Bangladesh), both countries signed the 1972 Simla Agreement to resolve the Kashmir dispute bilaterally or “by any other peaceful means mutually agreed upon between them” (Simla Agreement July 2, 1972). In 1975, the Plebiscite Front was dissolved following the Accord, infamously known as the Indira-Sheikh Accord, between the Government of India and Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah. In 1953, Abdullah had been unceremoniously deposed by the Nehru administration and kept in prison for 11 years. The 1975 Accord allowed Abdullah to return to power at the demoted position of “chief minister” of J&K, though his decision was not well-received by the public and some of his close comrades, who left his party in protest. However, soon after Abdullah’s death, Kashmiri nationalist organization Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) launched an armed struggle against Indian rule in the late 1980s. This militant turn in the Kashmiri resistance movement was long in the making, but the immediate trigger for it was the rigging of the 1987 elections, which was fought between the unionist National Conference and the Muslim United Front (MUF), a newly formed alliance of the dissident groups, who questioned and opposed the 1947 Accession. New Delhi responded to the armed militancy through a violent campaign of wide-scale security crackdown, which resulted in severe human rights violations against civilians and thus pushed many more Kashmiris to join the guerrilla movement. Pakistan-backed insurgent groups, prominently Hizb-ul-Mujahideen

(HM), started dominating the insurgency by the mid-1990s. In bitter internecine feuds, the JKLF suffered a major blow. In 1994, the group ultimately declared a unilateral cease-fire, which was brokered by the USA, United Kingdom, and a few Indian civil society members. In 1993, All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC), a coalition of over 20 socioreligious and political groups, came into existence as a political front of the Kashmiri self-determination movement. The APHC mainly comprised of the former MUF members. And, in turn, the MUF was mainly comprised of the former Plebiscite Front members.

In 1999, India and Pakistan fought a limited and inconclusive war in the Kargil area of J&K, which brought international spotlight and concern. Both the countries had just a year ago successfully conducted their nuclear tests. In March 2000, US President Bill Clinton visited India to defuse the tensions. Four months later, major insurgent group Hizb-ul-Mujahideen (HM) also dramatically announced a 3-month cease-fire and entered into unconditional negotiations with New Delhi. Internal disagreements in the armed movement, however, made the talks a short-lived affair. In July 2001, the leaders of India and Pakistan met at a summit-level meeting but that did not result in any political breakthrough on Kashmir. Yet, in the aftermath of the militant attack of the Indian parliament in December 2001, India mobilized its troops and weapons to the border, resulting in a tense military standoff with Pakistan for nearly 6 months. After international mediation, the situation deescalated, and by the autumn of 2002 both the countries withdrew their troops from the forward positions. India lost over 1800 soldiers during this military operation, mainly due to land mine and vehicle accidents (Pandit 2003). Considering the risk of hostilities turning into a potential nuclear war, India and Pakistan ultimately resumed the composite dialogue process in 2004 to resolve “all outstanding issues, including Jammu and Kashmir” (India-Pakistan Joint Statement, September 8, 2004).

In January and March 2004, Indian Prime Minister and Home Minister held direct talks with the APHC. Although both sides agreed to a step-by-

step approach to the conflict resolution, the stalemate continued on the framework of the resolution. New Delhi insisted on the solution within the ambit of the Indian constitution. APHC found such proposition unacceptable. Departing from its traditional stance, Pakistan under President Pervez Musharraf dropped the references to the UN Resolutions and instead proposed his “four-point formula” (involving substantial autonomy and phased demilitarization of both sides of J&K). An influential segment of the APHC refused to accept the Musharraf plan and insisted on the sanctity of the UN Resolutions. Ultimately, neither New Delhi-APHC nor New Delhi-Islamabad talks made any headway in resolving the Kashmir conflict.

By the mid-2000s, India had largely subdued the Kashmiri armed movement in the urban centers and also initiated electoral process through which the newly launched Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) came to power in 2002 that proposed the self-rule framework (of shared sovereignty) as a basis for resolving the Kashmir conflict. In the meantime, killings continued and so did low-level armed militancy. Between 2000 and 2005, around 16,000 people were killed in J&K, including 8600 civilians (Datasheet Jammu & Kashmir, SATP). In the same period, Pakistan-based armed group Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM) introduced deadly suicide bombings against Indian targets in J&K. However, after 9/11, as the USA stance toward armed groups turned adverse and Pakistan became the frontline US partner in “war on terror,” President Pervez Musharraf banned JeM along with another armed group, Lashkar-e-Tayyaba. Both were actively involved in the Kashmir insurgency.

Nonetheless, the 2008 mass anti-India uprising changed the nature of the conflict, as the Kashmiri resistance shifted from the armed insurrection to an unarmed struggle. The 2008 anti-India mass uprising was followed by youth-led street protests of 2009 and 2010. These episodes of contention were violently crushed by Indian security forces by killing, maiming, jailing, and torturing the young demonstrators (Kak 2011). Continued state repression instigated a new insurgent

movement that gained momentum, through surging recruitment of the local youth, and evolved into a full-blown insurgency by 2015. Iconic rebel leader Burhan Muzaffar Wani became the face of this “new age militancy.” His death in July 2016 triggered the third anti-India uprising in Kashmir and inspired hundreds of young Kashmiris to join the armed militant organizations. According to the 2017 data shared by the then Chief Minister of J&K Mehbooba Mufti in the J&K Legislative Assembly, 223 civilians were killed in the three uprisings in 2008, 2010, and 2016 (Outlook, 30 January 2017), while the civil society groups estimated that more than 250 people were killed during these uprisings (PUCL 2016).

Although, because of less than 1000 deaths per year, the Kashmir conflict is sometimes categorized as “a low-intensity” armed conflict, there are wider socioeconomic implications of the conflict that such categorization fails to capture. For example, continuation of the conflict has not only hit the local economy but also discouraged prospective investors from investing in Kashmir for its image of being a “conflict zone.” As a result, not many jobs have been generated for the expanding pool of educated youth. According to the 2016 Economic Survey Report of J&K, unemployment rate in the state (among the age group 18–29 years old) was 24%, which was higher than the national average of India, 13%. Likewise, militarization of civilian spaces, frequent violence, and persisting volatile situation have badly affected the mental health of the local population, with nearly 1.4 million adults in the Kashmir Valley suffering from significant mental distress, according to a 2015 survey conducted by Doctors Without Borders (Kashmir Mental Health Survey Report 2015).

After coming to power in 2014, the Modi government adopted a relatively more hardline policy on Kashmir. This hardline policy, primarily emanating from Hindu-nationalist BJP’s ideological stance on Muslim-majority Kashmir, manifested itself first in 2016 when the Indian state forces indiscriminately fired pump action shotguns (also called “pellet guns”) on Kashmiri protestors and blinded scores of them (Zia 2019b). To counter the youth-led street protests and new age

militancy, the Modi government tasked the security establishment with pacifying the restive population of the disputed region. Consequently, in 2017, after 15 years’ hiatus, Indian army reintroduced cordon and search operations (CASOs) that involve intrusive house-to-house searches and frisking of civilians. Between 2017 and 2019, more than 1000 CASOs were launched by the Indian state forces across Kashmir (JKCCS Annual Human Rights Report, 2017, 2018, 2019). These CASOs generated fear and resentment among Kashmiris. In different villages, particularly in southern Kashmir, residents accused the Indian state forces of harassment and vandalizing their properties during CASOs. Moreover, to deter the local population from giving shelter to militants, the Indian state forces also started blasting the houses where militants were holed up. Continuing with this hardline approach, the BJP government stripped Kashmir of its autonomy immediately after Modi’s reelection in 2019 and, through a wide-scale security crackdown, rounded up political leaders, members, and civil society activists. In the altered political condition, Kashmiri parties were denied avenues to mobilize the public and organize protests against the arbitrary move of the federal government. Kashmiri diaspora and Pakistan sought to highlight the human rights crisis in Kashmir and corner India at international forums, but India’s economic clout and strategic partnership with important international players, such as the USA and France, made it immune to any serious diplomatic crisis or external pressure. Pakistan’s weak economic situation along with relatively unfavorable international image because of its patronage of armed groups did not furnish enough diplomatic heft to it to enlist international support on Kashmir.

In the current scenario, it is unlikely that India and Pakistan will resume talks on Kashmir anytime soon, and the absence of any dialogue process on the main cause of friction between the two countries is going to keep the situation in the region on the boil. China has its interests in the Ladakh region, which it will seek to secure. That will implicate China in the larger Kashmir conflict, where it will balance (or even enhance) the position of Pakistan against India.

Historical Background: 1586–1947

Historical Himalayan region of Kashmir lost its sovereignty after the Mughal Emperor Jalal Uddin Akbar deposed its last independent monarch, Yusuf Shah Chak, and annexed the region in 1586 (Khan 1953, p. 194). Mughal satraps ruled Kashmir for nearly three centuries but ultimately lost the famed province in 1752 to the powerful Afghan army of the Durrani Empire, who annexed some important Mughal territories in a series of attacks between 1749 and 1757. By the early nineteenth century, the Mughal Empire had weakened considerably, and the Durrani were also in disarray due to the internecine strife. Encouraged by this state of affairs in its neighborhood, the Sikh Kingdom of Punjab seized the Afghan territory of Kashmir in 1819. However, in the First Anglo-Sikh War of 1846, the Sikhs were defeated by the powerful British East India Company, who by then had consolidated its control over much of the Indian subcontinent and were just awaiting to annex the rich and fertile land of Punjab. Sikh Empire's defeat in the war resulted in the Treaty of Lahore (March 9, 1846), under which the British East India Company forced the Sikh ruler to cede some of its territories, including the "provinces of Kashmir and Hazara," in lieu of the war indemnity of one and half crore (15 million) Nanakshahi rupees (Sikh currency). In a separate imperial arrangement called the Treaty of Amritsar (March 16, 1846), the British East India Company transferred the sovereign rights to Maharaja Gulab Singh and "male heirs of his body" the "hilly and mountainous country" of Kashmir (Treaty of Amritsar). An ethnic Dogra Hindu, Gulab Singh was the most important army general of the Sikh Kingdom, but he had helped the company to win the 1846 war after entering a secret deal with them (Huttenback 1968, p. 80–82). The company appropriated Kashmir province to Singh (for 7.5 million Nanakshahi rupees) and recognized him as an independent ruler, a decision that was apparently taken out of political expediency, as the British did not have military resources to occupy the distant mountainous country of Kashmir. The then Governor-General of India Lord Hardinge reasoned that rewarding Singh

would signal to "other Chiefs of Asia the benefits which accrue from an adherence to British interests" (as cited in Huttenback 1968, p. 82). Moreover, through the sale of the territory, the company could recover the costs incurred during the expensive back-to-back wars – the First Anglo-Afghan War (1839–1842) and the First Anglo-Sikh War (1845–1846).

Clubbing together his other territorial possessions, Gulab Singh created a sovereign principality "Jammu and Kashmir," which accepted the British suzerainty. Singh and his successors would rule Kashmir for almost 100 years (1846–1947). They imposed heavy taxation system on the indigenous populations to recover the payments made to purchase Kashmir. Such a taxation system badly affected the urban artisan community and the rural peasantry and forced many of them to migrate out of Kashmir and settle in the neighboring British Indian province of Punjab. A large number of Kashmiris had already settled in Punjab from the previous waves of migration caused by the great famine of 1832 and the miserable conditions under the Sikh rule (Jalal 2000, p. 352). By 1881, nearly 50,000 inhabitants in Punjab spoke Kashmiri language. The 1911 British India census recorded 177,549 Kashmiri Muslims in Punjab, of these less than 10,000 spoke Kashmiri. Ten years later, in 1921, Kashmiri Muslims in Punjab numbered 169,761, but only 4690 persons spoke Kashmiri, indicating that the majority of the Kashmiri community settled in the province had adopted the local Punjabi language (Census of India, 1921, p. 309).

By and large, the Dogra state was a *de facto* Hindu state, where non-Muslims fared better in comparison to Muslims, who, despite being in the majority, remained in a marginalized position (Rai 2004). However, as a paramount power, the British made some interventions in Kashmir and forced reforms in the local administrative system (these actions, though, were necessitated largely due to the growing political importance of Kashmir for the British in the context of their imperial rivalry with Russia, which bordered the frontiers of Kashmir). For example, in 1899, the British government nominated a Punjabi Muslim to the Maharaja's Council of advisors, the first Muslim appointed to

such a sinecure post in a Muslim-majority state (Lone 2019, p. 308). Apart from the British interventions, the petition campaigns of the local landed elite were also instrumental in creating marginal improvements in the socioeconomic conditions of the majority Muslim community of Kashmir at the turn of the twentieth century (Rai 2004: 254–56). By the early 1920s, “an embryonic Muslim political class” had emerged that fought for social, economic and political rights of Kashmiri Muslims (Copland 1981: 235). Encompassing newly educated young men, middle-class professionals, vast impoverished peasantry, and underprivileged urban artisans, the fledgling political formation presented a major challenge to the autocratic Dogra monarchy in the 1930s and 1940s. Using the argument of relative deprivation and employing religiously informed idioms, the new middle-class professionals-driven Kashmiri leadership embarked on a process of political mobilization to demand for a “responsible government.” They held meetings in mosques and, during congregational Friday prayers, denounced the sectarian nature of the Dogra Monarchy, which while governing a predominantly Muslim polity had employed mostly Punjabi and Kashmiri Hindus in the administration, and institutionalized discriminatory policies. This new leadership received support from influential voices from the diasporic Kashmiri community (including the renowned poet-philosopher of the Indian subcontinent Muhammad Iqbal) and a sympathetic Lahore press that ran campaigns to highlight the underprivileged position of Kashmiri Muslims in the Dogra state and asked for reforms in the system of governance in Kashmir. Historian Chitralakha Zutshi (2004, p. 191–92) notes, “Kashmiri Muslim expatriates in the Punjab had retained emotional and familial ties to their soil and felt compelled to raise the banner of freedom for Kashmir and their brethren in the Valley, thus launching bitter critiques of the Dogra administration.”

Although a major political unrest happened in 1924 in the form of a labor strike organized by the workers of the state-owned Silk Factory, it was the civilian uprising of July 13, 1931, that challenged the monarchical authority to a considerable degree. With the help of the British, this Muslim revolt

was immediately quelled by the Dogra state by carrying out a series of massacres and jailing the demonstrators (Ahmad 2017). The 1931 uprising and the consequent political unrest, however, was a watershed moment. It had political repercussions both internally and externally. The lobby groups in the neighboring British Indian provinces mobilized in support of Kashmiris and pressurized the British and Dogra governments. Under pressure that the unaddressed grievances of Kashmiri Muslims may have repercussions in its provinces where there were substantial Muslim population, the British forced the Dogra ruler to initiate reforms to allow fair representation of Muslims in the educational sector and state jobs. The disaffected Muslim population organized itself under a new political organization Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference (JKMC).

In November 1931, the Dogra monarchy set up a commission of enquiry (headed by Justice J.B. Glancy), which in its report in May 1932, among other things, recommended that the Dogra ruler allows formation of associations and political parties and press freedom and also recommended the establishment of a legislative assembly. Acceptance of these recommendations by the Dogra ruler opened political opportunities for Kashmiris, who went on to form a representative body, the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference (JKMC) in October 1932. Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah was appointed as its first president and Choudhry Ghulam Abbas as the secretary general. To include people of other faiths and build a broad-based movement, Abdullah changed the name of JKMC into Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (JKNC) in 1939, a decision that caused a split within the party. Some leaders saw this move as detrimental to the Muslim interests. Abdullah’s growing affinity with Indian National Congress (INC), particularly his growing friendship with Jawaharlal Nehru, made Abbas wary. He wished that Muslims of J&K affiliate themselves with the Muslim League headed by Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan.

In 1944, in a 44-page manifesto “Naya Kashmir” (new Kashmir), the JKNC outlined an ambitious program for a future secular and democratic

state of J&K, modeled on the socialist system of governance and planned economy. Two years later, borrowing from India's anti-colonial struggle, the JKNC, under the leadership of Abdullah, also launched the anti-monarchical "Quit Kashmir movement" in 1946. Abdullah forcefully denounced the 1846 Treaty of Amritsar, under which the despotic rule of the Dogra monarchy was imposed on Kashmiris, and sought a government that enjoyed the will of the people. In his April 1946 telegram to the British Cabinet Mission that was visiting Kashmir, he said that "We wish to declare that no sale deed, however sacrosanct, can condemn more than four million men and women to servitude of an autocrat when will to live under this rule is no longer there" (Dhar 1951, p. 149). He offered to pay 7.5 million rupees to the Dogra ruler to vacate, the amount for which the British had sold Kashmir to the ruler's great grandfather, Gulab Singh. Abdullah's movement faced major hurdles and fizzled out soon. Most non-Muslims of J&K venerated the Dogra Maharaja, because he was their benefactor and the reason for their relative affluence and social, economic, and religious privileges. As a result, they did not support the Quit Kashmir movement. The Muslim Conference also remained indifferent to the movement for a different set of reasons (Lone 2019, pp. 408–09). On May 20, 1946, Abdullah and other leaders of the JKNC were arrested and tried for sedition. Abdullah was sentenced to 9 years of prison (Bazaz 1954, pp. 258–59). Abdullah supporters protested and observed strikes against the arrest. The Dogra police, however, killed 20 demonstrators and jailed hundreds of others and ultimately quelled the Quit Kashmir movement (Para 2019, p. 113).

In early 1947, the last Dogra ruler, Maharaja Hari Singh, faced an internal armed rebellion from the Poonch province over newly introduced exorbitant tax rules (Snedden 2013). Between August and September 1947, the Dogra state had unleashed a "systematic [...] persecution of Muslims in areas of Poonch, Mirpur and Jammu." and by the third week of September, nearly 18,000 Muslims from different villages were killed (Rashid 2020, p. 6). By mid-October, further 20,000 Muslims had been killed by the Dogra

forces and the members of the extreme Hindu-nationalist Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). More than 200,000 Muslims were also displaced in this ethnic cleansing, which changed the demographic composition of the Jammu province (Snedden 2013, pp. 55–56), with the Muslim population constituting around 40% of the Jammu district in 1941, dropping significantly to fewer than 7% as per the last census (in 2011). In the meantime, large-scale sectarian violence (involving Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs) had ensued after the partition of British India, which pitted communities in Punjab and Delhi against each other. As Iffat Rashid (2020) argues, news and rumors about the Muslim massacres in the Jammu province and sectarian bloodletting in East Punjab and Delhi in September had politicized the tribal population from the North-West Frontier (NWFP). Consequently, in the third week of October, they launched an armed raid and entered J&K, where they were joined by the rebels of Poonch (Rashid 2020, pp. 5–6). At the time, the chief minister of NWFP was ethnic Kashmiri Abdul Qayyum Khan, who organized the militia for the Kashmir operation (Effendi 2007: 149). Forming a sizable military force, the rebels defeated the Dogra state forces, captured a few important districts, and proclaimed a provisional "Azad [free] Jammu and Kashmir government." Faced with this extraordinary situation, the Dogra ruler sought military assistance from India, who offered to help on the condition that he first signs the Instrument of Accession. Maharaja wished to keep his sovereign rule but eventually signed the document in October 1947 with a proviso that India may make laws for J&K only on three matters: defense, external affairs, and communications. This Instrument of Accession (IoA) later became the basis for Article 370 of the Indian constitution that guaranteed the autonomous status of J&K, even though according to the principles of India's Independence Act, where the ruler and the ruled happened to be from different religious denominations, the Instrument of Accession was to be ratified in accordance to the popular referendum, as was the case with Junagadh. The denial of the right to exercise the vote became the source of contention and the main reason of the Kashmir conflict.

What made the autonomous status of J&K possible was the unique historical circumstances, under which the IoA was signed by the last Dogra ruler. Being a Muslim-majority state, J&K was expected to either become part of Pakistan or remain independent as its Dogra ruler wished. As the rebels aided by the tribal militias advanced toward Srinagar, the Maharaja fled from Srinagar, the summer capital of the state. It was against the backdrop of these events Hari Singh signed the Instrument of Accession as India offered military help only on the condition that the ruler of the state sign the accession deed.

On October 27, 1947, India airlifted its troops to Kashmir and soon after the first India-Pakistan war broke out. In January 1948, India took the matter to the UN complaining against Pakistani's aggression. The UNSC, however, passed resolutions and asked for a free and impartial plebiscite to ascertain the wishes of the population of J&K. Indian government under Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru pledged to hold the referendum but continued to delay it until Indian laws under Article 370 of the Indian constitution were gradually extended to J&K, thus consolidating New Delhi's grip over the region, where it cultivated a political elite and proxies through which Kashmir was controlled and managed. New Delhi frequently intervened in Kashmiri politics, allowing (or facilitating) the local client regime to rig elections in their own favor, and jail and exile the dissidents who demanded the plebiscite (Bose 2003). After Nehru's death in 1964, India extended many more Union laws to Kashmir than negotiated under the terms of Article 370 and the 1952 Delhi Agreement. This created further discontent among Kashmiris who wished to retain their state's autonomy and exercise their right to self-determination under the UN-mandated plebiscite.

Post-Colonial India and the Kashmir Question

On account of his party National Conference's support to the 1947 Accession, Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah was able to negotiate substantial

autonomy for J&K, which, unlike other states that acceded to India, was allowed to have a constitutional assembly to ratify the terms of the agreement with India. Under Article 370, the provisions of the Instrument of Accession were formalized, limiting the powers of the Indian parliament over J&K and exempting the full applicability of the Indian constitution to the state. J&K retained a separate constitution and a national flag, with its chief executive being called prime minister and the nominal head Sadr-e-Riyasat (president), who was to be elected by the J&K Legislative Assembly. According to Duschinski and Ghosh (2017, p. 317), "Article 370 was designed to temporarily manage the constitutional relationship between J&K and India until the political will of the people could be established and a final settlement reached through the state's own constitutional drafting process." This constitutional arrangement came in the context of the India-Pakistan contestation over the disputed region and the Security Council resolutions that instituted a commission to hold a plebiscite to settle the issue. The UNSC Resolution 80 (March 14, 1950) had asked: "that steps should be taken forthwith for the demilitarization of the State [of J&K] and for the expeditious determination of its future in accordance with the freely expressed will of the inhabitants" (Resolution 80, 1950, p. 2). Despite being a non-permanent member at the time, India had abstained during the voting on Resolution 80 along with Yugoslavia, while Soviet Union had remained absent and 8 voted in favor.

In the early 1950s, the NC passed the Abolition of Big Landed Estates Act and the Distressed Debtors Relief Act that benefited a large segment of the rural population (mostly Muslims and Dalits) and thus gained a sizable constituency for the party that dominated the politics of J&K. In 1953, however, Abdullah was deposed by the Nehru government on the charges of conspiring for J&K's independence. In his place, Nehru installed Ghulam Muhammad Bakshi, whose regime (1953–1964) acted with impunity in suppressing the dissident voices. But, the idea of Rai shumari (plebiscite) did not vanish and continued to define the political discourses of the struggle for Kashmiri self-determination led

by the Plebiscite Front and other dissident organizations.

With Abdullah in jail, the president of India, in 1954, proclaimed the Constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) Order and added Article 35A to the Indian constitution that empowered the Jammu and Kashmir State Constituent Assembly (convened in October 1951) to define the permanent residents, who were given the special rights and privileges. The 1954 Presidential Order, though, also extended more Indian laws to J&K than originally agreed under the terms of the 1947 Accession, Article 370, and 1952 Delhi Agreement. Once the J&K Constituent Assembly dissolved in November 1956, no authority could have made further amendments to Article 370, yet newer powers were extended to the Union government viz-a-viz J&K, a process defined by A.G. Noorani (2011, p. 8) as “unconstitutional.” In 1965, the local client regime also replaced the nomenclature of J&K’s prime minister with “chief minister” and unconstitutionally changed the position of *Sadar-i-Riyasat* to a governor, who would now be appointed by New Delhi. This gradual erosion of J&K autonomous status, along with the autocratic nature of the client regimes that restricted political rights and other freedoms, became one of the reasons why increasing discontentment was caused among Kashmiris, many of whom continued to support the dissident organizations, such as the Plebiscite Front, which demanded the right to self-determination through a free and impartial plebiscite conducted under the auspices of the international community and the withdrawal of the armed forces and the restoration of civil liberties and free elections.

A number of factors coalesced to create conditions for widespread political unrest and protests throughout the 1960s, often spearheaded by students and youth, who desired to change the status quo (David Lockwood 1969). Firstly, as the client regimes in J&K used colonial-era laws, such as the Preventive Detention Act 1954, to stifle democratic dissent (Duschinski and Ghosh 2017, p. 319), resentment against the state prevailed among a large section of the population, and that resentment was often pricked whenever Indian leaders denied the possibility of holding the UN-

sanctioned plebiscite in J&K. Secondly, mysterious disappearance of the holy relic or *moi-e-muqaddas* (hair strand of Prophet Muhammad) housed in the Hazratbal Shrine in Srinagar triggered massive protests in the winter of 1963. This event, while heightening anti-India sentiments in the region and unifying the otherwise internally divided Muslim community of J&K, “also became an instrument for people to articulate their sentiments related to the political future of Kashmir more pronouncedly” (Kanth 2018, p. 62). And, thirdly, negotiations and mediation efforts on the Kashmir issue consistently failed. In 1963, India and Pakistan engaged in direct negotiations on Kashmir and solutions “other than the plebiscite were seriously considered by Pakistan,” and India too, reportedly, was willing to cede parts of Kashmir to “straighten out the border” (Lamb 1966, p. 102). But, these negotiations failed, ultimately. The 1965 war over J&K did not change the status quo, either. Yet, after the war, representatives of the major world powers visited South Asia to renew their efforts to get the Kashmir issue resolved. In December 1968, British foreign minister visited New Delhi and offered mediation on the Kashmir issue, but New Delhi rejected the offer. In January 1969, Shah of Iran tried to mediate on Kashmir, but he too failed. In May 1969, Russian Prime Minister Kosygin visited Pakistan and presented a new formula of softening the borders to Pakistani leaders, but they did not accept it. In July 1969, American President Nixon visited New Delhi with a proposal, but Indian leaders rejected it. Sensing that negotiations and international mediation on Kashmir were failing and the 1965 war also did not change anything, the Plebiscite Front leadership went further ahead to amend their relationship with New Delhi and finally decided to contest elections in 1970.

Between the 1950s and 1970s, the state-led modernization process, coupled with wide-ranging land reforms, had ushered in mass education and improved the socioeconomic conditions of the majority Muslim population. A critical mass of politically aware population had come of age that became assertive about their civil liberties and political rights as they confronted the system that

disregarded the democratic norms and used violence and coercion to rule (Ganguly 1996; Bose 2003). New Delhi's tampering with the provisions underpinning J&K's autonomy and its continuous interferences in its institutions and internal politics was widely perceived as an attempt to forcibly integrate the state with India and hence vigorously resisted by the people of J&K, especially in the Kashmir region, where the self-determination movement was widely supported. Although the vast majority opposed the status quo, the Kashmiri self-determination movement itself was composed of a variety of "parties and protest networks [with] different identities and structures. Some were full-fledged political parties, others were collections of angry young men, and others mixed political and social activism" (Staniland 2014, p. 65).

In 1975, the Plebiscite Front was ultimately dissolved after its patron Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah signed an accord with the Indira Gandhi administration, whereby Abdullah accepted India's sovereignty over J&K in lieu of returning to power as the chief minister, but the smaller dissident groups, including those that branched out from the PF, continued their resistance against Indian rule. Inspired by the political struggles in Vietnam, Algeria, Palestine, and the Latin America, some Kashmiri youth formed subversive groups. Along with the former Plebiscite Front members who opposed the 1975 Accord, different dissident groupings (including religious, student, and trade union organizations) created an alliance Muslim United Front in September 1986 to contest the 1987 elections for the J&K Assembly. The MUF mobilized thousands of people for its rallies in Srinagar's Iqbal Park in November 1986 and March 1987. When the elections were held on March 23, 1987, an unprecedented voter turnout (80%) was witnessed. Due to the MUF, many first-time voters participated in the polls. The MUF, however, was targeted by the state (Widmalm 1997, pp. 1020–21). Elections were heavily rigged in favor of the pro-India NC and Congress, while the MUF members were detained in large numbers and tortured in jails. By the autumn of 1989, the MUF collapsed, and with it

a nonviolent movement for Kashmiri self-determination.

Armed Uprising, Deep Militarization, and Human Rights Abuses

Many young Kashmiris who participated in the 1987 elections crossed the Line of Control (LoC) and received arms training and weapons from Pakistan. Members of the Kashmiri nationalist organization Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front launched the armed movement and started targeting the state symbols and armed forces. On August 1, 1988, they blasted the telegraph office in Srinagar and two other government buildings and carried out a series of assassinations of selected individuals, including political workers and suspected informers. By late 1989, situation in Kashmir had turned explosive. On the call of the dissident groups, and due to the general mistrust in democratic institutions, majority of the people in Kashmir Valley boycotted the elections for the Indian parliament due in November 1989. The poll percentage in the three constituencies was as follows: Baramulla (5.48%), Srinagar (0%), and Anantnag 5.07%), while for the entire J&K it was 25.60% (Election Commission of India, 1989, p. 42). In December 1989, JKLF abducted the daughter of newly appointed Home Minister of India Mufti Muhammad Sayed and got their five jailed colleagues released in ransom. The JKLF rebels paraded through the old city among the jubilant crowd, an event that is said to have bolstered the morale of the insurgents and their sympathizers. Many young men joined the ranks of the militant outfits after the Gaw Kadal massacre of January 21, 1990, in which Indian paramilitary forces killed over 50 civilian demonstrators, who were protesting after the news about the raids on civilian homes and molestation of women during the previous night's military crackdown reached the city. Between April and May, most of the estimated 150,000–170,000 Kashmiri Hindus of Kashmir Valley fled "due to a combination of militant activity, selective assassinations, the breakdown of law and order, and the

implementation of a policy of violent counter insurgency” (Datta 2017, p. 8).

Starting as a vanguard insurgent group, JKLF soon fragmented, paving the way for pro-Pakistan Hizbul Mujahideen (HM), who came to dominate the insurgency since the early 2000s. JKLF’s core political objective was to regain sovereignty of Kashmir through popular armed mobilization against Indian rule. JKLF, however, did not have a clear road map, so it was largely fighting “an ad hoc war” (Staniland 2014, p. 74). JKLF’s core leadership was Valley-centric, composed of “a group of urban lower-middle-class teenagers and young men who knew each other from Srinagar before the war,” and it lacked preexisting social base and networks to develop a robust institutional structure (Staniland 2014, p. 74). The organization allowed a range of recruits to train in its camps and with its weapons; some of these recruits belonged to the parties that advocated a different ideology than JKLF. As Staniland (2014) argues, this “provided opportunities for the JKLF’s future rivals to gain training, weaponry, and access to Pakistani patronage and sanctuary. The emerging cadres of the JKLF were highly heterogeneous, both socially and ideologically” (p. 75). HM, on the other hand, was able to build strong institutional structure by mobilizing its ties with the *Jamaat-e-Islami*, whose cadres and sympathizers sustained the outfit, even after the brutal counterinsurgency phase killed thousands of its members. Although initially hesitant to support the nascent insurgency, pro-Pakistan Jamaat eventually backed the HM (and internally captured its leadership) to counterbalance the JKLF. By 1995, HM had 2500 cadres (Schofield 2003, p. 175). Initially concentrated in the urban centers, the armed insurgency gradually moved to the rural parts of Kashmir and also spread to the Muslim-majority districts of Jammu, such as Doda, Poonch Rajouri, and Kishtwar. Most of the persons involved in the initial phase of the armed movement belonged to what Staniland (2014, p. 65) calls “nonviolent politicized opposition blocs,” the ones who had branched out of the PF and MUF and other dissident and social activism groupings.

By February 1990, over 100,000 paramilitary, army, and police personnel were deployed to Kashmir to crush the armed rebellion (Schofield 2003: 150). In July 1990, under the Armed Forces (Jammu and Kashmir) Special Ordinance, Indian military received wide-ranging powers, and then with the introduction of the Armed Forces (Jammu and Kashmir) Special Powers Act in September, they were provided legal impunity from prosecution and given extraordinary powers to search, arrest, and kill. Consequently, Indian troops often resorted to “arson, burning of shops and houses in retaliation for a recent ambush by the militants” (Schofield 2003: 156). Human rights groups have reported 8000–10,000 cases of enforced disappearance (Zia 2019a) and as many cases of sexual violence against Kashmiri women (Asia Watch 1993), including the Kunan Poshpora mass rape of February 23, 1991, wherein Indian troops of four Rajputana Rifles regiment were accused of raping at least 31 Kashmiri women in the twin villages of Kunan and Poshpora in north Kashmir’s Kupwara district (Batool et al. 2016). Some insurgents have also been involved in ransom, rape, and killings of noncombatants, though “it does not compare with the scale and depth of abuse by Indian State forces” (Seema Kazi).

Eventually, through relentless counterinsurgency operations, Indian forces killed a significant number of insurgents. Other rebels were either arrested or made to surrender, thus considerably weakening the Kashmiri armed opposition during the first phase (1988–2003). In this period, 18,000 rebels, 5000 Indian security forces personnel, and 13,000 civilians were killed in the conflict-related violence. Also, the “collapse of most of the Kashmiri armed groups [during this period] occurred when internal feuds exploded into fratricide and the Indian state exploited these organizational divisions” (Staniland 2014, p. 60).

In 1993, over 20 dissident groups formed a nonviolent organization All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC or Hurriyat) to politically represent the Kashmiri self-determination movement. Hurriyat’s tactics mainly included calling for *hartal* (general strikes), boycotting elections, and

observing Indian army's landing in Kashmir (October 27), India's Republic (January 26), and Independence Day (August 15) as "black day." To encourage political groups in Kashmir to become part of the election process, New Delhi indicated that it may be willing to consider some degree of autonomy for J&K but will not allow return to the pre-1953 status. Such a proposal, while somehow acceptable to the NC, did not find the audiences with the Hurriyat, which rejected a solution within the framework of the Indian constitution and asked for the implementation of the UNSC Resolutions. Refusal to take part in the electoral politics limited the options for the APHC, though through election boycott and civil disobedience campaigns, the APHC tried to pressurize the Indian government to resolve the Kashmir conflict. In 1999, India and Pakistan fought third ("limited") war on Kashmir, but that did not change the boundaries. Both sides suffered between 700 and 1400 fatalities, though figures are disputed.

After the 2003 cease-fire on LoC and initiation of the composite dialogue process between India and Pakistan, the conflict-related incidents gradually decreased in J&K. While over 3,000 people were killed in 2003, the yearly fatalities came down to 700 by 2008. However, in the summer of 2008, a massive anti-India uprising took place in Kashmir after the controversy over the transfer of 100-acres of forest land to a Hindu shrine. Muslims of J&K feared that on the demarcated land for the shrine, India was planning to create Hindu settlements within an intention to alter the demography of the region and turn Kashmir into another Palestine. Under pressure from the public demonstrations, the J&K government rescinded the land transfer order, which triggered counter-protests in the Hindu-majority districts of Jammu where the rioters attacked the supply trucks passing through Jammu from mainland India to Kashmir (and vice versa). In response to the continued economic blockade, people in Kashmir Valley on the call of trade bodies and apple growers mobilized and marched toward the historical trade route that passes via Muzaffarabad, the capital of Pakistan-administered Kashmir. The marchers demanded the opening of the Muzaffarabad

road. Indian security forces, however, intercepted them and shot down the protestors, including a senior Hurriyat leader, Sheikh Aziz, whose death became the cause of another big anti-India rally in the Pampore town. Between August 11 to August 22, four back-to-back anti-India rallies were taken out by the Hurriyat, galvanizing tens of thousands of people across Kashmir. The scheduled Lal Chowk rally for August 24, however, was violently crushed by the state by imposing stringent curfew, detaining Hurriyat leaders, and killing four persons and injuring 200 others, "as the CRPF and the Army opened fire on protesters, who defied curfew and staged demonstrations, at several places in Kashmir" (Bukhari 2008). Later protests often took violent turn, with young men clashing with the Indian paramilitary and police by throwing stones at them. Rape of two women – Asiya and Neelofar – in south Kashmir's Shopian town in May 2009, sparked another episode of protests that turned into Valley-wide anti-India demonstrations. Yet, in the summer of 2010, mass anti-India street protests broke out in Kashmir after J&K police on June 11 killed the 17-year-old Tufail Mattoo in Downtown Srinagar, where youth had gathered to protest against the killing of three Kashmiri porters by Indian troops in a staged gunfight in Machil area of Kupwara district and pass them off as foreign militants.

Post-2008 Youth-Led Political Mobilizations

According to the 2011 census, over 30% of people in the Kashmir region with 6.9 million inhabitants were between 15 and 30 years old. This youth bulge was a major factor in the political mobilizations of the post-2008 period. Social media also played a role. While 25% youth in Kashmir had access to social media in 2010, it rose to 30% by 2014 and then to 70% within a year (Jaleel 2018). Among the 220 people killed in the last three anti-India uprisings (2008, 2010, and 2016) in Kashmir, majority were teenagers and young men. J&K Police arrested nearly 11,000 protesters between 2016 and 2019, of which 8750 were

detained in 2016 alone (Geelani 2018). Many of these detainees were young men.

At the forefront of the post-2008 anti-India uprisings, Kashmiri youth often used stone pelting as the tool of political protest. Approximately 13,000 stone-throwing incidents occurred in Kashmir between 2009 and 2019, with nearly 2800 such incidents happening during the 2016 uprising triggered by the killing of iconic militant commander Burhan Wani (Ganie 2021, p. 116). In 2016, Indian armed forces frequently violently came down upon the peaceful rallies that also provoked violent protests by the youth (Raiot, 6 September 2016). To crush the growing wave of youth-led rebellion against the state, India introduced pump-action shotguns in 2010 as “non-lethal” crowd control measure. Described by a UN report (2018, p. 4) as “one of the most dangerous weapons used against protestors,” the pellet guns have had devastating consequences, as they fire metal pellets that can inflict severe internal organ damage on their targets. Since 2010, thousands of Kashmiri civilians have suffered pellet injuries and at least 24 have also died, including eight children (Jammu Kashmir Coalition of Civil Society 2018: 10). During the 2016 uprising, 6221 civilians suffered pellet wounds, including 782 eye injuries. With nearly 1500 persons suffering eye injuries and 139 getting blinded between 2016 and 2019, the state forces have carried out the (probable) first mass blinding in the world to quell civilian protests (Parvaiz 2019b).

As the post-9/11 political environment changed the attitude of the USA toward armed insurgencies, the Kashmiri armed movement also began weakening after Pakistan gradually started withdrawing its support. In the meantime, India and Pakistan also started the composite dialogue process, which also caused the decline in the conflict-related incidents. Nonetheless, failure of the India-Pakistan Composite Dialogue Process (2004–2008) to achieve any political breakthrough on the Kashmir issue and India’s violent suppression of the youth-led street protests led to the revival of militancy in Kashmir that emerged in 2013 and fully formed by 2015. Recruits were mostly local young men, some of whom had faced

police torture and harassment for participating in post-2008 anti-India street protests. A police survey suggested that active rebels influenced new recruits who resided in the same or adjoining villages, particularly if they were *Jamaat-e-Islami* strongholds (Jaleel 2018). Funerals of fallen rebels while mobilizing anti-India protests also acted as sites of recruitment. A few Kashmiri policemen after fleeing with their service rifles have also joined militant outfits.

The new age militants, however, were poorly equipped and lacked training, though they were tech-savvy and successfully utilized social media to catapult the new phase of the armed movement into public prominence. In July 2016, when Indian army killed the iconic young HM commander Burhan Muzaffar Wani in a gunfight, it triggered spontaneous anti-India protests. Wani inspired many young men to join the new armed movement. Unlike the first phase of armed militancy – when recruits could cross the LoC for training – the new age militants had only rudimentary arms training. Most of them were killed in army raids in their hideouts; some were killed within a span of a few days to a few months in intensive military operations backed by highly sophisticated electronic surveillance and a wide network of human intelligence. Between 2010 and 2019, insurgents suffered approximately 1440 fatalities, while about 950 Indian security forces personnel also died during this period (JKCCS 2019). High fatalities among the insurgents have not stopped local recruitments into the armed groups, and infiltration from across the LOC too has not ceased. Between 2015 and 2018, more than 100 houses were razed by Indian armed forces during the gunfights with the militants (Parvaiz 2018). The last decade, therefore, has been marked by increased violence in Kashmir that has had devastating consequences on economy, trade, education, and mental health, particularly in southern Kashmir, where much of the violence has taken place. Yet, in comparison with the decade of 1990s, 2000s has witnessed lesser number of conflict-related deaths, with 2012 and 2013 being relatively calmer with reported 143 and 203 yearly deaths, respectively (JKCCS Annual Human Rights Review 2019).

Fear of Settler Colonialism in the Post-Article 370 Kashmir

On August 5, 2019, after shutting down the communication lines (phone, landline, internet) and imposing a military siege on J&K's 12 million residents by deploying thousands of troops to seal roads and public squares, New Delhi arbitrarily revoked Article 370 of the Indian constitution. Unprecedented military siege and comprehensive communication blockade along with the mass detainment of over 3,500 Kashmiris, including former chief ministers, legislators, Hurriyat leaders, political activists, and minors, prevented the indigenous population from organizing and opposing the forcible imposition. Narendra Modi government's far-reaching move on disputed J&K was, however, widely criticized internationally. Kashmiri diaspora mobilized to highlight the human rights crisis in the besieged region and, with their efforts, got two US congressional hearings on Kashmir crisis convened, first on October 22 (under House Subcommittee on Asia, chaired by Congressman Brad Sherman) and second on November 15, 2019 (under Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission, chaired by Congressman James P. McGovern). Some important US legislators, (including Bernie Sanders, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, and Ilhan Omar) also tweeted and raised their concerns on the suspension of civil and political liberties in J&K, while 65 legislators endorsed the bipartisan Resolution 745 of Congresswomen Pramila Jayapal that urged the Government of India to lift restrictions on communication and end mass detention in J&K and rejected "arbitrary detention, use of excessive force against civilians, and suppression of peaceful expression of dissent as proportional responses to security challenges." The Resolution also asked for giving access to international human rights observers and journalists to the region (H.Res.745 2020). However, despite Jayapal agreeing to edit the language of the Resolution after intense Indian lobbying in Washington (through the lobbying firm Cornerstone Government Affairs), chair of House Foreign Affairs Committee, Eliot Engel, did not mark it up for a debate (Kumar and Lacy 2020). In the

meantime, Pakistan dispatched its diplomats to major capitals to apprise the world community about what its Prime Minister Imran Khan described in his New York Times article as "a violation of the United Nations Security Council resolutions on Kashmir and the Shimla Agreement between India and Pakistan" (Khan 2019).

New Delhi's official narrative was that removing Article 370 was necessary to pave the way for region's socioeconomic development and end "separatism and terrorism" in J&K and dynastic politics of NC and PDP, the two major parties of Kashmir. Economists such as Jean Dreze contested the government's claim that J&K had lagged in development as compared to the states in the mainland India, saying that due to the land reforms of 1950s, the region had "a relatively prosperous and egalitarian rural economy, with very low poverty rates by Indian standards" (Vincent 2019), although, over the years, 370 had been emptied out of its substantive contents in a process that Duschinski and Ghosh (2017) define as "occupational constitutionalism" (through presidential orders, illegal amendments, and supreme court judgments) but retained a semblance of autonomy for the people J&K, particularly Article 35A that enshrined their hereditary domicile status and reserved public sector jobs and government scholarships for them within the state. Besides, only "permanent residents" (who possessed state-subject certificate) of J&K could purchase local land, thus allowing the indigenous populations to preserve their distinct ethno-cultural identity and demographic composition. For the Hindu-nationalist BJP, a political arm of the RSS, abrogation of Article 370 had been one of the core ideological pillars of the party (that seeks to turn India into a "Hindu Rashtra" or Hindu nation) and the first step toward fulfilling the objective of *Akhand Bharat* or United India, as BJP's National General Secretary, Ram Madhav, said on February 22, 2020, to a young audience at the Indian Student Parliament in New Delhi. Madhav echoed other BJP leaders in reiterating that India intends to annex the Pakistan-administered Kashmir next, as part of the *Akhand Bharat* project (Outlook 2020).

On March 31, 2020, in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic when people were observing the lockdown, the Government of India introduced a new law under the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganization Act (2019), redefining the “domicile” with regard to government employment in the region. Anyone who has resided in J&K for 15 years, who has studied in the region for 7 years and appeared in class 10 and 12 examinations, and who has served in the public sector for 10 years (and their children) has now become eligible for residency rights. This paves the way for demographic flooding, with thousands of Indians (including military personnel deployed in the region and involved in human rights abuses) getting, retrospectively and prospectively, rights to purchase land in the disputed J&K, where the local population has long been engaged in a struggle for independence and resisted the militarized occupation (Junaid 2020). The J&K administration, now fully controlled by New Delhi through its appointed lieutenant governor and nonlocal bureaucrats (Ganie 2020, p. 188), has passed a slew of orders to transfer land to different India entities, including industrialists (Zia 2020; Parvaiz 2019a). Decisions and policies implemented by the nonelected bureaucratic administration of J&K have created anxieties among the residents, particularly among the Muslim-majority, because through these new policies New Delhi appears to be aiming at permanently finishing the Kashmiri self-determination movement and the larger Kashmir conflict by changing the facts on the ground in the disputed region. Once demographic composition of J&K is altered (from Muslim-majority to Hindu-majority), any future referendum in the region will potentially go in favor of India. Due to the tight control imposed by New Delhi along with the Covid-19 pandemic, political parties in Kashmir have not been able to operate freely to resist these moves. The APHC has been completely pushed underground, their pro-referendum and pro-freedom politics, of all shades, criminalized.

On August 22, 2020, pro-India parties in Kashmir issued a statement that read: “We all reiterate our commitment to collectively fight to restore the Special Status of J&K as guaranteed under the

Constitution and the commitments made from time to time” (Zargar 2020). Although through such a unanimous declaration these parties appear to signal their intent to put up a collective fight for restoring Article 370, their current position makes them too weak to operationalize any plan to get to their declared goal. The Indian state has already created a new set of players, through newly flouted Apni Party and Jammu Kashmir Workers Party, that can potentially supplant the ones who will persist with their opposition to Modi’s policies on Kashmir. No political party in Kashmir can survive without the support of New Delhi; this hard truth is known to every politician in Kashmir. So, accordingly, Kashmiri parties who take part in electoral politics will tread cautiously while dealing with the current regime in New Delhi. Well aware that those in direct confrontation with the establishment have even lesser chances of survival in the volatile political landscape of Kashmir, PDP and NC will seek to maintain a balance by raising the issue of Kashmir’s autonomy to the extent that restores their relevance among the local population and not to the extent that upsets New Delhi.

Summary

Kashmir has remained one of the intractable conflicts in the world because of a number of factors. Firstly, there is a “structural paralysis,” which arises out of incompatibility between Kashmiri autonomous political agency informed by identity consciousness and sense of group security and India’s state-institutional approach, which does not recognize Kashmiri self-determination as legitimate, because it is not bound by the framework of the Indian constitution. This situation of structural paralysis has created a vacuum “in which coercion and oppression appear to be the only options open to the state ruling elite” (Cockell 2000, p. 323). While the Indian state has tried to wean away Kashmiri youth, a major political actor in the Kashmir conflict, from the anti-India resistance movement through military and nonmilitary measures, these attempts have failed, as “the psychological distance that is

created by active conflict in Kashmir cannot be overcome by the perceived benefits of India's growing economic power or by efforts to integrate Kashmiri youth in state institutions" (Nair and Sambanis 2019, p. 332). Overall, the Kashmiri struggle for freedom has persevered despite brutal counterinsurgency campaigns in the last 30 years. That means the military solution has not succeeded. Yet, presently, more than 500,000 Indian security forces remain deployed in J&K, including 250,000 army soldiers and paramilitary personnel of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), Border Security Force (BSF), Indo-Tibetan Border Police, Jammu and Kashmir Armed Police (JKAP), Special Police Officers, and auxiliaries and intelligence wings. Civilian areas remain deeply militarized, with multiple camps of armed units woven around civilian populations to impose area domination strategy for counterinsurgency and quelling anti-India protests. Such militarized occupation has led to human rights abuses of civilians and created conditions for the continuance of armed militancy through popular support.

Secondly, India and Pakistan have remained locked in a territorial contestation over J&K since 1947, though they have been able to resolve the water dispute between them through a water-distribution arrangement of the 1960 Indus Water Treaty. The "Composite Dialogue Process" between 2004 and 2008 also yielded some confidence building measures, such as reopening of the trade route between the divided parts of J&K and the 2003 cease-fire. Yet, despite these positive developments, military skirmishes and exchange of artillery across the LOC have not ceased, resulting in dozens of fatalities every year, both civilian and military, as well as damage to residential properties near the volatile de facto border. After their nuclear tests in 1998, India and Pakistan have acquired advanced weaponry and enhanced their military capabilities to augment their deterrence doctrines, which reduced chances of a full-scale war, as witnessed during the February 2019 hostilities, which broke out after a Kashmiri militant, Adil Ahmad Dar, killed 40 Indian paramilitary troopers in a suicide bombing in District Pulwama of J&K. In retaliation, Indian

fighter planes struck inside Pakistani territory of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on February 26, and Pakistan responded the next day by downing an Indian fighter jet and capturing its pilot, who was eventually released on March 1 to deescalate the crisis. Nevertheless, given Narendra Modi's bolder and risk-prone approach to security issues, it is likely, if not inevitable, that India and Pakistan will clash again as long as Kashmir remains unresolved. Moreover, BJP's hardline approach on Kashmir and agenda to alter the demography of the Muslim-majority region will create conditions for intensified armed militancy. Strengthened by increased local recruitments and aided by Pakistan-backed armed groups, the conflict will thus veer toward a bloodier end.

Already, the newly flouted armed outfit "the Resistance Front" (TRF) has warned through its letter of May 1, 2020, that it will attack "with full ferociousness" the settlements that are being established in Kashmir "by giving them civilian sounding names." The TRF issued this letter immediately after the J&K administration transferred over 12-acre land to two Kendriya Vidyalaya (central government schools) on April 8 and 30 in Kupwara and Pulwama districts, respectively. Rebel groups also carried out the assassination of a top BJP leader from Kashmir, Waseem Bari, on July 8, 2020, setting off resignations from some lower wrung BJP cadres who had been groomed by the party in recent years. Armed groups are likely to attempt more such assassinations to instill fear among those Kashmiris who work for BJP or pro-India parties.

Although the Modi government claimed that removing Article 370 and taking direct control of the region would end violence in J&K, the evidence so far indicates otherwise, compelling the state to continue restrictions on political activities, civil liberties, as well as communication services. Despite the advocacy by many international organizations, particularly in the backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic, high-speed 4G Internet remained banned in Kashmir for almost 18 months "in the interest of the sovereignty and integrity of India" (Home Department, Government of Jammu and Kashmir, 16 August 2020). In the backdrop of the worsening political situation

in Kashmir since August 2019, the Freedom House report of 2020 has declined the status of Indian-administered Kashmir from being “Partly Free to Not Free” (Freedom House Report 2020). In terms of conflict-related fatalities, 229 people have been killed in the first 6 months of 2020, including 32 civilians, 143 militants, and 54 Indian armed forces personnel (JKCCS 2020). Overall, with two nuclear-armed states locked in an undeclared war and Kashmiris increasingly despaired under the hardline policy of New Delhi, it seems the disputed Himalayan region is fast turning into what the former US President Bill Clinton called “the most dangerous place on Earth” that could potentially breach international peace and security, if the Kashmir conflict is left unaddressed. The situation has become all the more alarming after the hostilities broke out between India and China in the Ladakh region in May 2020. Both the sides have mobilized their troops and weaponry to the frontline. A slight miscalculation threatens to turn the border crisis into a full-blown war, in which Pakistan is likely to dive into seize the opportunity of taking Kashmir from its arch enemy India.

In the meantime, grappling with a sluggish economy along with an unprecedented repressive political environment, Kashmiris are faced with a distressing situation. Resentment against New Delhi is simmering among the populace. Through expanding developmental and civilian activities (such as sports and cultural events), New Delhi seems to have gradually shifted to the “policy of engagement” in the post-Article 370 Kashmir. Such measures might address the developmental aspirations of Kashmiris and aid in the conflict management. But, if past is any indication, such policies have hardly been able to prevent anti-India uprisings in Kashmir. Therefore, to assuage the growing resentment among Kashmiris and for the situation to stabilize in the region, demilitarization along with the resumption of the dialogue process between India, Pakistan, and Kashmiris is a prerequisite. Such a measure will address, to a certain extent, the political aspiration of the people, particularly in the Kashmir Valley, the epicenter of the Kashmiri self-determination movement. Substantively, this will require, at the minimum,

restoration of Article 370 in its original form, i.e., as it existed prior to 1953. For ideological reasons, the Modi government will be averse to accept such a political framework for the Kashmir peace process. Hence, Kashmiris are most likely to stuck at the dead end in the foreseeable future. In case the current China-India border standoff develops into a war, parts of the erstwhile state of J&K may once again change hands.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Secession and Self-Determination](#)
- ▶ [Troubles, The: The Northern Ireland Conflict](#)

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Kenya

► Kenya’s War on Terror

Kenya’s War on Terror

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Synonyms

al-Shabaab; Counterterrorism; Extremism;
Kenya; War on Terror; Terrorism

Description

In the aftermath of 9/11 attacks, Kenya has increasingly become an anchor-state and ally in the global “war on terror.” While there is no universally agreed-upon framework on counterterrorism, in Kenya counterterrorism has centered on three key areas: enacting legislation, building/enhancing security institutions, and devising programs to reduce the risk of terrorism. In particular, Kenya’s contemporary counterterrorism practice has been equated to its historical responses (e.g., extrajudicial assassinations, profiling) to conflict and violence characterized as “old paradigms,” not only due to their reliance on collective punishment but also based on how such forms of punishment have been used to establish a particular social order.

With that in mind, this entry explores the logic behind Kenya’s “war on terror.” Using Fairclough’s understanding of recontextualization, the entry argues that Kenya has appropriated the “war on terror” signifier from the global context and given it local meaning. This entry is divided into four sections: the first is an overview of the so-called “war on terror” and a summary of acts of terrorism in Kenya. The second section provides some socio-historical and political context necessary to understand the contemporary “war on terror” in Kenya. The third section explores how the “war on terror” has been recontextualized by specifically looking at the elite’s definition of the nature and scope of the threat, vulnerabilities, drivers, and the solutions they propose. The fourth section concludes by emphasizing that the ensuing counterterrorism responses while fulfilling (inter)national agendas they have reinforced marginalization of minority groups and engendered new forms of insecurities.

Introduction

The “war on terror” is a phrase that was used by the then President of the United States of America (USA), George W. Bush in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, to mobilize a US-led international military campaign aiming to destroy al-Qaeda, the Taliban, and “rogue states.” While initially the military assault was launched in Afghanistan in

October 2001, the Iraq war was launched approximately 2 years later as part of the same “war on terror” campaign. Accordingly, this war metaphor reproduced claims and assumptions about the nature of the 9/11 attacks, the identities of the terrorist “other,” the nature and scope of the threat, the vulnerabilities and the responses deemed necessary (see Croft 2006; Jackson 2005; Jarvis 2008). This construction while containing imperialist undertones is also laced with cultural and racial tropes.

In Kenya, terrorism is not a new phenomenon. The concept of terrorism was used to define the violent actions of both state and non-state actors as early as 1975. On state terrorism, like the British empire, the two post-independent administrations, Jomo Kenyatta’s (1963–1978) and Daniel Arap Moi’s (1978–2001), also engaged in terrorism to suppress dissidence (Citizens for Justice 2003; Elkins 2005). Similarly, non-state actors such as the Maskini Liberation Front (MLF), February Eighteen Movement (FEM), the Sabaat Land Defence Forces (SLDF), and Mungiki also engaged in terrorism against civilians and government administrations (Mogire and Mkutu 2011). More attacks were witnessed in the 1998 and 2002 bombing of the US embassy in Nairobi and hotels in Mombasa, respectively, which were perpetrated by al-Qaeda.

Since 2012, Kenya has increasingly witnessed small- and large-scale attacks perpetrated by al-Shabaab, a Somalia-based militant group (see chapter War and Peace in Somalia). Major attacks include the 2013 Westgate shopping mall siege, the April 2015 Garissa University siege, the June and July 2015 attacks on villages in Mpeketoni and Tana River, and the 2019 DusitD2 attack. In response, Kenya has pursued different responses to address the rising threat of terrorism. Specifically, George W. Bush’s rhetoric that framed 9/11 as an “act of war” (see further Hodges 2011) is important in understanding the threat of terrorism and the naturalized military responses globally. In this framing, the conflict was seen as a “war between good and evil” (Erjavec and Volcic 2007, p. 125) where good symbolically stands for the West/Christians/liberal democracies while the evil “other” encompasses the non-Western/

Muslims/non-Christian. In this framing, the identities of the former are built through metaphors representing them as civilized, freedom-loving, and progressive whereas, the latter are represented as backward, savage, and freedom-hating. Such a framing not only controlled the kind of representations that emanate thereof (e.g., a focus on “Islamic extremists” qua Muslims as terrorists), but it made “war” appear as the only legitimate response of pre-empting the risk of terrorism.

Although George W. Bush's administration left office, their discourse continues to influence how countries make sense of terrorism and the ensuing counterterrorism responses. However, before analyzing Kenya's recontextualization of the “war on terror,” the section that follows first unpacks Kenya's sociohistorical, cultural, and political context necessary for understanding terrorism.

Socio-historical and Political Context

Kenya's history is socially, culturally, and politically complex. As of 2019, Kenya has over 45 ethnic groups, with a total population of approximately 47.6 million of which 75% are younger than 35 years. Religiously, Christians make up 85.5% of the population followed by Muslims who comprise of 11% (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics 2019). Hence, for a long time, Kenya's state-society relations have been rooted in ethnic and sectarian tensions. During the colonial era, the development of an ideal Kenyan identity was an important element in ensuring the survival of the empire. The British self-represented as superior by belonging to both a modern, civilized and upper racial group while constructing Kenyans as culturally, racially and economically inferior (Elkins 2005). This is not to say that such constructions ceased after independence (12 December 1963) but rather to reiterate that contemporary politics in Kenya warrant an understanding of history. Hence, collaborators and other Kenyan elites adopted British discourses (Discourse is used to refer to the assumptions, claims, and explanations about a certain phenomenon that are shared by cultural groups within and beyond national boundaries) of progress and civilization, and heavily promoted these within their communities.

As for those communities that resisted the British Empire, they were targeted with military and other forms of isolation policies. This socioeconomically and politically segregated them from the rest of Kenya, and constructed them as “hostile tribes” or “savages” acting against the British and consequently other Kenyan communities. This construction legitimized unconventional villagization which is a strategy aimed at forcing social and economic changes (Whittaker 2012). These strategies ranged from moderate policies such as grazing control schemes (Schlee 1989) and small-shop ownership schemes (Whittaker 2008) in the Northern Frontier District (NFD) (a predominantly Somali-inhabited region currently constituting the North Eastern province). To extreme measures (especially during the upsurge of anti-colonial resistance between, i.e., 1952 and 1960) such as the forceful programs that confined native Kikuyus in fortified settlements to cut off Mau Mau supplies (Karari 2018); and military methods such as flogging, incarceration, torture, and execution to deter nonconformists (Anderson 2005).

Such counterinsurgency policies continued into post-independent Kenya and culminated in the 1963–1968 *Shifita* (A term from the Ge'ez script that literally translates to rebel or bandit) *War* an insurgency calling for the secession of NFD, which was covertly supported by Somalia's regime (Anderson 2014). To facilitate control of the Somali people, the Kenyatta regime also used villagization policies that mirrored the colonial ones (Whittaker 2012). Not only did these policies disrupt the socioeconomic and cultural livelihoods of NFD, but also they were laced with narratives linking Somali people with criminality and illegality to the extent that the word *shifita* metaphorically continues to connote criminality and “otherness.” Instead of quelling the rebellion, villagization policies counter-productively increased resentment towards the regime. As a result, Kenyatta's successor Moi responded through military campaigns that meted out collective punishment in the NFD region.

Between 1980 and 1984, state forces counterinsurgency security operations raped, looted, burned properties, rounded-up and executed

thousands of Somali men in what has come to be referred to as the 1980 Bulla Karatasi massacre, 1982 Malka Mari massacre, and 1984 Wagalla massacres (Lochery 2012). Witnesses to these massacres were intimidated, tortured, and others deported while the administration actively launched a misinformation and denial campaign that banned any form of memorializing and silenced any calls for investigations to the massacre (Sheikh 2007). Moreover, in 1989, Moi's administration introduced a screening exercise and while it was claimed that the exercise was meant to verify citizenship, Whittaker (2012) adds that it also aimed to assess loyalties. This exercise continued into the 1990s and fostered the image of "Somalis as a problem." The screening practices differentiated Somalia-Somalis (i.e., refugees also referred to as "aliens") from Kenyan-Somalis and made differences within the latter category "more visible and manageable" (Lochery 2012, p. 624). The consequences are still present in policies such as the processing of identity documents that require certain Muslim communities and Somalis to provide extra documents as proof of citizenship (Mazrui 1993).

Similarly, "othering" is not unique to Somalis but has also affected some native communities of the Coastal region of Kenya. Kenya's tense relationship with its Coast region can be understood in three phases: the pre-colonial, colonial and the post-independence period. As early as the second century A.D Arab traders had started sailing to the East African Coast but Islam was not well established until the fifteenth century. This saw the growth of Muslim cities and a booming economy from the slave trade that was run by Muslim coastal elites, hinterland leaders and Arab merchants (Oded 2000). Most of those enslaved were Kenyans from traditional religious groups that inhabited the interiors of the Coastal region. This participation of Muslims in the enslavement of other Kenyans was constantly brought up by Moi (Lonsdale 2009) to suppress criticisms of his regime and activism of Muslim groups. However, in the same way that the Arabs favored Muslim converts, once the Portuguese captured the Coastal cities from the Arabs, they employed similar tactics. They educated Christian converts with

clerical skills which later secured their employment in the British colonial administration once the administrative capital moved to Nairobi (Thordsen 2009). Lack of clerical skills and the administrative capital's relocation negatively affected the employment and livelihoods of Muslims.

After independence, the exclusion of Muslims continued in two ways. First, both Kenyatta and Moi's regimes implemented policies that continued to favor secular-educated Christians over Muslims with Arabic education (Kresse 2010). This resulted in absolute underdevelopment of predominantly Muslim inhabited regions, with the inhabitants feeling like second-class citizens in their own country (Mohamed 2015). Second, post-independent regimes made little effort to adopt policies that would develop these areas. Coupled with land grabbing by the regimes and their administrative officers, the Coastal region has been subject to generational poverty (Mohamed 2015). Not surprisingly, this marginalization engendered the first secession (see chapter Secession and Self-determination) attempts by the Coastal region on the night of Kenya's independence (Oded 2000). Such calls for self-autonomy have continued throughout the post-independence period. While the lead organizations and tactics differ within each timeline, the narrative for secession remains the same (Willis and Gona 2012). In response, successive regimes have employed several tactics to break this resolve. From Moi and Uhuru Kenyatta who labelled the Islamic Party of Kenya and the Mombasa Republican Council as "Islamic extremist groups" to delegitimize their political activism and dehumanize Muslims as "troublemakers" (Ndzovu 2012) to the collective punishment and profiling witnessed after the 1997 regime-instigated clashes. While up-country communities (i.e., ethnic groups originating from interior Kenya) were killed by locally organized militia groups, Moi's administration responded by implementing a security operation that indiscriminately tortured, sexually abused, and detained locals (Human Rights Watch 2002).

This historical overview and successive government actions reveal complex relations between

ethnic and religious communities, and between the center and periphery. Most recently, the 1998 US embassy bombings, the 2002 Paradise Hotel bombings, the rise of al-Shabaab, its ensuing attacks, radicalization activities, and counterterrorism in Kenya should be read against this backdrop. The section that follows further analyzes the dominant claims by focusing on two mutually constitutive areas: a) how Kenya's elites defines the nature and scope of the threat of terrorism, and b) what solutions are derived from this conceptualization.

Recontextualizing the "War on Terror" in Kenya

Recontextualization, as developed by Bernstein (2003, pp. 52–53), refers to the "relocation of discourse from its primary context of discursive production to the secondary context of discursive production." In the process of moving discourse from its context it undergoes particular transformations in the "new context" (Fairclough 2003, p. 52). Thus, Fairclough (2003) adds that recontextualization functions by foregrounding/backgrounding information, generalizing, ordering and adding information on events. Thus, in this case, it is argued that the discourse(s) of the global "war on terror" are appropriated from the global context (following 9/11) and given a local meaning in the Kenyan context (experience with al-Shabaab and ensuing counterterrorism practices since 2011).

With Kenya's allyship in the "war on terror" in the aftermath of 9/11, the term terrorism has acquired a particular set of meanings that not only dictate what we know about terrorism, how we know about terrorism, but also how we respond towards incidences of terrorism. The nature and scope of threats in Kenya are understood as emanating from external and internal stresses. Externally, terrorism represents a specific form of violence emanating from Somalia. In this argument, risk of terrorism is assumed to stem from the lawlessness in Somalia, shared porous borders with Kenya, poaching, illegal trade in arms, and the rising refugee population from al-Shabaab's controlled areas in southern Somalia

(Lind et al. 2015). The argument of terrorism as originating from outside the nation-state is also common in mainstream global discourses on terrorism (see Croft 2006). In these discourse(s), Kenya, like most other countries in the global North and South, views itself as a victim of international terror networks, specifically those located in Somalia (Mwangi 2017). Even Uhuru Kenyatta (president of Kenya since 2013), in 2015 during an India-African summit in New Delhi remarked that "there is no country that is too far, safe or free from terrorism. . . Africa and India have both been afflicted by terrorism – an evil that knows no boundary" (Ministry of External Affairs India 2015). His statement is an example of the understanding of international terrorism as a looming threat. Uhuru draws a comparison between the several 2006 train blasts of Mumbai, and various large-scale al-Shabaab attacks in Kenya to demonstrate this danger. In his rhetoric, just like the USA, India and many other countries, Kenya is also an innocent "victim" of terrorism, specifically from Somalia-based al-Shabaab.

This victimhood status is reinforced by metaphors of war that predominate the political and media rhetoric. Specifically, attacks are regularly referred to as "al-Shabaab's war" (Wanga and Hajir 2015), "religious war" (Vidija 2015), and spaces like refugee camps labelled "war frontiers" (PSCU 2015). To complement this, counterterrorism is framed as "defending freedom and democracy . . . from the extremists who employ terrorism to undermine our way of life" (Chatham House 2018). This characterization elicits empathy and sympathy for Kenya as a victim thus absolving it of any responsibility in the ensuing counterviolence by shifting the blame to the attackers (Jackson 2005) instead of Kenya's foreign policies and internal dynamics. Within this view of Kenya as a "victim" of terrorism, Kenya's military counterviolence has been justified as a necessary act of self-defense.

However, studies demonstrate that Kenya has benefitted tremendously from supporting the "war on terror." Militarily, while US military-assistance to Kenya had been suspended in 1991 on grounds of human rights violations and suppression of democracy under Moi's administration

(Mogire and Mkutu 2011). For Prestholdt (2011), Kenya's support for the global "war on terror" not only resulted in the USA resuming and increasing its military assistance but the global "war on terror" has also become Kenya's instrument for improving diplomatic relations. Rémy (2011) adds that foreign counterterrorism operations (e.g., the 2011 Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) invasion of Somalia) served to further Kenya's economic agenda including paving way for the building of an oil terminal, a railway, and road network in Lamu that would facilitate trade with Ethiopia and Sudan. Also, in this operation, the Kenya military and some security officials are alleged to be overseeing the illegal trade of charcoal and sugar through KDF control of the port of Kismayo in Somalia since its recapture in September 2012 (Lind et al. 2015). As a result, this trade is estimated to accrue an annual income of over US\$251 million (UN Monitoring Group 2013, 2014). Besides, Uhuru's rhetoric and KDF's activities in Somalia have enabled Kenya to assert itself as a legitimate actor in the global arena and regional politics (Anderson and McKnight 2014). Thus, Kenya's attempts to externalize terrorism should be understood in relation to the benefits (economic, political, and military control) the country stands to gain, and Kenya-Somalia relations which have historically been riddled with tension and suspicion (Lind et al. 2015).

Notably, while appropriating the mainstream discourse(s) in terrorism, Kenya has also adopted language that views "terrorism" as violence and activism by Muslims. In this narrative, terrorism in Kenya is equated with the "Somali problem" and global discourses of "Islamic extremism" (see chapter Violent extremism, critical approaches to). For instance, in a televised remark the then president Moi in describing the 1998 attacks remarked that the "bombers would not have done what they did if they had been Christian" (as cited in Mwakimako 2007, p. 289). Later, during the launch of Operation Linda Nchi (Swahili for protecting the country) in 2011 the then assistant minister of Internal Security Orwa Ojode in a parliament session also said that terrorism "is a big animal with its head in Eastleigh, Nairobi and its tail in Somalia" (Opiyo and Githinji 2011),

as did Mathiu's (2014) Nation Media Group managing editors comment "that every little, two-bit Somali has a big dream – to blow us up, knock down our buildings and slaughter our children. They declared war on us... let's get down to work then... We are at war. Let's start shooting".

These accounts generate two main claims. First, given that, Kenya's two major religions are Christianity and Islam, by overtly exonerating Christianity of any involvement even before investigations are complete, the president covertly attributes the blame to Muslims. According to Omanga (2013), this position even became popular in both news reports and editorial cartoons. Indeed, this premise resonates with Kenya's government interpretation where terrorism is viewed as inherent to Muslims (Prestholdt 2011), an assumption well-articulated in Islamophobic slogans such as "not all Muslims are terrorists, but all terrorists are Muslims" (Mwakimako 2007, p. 289). Second, through the figurative phrase, the minister collocates terrorism with Eastleigh (a predominantly Somali inhabited suburban area in Nairobi) and Somalia. Positioning these words in close proximity underlines their connection to each other. Further, both the ministers and Mathiu's claim emphasize the dual nature of the threat as one with a face of a Somali Muslim individual from Eastleigh affiliated to a foreign "terrorist" organization, i.e., al-Shabaab. In creating the identity of the "dangerous other," and the "self" both actors "emphasizes or downplays sameness and differences" (Hodges 2011, p. 65). The "us" or ingroup in this case comprises non-Somali, non-Muslim Kenyans who by default are the victims of terrorism, whereas the "them" or outgroup comprises of ethnic Kenyan-Somali, Somalia-Somalis, Somali refugees, and Muslims living in Eastleigh. Here, by default, Moi's, Ojode's and Mathiu's claims connect Somalis, and Muslims to al-Shabaab and other similar groups because of shared identity markers such as religion, ethnicity, race, and geography. This process of differentiation is ideological and involves making choices on the vocabularies, grammar, and metaphors accessible in Kenya to make sense of the threat of terrorism. Thus, based

on the socio-historical context, both Somalis and Coastal Muslims have historically been portrayed with narratives of illegality, illegitimacy, violence, danger, and consequently a problem to Kenya.

These pre-existing narratives have enabled Kenya to summon its old internal enemies using the post-9/11 discourses which are hinged on the idea of “Islamic terrorism” as the most important threat to global peace and liberal ideals. In these discourses, the primary image of Muslims and Islam is one of barbarism, violence, and backwardness (Jackson 2005). Thus, not only are Muslims cast as a homogenous group but also their identity is portrayed in opposition to democratic ideals. Locally, such stereotypes have always informed the politics of Kenya not least because of the participation of Coastal Muslims in the eighteenth and nineteenth century slave trade but also because of the attempts of predominantly Muslim regions (NFD and Coastal region) to secede from Kenya. Muslims are considered to have betrayed Kenya in the past and to be unpatriotic in the present, thus needing close surveillance and policing because if left freely they may wreak havoc. A conceptualization that narrowly focuses on cultural factors dehumanizes Muslims and Somalis, and simply reduces their motivations to “Islamic extremism” (Oded 1996) and “Muslim rage” (Mwakimako 2007). The understanding of terrorism as a “Muslim problem” has enhanced the fear of the “other” deemed dangerous (Mogire and Mkuu 2011). This climate of fear has in turn been used by Uhuru’s administration to push for a counterterrorism agenda that prioritizes increased power and mandate for security institutions and the executive instead of redressing historical injustices and inequalities.

As such, based on the perceptions of terrorism as an external and internal threat, Kenya’s counterterrorism efforts have targeted several fronts. With terrorism being a criminal offence, Kenya has pushed for a range of security legislation, including the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2012, Prevention of Organized Crime Act 2010, and Security Laws Amendment Act 2014 (SLAA) to criminalize, and prosecute terror suspects (see

Mwangi 2017). Also, in 2013 Kenya signed the Tripartite Agreement to facilitate the repatriation of Somali refugees living in Kenya. This came in the aftermath of the 2013 Westgate shopping mall attack that was followed by a rising perception of Somali refugees as a national security threat (Mwangi 2018). Financially, Kenya has adopted the Proceeds of Crime and Anti-Money Laundering (Amendment) Act of 2017, and the Anti-Money Laundering (AML) bill, 2006 as deregulation legislation meant to disrupt the financing of “terrorist” organizations.

Militarily, through state security forces Kenya has conducted several local and foreign military operations to pre-empt the risk of terrorism. Locally, well-known operations include 2014 Operation Sanitization Eastleigh also publicly known as operation Usalama Watch (Swahili for security) which targeted Eastleigh and South-C areas of Nairobi; Operation Linda Boni (beginning in 2015 and lasting more than 5 years) meant to remove al-Shabaab operatives from the Boni forest; a 2015 presidential Amnesty pardon allowing the reintegration of Kenyan youth who renounce al-Shabaab activities. Other small-scale operations include curfews, stop-search operations, arbitrary arrests, and extrajudicial assassinations and disappearances of terror suspects. All these operations are marred by profiling, collective punishment, and violations of human rights and international conventions (see further Human Rights Watch 2016). Also, as part of enhancing its security architecture in 2004 Kenya developed the National Counter Terrorism Centre and tasked it with the responsibility of developing the country’s counterterrorism strategy, Preventing/Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE) policies, and coordinating regional and local counterterrorism and CVE initiatives. Additionally, in 2014 Kenya also established a specialized police unit; Anti-Terrorism Police Unit in charge of planning and implementing counterterrorism operations.

In terms of foreign operations, in October 2011, together with the Somalia forces, Kenya launched the KDF Operation Linda Nchi in Somalia meant to push back al-Shabaab into southern hinterlands and create a buffer zone (Jubaland initiative) that

would enable the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia to effectively control and govern. The operation ended in March 2012 but KDF remained in Somalia and were integrated into the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). Additionally, on September 28, 2012, together with the Somali National Army and AMISON forces, KDF launched operation Sledgehammer in Kismayo that led to the capture of the port city in southern Somalia. Kenya has also pursued soft-security counterterrorism measures including the adoption of the National Strategy for CVE in 2016 and its ensuing County Action Plans. This strategy coordinates government, civil society, private sector and community stakeholders in the designing and implementation of CVE initiatives.

Summary

In conclusion, while Kenya has improved institutional capacity, strengthened its counterterrorism legislative framework, and earned a legitimate position in the global arena, its “war on terror” has also exposed its internal politics of national identity and belonging. By appropriating the problematic rhetoric that connects Muslims and Somalis to terrorism, counterterrorism has securitized large populations, spaces and locations associated with these groups. As a result, Kenya’s “war on terror” has been characterized by ethnic and religious profiling, violation of human rights and circumventing judicial procedures (Human Rights Watch 2016). Thus, in its pursuit of internal and external threats Kenya has endangered the very liberal gains it embarks to protect. Thus, for effective counterterrorism, it is paramount that Kenya starts to reflect on its “war on terror”; in terms of the material social, economic, political, and human insecurities it has produced in regions deemed “hot-spots.” While earlier in 2011 there were speculations about the ongoing radicalization of Kenya’s youth cohort, an interview with N. Songora (personal communication, June 22, 2019) revealed that in 2019 there were over one hundred violent gangs mostly originating and operating in the securitized areas of the Coast region.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Secession and Self-Determination](#)
- ▶ [War and Peace in Somalia](#)

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Land Conflict

► [Sources of Peace in a Developing Island State](#)

Land Politics and Conflict

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Synonyms

[Environmental peacebuilding](#); [Land rights](#); [Land tenure](#); [Land use](#)

Definitions and Issues

A successful transition to peace necessarily involves establishing tenure security, where tenure refers to a set of social relations that govern the access, use, and claims to land. Tenure security is the predictability of property rights that allows people to rebuild their personal, economic, social, and political lives. Conflicts reorder social relations dramatically: population patterns change; state power is less effective; identities shift as people move locations and their relations to land; and legitimacy and authority that are used to claim land, property, and territory are

challenged (Unruh 2003). This entry examines land as a cause of conflict, a dimension of violence, and a key aspect of post-conflict reconstruction.

Ways of using, accessing, and owning land pose particular issues, within and outside conflict. The particularities emerge from the fact that land is, in Tania Li's (2014b) words, a "strange object." First, its "substance" is dependent on particular relations. For some, it is a source of food, for others a basis of tax revenue, and elsewhere it might be shelter or a foundation of ethnic identity. Second, it is peculiarly material in that it is not movable as other "possessions" are, and its use depends on exclusion of others from it. And third, it depends on "inscription devices": whether crops, ploughs, ancestral graves, or cadasters, a whole variety of devices are employed to give land meaning and assemble it as a resource. All these dimensions of land are challenged in times of conflict: a forest that was a source of food can become a battle ground; revenues from crops and mines can be (re)directed into weapons; radically different orders of exclusion are enacted as territorial lines shift; and instead of through titling deeds and ploughs, plots might be known through landmines.

Tenure often exists in the form of legal pluralism: the existence of "different sets of rights and obligations concerning land and property" that "reside within multiple social fields or normative orders" (Unruh 2003, p. 355). Multiple governing orders can coexist at the

same time: traditional (historical arrangements that may or may not be still in effect), indigenous (attached to specific groups, often related to traditional or customary rights), and customary (provisions that are still in effect and are non-statutory) (Unruh and Williams 2013a, p. 2). In these discussions, land rights and property rights are sometimes used interchangeably, even though land rights for owners are particularly circumscribed (by planning, environmental, and other laws), and are often abbreviated to HLP: housing, land, and property right. Establishing tenure security means reconciling these competing orders in a way that ensures trust in its long-term sustainability.

Land politics in and after conflicts are also shaped by the raising value of land and food, especially in the last two decades. After the food price crises of 2007–2008, land emerged as an important capital investment: industrial agriculture, biofuel production, mining, and conservation increasingly rely on so-called large-scale land acquisitions, or land grabs (Borras et al. 2011; Edelman et al. 2013; Hall et al. 2015; Margulis et al. 2013; Margulis and Porter 2013; Millar 2015). Many of the land deals reported by INGOs that monitor large-scale land acquisitions, such as GRAIN and the International Land Coalition, take place in countries emerging from conflict. Recent examples include the investment by the Canadian company Feronia Inc, in Tshopo Province, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (GRAIN 2019) and the sales of land on which refugees had previously settled in Uganda (AFSA et al. 2020) and Tanzania (Mittal 2012). In these contexts, land is both an opportunity for development, and thus long-lasting peace, and a source of conflict.

The particularity of land ownership and use has been getting increasing attention in peacebuilding. In 2009, the Peacebuilding Commission at the UN, along with the United Nations Environment Program, published *From Conflict to Peacebuilding: The Role of Natural Resources and the Environment*. The report argued for more attention to natural resources as implicated in all phases of conflicts, “from contributing to the outbreak and perpetuation of violence to

undermining prospects for peace.” At the same time, the natural environment and resources in question need to be protected as they can become “victims” of conflict themselves, through physical destruction and the breakdown of governance structures (United Nations Environment Programme 2009).

These issues are explicitly addressed in the emerging subfield of environmental peacebuilding that looks to natural resources and ways of managing them as crucial for transitions to peace. Land plays a part in most of these discussions – mining, logging, agriculture, and waterways involve specific spatial coordinates. Yet the specificity of land *as* a resource also requires a more detailed approach. In the last decade, several volumes and special issues have addressed the nexus between land and conflict explicitly (Cramer and Richards 2011; Leckie 2009; Pantuliano 2009; Takeuchi 2014; Unruh and Williams 2013b), as a part of wider discussions on natural resources (Bruch et al. 2016; Schilling et al. 2018), or within a political theory understanding of territory and territorial disputes (Kolers 2009). These edited volumes provide an exceptional level of conceptual discussion and in-depth case studies from around the world.

This entry will highlight the most important issues that this literature is built around to help researchers and practitioners approach land politics in conflict and post-conflict contexts. The following sections review the different ways that land and conflict come together in different phases of war: before, during, and after conflict. While such temporal separation inevitably glosses over the ways these processes overlap, it is a useful heuristic device for observing land politics. The conclusion points to emerging areas of investigation and highlights the political character of land that can help researchers connect disparate temporalities and scales on which political authority is made and transformed.

Land as a Cause of Conflict

Land is habitually associated with causes of war and violence, yet the specific relationship between

the two can be understood quite differently. In a useful review, Van Leeuwen and Van der Haar (2016) speak about three distinct theoretical approaches. First, there are those who see causes of conflicts *in* land as a resource itself (see Homer-Dixon 1999). These approaches revolve around scarcity and treat land as a finite resource around which competition emerges and ultimately turns into violence. Second, there is the literature that understands conflicts as products of particular historical and political developments. These scholars, often coming from the political ecology tradition, are less interested in scarcity itself, and pay more attention to “the political production of scarcity and exclusion” (Leeuwen and Van der Haar 2016, p. 96; see Le Billon 2001; Peluso and Watts 2001). Third, there are perspectives coming from legal anthropologist studies that focus on land governance structures, rather than land, as the causes and drivers of conflict – whether these are institutional failures (see Ostrom 1990; Turner 2004) or broader regulatory and political contexts (see Lund and Boone 2013; Peters 2004; Sikor and Lund 2009; Unruh 2003).

Van Leeuwen and Van der Haar (2016), however, emphasize that all existing approaches require better theorization of the connection between conflict and violence, on both local and global scales. They suggest that, instead of researching “ways in which land may *cause* violent conflict,” researchers should turn to exploring “how land becomes part of larger patterns of violent contestation” in the process of “the social production of violent conflict” (Leeuwen and Van der Haar 2016, p. 95). This approach is especially useful because (even when land is not the “primary” cause of war) land issues affect the direction and intensity of violence as different groups use the conflict as an opportunity to address other disputes (André and Platteau 1998; Chauveau and Richards 2008).

In pursuing such an approach, two issues emerge. First, understanding the historical roots of a conflict, and the land issues that are a part of it, requires a long historical perspective that takes into account histories of colonialism, slavery, rebellion, and food production in contexts as varied as Kenya, Central America, Angola, or the

Philippines (Cramer and Richards 2011). Such analysis is often difficult to achieve when dealing with conflicts that require urgent responses. In post-conflict Rwanda, for example, policies which forced multiple claimants to share land were implemented to accommodate the various groups of refugees returning even though they violated constitutional protections (Bruce 2013). And secondly, these larger patterns of violence and the micro- and macro-contexts in which they participate do not unfold in separate phases – land grievances, aspirations, and needs do not recognize temporal designations that separate war and peace too easily.

Land in and after Conflict

Land shapes the development of conflicts as much as conflicts can remake the physical landscapes in which they take place. Land is key when searching for resources that fund wars and crucial for ensuring food security during and after conflict. Agricultural products, timber, charcoal, diamonds, and many other resources found *on* the land become “conflict resources” that both directly and indirectly finance conflict (Le Billon 2013). This is the case with the so-called “diamond wars” in sub-Saharan Africa (Billon 2008) or teak, gems and minerals, and wildlife in Myanmar (Talbot et al. 2016). Curtailing access to revenues from those resources has been a key concern of the UN (Le Billon 2011).

Food security is both severely impacted by violence and can directly shape the developments of conflicts, even more so in countries where a high percentage of the population is related to agricultural labor, as is the case with most conflicts today. Internally displaced people (IDPs) and refugees leave rural areas to, often temporarily, settle into urban centers that frequently cannot provide for the increase in population. Landscapes change profoundly, but so does their use. After wars, we often see an emergence of “postconflict livelihoods” that, on the one hand, depend on “extractive, low-investments, opportunistic, short-term and often dead end (resource-exhausted) activities” that can meet immediate

needs for food, water, and shelter. At the same time, they are marked by attempts to “reacquire or rebuild the landscape assets that allow for the (re)construction of a more durable livelihood strategy” (Unruh 2017, p. 3). Managing immediate needs and future aspirations often involve dramatically different practices.

These dynamics profoundly shape both peace negotiations and peace settlements. A post-conflict land settlement is concerned with “livelihoods, macroeconomic recovery, governance, and reintegration of former combatants” (Unruh and Williams 2013a, p. 3). It can be understood through three main dimensions of post-conflict land laws reform: i) addressing grievances coming out of both pre-conflict and conflict land administration; ii) helping and instituting social change; and iii) using land reform as a tool for post-conflict recovery and reconstruction (Unruh and Williams 2013a, p. 11).

One of the main drivers of land use change is the dislocation of both refugees and internally displaced persons. These movements change the landscapes from which people depart, those in which they arrive and stay during the war, and others to which they return (Unruh 2017, p. 2). While restitution processes often address effects of colonialism and socialism (see Fay and James 2009), they are also an important part of post-conflict land settlements and aim to enable former landholders to reclaim their rights.

Restitution was enshrined in the UN’s 2005 Principles on Housing and Property Restitution for Refugees and Displaced Persons, often referred to as the Pinheiro Principles, after the rapporteur Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro (see McCallin 2013). Despite its importance, it is always a contested process as it connects prewar grievances and postwar aspirations. These aspirations do not see only civilians returning to formerly owned properties, but former combatants often choose agricultural labor as a way of reintegration. Post-conflict land systems therefore include not only restitution, but wider land reforms that could accommodate such, frequently competing, claims. This was the case with the ambitious land reform in Mozambique that was designed to accommodate community property rights, provide opportunity for large investments, and work

toward restitution alongside both of these ambitious projects (Unruh 2005).

Besides working toward ameliorating the consequences of the conflict, postwar reform and restitution processes can also serve a wide range of state- and nation-building projects. For example, restitution through narrow definitions of “return” that emphasize property in lieu of relational importance of networks, citizenship, labor, and education was used to promote ethno-national engineering in Croatia (Leutloff-Grandits 2016). In other contexts, postwar conditions were used for ambitious land reforms meant not only to democratize land use, but also to give legitimacy to postwar regimes. This was the case with land reform in Colombia, where the Integral Rural Reform based on formalization, restitution, and equitable distribution of land remains a key aspect of the peace process on both state and community levels (McKay 2016; Velásquez et al. 2020).

Post-conflict land reforms are frequently conducted under the guidance of International Financial Institutions or directly under post-conflict international administrations (Grajales 2020b; Grasten and Tzouvala 2018). They involve formalization processes that use registration and titling to ensure tenure security as in the case, for example, in Angola (Cain 2013), Afghanistan (Murtazashvili 2016), Colombia (Rettberg 2020), and Sierra Leone (Millar 2016a). While the aim of such projects is providing a basis for the protection of land and property rights, it is well recognized that they can be dangerous to the weakest claimants. Youth, women, or migrants are often marginalized in contexts where multiple claims on land exist (for example, grazing rights of one group and tree planting rights of another). Moreover, implementing such reforms in systems that are not based on an individual title deed, as most systems in the Global North are, brings into sharp relief the difficulty of bringing together diverse practices and knowledges (Grajales 2020a; Nyamu Musembi 2007).

The politics of formalization processes and the development narratives that legitimize them are especially relevant in large-scale land acquisitions that are by now common in post-conflict contexts. These land deals are seen as opportunities for recovery and export-oriented growth and can be

interpreted as “a direct embodiment of the liberal peace paradigm” (Millar 2016b, p. 569). While such projects are presented through the lens of market-led development that come naturally to the liberal peace paradigm, such understandings stand awkwardly in relation to land which is almost never traded under free market conditions.

Land grabs themselves depend on heavy state and elite involvement (Wolford et al. 2013) and land grabbing often happens “legally” as the state and local elites are involved as actors able to guarantee tenure security to investors. Dispossession can thus happen through legal means, through “white collar crimes” or more explicitly through violent military-state structures engaging in “ceasefire capitalism” (Le Billon 2018; Woods 2011). While there exists a wide literature that considers the nuances and the often-disastrous effects of land grabs (see the contributions in Hall et al. 2015), there is also a move to consider these deals more explicitly as a part of peace and conflict processes. Large-scale land deals are documented as promoting conflict at multiple levels in settings like Papua New Guinea (Hennings 2016), Cambodia (Kuhn 2018), and Sierra Leone (Millar 2016b). They create sites of contestation where various local coalitions resist them, as is the case in Côte d’Ivoire (Grajales 2020a), Serbia (Kušić 2018), and Uganda (Martiniello 2015). Land grabs can also become a source of resistance to peacebuilding more generally like in Cambodia in the 1990s (Lee 2015), and they often bring together militaries, conservation agencies, narcotics production, and industrial agriculture in unexpected ways, as they did in Guatemala (Grandia 2013; Ybarra 2012) and Sierra Leone (Millar 2018).

Summary and Future Work

Land is a key issue in understanding causes, forms, and ends of conflicts. It can play a major role in the emergence of wars as a resource, an identity, or territory. Landscapes are reshaped by violence and the movement of people, while land itself can provide resources for further fighting. And after violence, tenure security underlines any quest for sustainable peace. It is no wonder that

issues of land use and land distribution are approached by practitioners with urgency and determination.

However, seeing land as an important resource that needs to be managed effectively to prevent, end, and rebuild after conflict can lead researchers into a “problem-solving” vision. While such approaches provide the knowledge needed for solving urgent problems, they can also be constrained by their “normative objectives” (Grajales 2020b) that tend to see land as an “economic subject” of governance, rather than a “political problem” (Grajales 2020b, p. 16). While the last decade has seen a particular move toward seeing land as *political*, how to study and theorize these political processes is an ongoing question. Some argue for focusing on structures, institutions, agencies, and narratives that bring together local and global dynamics in land conflicts (Dietz and Engels 2020). Others point to post-conflict transformations as instances of restructuring of agrarian capitalism in which peacebuilding, corporations, and strategies of accumulation come together (Grajales 2020b). Whatever a particular approach might be, it is always concerned with the political problem of “land control”: “practices that fix or consolidate forms of access, claiming, and exclusion for some time” (Peluso and Lund 2011, p. 668). Efforts to control land – including those described in this entry – are then not just an outcome of decisions made elsewhere. They “do not only reflect existing political authority, but produce it in the first place” (Hirblinger 2015, p. 705; see also Lund and Boone 2013). This production of political authority and power makes land a crucial site of both conflict and post-conflict politics – this is especially so when thinking about temporalities and scales involved.

Land challenges the temporalities of war and peace. Conflict shapes land dynamics for decades to come, even when the conflict has ended so long ago that most people do not see the spaces as “post-conflict” anymore (Baird and Le Billon 2012; Ybarra 2011). Thinking about land relations here highlights that “post-conflict” is not a temporal designation, but a “set of political circumstances created by the fears and expectations of social actors, the implementation of a certain array

of public policies and the reconfiguration of economic relations” (Grajales 2020a, p. 13). Examining how “land control” is transformed can help researchers challenge the pre-/post-/in-conflict designations and offer a more nuanced understandings of the political, social, and economic transformations.

More than providing temporal connections between conflict and post-conflict contexts, land politics also point to the need to see land tenure as an outcome of local and global processes coming together. While active conflicts present both specific problems and an unparalleled urgency to resolve them, the land conflicts that shape and reflect them should not be considered as separate from the global land politics in which they are embedded: this is as much the case with African American land ownership in the USA (Agyeman and Boone 2020; Presser 2019), the entanglement of settler colonialism with racial regimes of property (Bhandar 2018), indigenous frontiers (Li 2014a), decolonial claims to territories (Tuck and Yang 2012), the sell-off of public lands in the UK (Christophers 2019), or post-socialist transformations in Eastern Europe (Dorondel 2016; Verdery 2003). Understanding land issues in these contexts requires thinking about conflict and politics together with the social, economic, and ecological relations that make them.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Conflict and Hunger](#)
- ▶ [Conflicts and Natural Disasters](#)
- ▶ [Human Geography and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Peace Agreements](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding–Development Nexus](#)
- ▶ [Peace Formation](#)
- ▶ [Security-Development Nexus in Peacebuilding](#)

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Land Rights

- ▶ [Land Politics and Conflict](#)
- ▶ [Maoist Conflict in India](#)

Land Tenure

- ▶ [Land Politics and Conflict](#)

Land Use

- ▶ [Land Politics and Conflict](#)

Left Wing-Extremism

- ▶ [Maoist Conflict in India](#)

LGBTQ Perspectives in Peacebuilding

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Synonyms

[Civil Society Organizations \(CSOs\)](#); [Feminist](#); [Gender](#); [Human rights](#); [Masculinity](#); [Peacebuilding](#); [Post-conflict](#); [Queer](#); [Sexual and gender-based violence](#); [Sexuality](#); [UNSCR 1325](#); [Violence](#)

Introduction

Feminist scholars have long touted the necessity of employing a gender lens to better understand power and violence in global politics. Sexuality is an important dimension of these gendered power dynamics. LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual,

transgender, and queer) perspectives in peacebuilding unsettle the assumptions about what is the “correct” or “normal” sexual orientation, gender identity, or family structure. Drawing on a multiplicity of LGBTQ voices to inform post-conflict responses allows for a more expansive approach to understanding what gendered insecurities look like and how best to respond to them. Centering LGBTQ communities in responses to conflict-related violence is also important when working to develop peacebuilding processes that move beyond the heteronormative patriarchal power dynamics that have historically resulted in violent conflict. LGBTQ perspectives in peacebuilding introduce voices generally marginalized or left out entirely.

Definition

Everyone has a sexuality, though Western society privileges heterosexual identities as “normal.” As such, states marginalize LGBTQ identities or even criminalize non-normative relationships and the behaviors of those with diverse sexual orientations or gender identities. Queer theorists also argue that sexuality influences global norms regarding how certain states or populations are “othered” in world politics resulting in racist violence against those deemed foreign to the nation (Puar 2007; Weber 2016). Sexuality is an important aspect of security in international relations, reaffirmed through nationalist claims to a “straight” state (Canada 2009; Picq and Thiel 2015; Peterson 1999). Those marginalized because of being a part of the LGBTQ community may experience economic, political, and social insecurities. Some states treat queer identities or those that are not heterosexual as perverse or a threat to society. Queer organizations work to overcome this by supporting LGBTQ individuals through art and activism, often filling gaps in support services where governments fail to care for those marginalized due to their sexual orientations or gender identities.

Efforts to bring a gender perspective to peace and security work often neglect how members of LGBTQ communities experience conflict, seek security, and work for peace. Those initiatives

that address this shortcoming allow opportunities for intersectional feminist collaborations across movements to confront violence (Evans and Lépinard 2019). Although LGBTQ organizations are not often invited to peace negotiations, when given the opportunity, they can offer new ways of understanding peace and building a post-conflict society informed by the day-to-day needs of the queer community. To this end, “While conflict can exacerbate vulnerability and violence, many SGM [sexual and gender minority] individuals already experience high levels of physical and sexual violence in day-to-day life, be it from security forces, ideologically motivated groups, other citizens or even from their own families and communities” (Myrntinen and Daigle 2017 p. 17). This is especially true for those human rights activists who bring the needs of LGBTQ individuals to the national and international agenda.

Sexuality and Conflict Studies

Sexuality is one dimension of identity that is policed more aggressively during times of conflict (Amar 2014). Periods of post-conflict transition may result in backlash against minoritized sexual orientations or gender identities along with increased homophobia (Serrano-Amaya 2018). Homophobia is also a means of shoring up “traditional” patriarchal masculine norms (Slootmaeckers 2019). Vulnerability to sexual and gender-based violence is exacerbated for LGBTQ individuals in times of conflict. This was the case in Iraq following the US-led 2003 invasion (Human Rights Watch 2009). As Out-Right Action International reports, “Compared to the hundreds of thousands of other Iraqis facing persecution and threats to their lives and livelihoods today, LGBT Iraqis are at heightened risk both because of greater threats to them and because their ability to reach safety is reduced” (2014, p. 12).

Scholars who research sexuality have also examined how homophobia within society changes shape prior to and after conflict in cases such as The Troubles in Northern Ireland (Duggan 2012; Ashe 2018). Though this changing attitude

can be challenging to measure, one method of doing so is looking at reporting on hate crimes over time. In her research about homophobia during and after The Troubles, Marian Duggan writes about how sexual minorities may be especially vulnerable to victimization due to the way they are constructed in society as “acceptable” targets of this violence. Duggan looks at hate crime statistics to measure this victimization (2012, p. 20). The post-conflict period may provide a time to shift these norms, rethink how sexual and gender minorities may be targets of hate crime, to then respond with the appropriate social supports and necessary legal regulations to confront this social discrimination. Peacebuilding work that takes these vulnerabilities seriously may be able to address insecurities more successfully. It is also important to consider the experiences of LGBTQ combatants in peacebuilding work (Thylin 2018). Including the full complexity of SGM experiences requires engaging with LGBT perpetrators as well as survivors of violence.

The Colombian peace process offers a valuable insight into the inclusion of LGBTQ perspectives in post-conflict peacebuilding work (Hagen 2017). LGBTQ organizations participated in conversations about the gendered dimension of the conflict during the peace process. This includes attention to how people are targeted violently because of their non-normative sexual orientation or gender identity as well as those targeted because of their assumed non-normative identities based on attributes like clothing, affect, or engagement with human rights advocacy. As a result, in some communities it is not safe for LGBTQ individuals to openly identify or be visible for fear of public backlash or targeted violence from the state.

LGBTQ Perspectives on (In)Security

Heterosexual assumptions about gender can lead to the erasure of queer experiences by scholars and policymakers. There is risk of invisibility especially for lesbian and bisexual relationships which in some contexts are seen as less serious because they do not involve men. This highlights

the increased vulnerabilities certain women face because of their intersectional identities including sexuality, race, class, and disability. For example, trans women are at risk of compounded violence as a result of the intersection of homophobia, economic insecurity, and sexual harassment they are likely to face as documented in research with trans women in Lebanon (HRW 2019).

Following the passage of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in 2000, there has been increasing attention to how gender matters to understanding peace and conflict. The resolution, which was the first of what is now 10 Women, Peace and Security resolutions (WPS), calls for a gender perspective in peace and security work by highlighting how this is important for building peace and responding to violence in conflict-related environments. In some cases, the move to implement a gender perspective has amounted to simply pushing for the need to include women in peace and security efforts. Given the poor representation of women in peace talks, peacebuilding in general, and peacekeeping initiatives, it is understandable that this has been a focus of WPS work. However, including women is not the same thing as ensuring peacebuilding initiatives promote an intersectional gender perspective. Furthermore, given the prevailing heteronormative framing of international politics, the default assumption is that women are heterosexual (Hagen 2016). There is little attention to LGBTQ individuals in WPS initiatives. In recent years, there have been some efforts to bring together LGBTQ organizing and WPS organizing by organizations like OutRight Action International (Davis and Stern 2018). Women's rights in Colombia have also provided shadow reports through CEDAW to help draw connections between women's rights organizing and supporting LGBTQ individuals (Shadow Report 2013). New visions for transitional justice are also emerging amid the push for LGBTQ rights in Latin America (Bueno-Hansen 2017; Fobear and Baines 2020). Nevertheless, there is the risk of cooptation of LGBTQ rights in post-conflict (Nagle and Fakhoury 2018).

Another important dimension of documenting LGBTQ experiences is acknowledging the

challenge of creating universal categories for members of a diverse queer community. Historically, research about LGBTQ populations has focused primarily on categories of sexuality as defined by the West. Narrow and colonial frameworks of sexuality uphold the West as a place where LGBTQ communities exist and the Global South as a space where LGBTQ people only experience homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic violence. Peacebuilding efforts that center organizing by local LGBTQ individuals is one way to resist this binary framing while refusing colonial legacies of violence. In some communities in Pakistan, India, and Afghanistan, there are "underground movements" of LGBT communities (Munhazim 2020). In South Asian communities like this, a definition of LGBTQ visibility defined by a Western framework of coming out neglects these spaces and histories of diverse sexualities.

Summary and Future Directions

LGBTQ perspectives offer a lens for understanding power dynamics in global politics, especially for communities emerging from conflict. It is important to think about sexuality as a separate but interlinked, context-specific dimension of lived experiences along with gender, race, class, and ability. It is valuable for international actors such as funders, policymakers, and researchers to be intentional about supporting LGBTQ individuals by terms as defined by LGBTQ communities rather than setting top-down priorities from the international to the local. Security responses should be aware that LGBTQ communities will not look the same in all places, and therefore the approach to peacebuilding should be informed by feminist and queer organizing locally and regionally. Relatedly, in July of 2020 Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination reported based on SOGI (sexual orientation and gender identity), Victor Madrigal-Borloz, reported to the UN General Assembly the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the human rights of LGBT and gender-diverse people. Madrigal-Borloz's reporting highlights how the

pandemic can exacerbate social exclusion and violence along with the interaction with institutional drivers of stigma and discrimination against these communities furthering existing insecurities (A/75/258 2020).

Future directions for research in LGBTQ perspectives in peacebuilding should emerge from an intersectional understanding of gender in peace and security work. By focusing on LGBTQ experiences, future research about gender in peacebuilding can avoid the pitfalls of reproducing stereotypes about men and women as distinct sex categories with fixed behaviors attached to a binary framing of masculinity/male and femininity/female. Instead the complexity of LGBTQ experiences opens up the possibility to not only bring a more complete gender analysis to peacebuilding but also appreciate a diversity of sexual orientations and gender identities around the world.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Masculinity and Conflict](#)
- ▶ [Nonviolence and Civil Resistance](#)
- ▶ [Search for Peace, the](#)
- ▶ [Security Sector Reform After Armed Conflict](#)
- ▶ [Women, Peace and Security Agenda](#)

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Liberal and Illiberal Peacebuilding in Sri Lanka

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Synonyms

[Conflict in Sri Lanka](#); [Ethnic conflict](#); [Post-conflict reconstruction](#); [Reconciliation](#); [Sri Lankan peace process](#)

Definition

Sri Lanka's long-running separatist war, which began in 1983 and lasted for 26 years, ended with a military victory for the government armed forces in 2009. Although the likelihood of a return to organized armed conflict remains slim and the country has seen its economy expand significantly, grievances from minority groups remain, and new societal conflicts have emerged. The Tamil separatist conflict was not the first instance of armed conflict in the post-colonial period: in 1971 and between 1988 and 1989, a youth-based movement in the south of the country, the *Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna* (JVP, lit. People's Liberation Front), staged two insurrections against the state. This entry analyzes a variety of international,

regional, and local efforts to address these conflicts, using a detailed historical analysis of the varied waves of peacebuilding interventions to explore some of the limitations of global categories such as liberal and illiberal peacebuilding in the Sri Lankan context. In doing so, it highlights some important analytical biases that inform existing scholarship on peacebuilding in Sri Lanka.

Introduction

Sri Lanka's experience of conflict has provided scholars with a useful case study with which to explore shifting global conditions and approaches for peacebuilding. International peacebuilding in Sri Lanka intensified in the early to mid-2000s, at around the same time as academic interest in liberal peacebuilding was reaching its peak. As a result, the country became a prominent case study for exploring this model and highlighting its deficiencies. After the breakdown of an internationally backed peace process in 2006, and particularly since the end of the war in 2009, the Sri Lankan case has more recently become a “paradigmatic case of victor's peace” (Smith et al. 2020, p. 5) and has contributed to discussions around emerging concept of illiberal peacebuilding.

For the purposes of this entry, liberal peacebuilding will be used to refer to the mainstream approach to international peacebuilding which involves combining democratization, economic reform, and conflict resolution. Smith et al. (2020) have argued that illiberal peacebuilding can be contrasted with the liberal peacebuilding approach on the grounds that it is led by local actors, is economically oriented not toward neoliberalism but cronyism and corruption, and emphasizes inequality and order not liberty and equality. While acknowledging the benefits of using general concepts such as liberal and illiberal peacebuilding to explain and critique broad global policy trends, this entry will demonstrate how the experience of countries like Sri Lanka can also be used to reflect on the limitations of such categories. As Selby (2013) has argued, the liberal peacebuilding concept overstates the liberal

content of these policies and (sometimes deliberately) underplays the geostrategic drivers of many liberal peacebuilding policies. Similarly, while pointing to very substantive changes in the underlying global realities for peacebuilding and challenges to liberal norms, the practical content of “illiberal peacebuilding” may exhibit many continuities with liberal approaches.

This entry uses Sri Lanka’s experience of conflict and peacebuilding over the five decades to caution against oversimplified renderings of a transition from liberal to illiberal peacebuilding. In doing so, it highlights several analytical biases that tend to inform and reinforce the liberal and illiberal categorizations. Ideas about a global shift from liberal and illiberal peacebuilding categories are at least partly sustained by a mismatch in analytical focus between academic studies of liberal peacebuilding (which tends to focus on international (Western) policymaking) and illiberal approaches (which are more focused on domestic actors). Furthermore, studies of liberal peacebuilding often ignore peacebuilding efforts that pre-date the upsurge of interest in international peacebuilding that occurred after the mid-1990s. In the case of Sri Lanka, this has led to a neglect of efforts to address earlier instances of conflict (notably the JVP insurgencies of the 1970s and 1980s). A fuller historical account can complicate linear narratives about a progression from liberal to illiberal peacebuilding. Revisiting cases like Sri Lanka can also highlight the ambiguities in the agendas and motivations underpinning international peacebuilding and demonstrate how the application of concepts like liberal and illiberal peacebuilding risks overplaying the importance of rhetorical commitment and intentionality to peacebuilding processes, neglecting the unintended consequences of these interventions.

The entry will proceed as follows. After providing a brief overview of conflict and peacebuilding efforts in the Sri Lankan context, the entry will examine four key periods – the first JVP insurgency and its aftermath (1971–1986), the aftermath second JVP uprising and responses (1987–1994), the civil war between the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) and the LTTE (1983–2009), and the post-war period after 2009 – before concluding with analysis and discussion.

Overview of Conflict and Peacebuilding Efforts

The legitimacy of the post-colonial state in Sri Lanka has been challenged by two major youth groups. The most prominent conflict was between the majority Sinhalese-led government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the leading Tamil separatist group who were fighting for self-determination for the Tamil minority, concentrated in the Northern and Eastern Province. As Uyangoda (2005) has argued, the war between the Tamil insurgents and the GoSL can be viewed as a manifestation of mutually reinforcing ethnonationalist projects over the state – Sinhala Buddhist Nationalism and Tamil Nationalism (Uyangoda 2005). Estimates of the total number of people killed in the LTTE conflict vary considerably. The Uppsala Conflict Data Program estimates 60,000 deaths based on official data, while other studies argue that the real number of deaths is much higher than official figures (UCDP *n.d.*). Obermeyer et al. (2008), for example, argue that there had been 215,000 conflict-related deaths in the period before 2002.

The legitimacy of the state was also challenged by the JVP, representing the educated rural Sinhalese youth in the South, who felt systematically marginalized from access to resources and state power. The JVP staged two insurrections against the GoSL in 1971 and between 1988 and 1989, the latter of which came to an end when its leader was killed. The group re-entered party politics in democratic elections in the early 1990s. The conflicts both resulted in around 100,000 deaths and paved the way for continuous decay of democratic space for civil society. The actual numbers killed directly in both conflicts are disputed in the literature [see Moore 1993 and UCDP (*n.d.*)].

A Period of Failed Self-reintegration of JVP and Relapse into Violence (1971–1986)

Analysis of the conflict between the GoSL and JVP is rarely framed in terms of peacebuilding interventions. The conflict spanned two decades and prompted a range of “home-grown”

comprehensive conflict response measures, the most successful of which were not intentionally designed to promote peacebuilding. The first JVP rebellion in April 1971 was immediately suppressed with thousands of its cadres killed or jailed (Venugopal 2010). Later in 1971, the government investigated the causes of the uprising, identifying education and employment as key drivers. The economic reforms introduced by the government were intended to address some of the causes of the conflict but in practice did very little to expand economic opportunities for young people. Targeted actions including rehabilitation classes and the decision to debar suspended sentences to ex-JVP members allowed some to gain public sector jobs but failed to provide widespread opportunities. In the name of reconciliation, following the 1977 parliamentary elections, the new UNP government granted an amnesty to JVP members, viewing them as “misguided youngsters.” The JVP soon returned to democratic politics, and the ban on the party was lifted the same year, allowing the party to contest the 1983 presidential elections before being banned again. The government’s peacebuilding measures ultimately failed in preventing the relapse of violence. The self-reintegration process initiated by the JVP itself was a more effective measure, which, combined with the expansion of the NGO sector around this time, enabled most of the JVP members and ex-members to become more engaged with the democratic process (Hill 2013). However, a lack of access to economic gains and political power remained major grievances and acted as central drivers of the second rebellion. Those conditions were aggravated by political instability, economic issues, and the government’s decision to exclude JVP from politics in 1983 due to their gaining popularity and the emerging Tamil separatist violence.

Successful Self-reintegration of the JVP (1987–1994)

The second insurrection between 1987 and 1989 was again crushed by the GoSL forces, killing between 20,000 and 60,000 people including the JVP’s key leaders (Hill 2013, p. 371). The new

president, Ranasinghe Premadasa, opened negotiations with the JVP in 1989 and subsequently lifted the ban on the organization, which had been imposed in 1983. Although de-proscription was intended as a temporary measure to allow talks, this decision was never reversed. Hill (2013) argues that this unintended measure constituted the biggest and most positive step toward resolving the JVP conflict, by promoting the long-term reintegration of the group. Several other peacebuilding measures that were explicitly designed by the government to address conflict grievances proved less successful. One such measure includes the government’s effort to provide jobs for rural Sinhalese youth in the 1990s by establishing garment factories in the rural areas in the South. In practice, this intervention largely failed to address the grievances of the youth involved in the struggle since most garment factory workers were women while the JVP cadre was mostly men (Hill 2013, p. 362). Another failed measure was the establishment of the Rehabilitations of Persons, Properties and Industries Authority, which provided limited compensation for those who can prove with the death certificate that their relatives died during the conflict.

As Hill (2013) has argued, it was the successful reintegration process, caused in part by the de-proscription of the government, but also driven by other contextual factors including the JVP’s own success at organizing and growing public dissent against successive ruling governments, which can best explain the successful resolution of the JVP conflict. In an ironic twist, the JVP’s rehabilitation and later electoral success in the early 2000s led to them playing a central role in the disintegration of the 2002–2004 peace process between the government and LTTE (see Venugopal 2018).

Peacebuilding and the Tamil Insurgency

The Tamil conflict can be traced to a lack of safeguards to protect the rights of the minority Tamil community. Sri Lanka’s post-independence history has been read as a failure of the state to reconcile the interests of minorities with those of the Sinhalese majority. Bastian (1999) argues that

this failure occurred at three levels: in terms of the failure of the state's institutions to generate a means of power-sharing between ethnic groups, in terms of the state's identity, and finally in the implementation of public policies.

From Local to "Regionalized" Peacebuilding: Indian Involvement

Even before the emergence of the fully blown military conflict between the LTTE and the GoSL in 1983, several government-led measures had been taken to address political marginalization of minorities (see Table 1 below). The Bandaranaike-Chelvanagam and the Senanayake-Chelvanagam Pacts, signed in 1958 and 1965, respectively, attempted to provide some form of regional autonomy for Tamils, but both were rejected by opposition parties. In 1966, the UNP attempted to reverse the Sinhala Only Act through the Tamil Language (Special Provisions) Act, but these changes were later thrown out by Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike in 1972. On coming into power in 1977, President Jayawardene called for an All Party Representative Conference (APRC), which finally generated talks in 1984 but had limited success due to growing violence and internal opposition inside and outside the government. An important feature of these efforts is none of these attempts were facilitated by external parties except the APRC in 1984 which saw the first Indian involvement, with the Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi making her good offices available to the parties (Robert 1985; Rao 1988).

The Tamil separatist struggle that had seen the birth of several paramilitary groups in the 1970s was transformed into a full-scale military conflict when Tamil militants ambushed and killed 13 Sri Lankan soldiers in July 1983 (Manor 1983, p. 450). This incident sparked a nationwide pogrom, involving widespread attacks by Sinhalese mobs on Tamil families and their properties and businesses. A series of failed peacemaking efforts followed the start of the civil war between the LTTE and the government. Peace talks were held in Thimphu in 1985 (the first time negotiations were held outside of the country) but quickly broke down due to a lack of trust on both sides and

internal divisions on both sides (between the TULF and LTTE and as a result of nationalist pressure from the SLFP on the UNP government). The Sri Lankan government revived an earlier proposal for granting greater autonomy to the North and East through district councils, while the LTTE set out four principles for agreement: recognition of Tamils as a nation, recognition of the existence of the Northern and Eastern Provinces as Tamil homeland, recognition of the right of self-determination, and recognition of the right of Sri Lankan citizenship and fundamental rights of all Tamils in the country (Rothenberg 1998).

Indian engagement escalated after Thimpu and culminated in 1987 with the Indo-Lanka Accord signed between the GoSL and the Indian government, which attempted to resolve the conflict through an agreement to devolve power to the provinces (Venugopal 2003, p. 19). Crucially, however, the Accord did not involve representatives from the Sri Lankan Tamil community, and while it succeeded in disarming several Tamil militant groups, it failed to neutralize the LTTE, cementing their pre-eminence in the Tamil political and military arena.

An Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) was sent to enforce the ceasefire, but this soon became embroiled in a protracted guerrilla war with the LTTE, who refused to accept the conditions of the Accord. India had effectively transformed from a facilitator of talks to a party to the conflict. The IPKF left in 1990 not only having failed to stabilize the North but also having succeeded in destabilizing the South by contributing significantly to fears about external intervention. These anxieties contributed to the second JVP uprising in 1989 (Bullion 1995; Bose 2002). The Indo-Lanka Accord also established the Provincial Council System, which, while promising to devolve power to the provinces, was stifled in practice. Arguably, the councils' biggest contribution to conflict has been to serve as a lightning rod for new conflicts and adding to nationalist insecurities about a potential threat to the unitary state (Goodhand, Klem and Walton 2016). This was the last major peacebuilding role played by India.

Liberal and Illiberal Peacebuilding in Sri Lanka, Table 1 Peace initiatives in Sri Lanka’s Tamil separatist conflict (1958–2009)

| Peace initiative | Type | Parties | Third party? | Key outcomes |
|---|---|---|------------------------|--|
| 1958 Banadaranaike-Chelvanagam Pact | Internal negotiations | Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) from the government and the Federal Party of Sri Lanka | No | Opposition rejected and GoSL nullified the agreement due to the pressure from the Sinhalese hardliners |
| 1965 Senanayake-Chelvanagam Pact | Internal negotiations | United National Party (UNP)-led government and the Federal Party of Sri Lanka | No | Weaker agreement was rejected by the opposition and subsequently radicalization of Tamil youth |
| 1984 APC | Third party-facilitated negotiations (regional) | All Party Conference (SLFP, United National Party, Tamil United Liberation Front) | India as a facilitator | SLFP and TULF withdrawn support citing too much and too little, respectively |
| 1985 Thimpu Talks | Third party-mediated negotiations (regional) | Government of Sri Lanka, Eelam National Liberation Front (TELO, EROS, TELA, LTTE, EPRLF, TULF, PLOTE) | India as a mediator | Tamil groups walked away from the talks as Thimpu principles by Tamil militants and the proposals by government did not overlap |
| 1987 Indo-Lanka Accord | Third party agreement | India, GoSL | Indian intervention | Indo-Lanka Accord was signed, 13th Amendment to the constitution was introduced. Hostilities resumed as LTTE violated the ceasefire |
| 1989 LTTE-Premadasa Talks | Internal negotiations | GoSL and LTTE | No | IPKF was sent back and LTTE walked away from the talks, ceasefire violated, and hostilities resumed |
| 1995 LTTE-Kumaratunga Talks | Internal negotiations | GoSL and LTTE | No | LTTE violated the ceasefire and hostilities resumed |
| 2002 Ceasefire Agreement (CFA) and 2002–2003 peace talks | Third party-facilitated negotiations | GoSL and LTTE | Norwegian facilitation | CFA signed and SLMM was set up. Both parties violate CFA and peace remained fragile. Talks did not make significant progress on substantive political issues |
| 2006 Geneva Talks | Third party-facilitated negotiations | GoSL and LTTE | Norwegian facilitation | CFA reassurance talks, both parties violated CFA and full hostilities resumed |
| 2007 APRC Conference | Internal negotiations | All Party Representative Conference (Sri Lanka Freedom Party, United National Party, Tamil National Alliance) | No | APRC submitted proposals but these were never implemented |

Return to Local Initiatives: War for Peace and the Emerging Liberal Agenda

After the failure of Indian-led efforts, Sri Lanka returned to a locally led approach. In 1989 a brief round of talks was conducted between the

Premadasa government and the LTTE. The IPKF were sent back to India as a concession for talks with the LTTE. The short-lived ceasefire quickly broke down, and war resumed. President Premadasa was assassinated in 1993. There was a

brief cessation of hostilities after the election of the People's Alliance (PA) government in 1994, led by President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga, who had won parliamentary and then a presidential election on a peace ticket. Negotiations were conducted between the LTTE and the government in 1995, but the government's proposals were rejected both by the LTTE and the UNP – the opposition party to the government. Rothenberg (1998) has argued that as with previous rounds of talks, the process was undermined by mistrust and internal rivalries. Furthermore, the talks were hampered by a lack of attention to procedural issues including a lack of preparatory talks, a failure of the government to send high-ranking officials in their delegations, and a lack of a clear agenda. Following the talks, the government began to pursue a military solution to the conflict, through its “war for peace” strategy, which the government returned to full offensive method war for peace which promised long-lasting peace by militarily weakening the LTTE.

The Kumaratunga government's peacebuilding efforts represented an early formulation of the liberal peacebuilding approach, by combining policies of state shrinkage, outward-oriented growth, and devolution of state power. While President Kumaratunga pursued a liberal peace agenda to the extent that she believed peace could be encouraged by pursuing policies of economic liberalization and promoting greater engagement with the global economy, she did so at the same time as limiting the role of international actors in the peace process (Rampton & Welikala 2009). Kumaratunga's attempts to liberalize the economy were not simply a product of her belief in the key tenets of the liberal peace but also an outcome of the withdrawal of foreign aid committed during her predecessor Premadasa's presidency (Shastri 2004, 76 cited in Rampton & Welikala 2009).

The Limits of Liberal Peacebuilding

A more internationalized mode of liberal peacebuilding emerged following the victory of the UNP in the parliamentary elections of 2001.

By February 2002, the government and the LTTE had signed a ceasefire agreement. Peace talks brokered by Norway followed in September of that year. The government de-proscribed the LTTE, and six rounds of peace talks were conducted between September 2002 and April 2003. During this time, Sri Lanka was viewed as a key site for the emerging liberal peacebuilding model. As a result, it saw an influx of interest from international donors and NGOs (Walton 2008) while also becoming regularly profiled as a case study through which to examine the liberal peacebuilding model in the academic literature (see Goodhand & Walton 2009; Stokke 2011; Goodhand et al. 2010; Newman et al. 2009).

The peace process was multi-faceted and involved security guarantees, efforts to support peace negotiations, mechanisms for monitoring the ceasefire, as well as the provision of development assistance. Total aid to Sri Lanka increased significantly after the ceasefire. In 2003, donors pledged \$4.5 billion to help development and reconstruction in Sri Lanka, and delivery of these funds was contingent upon progress in peace negotiations. There was considerable variation in the motivations and approaches of aid provision from different donors. Many of the largest donors such as Japan, ADB, and the World Bank tended to channel funds through the GoSL and continued to work “around” conflict (Burke and Mulakala 2005). A smaller group of Western donors sought to work “on” conflict by focusing on reconstruction and rehabilitation in the North and East and pursuing measures aimed at improving governance, building civil society, and protecting human rights. The internal contradictions in donors' peacebuilding strategies were accentuated by Western governments' more hard-line response to international terrorism after the events of September 11, 2001. The peacebuilding strategies of a variety of Western donors including the USA, the UK, the EU, and Canada were undermined by moves to proscribe the LTTE (Goodhand and Walton 2009). There was often a large gap between the expressed aims of liberal peacebuilders and the actual outcomes of their interventions. The heavy internationalization of the peace process invigorated nationalist forces

by heightening the perceived threat to Sri Lankan sovereignty. The cautious step-by-step approach embodied in the peace process also led to limited humanitarian and human rights gains for vulnerable populations in the North and East. In this sense, the 2002–2004 peace process has been described by some as a “virtual peace,” wherein there was a deferral of some of the fruits of the liberal peace project such as enhanced security via greater respect for human rights.

The newness of these approaches has arguably been overstated in the existing literature on liberal peacebuilding. While the 2002–2004 process was more formalized and generated more sustained commitment from the conflict parties, many of the core components (including the focus on a return to normalcy and improving the socioeconomic conditions of the North and East while exploring options for granting greater regional autonomy) replicated strategies pursued in previous rounds of talks. Another criticism of existing accounts of liberal peacebuilding has been a tendency to understate the importance of domestic actors and processes in shaping outcomes. As Goodhand and Walton (2009) have shown, the approach was not simply imposed upon the government from the outside; the role of domestic “importers” of the liberal peacebuilding model, including the Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe and certain sections of civil society, was important.

During the third round of talks in Oslo, the LTTE expressed its willingness to explore a political solution based on a federal structure within a united Sri Lanka, representing a significant departure from the principles outlined in the Thimpu talks. These positive steps, however, were quickly reversed when the LTTE withdrew from the peace process in April 2003, in response to a decision to hold a donors’ seminar in Washington D.C. Since the LTTE had been banned in the USA, they were not permitted to send representatives. Anton Balasingham, the LTTE chief spokesman, argued that this represented a deliberate snub to the organization and was indicative of a broader strategic ploy by the government to corner the LTTE into an internationally backed “peace trap” (Balasingham 2004).

The peace process unraveled further after President Kumaratunga called a snap election in April 2004, which resulted in the defeat of the incumbent United National Front (UNF) government. The new People’s Alliance (PA) coalition relied on support from the JVP and was more critical of the peace process and the LTTE. The LTTE’s support for the process was also diminished both by the defection of its Eastern Command led by Vinayagamoorthy Muralitharan (known as “Karuna”) in early 2004 and the new government’s rejection of its Interim Self-Governing Authority (ISGA) proposals later that year. A “shadow war” between the LTTE with the Karuna faction began in the East, involving regular tit-for-tat killings between the two factions and an escalating number of political killings in the East.

The PA candidate, Mahinda Rajapaksa, won the presidential election in November 2005. Rajapaksa’s coalition, which relied on support from nationalist political parties, was less receptive to international engagement and more cautious about making concessions to the LTTE. Although three more rounds of peace talks were held during 2006, there was little progress, and the government increasingly began to act upon the strategic opportunity offered by internecine fighting in the East to weaken the LTTE through its illicit support of the Karuna faction (ICG 2008). Rajapaksa reversed the decision to merge the Northern and Eastern Provinces, focusing instead on the discredited Provincial Council System as his primary tool of devolution.

The Norwegian-facilitated peace process has been critiqued on several grounds. First, the heavy internationalization of the process undermined the domestic legitimacy of Ranil Wickremesinghe and helped to create conditions for the nationalist backlash that followed. Second, the strong emphasis on development and creating a “peace dividend” misread the incentives of the main conflict parties and failed to generate widespread economic benefits (particularly among more marginalized Sinhalese populations living in rural areas who were negatively affected by some economic reforms pushed through by the UNF government at the same time as the peace

process) (Goodhand and Walton 2009). Third, the bipolar approach taken to peace talks excluded other groups such as the JVP and the Jathika Hela Urumaya (JHU) who then mobilized in opposition to the process. Fourth, the incremental approach, which deferred addressing core political issues while bringing about a return to normalcy and generating economic benefits, failed due to internal tensions among international actors and within the Sri Lankan government. The lack of a clear roadmap toward an agreement created uncertainty in which parties that opposed to the process could exploit and ultimately undermined public trust in the process. Fifth, as noted above, the process exposed internal divisions with the negotiating parties, both within the Sri Lankan government (between president and prime minister) and within the LTTE (with the breakaway of the Karuna faction). As the peace process broke down, Western donors became increasingly disillusioned with supporting peacebuilding in Sri Lanka, and many withdrew or reduced support after 2005. Cuts in Western aid have been offset by a growth in export credit loans and new funding from China and other regional donors such as Iran and Malaysia.

Return to War and Emergence of Illiberal Approach

A return to open hostilities began in 2006. By mid-July 2007, the GoSL had largely cleared the East of LTTE cadres, and military operations moved northward. By May 2009, GoSL forces had regained control of all LTTE-controlled areas in the north. Civilian casualties rose sharply as fighting pushed the LTTE back toward an ever-shrinking strip of the Mullaitivu coast. The LTTE's key leaders, including their chief Velupillai Prabhakaran, were killed in the final stages of the battle.

Rajapaksa's pursuit of a ruthless counterinsurgency strategy against the LTTE was dependent upon wider geopolitical shifts. Although Rajapaksa was heavily criticized by Western countries for abandoning the peace process, he was largely able to avoid any major political or

economic costs by re-balancing Sri Lanka's external relations and cultivating new sources of support from countries such as China, Russia, India, Pakistan, and Iran, who were less committed to liberal goals. The Rajapaksa government continued to rely on the support of these players in the post-war period.

Following the end of the war in 2009, Sri Lanka quickly became viewed as an archetype for a new reason: "a paradigmatic case of victor's peace that contributed to early theorizing on illiberal peace-building" (Smith et al. 2020, p. 5). In the post-war period, Rajapaksa privileged national security, economic development, and regime consolidation over addressing the political grievances of minority communities. Lewis (2020) has examined the ideational roots of this illiberal turn in Sri Lanka and elsewhere, highlighting a number of key features – a rhetorical commitment to distinguishing friend and enemy (rather than seeking to resolve differences), an emphasis on centralized sovereign power (rather than devolved power), and an anti-liberal understanding of space. Responding to international pressure, Rajapaksa made some steps to address issues of accountability and reconciliation by appointing a Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission in 2010. This body consulted widely and produced recommendations, but very few were implemented. The process was seen by many as a cosmetic exercise to deflect international criticism.

Military spending continued to rise sharply during this period, and former LTTE-held areas remained heavily militarized. Rajapaksa sought to reframe the problems facing the North and East in economic terms and committed his government to an ambitious program of large-scale infrastructure, funded largely by commercial borrowing. Some of these projects, including the new port in Hambantota, were of questionable strategic value and were largely backed by Chinese loans. Spending on infrastructure drove high growth rates after 2009, but the fruits of this growth generally failed to improve the condition of the poor, particularly those living in the former conflict zones. Household survey data from 2016 showed that the conflict-affected regions of the North and East

remained the poorest, while another study showed limited job creation or private sector growth in the North and East (Sarvananthan 2016). The large-scale infrastructure development, while providing some benefits to the South and Western Provinces, also fueled corruption and led to growing indebtedness. Rajapaksa sought to strengthen his position as president by amending the constitution to remove democratic checks and balances and abolish the two-term limit.

After taking a nearly decade-long authoritarian turn, a democratic revival appeared on the cards after Mahinda Rajapaksa lost the 2015 presidential elections to a former ally and unity candidate Maithripala Sirisena who had joined forces with the UNP led by Ranil Wickremesinghe. This “good governance” coalition also successfully defeated Rajapaksa in the later parliamentary election in August 2015 and promised to introduce a new constitution that abolished the executive presidency, addressed minority grievances, and reformed the electoral system while restoring democratic governance and law and order. Although some limited progress was made on some aspects of this ambitious agenda, the new coalition struggled to hold together in the face of growing opposition from the “Joint Opposition” led by Rajapaksa. The process of returning land and forming a consensus around the need for political reform was slow, and the prospects for state reform and a referendum on a new constitution were undermined further after local elections held in February 2018, which saw a new party established by Mahinda Rajapaksa – the Podujana Peramuna (SLPP) – winning 239 out of 340 contests (Goodhand and Walton 2017). This result precipitated a political crisis and intensified infighting between the president and prime minister, leading to an attempt by the president to unilaterally replace the sitting Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe with the former president, Mahinda Rajapaksa. Although this “constitutional coup” was eventually blocked by the Supreme Court, Rajapaksa’s return to power seemed assured after Mahinda Rajapaksa’s brother, the former defense minister, Gotabaya Rajapaksa, won the presidential election in November 2019.

Summary

The application of the liberal and illiberal peacebuilding concepts to Sri Lanka has underplayed the importance of locally and regionally led peacebuilding efforts implemented in Sri Lanka and the agency of local actors. As a result, earlier local efforts have either been ignored by the peacebuilding literature or simply elided with liberal approaches adopted in the latter part of the conflict. The Sri Lankan case highlights clear differences between the liberal and illiberal approaches, which are most apparent at an ideological and rhetorical level. Liberal peacebuilders espoused a commitment to a negotiated settlement and maintained a much greater commitment to democratic plurality, media, and civic freedoms. In contrast, since the end of the war in 2009 in particular, the Rajapaksa-led government has remained committed to the centralization of sovereign power and a re-casting of the “ethnic conflict” as a terrorist problem, by drawing a sharp dividing line between “friend” and “enemy” in official discourse.

Despite these differences, these liberal and illiberal categories are normative frameworks that obscure strong continuities in practice between the liberal and illiberal approaches to peacebuilding and conflict management. First, although the Rajapaksa government has clearly diverged from the liberal approach by denying the ethnic drivers of conflict, in both approaches, development has been presented as a core strategy for overcoming tensions between social groups or addressing challenges facing marginalized populations. Both the liberal peacebuilding approaches in the 2000s and the government’s response to the JVP uprising in the 1970s and 1980s identified youth unemployment and education among socially marginalized groups as key causal drivers of conflict. Second, within both the liberal and illiberal frameworks, peacebuilding responses have focused primarily on containing organized armed violence, neglecting less visible forms of violence including gender-based or sexual violence, or violence against sexual minorities has been neglected. Third, although the emerging illiberal model has been presented as a domestically

driven alternative to the internationally driven peace process of the early 2000s, in practice, both approaches are the result of complex interactions between “importers” and “exporters”: just as Western countries promoted and facilitated liberal peacebuilding measures, the Rajapaksa government drew inspiration and support from foreign powers committed to the protection of state sovereignty including China, Russia, and India.

As well as highlighting some of the limits of the dominant peacebuilding concepts and categories, Sri Lanka’s experience also highlights the tendency for existing analysis to exhibit a strong analytical bias within discussion of liberal peacebuilding toward the exploration of Western-backed or Western-led initiatives, which is then contrasted with an analysis of illiberal efforts, which focuses primarily on locally driven initiatives. The pre-2002 antecedents of liberal peacebuilding (which pursued similar strategies but were driven by local actors) are generally underplayed in existing accounts. Furthermore, existing accounts often underplay the illiberal aspects of these internationalized interventions. These include the decision taken by many Western countries to proscribe the LTTE in the early 2000s, the provision of covert military support to the GoSL, and the failure to launch an effective collective response to human rights abuses and war crimes committed after the war resumed in 2006.

The Sri Lanka case highlights the tendency for peacebuilding narratives to neglect certain key episodes of violence at exclusion of others. As discussed in our analysis of interventions to address the JVP conflict, some of the most effective measures were not intentionally designed to address conflict. Conversely, other intentional peacebuilding efforts such as the IPKF intervention of the late 1980s or the internationalized peace process of the early 2000s had unintended negative consequences, acting as a spur to a nationalist backlash which led to renewed conflict between the state and JVP in the late 1980s, and facilitated the rise of Rajapaksa after 2005. These examples highlight how approaches to understanding peace and conflict could benefit from widening their gaze to examine the intended and unintended

consequences of a wider range of interventions, including both interventions designed to promote peace and those with other goals.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Liberal Peace in Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Liberal Peacebuilding in a Transitional International Order](#)
- ▶ [Local Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Mediation](#)
- ▶ [Peace Agreements](#)
- ▶ [Post-Conflict Nation-Building](#)

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Liberal Interventionism

- ▶ [Deconstruction in International Interventions](#)

Liberal Peace

- ▶ [International Peace Architecture, Blockages, and Counter-Peace](#)
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Liberal Peace and Its Critiques

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Synonyms

[Everyday peace](#); [Hybridity](#); [Liberal peace](#); [Liberal peacebuilding](#); [Peace formation](#); [Post-liberal peace](#); [Statebuilding](#)

Definition

The ethical underpinnings of liberal peace have driven its critical development into new areas of peacemaking and peacebuilding.

Introduction

There has been a widespread, local dissatisfaction with what the liberal peace represents for its subjects in conflict-affected environments. This became very evident in local and qualitative, social, economic, and political terms, as much as contemporary, methodologically and theoretically sophisticated, and locally grounded research now illustrates (see Chandler 2006a; Pugh 2005, 2008; Pugh et al. 2008b; Cooper 2007; Jahn 2007; Duffield 2007; Mac Ginty 2008; Mac Ginty and Richmond 2007). It contradicts the orthodox, institutional and elite level, state-based approaches often deployed and reflects the events that have unfolded in situations as diverse as East Timor, Bosnia, Kosovo, or Cambodia.

In many post-violence environments, local perceptions of the liberal peace project and its state-building focus indicate it to be ethically bankrupt, subject to double standards, coercive and conditional, acultural, unconcerned with social welfare, and unfeeling and insensitive towards its subjects. Indeed, it may even have incited resistance, reflecting the common emergence of a local postcolonial narrative about liberal peacebuilding's endorsement of an international-local relationship, configured as managers and subjects. This entry explores the *everyday* nature of sustainable peace – focused on a culturally appropriate form of individual or community life and care. This points to the need for either a form of liberal peace with a broader social contract or, more ambitiously, one that transcends liberal and neoliberal, Western biases, deploying postcolonial and ethnographic tools (Richmond, 2011). It might aim at producing an emancipatory, empathetic, everyday politics embodied in governance frameworks spanning local to global scales, reflecting hybridity and power relations, but also foreground local

political claims for emancipation from violence, whether political, economic, social, or cultural (MacGinty and Richmond, 2013; UN 2018).

The Ethics of the Liberal Peace

The liberal peace framework rests upon conceptions of liberal-internationalist thought, on liberal-institutionalism, on the democratic peace hypothesis and free trade, on international law, and on the balance between individual freedoms and regulations. These are embedded in liberal thinking and in the state, via a liberal social contract. It draws heavily on the Western philosophical and political debates that emerged from the writings of Hobbes, Machiavelli, Abbe St Pierre, Kant, Rousseau, Locke, Paine, Penn, Cobden, Mill, Bentham, and Grotius, amongst others, in the context of cycles of war, diplomacy, state-building, imperialism, and colonialism (see Brown 2002; Howard 2002; Ceadal 1987). In academic and policy writings related to peacebuilding and state-building, it is normally taken to signify, in Wilsonian terms (Link 1983a, p. 525; Link 1983b, pp. 536, 537), the processes, actors, and 'technologies' associated with humanitarian intervention, with security sector reform (and DDR), and with institution building, good governance, democratisation, rule of law programming, human rights, reconstruction, development, and free market reform (Boutros-Ghali 1992, 1996; United Nations, General Assembly 1994, 1995, 2004).

There are four main strands of thought contained within the liberal peace framework from which these components are derived. These include the 'victor's peace', the 'institutional peace', the 'constitutional peace', and the 'civil peace' (see for more from supporters and critics of liberal peace: Richmond 2005; Doyle 1983; Doyle and Sambanis 2006; Call and Cousens 2008; Krasner 2004; Paris 2002, 2004, Snyder 2000; Rieff 2002; Mandelbaum 2002; Pugh 2005; Chandler 1999; Duffield 2001; Mac Ginty 2008; Jahn 2007; Cooper 2007). These combine to form the liberal peace model, each contributing to a different area of governance. The liberal

peace is differentiated from the liberal democratic peace in that it offers a broader focus, not just on domestic political institutions and their international implications but on the character of peace in civil and societal, political, economic, and international spheres. This has been the model and loose ‘consensus’ that internationals have attempted to apply in UN peace operations – from Cambodia in the early 1990s to East Timor and Afghanistan more recently – and also via other international and regional organisations since the end of the Cold War, with very limited outcomes (see Richmond and Franks 2009; see also Brown 2002; Howard 2002; Ceadal 1987; Boutros-Ghali 1992, 1996; United Nations, General Assembly 1994, 1995, 2004; see Richmond 2004 on the peacebuilding consensus). In practice, the first three strands of the liberal peace framework dominate peacebuilding, with a focus on security, institutional, and constitutional reform. These dictate the significance of international regimes, organisations, and law, and democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and the free market. Liberalism is understood to be aspirational, and the liberal peace is always framed by the state and the market.

The civil peace is, however, a key part of this agenda as it supports the liberal peace’s emancipatory claims and legitimacy, being derived from local agency as well as international liberal norms. The civil peace is derived from the phenomena of direct action, citizen advocacy, and mobilisation and from the attainment or defence of basic human rights and values. Within the liberal peace context, it indicates individual agency within an international organisation, agency, or NGO context or within the market, rather than community agency, which it itself is deemed to carry problematic cultural baggage. It also represents and underlines the old contractual dilemmas between the state and the citizen and of self-government, self-determination, and pluralism.

These intellectual strands offer different levels of engagement with the ‘everyday’ and with ‘care’. They indicate conservative, orthodox, and emancipatory graduations of the liberal peace. The conservative graduation offers basic security, while the emancipatory graduation offers social

transformation. The conservative graduation of the liberal peace is associated with top-down and heavily externalised approaches to peacebuilding. These have been widely accepted as a transitional necessity in most post-war environments. Illiberal transitions towards liberal institution building are key to this approach (Paris 2004, p. 188) (as have been seen in Somalia, the Balkans, Afghanistan, and Iraq). Conservative graduations of the liberal peace offer basic everyday security but little care.

The *orthodox* graduation of the liberal peace focuses on top-down institution building. Bottom-up approaches engaging with civil society are relatively widespread, but international actors focus on the development of the liberal state, its institutions, and a neoliberal economy. This is rights based and developed through conditionality. It tends to be justified by the argument that security, order, and institutions always come first. These are derived from the praxis of internationals not locals, for whom ownership of the liberal peace is eventually envisaged (see Hutchings 2000 on the ethics of care). This model is exemplified by the UN family’s practices of peacebuilding and governance reform, which started at the end of the Cold War and in particular culminated in the Kosovo mission and UN sovereignty for a time over East Timor. The orthodox graduation offers significantly more engagement with its subjects over a broader range of issues, denoting potential for an everyday peace. Assuming security matters have been assuaged by this point, this establishes institutions that provide care, relating to governance and public services but within the confines dictated by neoliberal marketisation.

The next graduation represents a more critical form of the liberal peace. This *emancipatory* model is concerned with needs as well as rights (and a blurring of the line between these categories) and a much closer relationship of custodians with local ownership. This is a bottom-up approach with a strong concern for social welfare and justice. It equates to the civil peace and generally is not state led but shaped by NGOs, trade unions, advocacy, and social movements. Here the everyday and care become the major concerns

of peacebuilding, though this treads a fine line between providing what external actors believe to be suitable versions of care, according to their external understandings of the everyday, and what recipients may want. However, this comes closest to engaging with the notion of an everyday ethic of peace.

The liberal peace framework and its graduations converge on a notion of *peace as governance*. This is both biopolitical and governmentalising in the Foucaultian sense of these terms, reordering state and society via the alphabet soup of agencies, organisations, and institutions. The framework relies on the concepts of territorial statehood and sovereignty and on dominant states in the international community. These assume that the epistemology, ontology, and methods associated with the liberal peace are on ethically firm ground. Its parameters suggest an end to violence and, through the liberal state formulation, an everyday form of peace, which engages with the local, its cultural dynamics, welfare needs, and environment. Thus, it leads to the social contract inherent in a liberal state. This has been extended into a claimed automatically ethical blueprint for its transferral to non-Western, non-liberal polities. Yet, it is also a disciplinary framework that often rests on coercion, a lack of consent, conditionality, and the prioritisation of elites over the interests of the many. As such criticisms emerged in the 1990s, the more recent ‘light footprint’ approach in Afghanistan has been interpreted as a scaling back of the governmental claims of the liberal peace, but similar values remain in the internationals’ approach even there (see Tadjbakhsh and Schoistwohl 2008; Suhrke and Borchgrevink 2009; see as example Statement of H.E. Dr. Han Seung-soo, President of the 56th Session of the General Assembly, at the 55th Annual DPI/NGO Conference ‘Rebuilding Societies Emerging from Conflict: A Shared Responsibility’ 2002).

The ethics of liberalism suggests the ‘good life’ in which individual privileges denote freedom to act politically, economically, and socially, within a liberal governance framework, which constitutionally guarantees human rights. Yet, the

governmental and institutional imbalance in the very highly specialised context of post-conflict states undermines this ethic of freedom and often stifles local voices and their concerns about peace. Many of the subjects of recent state-building experiments regard the liberal peace as an ideology that degrades into violence because its universal aspirations are not mirrored on the ground (Richmond and Franks 2009). This results in the re-securitisation of the post-conflict liberal state, whereby politics is deemed to start from security and institutions, rather than from social justice, community, and everyday life. Thus, the politics of the liberal peace are perceived to represent the maintenance of existing normative and political hierarchies at the local, national, and global levels. This makes its subjects complicit in anti-democratic and anti-self-determination processes. They are tied to the state and to institutions that do not represent the local as either a civil society or as an everyday context (see for more Caroline Hughes 2009).

This is particularly exaggerated in the liberal peace’s most conservative, militarised forms – as praxis in Afghanistan or Iraq illustrated. It is also the case to some degree even in its orthodox, more institutionalised forms as in Kosovo, East Timor, or Bosnia (Tadjbakhsh and Schoistwohl 2008). In extreme cases it is associated with ‘liberal war’ (Williams 2006). Its post-Cold War moral capital, based upon its emancipatory claims, has been squandered as a result, and its basic goal of a liberal social contract undermined. Since 9/11 attention has been diverted into other areas, and many, perhaps promising peace processes, have regressed. This also diverted attention away from a search for alternatives, for forms of peace, and for empathetic strategies, through which the liberal blueprint for peace that has loosely emerged might coexist with alternatives. This might also be seen to be in line with policy objectives, as in the example of the United Nations Security Council (2001) report of the then Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, which pointed to the need for ‘comprehensive peacebuilding’ that goes far beyond security and state-building but also leads to social transformation.

Developing an Ethical Account Through Eirenism

Such a search, via critical research agendas for peace termed here *eirenist* [from the Greek word for peace *eirene*/*Ειρήνη*], indicates the need for an ethical re-evaluation of the liberal peace. ‘Eirenism’ was used by Erasmus as a call against religious chauvinism after the Reformation (see Kende 1989). Erasmus believed that rulers were often responsible for war and that a political system was required to prevent them from opposing the wishes of their subjects. He believed that rulers should not treat their territories as private property and should be concerned with the welfare of others. He believed speaking and praising peace and condemning war should be normal social practice as well as state practice. In a modern context, eirenism provides a lens through which one can evaluate the claims, apparent or hidden, of a particular epistemology, concept, theory, method, or ideology. Subaltern voices, political claims, and positionality are essential in order to identify the root causes of conflict, to describe their impact, and to determine the reconstruction of legitimate authority as well as the provision for public, material, and justice requirements. The failure to apply such a tool has led liberal peacebuilding approaches into a paradoxical situation. They have reinstated social and economic class systems, undermined democracy, and caused downward social mobility (as explained in the examples of East Timor and Afghanistan below). Yet, liberal peace’s Renaissance and Enlightenment underpinnings make clear that the state system of territorial sovereignty, the approximation of democracy, human rights, and free trade, also carries a humanist concern with social justice and wide-ranging pluralism (often to be guaranteed by an international organisation) (Kende 1989, p. 236).

An eirenist perspective offers a different view of recent peacebuilding experiences and data. For example, a range of UN and UNDP thematic or country-focused reports has shown liberal peacebuilding had less impact on everyday life than is often claimed by its institutional

proponents, the donor and development communities, and particularly the international financial institutions. In East Timor after the crisis of 2006, a UN report conceded that, despite a lengthy and costly UN involvement, there since 1999:

poverty and its associated deprivations including high urban unemployment and the absence of any prospect of meaningful involvement and employment opportunities in the foreseeable future, especially for young people have also contributed to the crisis. (United Nations, Security Council 2006, p. 9)

A report from the same period on Afghanistan by the UN Secretary General ignored any direct engagement with such issues in favour of traditional political and security concerns, with the exception of one telling reference:

The failure of development actors to ensure that quieter provinces in the north and west receive a tangible peace dividend has played into the latent north-south fault line within Afghanistan. (United Nations, General Assembly, Security Council 2007, p. 6)

This report’s later sections on development, human rights, and humanitarian issues or human security focus on orthodox issues relating to institution building or emergency problems (United Nations, General Assembly, Security Council 2007, parts V, VI, VII). Accordingly, the transition in Afghanistan was under ‘...increasing strain owing to insurgency, weak governance and the narco-economy’ and the government needs to ‘...restore confidence to the population in tangible ways’, but this is conceptualised as being derived from:

stronger leadership from the Government, greater donor coherence — including improved coordination between the military and civilian international engagement in Afghanistan — and a strong commitment from neighbouring countries, [without which] many of the security, institution-building and development gains made since the Bonn Conference may yet stall or even be reversed. (United Nations, General Assembly, Security Council 2007, p. 17)

This list of priorities, focusing on security, terrorism, narcotics, and then the orthodoxy of the liberal peace as a subsequent priority (governance, development, reconciliation, and human

rights abuses in this order), effectively places a local peace dividend for communities and individuals as a distant and lesser priority and disconnects its importance from the conduct of democratic politics and the legitimacy of the state (United Nations, General Assembly, Security Council 2007, para. 74–84). This is because the liberal peace's primary goal in its intervention into the local or domestic is actually an international order between sovereign states. This is to be achieved ideally through the construction of a liberal social contract to produce domestic and international order. In practice, what has been achieved in post-conflict environments are the shells of liberal states, reproducing international order but achieving a virtual peace in a domestic context – at least in the short to medium term, as the examples above and of Cambodia and Bosnia aptly illustrate.

An irenist perspective also sheds lights on the ethical and policy metanarratives about liberal peace, derived from the founding myths of Westphalia, its state-centric elitism, its focus on territorial boundaries and sovereignty, and its disciplinary nature. R.B.J. Walker (personal communication, 2008) has described this as a 'moment of exclusion'. The concept of peace has generally been subject to utopian or dystopian assumptions, and the notion of the liberal peace has emerged as an 'auto-ambivalent' compromise (Williams 2006, p. 215). It has been imbued with a specific set of interests, partly through the decontextualisation of classical political theory to support inherency arguments about conflict, or confirm liberal norms of market-democracy, and a propensity to reshape rather than engage with non-liberal others. This also validates territorial state sovereignty and a social contract skewed in favour of the state, free markets, and the eradication of the indigenous or locally more authentic traits (often through property rights) (Boucher 2006, p. 157), amongst other tendencies (see Jahn 2006a). This has been used to promote a culture of governmental and securitised institutionalism rather than promoting a broad peace (often by rejecting Kant's peace federation or by confirming territorial sovereignty) (Franceschet 2006, p. 92) or an everyday peace (MacMillan

2006, p. 71). It has supported the classical liberal view that liberal states and peoples are effectively superior in rights and status to others and extended these arguments to allow for the justification of direct or subtle forms of colonialism, interventionism, and local depoliticisation to occur (Jahn 2006b, p. 203; see also Chandler 2006b, p. 36). A civil and emancipatory peace might arise through liberalism, as Foucault (1976) argued, but more often it leads to violence of a structural or direct nature in non-liberal contexts. In practice it also may have negative effects on self-determination and agency (Duffield 2007, p. 27).

This is as opposed to the potential of peace being empathetic, emancipatory, and resting upon an ontological agreement and hybridity (meaning the development of an ontology that is not exclusive but is open to difference) (see, e.g. Connolly 1991, p. 64). These latter qualities imply that the agents and recipients of the liberal peace are able to relate to each other on an everyday, human level, rather merely through problem-solving institutional frameworks that dictate or negate lived experience.

What has emerged from the more critical literatures is a suggestion that an ethical reading of peacebuilding requires a willingness to recognise local ownership, human rights, culture, and social and grassroots resources for self-government as significant even in relation to the priorities of military or institutional capacities and international order. This infers an engagement with the everyday, to provide care, to empathise, and to enable emancipation across scales (Sylvester 1994, pp. 315–334). These objectives are integral to the liberal peace in theory, but in practice asymmetries inherent in its top-down nature, elite governance and complicity with local elites, are more visible. The position that emerges from the above argument enables an investigation of modifications to the liberal peace without necessarily calling for its abandonment (though post-structural work indicates continuing dissatisfaction with the inherent biases of even a moderated liberal form of peacebuilding).

However, other serious issues also arise with any attempt to retain while modifying the core of liberal peacebuilding. The neoliberal co-option of

the liberal peace, its lack of social welfare frameworks, failure to mediate cultural difference, and tendency towards assimilation rather than local cultural engagement, means that it is often exceptionally abrasive when transplanted, as recent experience in Afghanistan and Iraq illustrates. In addition, there is a serious issue with its incapacity for environmentally sensitive engagement. It might be said that the conservative end of the liberal peace spectrum, as with liberal imperialism, has become an exercise in hubris for the internationals, Western states, donors, agencies, and NGOs that propagate it, mainly because it lacks these sensitivities. Ethically, moving beyond these limitations, this would amount to an ontological commitment to care for others in their everyday contexts, based upon empathy, respect, and the recognition of difference. This commitment to care has instead been displaced by a parsimonious orthodoxy that offers its participants the unproblematic right of interpreting and making policy for unknowable others, normally defined as states rather than people or communities. This is why the liberal peace is mainly focused on an international or regional peace, rather than an everyday form of peace.

What needs to be considered in terms of attempts to reform liberal peace is how to identify the rights, resources, identity, welfare, cultural disposition, and ontological hybridity that would make liberal states, institutionalism, and governance viable in everyday liberal and non-liberal contexts. This requires an engagement with not just the currently fashionable and controversial issues of local ownership or local participation but the far deeper 'local-local' (i.e. not merely a veneer of internationally sponsored local actors and NGOs constituting a 'civil' as opposed to 'uncivil' society), which allows for genuine self-government, self-determination, democracy, and human rights.

As Walker has argued, IR theory fails when it attempts to present a truth as anything other than a 'historically specific spatial ontology' (Walker 1992, p. ix). The paradox of thinking about peace in contemporary conflict is that governance and state-building require an instrumentalist need for theory and practice to offer progress from a

war system to peace system in advance of its engagement with a specific conflict context. This means that great care must be taken to separate this intention with a historical or ideological blueprint approach to peace that is then transplanted into conflict zones. Of course, most policymakers would deny that any such blueprint exists. This raises the broader question of how developing an account of peace can engage with the other without falling into an Orientalist and coercive syndrome or disregarding local context. Thus, 'peace' as a concept offers a contradiction: it requires a method, ontology, and epistemology, which are negotiated locally but prompted externally by agents who must engage with the other but cannot know one another (at least in a short time and at the depth of detail required for such ambitious relationships).

This does not mean that the elements of the liberal peace may not be broadly applicable but that the assumption that they are should not be made a priori. The negotiation of a single and universal concept of peace may be a worthy goal, but it also may be as much a chimera as Einstein's 'unified field theory'. A Hobbesian permanent modernity of the post-Civil War environment that Hobbes was familiar with would not be an acceptable peace to many today, and neither would a hegemonic peace that was predetermined, equally permanent, and not reflective of the myriad of groups, interests, cultures, and dimensions of the local or of international relations. Yet, the liberal peace has become an intervention in local discussions about peace, often replacing them entirely with the views of a transnational peacebuilding class and the institutions they are part of. This is indicative of a deeper contest over interpreting and governing the other. As Bleiker (2005, pp. 77–78) points out, this does not mean completely abandoning the realist, security-focused mode of thinking, but it does involve contextualising it and seeing it as only one of the many components of peace. The liberal peace is predicated upon the disciplinary enterprise of constructing rights for its epistemic communities of policymakers, analysts, academics, officials, and other personnel, to interpret and make policy on their behalf. Much of this move has been

predicated upon the desire of this community to emancipate the other from war, violence, and unstable political, social, and economic structures, to set an example, as well as to govern (Dillon 2005). The orthodoxy has been to accept mainly rationalist approaches, and certainly not to question this privilege (Appadurai 2001, p. 6). Opening up this question – as has already occurred in some disciplines such as anthropology (see Geertz 2001) – illustrates how ethical evaluations indicate and underline the problem of IR as a potentially ‘Orientalist’ discipline and its main methodological problems in dealing with others, difference, and the everyday. A growing body of literature points to the problems of liberalism and its version of peace in this context (see Jahn 1998; Bishai 2004; Geuss 2002).

If the liberal peace is to be salvaged, it would have to offer a more pluralist debate on its own alternatives, a *via media* between itself and them, and would also have to offer a technology of governance that is broadly representative of all actors at multiple levels, public and private, gendered and aged, and of multiple identities. This would mean it would adopt a potentially hybrid localised identity to counterbalance its global or governmental metanarrative of cosmopolitanism, with commensurate implications for its claimed boundaries, rules, rights, freedoms, and norms. This might mean it would accrue more everyday legitimacy, which might be then formalised in governmental, institutional, or constitutional structures and legal frameworks, which would rest primarily upon a ‘new’ social contract. This legitimacy would rest upon its provision of social, cultural, economic, and political resources sufficient to meet the demands made upon it by its local, everyday, constituencies and an international community of which they should be a stakeholder. It would also rest upon an international social contract, while not displacing indigenous legitimacy with preponderant institutions that are inflexible and actually obscure the local and the everyday. But such a framework should not then be set in stone but instead must be seen as an evolving form, focusing on an everyday peace, and the necessary emancipatory and empathetic structures and institutions this may require.

The difficulty with this ethical repositioning of the liberal peace from an eirenist perspective is that it no longer represents the ‘really existing’ liberal peace in contemporary post-conflict environments, which have come to rest upon ‘biopolitics’, the ‘administration of life’, and ‘governmentality’ (Foucault 1991). This points to the problems inherent in universal frameworks for peace, engaging with others while avoiding orientalism, neocolonialism, or an over-reliance on predatory institutional frameworks at the expense of everyday life. Thus, liberal peacebuilding and international security elevate elites and institutions over societies and everyday life. This failure is often equated by its recipients with colonialism or hegemony and identified as representative of dominant Western culture and ideology. A broader social justice is perceived to be absent, and it fails to achieve any form of care (Allan and Keller 2006a, p. 196). It is unable to communicate across cultures, rests upon a legalistic framework, disassociates law from local norms, attempts to preserve the pre-existing Western liberal order, and claims a problematic universality (Allan and Keller 2006b, p. 212). As a result it fails often to provide even ‘thin recognition’, let alone mutual consent. What is missing is dialogue and communication – indeed a discourse ethic of empathetic self-emancipation in an everyday context. The liberal concept of ‘toleration’ over difference, as the word implies, is too limited to produce pluralism or hybridity, and liberalism’s link with sovereignty and the state and its homogenising tendencies provide other constraints. Issues such as welfare and culture are ignored as a result, meaning that the liberal peace is not an everyday peace.

Because of its ethical ambitions of enabling emancipation *after* achieving security and building institutions, the liberal peace is increasingly seen as caught up in an organisation and governmental praxis, being ideological, and deploying a metanarrative, which provokes resistance amongst what it portrays as powerless local agents (see Gowan 2008). This postcolonial critique doubts the claims of the emancipatory graduation of liberal peace but rather sees its use as legitimating its conservative and orthodox graduations.

This challenges the liberal peace's implied claim that progress from a conservative version, based upon military and diplomatic processes (equated with a negative peace), to an orthodox liberal state-building process and then to an emancipatory version of the liberal peace (positive peace) will occur. The liberal social contract endeavours to accrue legitimacy for the regulatory institutions of governance required by offering mainly political rights to individuals as sufficient enticement for them to acquiesce to the liberal state project. This works on the assumption that the freedoms derived from political rights are more significant than need or material gain for individuals in post-conflict situations. The emancipatory graduation of liberal peace does offer the potential for reflection on the ethical implications of this, but it is in this top-down, institutional format that liberal peacebuilding fails to adequately consider the requirements for a social contract beyond political rights for grassroots actors in their everyday context. As a result their consent is often lacking, and the legitimacy of the liberal peacebuilding project is undermined. This eirenist reading points to a need to return the everyday to the praxis of emancipation.

A Post-Liberal Peace: The Everyday and Hybridity

As the liberal peace is on uncertain ground what is needed is the addition of an *eirenist* and ethical repositioning of this project. An eirenist perspective is aimed at opening up a discussion of what form of peace is inferred by its peacebuilding praxis. The following section offers some thoughts on a post-liberal peace, which are perhaps a more suitable response to the sorts of critiques outlined above.

A more radical *post-liberal peace* lies 'beyond Westphalia' (see Lyons and Mastunduno 1995). This argument was made in the early post-Cold War context but has recently faded in the light of the many problems that have emerged with the liberal project and in a new moment of inclusion and its related ethical practices. This reflects and extends the historical expansion of the concept of

peace that has occurred, from the medieval 'Christian peace', the Renaissance humanist, and 'non-infidel' peace, to the utilitarian peace, the peace based on reason, and then later concerns with disarmament, international organisation, civil society, labour movements, and social transformation (see for more Kende 1989). The interdisciplinary agenda dictated by an ethical critique of the liberal peace probably cannot develop while clinging to notions of a territorially bounded, sovereign, and state-centric international space. The everyday, society, and community are distant to such discussions.

This is not to foreground a search for a new metanarrative of peace. Plant (1992, pp. 157–158) warns that most critical and 'revolutionary' thinking displays a concern with new metanarratives based upon a '...nostalgia for truth, meaning, immediacy, and liberation'. These are often depoliticising, as with the contemporary praxis of the liberal peace. Instead, this approach highlights the importance of local voices and narratives (not just local elites) and enables self-government, self-determination, empathy, care, an understanding of cultural dynamics, and the everyday. In these senses, developing a more sophisticated understanding of peace connected to the liberal universal project, or with multiples and hybrid forms of peace, can be connected to an excavation of the model self and the states of exception that might impact upon it, rather than merely a focus on the state as its organising principle. This is not to say that the regulation of boundaries, the construction of viable states, and the modern state system's location of the self are not significant but to offer another significant location of forms of peace. Of course, it should be acknowledged that the everyday and the local are 'fuzzy' concepts, requiring more research in order to open up more critical understandings of peace.

There are a range of dynamics stemming from this attempt to respond to the ethical issues that the praxis of the contemporary liberal peace has given rise to and to begin imagining the modifications that this may involve. More radically, it raises the question of where alternatives to the liberal peace agenda may be derived from, and what they may

entail. In this respect, areas such as gender can be read as requiring a radical restructuring of representation across political, social, professional, and economic spheres and within the public-private/agency-structure and care debates. Similarly, environmental debates generally point to the unsustainability of many political, economic, and social practices that lead to the consumption of non-renewable resources, irreversible environmental harm, and reflect an unequal demography of consumption. Focusing on marginalised actors such as children raises the question of their agency within the broader adult-dominated structures of IR, and whether and how they can be represented. The problem of poverty has of course long been linked to a tendency for violence, relative deprivation, and frustration-aggression. It also refreshes the debates about whether relative economic equality is a component of peace, whether welfare should be centrally organised, or whether it should be left to markets and individual capacity to remedy. Behind all of this is the lurking question of whether liberal paradigms are able to engage with and represent equitably postcolonial or non-liberal others – those for which it infers a lesser status.

The incorporation and study of intersubjective issues has necessitated methodologies that facilitate research that examines how individuals, societies, and communities operate within this context. For example, the adoption of discourse analysis and ethnography allows for greater, and culturally appropriate, access to everyday life and to facilitate a clearer understanding of how institutions and their creation or development affect the individual, communities, and society. Yet, ethnographic methodologies in IR are generally taken to have achieved little more than providing an overview of civil society actors, or how war, conflict, and violence affect individuals and groups, and often research is heavily oriented towards official statistics and reports, which themselves tend to be compiled via mainstream statistical approaches (often based on very limited local data). However, there are notable exceptions, particularly amongst PhD students at institutions such as at the various centres at University of Bradford, University of Queensland, or

University of Uppsala, PRIO (to name but a few), who increasingly appear to favour in-depth local studies as part of their research, along with a group of scholars working in development and peace and conflict studies, who increasingly are moving away from, or had little association with, the formal discipline of IR (see in particular Nordstrom 2004). Where ethnography is applied, it is often marginal, though the sort of ‘institutional ethnography’ that Escobar (1995, p. 113) has called for is now slightly more common. Such research may open up a clearer understanding of what motivates individuals and social groups to enter into conflict, criminality, and grey/black markets or to develop a more harmonious existence with their neighbours. Does this mean the end of liberal institutional governance? This is a provocative question, which indicates a need for peacebuilding actors, and developed world academics can gain a clearer understanding of the everyday and its dynamics. This requires that local academics and policymakers beyond the already liberal international community are enabled to develop theoretical approaches to understanding their own predicaments and situations, without these being tainted by Western, liberal, and developed world orthodoxies and interests. In other words, to gain an understanding of the indigenous and everyday factors for the overall project of building peace, liberal or otherwise, a *via media* needs to be developed between emergent local knowledge and the orthodoxy of international prescriptions and assumptions about peace.

Using the notion of the everyday might enable a response to the constraints of the liberal peace but also represents an alternative site of knowledge for peacebuilding. One contribution can be found in the work of de Certeau. He argues that the practices of everyday life are distinctive, repetitive, and unconscious. He focuses on productive and consumptive activities, rather than culture or resistance – two other interpretations of everyday life. For de Certeau (1984, p. xi) the everyday is about how individuals navigate their way around and try to create space for their own activities while taking into consideration institutions of power. People are able to adapt and take

ownership over structures and institutions so that they begin to reflect their own everyday lives rather than reflecting structural attempts at assimilation. This reappropriation through the everyday then becomes a site of politics and represents a move from subjects to active citizens, from depoliticisation to self-government and self-determination. He outlines strategic and tactical forms of behaviour vis-à-vis the everyday. Institutions operate in a strategic manner to which people adopt tactical responses. A strategy offers a relatively inflexible dominant order which is physically manifest and controls significant material resources. It is thus embedded in a dominant order. However, because the goal of a strategy is to maintain itself, this creates the need for individuals to find ways of 'domesticating' them, while it causes the strategic actor to need individuals to become predictable, homogenous, and malleable. De Certeau also points out that strategy and tactic (i.e. institution and individual) only have very indirect contact with each other. Effectively, they become distant and engaged in assimilation or resistance. This binary represents politics in this subsequently fragmented terrain. For him, tactics representing the everyday are hindered by hegemonic institutions but are unencumbered by their material weight. Thus, the everyday tactic is more flexible and able to adapt more quickly than centralised strategies and methodologies. They are more personal and invisible to eyes that are attuned to orthodoxies of state and power. The tactical in the everyday is a diffuse form of politics, not institutionalised but able to shape, resist, and choose institutions and strategies (de Certeau 1984, Chapter II).

A post-liberal agenda entails a praxis that would enable political, social, and economic organisations and institutions to represent and respect the communities they are effectively in a contractual relationship. At the same time this would seek to enable the tactical flexibility de Certeau outlines. As a consequence, international forms of peacebuilding would be more likely to be participatory, empathetic, locally owned, and self-sustaining, socially, politically, economically, and environmentally speaking. They would be enabled to provide a *via media* between different

identities and interests. They would also be adaptable to changing circumstances and needs. As far as possible, these interlocking and interrelated versions of peace would also provide justice and equity and avoid violence both direct and structural. This would either counterbalance or supplant the liberal peace's obsession with hard security, territorial sovereignty and statehood, and institution building over the everyday. This might, in liberal terms, lead to a modification of current global state-building agendas and a refocusing on the needs at the civil level, rather than mainly on rights. More likely it would entail an everyday tactic of engagement between liberal states and non-liberal alternatives, or locally imagined polities that provided for political, economic, and social requirements in their immediate context – whereby the strategy approximates the tactic, the institution responds to the characteristics of the local via an ethic of care. It is difficult, from a liberal and critical position, to image this being achieved without some conception of democracy, law, human rights, and development or welfare support. A deeper contextualisation of peace may allow for a hybridised localised and internationalised praxis of peacebuilding to emerge that are more locally sustainable, resilient, and legitimate than what has been the result of the recently evolved liberal peacebuilding/state-building praxis. There are indications of these opportunities in the evolving systems of peace – some of which are modifications to, or alternatives to, the liberal peace. This is not to supplant the already existing research agendas dealing with everyday issues, such as neo-patrimonialism, rent seeking, spoilers, criminality, militias, or corruption, but to provide a balance to the general tendency to essentialise mainly contractual or institutionalised rights-based responses to these, which then spill over into the core everyday life in its 'civil' rather than 'uncivil' senses.

The hybridity outlined above necessitates the development of a system that protects difference and allows for exchange and cooperation in a way in which all its participants believe is beneficial for their needs, to define themselves and cooperate with others (see, e.g. Connolly 1991, p. 10). This is a difficult a problem as it involves mediating

relations between differently bounded and comprised units subscribing to different forms of peace. It signifies that it is unlikely that a universal form of peace will persuade everyone.

It also connects to the more common research agenda on a just peace (Allan and Keller 2006b, pp. 16–17). Such research generally argues that justice through peace is preferable to justice through war and the most marginalised provide guidance to the powerful in understanding what peace means. A just peace is normally taken to require respect for free speech and human rights, and individuals have primacy over states in terms of their rights, freedoms, and participation. It acknowledges that recognition is a central part of peace, as are the way in which categorisations are made to include or exclude others (Keller 2006, p. 49). Of course, recognition implies reconciliation, but the latter cannot occur before the former (Keller 2006, p. 51). The language of Western liberal institutionalism, or of sovereignty, alone is a doubtful basis for a just peace, because these offer obstacles to the recognition of certain others, favour liberals, and continue the process of marginalisation. Reconciliation cannot stem from this (hence, the inability of states to recognise even their own native peoples). Again, this points to a need to engage with the everyday. Allan also adds a requirement for a global concern with care to the concept of the just peace (Allan 2006, p. 91). This care ethic supersedes a positive peace in liberal terms, drawing on the eponymous feminist concept (see Gilligan [1982] 1993). This, he argues, can be seen in the liberal discourses relating to the needs for recognition, a culture of non-violence and respect for life, solidarity, economic justice, tolerance and equality, and common empathy between human beings (Allan 2006, p. 126). Tolerance and solidarity coalesce within care, according to Allan (2006, p. 127), in that difference and uniqueness are accepted, and sympathy for the difficulties of others and a willingness to assist are present. This also connects with pre-existing debates on human security, particularly its emancipatory aspects (Tadjabksh 2005, p. 10). This reflects the agenda in international documents such as the *Responsibility to Protect* (International Commission on

Intervention and State Sovereignty 2001). The questions are who will provide this care and who will define its reach, terms, and definition. International institutions, policymakers, states, NGOs, agencies, and scholars are currently part of an embryonic version of this process, though with differing approaches. Focusing on what this means in everyday life might prevent this from becoming another ‘hegemonic’ agenda.

The notion of care has a number of facets, invoking both a moral association and solidarity. The Hegelian notion of a struggle for recognition is certainly significant, in that it leads to equality and mutual understanding and respect (see for more Taylor 1992). As Dallmayr (2004, pp. 100–101) argues, it is possible to draw out an intellectual connection between the Stoic notion of ‘self-care’ in relation to freedom. As Foucault ([1984] 1986) argued in his last works, freedom can be taken to be the ontological condition of humanity in everyday terms relating to self-care and care for others. He argued that this was an Enlightenment replacement for the cultivation of the soul (lost in modernity) and is analogous in particular with self-government (see also Connolly 1991, pp. 10, 57). This is not to imply that Foucault’s concept of the ‘care of the self’ is an alternative conception of ethics but a position from which to engage in a constant critique of any attempt to establish order – even the author’s own attempts to develop an everyday notion of peace. A post-liberal peace would therefore contain a feedback process and engage in constant adaptation. Indeed, Szokolczai (1994, p. 9) has argued that Foucault’s entire project was to show how, from Socrates onwards, European thinking has been aimed at ‘...wak[ing] others up from the slumber in which they conduct their everyday existence...’. This is aimed at the transformation of the self, echoing Walker’s (personal communication, 2008) comments about a post-liberal peace’s connection with the excavation of the modern self. This reproduces self-government rather than regulation (though, more problematically, it might also be equated with neoliberal approaches to economic self-help). This may be taken as a critique of political liberalism and of its grand interventionary strategies on behalf of

others, or less radically it may be taken as an attempt to replace the liberal technology of regulatory governance (biopower), which results in restriction and cold institutionalism, with a more emancipatory version of liberalism. Either way, these goals are connected through the everyday and require empathy.

Both would require radical methodological change. They indicate, as Bauman (1993, p. 34) has argued, that ‘...the moral is what resists codification, formalisation, socialisation, and universalisation’. Translated into peace, this has far-reaching ethical consequences. The ethics of peace are therefore not found in exporting institutional governance as technology, or ‘branding’ exercises (for democracy, neoliberalism, human rights, and rule of law). They reside instead in the empathy and care of human relations, in ‘unscripted conversations’ (Duffield 2007, p. 234) about self-government and reflected in the informal relations of individuals and communities in the official framework of the polity and its own relations with other polities. This fluidity resists formal institutions and boundaries unless mutual care and empathy provides their everyday ethic. Thus, rather than merely being a contest over rights and rules, an ethical version of peace would be heavily influenced by specific contexts in balance with responsive international institutions and norms (Gilligan [1982] 1993, p. 2). This would, of course, need a constant process of negotiation and would have to include a broad range in voices from the local to the global. This would perhaps involve global elites, officials, and states taking responsibility for the reframing of their interests and activity by the poor, powerless, and marginalised and their everyday concerns (Dallmayr 2004, p. 110).

What the everyday, a just peace, and the care of the self exposes in the context of the juxtaposed liberal peace project is its general tendency to harvest power and resources for politicians, officials, experts, and institutions. This forms a liberal discourse that removes individual and societal agency at the expense of empathy and care and, therefore, of a sustainable peace. This is a side effect rather than the goal of liberal governance in the specialised circumstances of its export to post-

conflict environments, but the net effect is the displacing of community, culture, identity, and welfare in favour of external discourses of expert knowledge. These are tinged by their own ideology, culture, and interests. The everyday, empathy, and care therefore unsettle liberal institutions, rather than merely confirming them, but add additional dimensions and sensitivities and the ontological dimension that they imply. It is important to remember that Foucault saw care in the context of self-governance as a way of escaping, or moderating, the hegemonic tendencies of liberal social and political governance. Power and resistance are entangled within liberal polities, but empathy and an aspiration towards self-government, especially within a ‘deep civil society’ (the local-local) derived from a more empathetic engagement, offers a conceptual way forward without delving into a new grand narrative of ethics and with an eye on the everyday as a contested site of identities, care, empathy, as well as interests.

One common criticism of arguments concerned with prioritising the local and the everyday is that such inclusivity and openness in peacebuilding environments may be relatively inefficient compared to the sort of progress that can be made via more limited and reductionist prioritisations of needs and issues (such as those encouraged by the orthodoxy of liberal peacebuilding). Slow progress or constant political infighting is taken to undermine progress towards a centralised unity, as can be seen in the context of the tribal networks and the deliberations of the *loya jirga* in Afghanistan (see for more Freeman 2011) or in Iraq, where tribal leaders have also had some involvement after early criticism that government, whether by the coalition or by ‘local’ actors, was extremely limited in its representation of the range of Iraqi groupings (see Chandler 2006b; Conetta 2004). Stalemate rather than progress is the result according to this view of the dangers of the local, undermining reform and institution building, and the development of liberal governmentalism. The examples of Bosnia, Kosovo, and East Timor show that both a deferment to the local and a retention of powers amongst the internationals can be very problematic (see Richmond and Franks 2009, chapter

1–4). In these cases local tensions retarded or blocked reform or co-opted the state project for ethnonationalist agendas. International direction of peacebuilding did little better, however: either empty institutions were built, which were not then taken up at the local level, or resources were deployed in ways that often depoliticised the local [as Chandler (2006b, p. 36) has shown in the context of Bosnia] or had little impact on the local. In all of these cases, attempts have been made to involve the local, while simultaneously depoliticising it by failing to deal with everyday issues. Local actors in these cases have, while acknowledging the benefits of peacebuilding and state-building in some areas, tended also to see this as undermining the legitimacy of their peace process; as depoliticising, undermining their right of self-determination and human rights; as portraying a lack of respect for their cultural norms; or as examples of either hegemonic or ideological Western conditionalities. These indicate serious dilemmas, which the post-liberal peace might avoid in its concern for the everyday. The evidence points to the need to better understand the local and its contextual everyday before internationals begin directing reform, institution building, or providing services, which may not meet local everyday needs. Blaming the local – whether directed at elites or at civil society – for lack of a progress towards a liberal peace is to miss the point of local politics and the contours of everyday life.

A research agenda is needed, which engages with an understanding of the dynamics of the relationship between the liberal and the local and of the interface between the two in terms of everyday life for local communities and actors, as well as for more abstract institutional frameworks. This ‘liberal-local interface’, and the nature of peace that it suggests, requires extensive and ongoing consultation and research in order to develop these ideas so that they are ready to be negotiated, accepted, rejected, and constructed when and where it becomes necessary. When internationals engage in conflict zones, they might ask disputants how many different levels of the polity might be included, what type of peace could be envisaged, what and how care might be provided, and

what is needed to understand, engage, and support everyday life. Security, institution building, democratisation, the rule of law, human rights, marketisation, and development might be constructed from these informed perspectives. This would have to occur in the explicit context of responses to the root causes of the conflict [even within an indeterminate world, as Plant (1992, p. 186) points out], meaning that peacebuilding occurs at two starting points. Rather than mainly stopping overt violence from threatening regional stability, it would concurrently establish an understanding of a local and everyday peace. This would require a conversation between disputants and internationals, avoiding any exclusionary practices, to undercover a consensual discourse ethic and praxis by which a post-liberal peace might be achieved. This appropriateness would be negotiated from the perspective of the internationals, custodians, and other interventionary actors and, most importantly, local actors, and not necessarily to pre-existing models, agendas, or scripts.

Rather than producing bare life (see amongst others Sylvester 2006, p. 67; Agamben 1998), critical research agendas for peace [or see Critical Peace Research (CPR) by Jutila et al. (2008)] offer an eirenist reading of the connected areas required for the consideration of the possibilities inherent in post-liberal *forms* of peace, as in the liberal-local hybrid and its interface suggested above. These aim to reflect and become embedded within everyday life and the societies it affects. This may seem naïve to many working within a more orthodox tradition, but to others who are working around these traditions, resistance to these ambitions seems naïve – destined to repeat the traumas of realist or liberal ‘history’. As Jabri (2007, p. 268) has shown, this version of peace engenders a capacity to resist violence and to struggle for a just social order that goes far beyond the endeavours of a liberal ‘international civil service’. It represents the everyday issues and solidarity of individuals, communities, and social movements. For Jabri (2007), it is this solidarity that produces a more sophisticated form of peace. Indeed, this indicates that individuals and communities have

primacy over states in terms of their rights, freedoms, and participation (Allan and Keller 2006b, pp. 16–17). Thus, recognition is a central part of the way in which categorisations are made to include or exclude others (Keller 2006, p. 49) (think of the way non-state groups such as the Turkish Cypriots, the Kurds, the Palestinians, and many others have often been excluded from peace processes on such grounds). Recognition implies empathy, care, and, thus, reconciliation, but the latter cannot occur before the former, and little can be achieved without a contextual understanding of the everyday (Keller 2006, p. 51). The limitations of liberal and neoliberal versions of peace mean that the state is empowered to interrupt this ethic of care, solidarity, and empathy at its borders and tends to focus on risks rather than opportunities. In building an empathetic, emancipatory peace, utilising an eirenist lens, considering the everyday provides some guidance around the pitfalls and biases reflected in the liberal peace and its borders. A good example of this can be found in documentation such as the *Responsibility to Protect* (International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty 2001) report, which operates to extend liberal norms and governance to non-liberal others, on the assumption that represents a universal process of conflict resolution (see for more Connolly 1991, p. 218 on ‘non-territorial democracy’ as a possible way of overcoming the ‘bordering’ that occurs in the liberal peace). This would surpass the current focus on the state, territoriality, and institutions and reconnect with the local—a hybrid and post-liberal peace.

Conclusion

Effectively, what this implies is a ‘local ethic of peace’, resting on the legitimacy of a wide array of interconnected local and non-local practices and the mediation of any tensions that obviously exist between them. From this insight there emerges a recognition of the ongoing development of local-liberal/international hybrid forms of peace, which have significant implications for peacebuilding and state-building.

With this in mind, critical policies for a post-liberal peace might engage with the following:

1. A detailed understanding (rather than co-option or ‘tolerance’) of local culture, traditions, and ontology; and acceptance of peacebuilding as an empathetic, emancipatory process, focused on everyday care, human security, and a social contract between society and the polity, which acts as a provider of care rather than merely security.
2. In addition a peacebuilding contract between internationals and local actors, which reflects the social contract within the polity.
3. Thinking about peace beyond the liberal state mechanism (rather than using peace to propagate liberal states).
4. Local-local ownership of a local, regional, and global process of peacemaking or of an agreement.
5. Local decision-making processes to determine the basic political, economic, and social processes and norms to be institutionalised.
6. International support for these processes and guidance on technical aspects of governance and institution building without introducing hegemony, inequality, conditionality, or dependency.
7. An economic framework, focusing on welfare and empowerment of the most marginalised, should be determined locally. Internationals may assist in free market reform and marketisation/privatisation not on the basis of external expert knowledge but on local consensus, but they should also introduce a socioeconomic safety net immediately to bind citizens and labour to a peaceful polity (rather than to warmaking, a grey/black economy, or transnational criminal activities). Otherwise, neoliberalism clearly undermines any social contract and leads to a counterproductive class system.
8. Any peacebuilding process must cumulatively engage with everyday life, care and empathy, as well as institutions.
9. Items from 1 to 8 should result in a process whereby a localised peace is installed that includes a version of human rights, rule of

law, a representative political process that reflects the local groupings and their ability to create consensus, as well as broader international expectations for peace (but not alien 'national' interests).

10. Overall, these points imply the development of a liberal-local hybrid and a commensurate interface in each context.

To some extent, these points reflect the potential of the liberal peace, but they also emphasise the need to construct local consensus before blueprint thinking or policies are developed or applied. This causes one of the key paradoxes of peacebuilding: the institutions needed for it pre-exist most peace processes, and therefore, they carry their own blueprint of norms and assumptions about what constitutes peace processes (even if peacebuilders may try to avoid this). This means that it may be difficult to achieve the points above with existing peacebuilding actors, but of course it is also implausible that they should be created anew for each case. What this means is that peacebuilding actors themselves must also be subject to a set of requirements to prevent them from treating every case as the same and to actualise or at least simulate a social contract between internationals and local populations of post-conflict areas. The above agenda requires the following from peacebuilding actors:

1. That care, empathy, welfare, and a consideration of everyday life are the basis of a social contract required between societies, emerging post-conflict polities, and internationals.
2. Peacebuilding actors must not work from blueprints but should develop strategies based upon multilevel consultation in each case. They should develop relations with local partners, which would reach as far as possible into a local society, enabling grassroots representation. They should endeavour to see themselves as mediatory agents, whereby their role is to mediate the global norm or institution with the local norm (academics and peacebuilding policymakers should avoid overstating the applicability of blueprint-type models but instead engage more with local knowledge in an empathetic manner).

3. Peacebuilding actors also operate on the basis of the norms and systems they are trying to instil, such as democracy, equality, social justice, etc. Theorists and policymakers cannot ever be beyond methodological ethics and must acknowledge peacebuilding's reflexive qualities.
4. Theorists and peacebuilding actors need to move from an institutional peace-as-governance agenda to an alternative or at least additional everyday agenda. Putting communities first entails a rethink of the priorities of peace. In terms of peacebuilding, this would place human needs, particularly economic and security needs, before free market reform and in parallel to democracy, second-generation human rights, and a rule of law that protects the citizen and not just wealth. This would probably require the creation of social welfare-oriented peacebuilding institutions, funded by donors and other international actors whose interests are ultimately a self-sustaining peace.
5. Finally, peacebuilding should not be used as a covert mechanism to export ideologies of peace but instead should seek open and free communication between post-conflict individuals and peacebuilders about the nature of peace in each context.

The consideration of such issues requires the opening up what Duffield (2007, p. 234) and others have referred to as 'unscripted conversations' untainted by hierarchy, hegemony, and problem-solving. This is crucial if empathy is to be carried through communication, policy, and institutions, via critical policies for peacebuilding towards an everyday peace. Pugh et al. (2008a) have argued that this requires 'permanent critique' (Plant 1992, p. 87) and a broader wariness of grand narratives, even in the guise of responses to crises (Plant 1992, p. 114).

Cross-References

- ▶ [Culture and Conflict Resolution](#)
- ▶ [Liberal Peace in Peace Operations](#)

- ▶ Liberal Peacebuilding in a Transitional International Order
- ▶ Peace and Political Unsettling
- ▶ Peace Infrastructures
- ▶ Peacebuilding: Utopia and Reality

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Liberal Peace in Peace Operations

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Synonyms

Capitalist peace; Democratic peace; Kantian peace

The understanding that *liberal democracies do not fight each other* has become one of the most

disseminated ideas among scholars and policymakers on the conditions for international peace and security since the initial statistical findings about the correlation between democracy and peace in the 1970s. Broadly defined as a paradigm that calls upon the active construction of lasting peace within the international system through the transformation of societies, “liberal peace” connects the maintenance of international stability to the dissemination of liberal values and institutions, and to agendas geared towards socioeconomic and political restructuring of non-liberal sovereign States. This chapter explores some articulations of the notion of liberal peace over the past decades, tracing the debate that has culminated in moral and political justifications for liberal interventionism in non-liberal States after the Cold War. It investigates the influence of liberal ideas in conceptual and practical transformations of United Nations Peace Operations, which along with other historical developments and experiences in the field, shaped the emergence of more robust and intrusive generations of peace operations authorized to intervene in the domestic affairs of States and to actively participate in post-conflict reconstruction. As the deployment of peace missions shaped by liberal values and expectations has been widely contested and criticized as a contemporary form of colonialism, the recent years have brought up questions about resistance and the emergence of a post-liberal order, but also about the capacities of international institutions such as the United Nations to deliver the ambitious promises of previous decades.

Definition

Liberalism is not a consistent or coherent current of thought, and the understanding of what entails to be liberal varies according to the geographical and historical context in which these liberal ideas have been developed and/or interpreted. Nonetheless, four fundamental elements of liberalisms that have been widely accepted over the centuries are: individualism (moral primacy of the individual above any claims to collectivity), egalitarianism (notion that all men have the same moral status),

universalism (the moral unity of the human species regardless of historical associations or cultural forms), and progressivism (correctability and expectation of improvement of social institutions and political arrangements) (Gray 2003).

Introduction

The association of liberal values with international peace and stability is not automatic or natural, but the result of historical developments and particular interpretations of liberalism and democracy that led to the conceptualization of the term liberal peace and its employment in contemporary political agendas and practices. Data measuring the correlation between specific political regimes and variables such as freedom and peace have been disseminated, for instance, since the 1940s by the independent watchdog organization Freedom House and since the 1960s by the Correlates of War (COW) project founded by J. David Singer in 1964. It was only in the 1980s that Kantian ideas became a philosophical and ideological ground for a great number of qualitative analyses on the matter.

Kantian's essay "Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch" (1795) became an important source of inspiration of many advocates of the liberal peace. International organizations, economic interdependence, and democracy (associated with the "federation of free states," "universal hospitality," and "republican constitution" in the three Definitive Articles for Perpetual Peace) have been melded to comprise what some scholars called the "Kantian Tripod" (Doyle 2005; Russett and Oneal 2001). Broadly defined as a paradigm that calls upon the gradual and active construction of lasting peace within the international system through the transformation of societies, "liberal peace" connects the maintenance of international stability to the dissemination of liberal values and institutions, and to agendas geared towards socioeconomic and political restructuring of non-liberal sovereign States.

Some conditions that have been highlighted as required for the construction and maintenance of "healthy" domestic environments, and thus of peaceful and stable international relations, have

included: freedom from arbitrary authority, protection and promotion of freedom, and democratic participation (Doyle 1983). After the Cold War, where States have not been capable of meeting criteria for domestic stability, the rule of law, constitutional democracy, human rights, neoliberal development, and civil peace have been packaged and delivered by organizations involved in the liberal governance of societies (Campbell et al. 2011). As an intrusive and proactive force, liberal peace finds its most recent expression in practices of peacebuilding or statebuilding operations.

A Liberal and Democratic Peace

Even though "liberal peace" and "democratic peace" have been used interchangeably in many studies, and one could argue that they are strongly correlated, they are not necessarily the same idea. Both hypotheses draw inspiration from qualitative liberal political theory that can be traced back to the beginning of the nineteenth century. But while hypotheses associated with the "liberal peace" more specifically focus on economic development and interdependence as powerful inhibitors of wars (Keohane and Nye 1977; Russett and Oneal 2001; Schneider et al. 2003), hypotheses associated with the "democratic peace" have emphasized the relation between the structures of different political regimes and foreign policy behavior (Babst 1972; Rummel 1979; Small and Singer 1976).

Thomas Friedman, in his column at the New York Times, amended in 1996 the proposition that "*two democracies do not fight each other*" with the affirmation that "*countries that both have McDonald's restaurants don't fight each other.*" But empirically, the hypothesis of the democratic peace is much less contested than the hypothesis of the liberal peace. Besides the fact that the two world wars have challenged the expectation that an economically interdependent world would be peaceful, the arrival of McDonald's or Starbucks (as in most recent formulations) in States that have been categorized as "non-liberal" weakens the assertion as well. As a result of the limitations

and statistic uncertainty derived from the isolation of political or economic variables, many researchers have increasingly emphasized the relevance of a combination of political, ideological, and economic elements for the constitution of a liberal (democratic) peace (Danilovic and Clare 2007; Mousseau and Oneal 2003).

Doyle initiated a series of studies on the liberal peace that considered Kant's essay on the Perpetual Peace a "*source of insight, policy and hope*" (Doyle 2006, p. 202). Since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the subsequent end of the Cold War, the Kantian belief in the realization of perpetual peace through the promotion of democracy, economic interdependence, and international organizations became the word of order in decision-making in advanced industrialized democracies and major international organizations. As an example, the dissemination of liberal democratic values was a pillar of United States' foreign policy during the administration of Bill Clinton (1996), who stated that the promotion of democracy:

advances our interests because we know that the larger the pool of democracies, the better off we, and the entire community of nations, will be. Democracies create free markets that make for more reliable trading partners and are far less likely to wage war on one another. While democracy will not soon take hold everywhere, it is in our interest to do all that we can to enlarge the community of free and open societies.

There are disagreements as to whether Kant's text offers sufficient justification for interventionist practices. However, inspired by his own reading of the Kant's treaty on the Perpetual Peace, Doyle defended that liberal wars should be fought for liberal purposes, but only for liberal purposes. Doyle (2005, p. 465) sustains, for instance, that the incursions of the United States in the Third World since the Cold War with the goal of weakening the popular regimes of Mossadegh in Iran, Arbenz in Guatemala, Jagan in Guiana, Allende in Chile, and the Sandinistas in Nicaragua happened because these regimes represented a threat to property and to the state of law.

The great majority of interpretations of the Perpetual Peace written in the second half of 1990 emphasizes the First Definitive Article, and especially the notion of "citizens' consensus"

(Easley 2004). A state-centric reading of the Second Definitive Article was also predominant because an independent liberal republic, and not some form of international government above the States, would be the main source of peace.

The First Definitive Article to the Perpetual Peace states that "*The Civil Constitution of Every State shall Be Republican.*" According to Kant, a Republican Civil Constitution is the only one that derives from the idea of an original contract and upon which all the juridical legislation of a people is based on. The constitution of a republican is established according to the following principles: "*firstly, by principles of the freedom of the members of a society (as men); secondly, by principles of dependence of all upon a single common legislation (as subjects); and, thirdly, by the law of their equality (as citizens)*" (Kant 1991, p. 99). This pattern in more recent interpretations of the Perpetual Peace became the philosophical foundation for narratives and practices of contemporary liberal peace. The transformation of non-liberal States into liberal States is then treated as an ethical responsibility and a sine qua non condition for peace. In this context, interventions are not only justified but they become a moral duty of "free States."

United Nations, Peace Operations, and the Liberal Peace Project

In June of 1945, the United Nations Charter was signed in San Francisco, establishing an international organization to be known as the United Nations (UN), which was determined to "save successive generations of the scourge of war." Two central elements of the League of Nations were sustained in the newly created organization. The first was that the UN would be an organization of sovereign States without any supranational power, and the second was the affirmation that the institution would not have any authority to intervene in the domestic affairs of its member States. However, included in Article 1 of the Charter as a purpose of the UN is "to achieve international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian

character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion.” With that, the UN reconciles sovereignty and self-determination with an understanding of the universality of the aims and goals of different societies united as “We the Peoples of the United Nations.”

In the 1980s, with the weakening of the communist bloc and the economic crisis in the West, domestic popular pressure for justice, equality, human rights, and democratization started to gain momentum. The end of the Cold War was followed by increasing legitimation of the Western liberal ideology, with an emphasis on free market and democracy as values embedded in multilateral institutions agendas and practices. Susan Rice, U.S. Permanent Representative to the UN from 2009 to 2013, echoed the argument that there was no better alternative to the international organization, as she affirmed that doing nothing meant to allow conflicts to spill over and to “create an environment where criminals can operate and where terrorists can find a safe heaven” (DPKO and UNDP 2011).

The last decade of the twentieth century marked the emergence of more intrusive and multi-dimensional peace operations (see chapter “► [Evolution of Practice in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations](#)”). This reactivation of the UN Security Council (UNSC) was followed by the decline in the incidence of interstate conflicts and by a greater emphasis on intrastate conflicts. The UNSC started to actively promote the contention and the peaceful resolution of regional conflicts. The focus on intrastate conflicts (those happening within the limits of a national territory) translated into demands for the reform or reconstruction of political/economic/social structures of those States, and the association, as envisaged by the democratic or liberal peace theory, of the domestic order with foreign policy behavior, and subsequently, with international peace.

Civil wars (what usually occur within the limits of a single State and between combatants dwelling within that State) represented more than 90% of all armed conflicts documented in the 1990s (Paris 2004, p. 1). In this context, the UN brings to the

center of its discourses and actions the issue of human rights and concerns around socioeconomic conditions that had been so far ignored in the practice of the institution. These issues started to be emphasized above other questions related to state sovereignty (in this case, territorial sovereignty) (Aksu 2003, p. 64). The previous emphasis given to the “protection” of sovereignty becomes the “promotion” of sovereignty (Aksu 2003, p. 68).

In the Agenda for Peace, published in 1992, the UN Secretary-General at the time, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, invokes the UN and its partners for “rebuilding the institutions and infrastructures of nations torn by civil war and strife; and building bonds of peaceful mutual benefit among nations formerly at war” (A/47/277 and S/24111 1992). In 1994, he defines the concept of post-conflict *peacebuilding* in a supplement to the Agenda for Peace as requiring “efforts to identify and support structures which will tend to consolidate peace and advance a sense of confidence and well-being among people” (Barnett et al. 2007, p. 35).

Peacebuilding also consists in mitigating or preventing forms of direct or indirect violence (structural) through the interaction of multiple constructive incentives. Barnett et al. (2007, p. 49) identifies three dimensions of post-conflict peacebuilding – creation of stability, restoration of state institutions, and redirection of the socioeconomic dimensions of the conflict. There has been some consensus that peacebuilding entails more than the promotion of stability; it is formulated to create positive peace, to deal with the roots of the conflicts, and to allow states and societies to develop stable expectations of a peaceful transition.

At the beginning of the year 2000, the Brahimi Report offered the following detailed definition:

Peace-building is a term of more recent origin that, as used in the present report, defines activities undertaken on the far side of conflict to reassemble the foundations of peace and provide the tools for building on those foundations something that is more than just the absence of war. Thus, peacebuilding includes but is not limited to reintegrating former combatants into civilian society, strengthening the rule of law (for example, through training and restructuring of local police, and judicial and

penal reform); improving respect for human rights through the monitoring, education and investigation of past and existing abuses; providing technical assistance for democratic development (including electoral assistance and support for free media); and promoting conflict resolution and reconciliation techniques. (A/55/305 and S/2000/809 2000)

We can identify in these definitions of peacebuilding a direct relation with the issue of development, or with a narrative of development that prioritizes the distribution of resources and the satisfaction of the basic needs of societies (see chapter “► [Security-Development Nexus in Peacebuilding](#)”).

The consolidation of the peacebuilding agenda happened right after the World Summit in 2005, when UN member-states endorsed the proposal of the then UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan of creating a Peacebuilding Commission, a Peacebuilding Support Office, and a Peacebuilding Fund. The Peacebuilding Commission was established on 20 December 2005 by resolutions of the General Assembly (60/180) and the Security Council (1645 and 1646).

The United Nations still has a limited role in the realization of its ambitious goals. To enhance its capacity to deliver the tasks at hand, the security sector has partnered with international and regional organizations, such as NATO (see chapter “► [NATO’s Approach to Peace Operations and Peacebuilding](#)”), and other programs. These missions became increasingly dependent on International Financial Institutions (IFIs), nongovernmental organizations, and UN civil agencies that offer support in the supply of humanitarian relief and infrastructure reconstruction. Nevertheless, the UN is still the biggest provider of peace forces to the international system, responsible for the majority of the operations deployed globally. The total number of personnel serving in the 13 peacekeeping operations as of January of 2020 is 95,423, including 69,638 troops, 8756 in the police force and 12,607 civilians.

In 2010, a document published by the UN Peacebuilding Support Office recognizes that “there is no simple, clear cut definition of peacebuilding that sets it apart from conflict prevention, peacekeeping, peacemaking, humanitarian and development assistance” (p. 8). However, peace

operations such as the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) (1995–2002), United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) (1999–Present), United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) (1999–2005), United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) (2003–2018), United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) (1999–2002), United Nations Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) (2006–2012), United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) (2002–Present), and others have in common their reliance on partnerships with international financial institutions (e.g., IMF and World Bank), international development organizations, donor nations, and humanitarian relief agencies bringing together a clear integration of security with development, democratization, and human rights.

East Timor is an emblematic case of this type of multidimensional intervention. Due to the scope of the mission deployed in East Timor in 1999, scholars have called it a “test case” for the new model of operations following the premises of the liberal peace (Suhrke 2001, p. 1; Chesterman 2002, p. 45). Over a period of 13 years, the UN authorized five different missions in Timor-Leste: UNAMET (1999), UNTAET (1999–2002), UNMISSET (2002–2005), UNOTIL (2005–2006), and UNMIT (2006–2012). After the UN-sponsored referendum in which over 70% of East Timorese voted for independence from Indonesia, the resolution S/RES/1272 created the UN Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), responsible (1) to provide security and maintain the law and (2) to assist in the development of civil and social services. At midnight on 19 May 2002, East Timor became a democratic republic, representing an important marker in the liberal statebuilding process.

UNSC resolution 1410 in 2002 establishing the UN Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISSET) recognized that “the emerging institutions in East Timor remain[ed] fragile and that in the period immediately after independence assistance w[ould] be required to ensure sustained momentum in the development and strengthening of East Timor’s infrastructure, public administration, law enforcement and defense capacities.”

The series of prescriptions imposed to the newly formed state did not take into account the social and political complexities of the local environment. East Timorese police and army clashed in 2006 mainly because of deeply rooted rivalries that still influenced social relations in the newly independent State. In reaction to the wave of violence, the Security Council authorized with resolution S/2006/628 the establishment of the UN Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT). The mandate was even more ambitious than the former and aimed at (1) (re)constructing state institutions while enhancing their capacity; (2) assisting the government and the institutions to enhance their democratic-governance culture; (3) restoring and maintaining public security, attending to law enforcement, in the country; (4) reconstructing the national police and army; and (5) facilitating relief and recovery assistance; among many other tasks.

The constant pressure for the *Timorization* of these missions exposed the lack of initial engagement with the local population and the disconnection between a model of State envisioned by the West and the reality on the ground. The adoption of Portuguese as the national language, the centralization of the decision-making in Dili, and the fact that civilian administration staff was predominantly internationally recruited have all been highlighted as major flaws of the intervention (Suhrke 2001; Philpott 2006; Chopra 2002). Inflation, the new dollarized economy, the end of Indonesian-style subsidies on rice and kerosene, and unemployment, also put into question the effectiveness of the prescriptions offered by the World Bank and other international monetary organizations to improve the conditions of that society (Gunn 2007, p. 96). Richmond and Franks (2008, p. 189) highlights that despite its enormous revenue-generating potential in gas and petroleum reserves, little of the income has filtered back to the population. Moreover, the fact that during the UNTAET, for every “ten assessed dollars” spent on the mission itself and UN staff, only one voluntary dollar was spent on the administration of the country (Steele 2002, p. 83) affected the legitimacy and credibility of the actors involved.

More recently, the intervention in Afghanistan, due to its distinct scope and conditions, seemed to require a new model of operation fundamentally different from “peacebuilding” (Paris and Sisk 2009, p. 11). It was seen as at least a “fairly rare example of ‘post-conquest peace-building’” (Newman 2009, p. 33). However, others have shown that these operations could still be translated into the vocabulary of “Liberal Peacebuilding” (Dodge 2013, also see chapter “► [Statebuilding in Afghanistan: Inertia and Ambiguity](#)”).

In October 2003, UNSC resolution 1510 authorized the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) to expand its operations from Kabul to the rest of the country. As with other cases, the centralization of authority formalized by the Afghan constitution in 2003 combined with free-market prescriptions proved ineffective and disconnected from local political and economic realities, exacerbating the distance between ruling elite groups legitimized by the Western powers and the vast majority of the population. In 2012, Afghanistan was ranked the third most corrupt State according to Transparency International (Dodge 2013, p. 1207).

Afghanistan is a much larger country than East Timor and exposed even more dramatically the effects of a top-down approach combined with prescriptions for the State emulated from an ideal Western model. With disappointments and contradictions emerging from the so-called “liberal world” and never-ending conflicts that could not be stabilized by those old prescriptions, peace operations are now reevaluated in its scope and capacities to positively affect change in post-conflict situations in a context in which the war on terror largely redirected the agenda of international security. Expressed in Trump’s speech to the American troops in Afghanistan in November of 2019, his “principled realism” comes with a rejection of the idea of “building nations.”

A Post-liberal Peace?

“The World is changing, and UNPKOs must change with it if they are to remain an

indispensable and effective tool in promoting international peace and security,” stated former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon on 31 October 2014 when announcing the establishment of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations. In December 2015, he issued his Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, which meant calling for a broader set of tools to deal with “new” threats. In Ban Ki-Moon’s report, it is noted that UNPKOs lack political support for mediating a solution or capabilities to protect the mission and the civilians under threat.

In 2017, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres launched the Action for Peacebuilding (A4P), which aims to “hold the Security Council, Troop Contributing Countries, Financial Contributors, Host Countries, and regional partners accountable to make UN Peacekeeping successful with the proper mandates, partnerships, and resources on the ground.”

One hundred and fifty countries committed to contribute for the strengthening of UN Peacekeeping, but in more recent discourses and practices, the assumptions and expectations of a liberal peace seems to no longer feature as a priority. The international interventions have scaled down in ambitions in the past few years, and it has been argued that there is a shift from the traditional liberal agenda emphasizing democracy and economic interdependence towards stabilization and counterterrorism (Karlsrud 2019). Liberal peacebuilding has been replaced since the beginning of the 2000s with the protection of civilians (PoC) as a main rationale in peace operations, as expressed in the mission statement for the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) and others. For John Karlsrud (2019, p. 3), “the result has been less intrusive UN peacekeeping operations with more limited goals, a shorter-term outlook and more reactive approach to security incidents, all to the detriment of implementing a long-term people-centric strategy to address the root causes of security challenges.”

The USA and its Western allies have been key actors in the process of shaping the agenda of international organizations, and more specifically, of peace operations, around liberal values. President Donald Trump, among others, is open about

not being dedicated to the promotion of liberal values such as democracy, civil rights, protection of civilians, and the rule of law as conditions for the achievement international peace. It has been noted that “US lawmakers are planning to devolve more authority to the field under the so-called ‘status-based targeting system’ for suspected terrorists, meaning troops will be able to use lethal force against a suspected member of a terrorist organization even if that person does not pose an immediate threat” (Karlsrud 2019, p. 8).

Some interpretations of the recent crisis of the liberal peace locates the problem “in th[is] disorderly global South, characterised by authoritarianism, civil war, identity conflict, underdevelopment, rights abuses and ‘ungoverned’ spaces” (Ramptom and Nadarajah 2017). Other interpretations of the crisis of the liberal peace acknowledge that these ideals and values are not static and that the liberal peace of three or four decades ago is not the same as the one that could be perceived, conceptualized and assessed today.

Peace Operations are in a constant process of reinvention, as the goals on paper are constantly challenged by limitations and unexpected developments in the field. As noted by critiques of the liberal peace, the territories and societies that become recipients of the operations have never been a blank page upon which one would be able to write its own rules and values (see chapter “► [Peacebuilding and Postcolonial Subject](#)”). To the same extent that the UN incorporates and appropriates notions of local participation and hybrid peace in its agenda (see chapter “► [Hybrid Political Orders and Hybrid Peace](#)”), the recipes and prescriptions these institutions bring to the ground are transformed, distorted, and reimaged.

The considerations of a post-liberal peace make the question of assessment of peace operations (see chapter “► [Assessment of Peace Operations](#)”) even more complicated. How do we measure success and failure of a post-liberal peace? Does the current crisis in the liberal peace framework represent the failure of the international community to construct peace or an opportunity for alternative ways of operating in post-conflict societies?

Cross-References

- ▶ [Assessment of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Evolution of Practice in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations](#)
- ▶ [Hybrid Political Orders and Hybrid Peace](#)
- ▶ [NATO's Approach to Peace Operations and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding and Postcolonial Subject](#)
- ▶ [Security-Development Nexus in Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Statebuilding in Afghanistan: Inertia and Ambiguity](#)

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Liberal Peacebuilding

- ▶ [Liberal Peace and Its Critiques](#)
- ▶ [Liberal Peacebuilding in a Transitional International Order](#)

Liberal Peacebuilding in a Transitional International Order

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Synonyms

[BRICS](#); [China](#); [Critical perspectives](#); [Liberal peacebuilding](#); [Transitional international order](#)

Definition

This chapter explores how peacebuilding is evolving in a changing international order in which key actors are rising and declining in relative authority and power. In this context the era of liberal peacebuilding is in transition – or perhaps in decline – as a result of a number of pressures. Internal contradictions in the liberal peacebuilding agenda, local resistance to international peacebuilding norms and practices, a decline in the willingness and

capacity of Western sponsors to underwrite international peacebuilding, and the rise of non-liberal state involvement in peacebuilding have all changed the nature of peacebuilding. There has been a declining enthusiasm for liberal peacebuilding among traditional sponsors of peace operations and the marked increase in involvement in peacebuilding on the part of some non-Western states and in particular China. This raises a number of questions: How is the transitional international order shaping the evolving international politics of international peacebuilding? With the rise of non-Western (especially Chinese) participation in peacekeeping and peacebuilding, are the principles and values which underpin peacebuilding shifting away from the “liberal” vision? With the retreat of liberal internationalism, does this represent a “post-liberal” model of peacebuilding?

Introduction

Liberal peacebuilding emerged following the end of the Cold War in a unique political moment. The belief that international actors could promote peace and reinforce the international order by building or rebuilding state institutions, democracy, and free market economics in conflict-prone societies was the height of liberal internationalism. While peacekeeping during the Cold War was essentially aimed at underpinning stability and ceasefires between states in order to contain conflicts and promote conflict resolution, liberal peacebuilding represents a far more ambitious agenda aimed at transforming societies in line with “modern” norms of governance and economics. Almost all newly created peace operations since 1990 have been deployed within – rather than between – states, during or following intra-state armed conflict. All of the major peace operations have involved elements of the liberal peacebuilding agenda, including support for electoral democracy, governance, the rule of law, and economic development along broadly liberal lines.

However, the era of liberal peacebuilding is in transition – or perhaps in decline – as a result of a number of pressures. Internal contradictions in the peacebuilding agenda, local resistance to

international peacebuilding norms and practices, a decline in the willingness and capacity of Western sponsors to underwrite international peacebuilding, and the rise of non-liberal state involvement in peacebuilding have all changed the narrative and practices of peacebuilding.

This chapter will consider this evolution in peacebuilding in the context of the changing international order in which key actors are rising and declining in relative authority and power, a process that is reshaping the institutions and norms that define international life. In the realm of international peacebuilding, this involves a declining enthusiasm for liberal peacebuilding among traditional sponsors of peace operations and the marked increase in involvement in peacebuilding on the part of some non-Western states, and in particular China, which is shifting the values which underpin peace operations. In considering the implications of these changes for peacebuilding, the chapter will consider a number of questions: How is the transitional international order – defined as the geopolitical, normative, and institutional changes which occur as key states rise and fall in relative power and influence – shaping the evolving international politics of international peacebuilding? With the rise of non-Western (especially Chinese) participation in peacekeeping and peacebuilding, are the principles and values which underpin peacebuilding moving away from the “liberal” vision? In the context of the retreat of liberal internationalism, does this represent a “post-liberal” model of peacebuilding? Is this likely to be a coherent, alternative vision?

The chapter will first present the vision of liberal peacebuilding and its evolution. It will then make the case that this approach to international conflict management has declined as a persuasive model, as a result of a number of pressures and challenges. The next section will give specific attention to China’s growing role in peacekeeping and peacebuilding as an illustration of the impact non-Western involvement in this area. The following section will consider if the growing non-liberal input into international peacebuilding reflects a new normative framework for peacebuilding, and the conclusion will

consider the implications of this for future theorizing in peacebuilding research.

The Decline of the “Liberal Peace” Model in Theory and Practice

Most post-Cold War peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations have been deployed during or after intrastate armed conflict. These cases have involved building or strengthening security, development, humanitarian assistance, and strengthening governance and the rule of law (Newman 2013). Major peacebuilding operations – which extend far beyond the narrow remit of peacekeeping – also reflect the liberal peacebuilding model: the promotion of free market economic reforms, democracy, and other institutions associated with “modern” states as a driving force for building peace and stability. The liberal approach to peacebuilding in conflict-prone states is driven by the conviction that the primary “problem” with these societies is the absence of “effective” state institutions, with reference to Western standards and practices. With this rationale (re)building viable institutions becomes a priority, and this assumes that state institutions and the right market conditions will serve the economic goals of peacebuilding. According to this, certain institutions are universally viable – such as electoral democracy, free market economics, a centralized secular state, and civil and political human rights – and if these are in place, political and economic development will move forward and serve peace, in a mutually supportive process (Newman 2013).

Within this arena, the central challenge is thought to be how to make the liberal peacebuilding project work in practice: to build or rebuild state institutions and good governance, including democracy, develop a responsible civil society, and promote a liberal market. This involves finding the right fit at the local level for peacebuilding programs and the right sequence of activities. Major international peacebuilding operations – either under UN auspices or with significant UN involvement – have been conducted along these lines in locations such as Cambodia, Angola, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Côte d’Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC),

Somalia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, East Timor, Kosovo, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. There is certainly evidence that peacebuilding operations have had a positive impact in terms of stabilizing conflict-affected societies, reducing the recurrence of armed conflict, and assisting state-building (Fortna 2008; Doyle and Sambanis 2006).

However, a number of changes and pressures have challenged the liberal peacebuilding model, in both theory and practice. Firstly, this approach has generated resistance within the epistemic community and also within the societies in which these operations have been deployed. International peacebuilding has prioritized the top-down building or rebuilding of institutions, the promotion of liberal democracy, and free market-led reform. According to some analysts (Mac Ginty 2011; Richmond 2009; Campbell et al. 2011; Jacoby 2007; Tadjbakhsh 2011), this has resulted in a lack of sensitivity toward local needs and aspirations, a failure to integrate indigenous institutions into peacebuilding, insufficient local ownership, and thus programs which are not regarded locally as effective or legitimate. In addition, the promotion of market reform within the liberal peacebuilding model has been controversial, since it can hamper the development of public services, welfare, and social inclusion at a time when they are most needed. This can result in growing inequalities and alienation, which threaten broader peacebuilding goals (Newman 2011).

The liberal economic model behind international peacebuilding tends to favour, as a long-term goal, constrained public expenditure, deregulation, and privatization, which creates a paradox. Peacebuilding implies the strengthening of the state and public goods – including welfare – yet liberal economic and social policies can be in tension with this. The promotion of electoral democracy in conflict-prone societies has also been problematic (Paris 2004). Consolidated democracies in stable states tend to be peaceful but democratizing societies – especially in conjunction with factors which make them fragile – can be highly volatile (Goldstone et al. 2010; Collier 2009). Electoral democracy in divided

societies can worsen political conflict and sectarian divisions. There is also often a perceived gap between international and local stakeholders in large peacebuilding missions, giving the impression of an absence of local ownership and consultation. As a result, local resistance has emerged in many peacebuilding cases. Moreover, key parts of the liberal peacebuilding model – such as the promotion of liberal democracy, gender equality, and civil society – have arguably not achieved significant traction in key cases, such as Afghanistan, Iraq, South Sudan, and Kosovo.

Secondly, the liberal peacebuilding model has been challenged by a declining commitment to multilateralism and peacebuilding among traditionally important donor countries and a decline in their capacity to support such operations. The results of large-scale international peacebuilding projects have been disappointing in some respects – especially in relation to some of the more “liberal” aspects of the agenda – and this has led to a decline in support among donor countries for major interventions. Financial constraints within donor countries have also raised political opposition to supporting these major initiatives, after prolonged engagement in cases such as Afghanistan. The rise of nationalism and populism also threatens the integrity of the liberal international order broadly speaking, and within this, support for peacebuilding as a global “public good” is in decline.

Changing strategic priorities are relevant to this. In a post-9/11 world, where traditional security challenges have returned to the center of the policy radar, a renewed emphasis of military security has arguably displaced some policy interest in liberal peacebuilding. Sherriff et al. (2018) have suggested that in a period of “geopolitical flux” and changing strategic priorities for major powers, the nature of peacebuilding may shift. This shift may reflect a more “realist” orientation, in which stability and the containment of conflict, and more strategically important regions, are prioritized. Indeed, according to Karlsrud (2019: 1) “Liberal peacebuilding may be on its way to the scrapyard of history. After being a popular concept as well as practice in the international security

agenda after the end of the Cold War, international interventions are scaled down in ambitions, with a shift towards stabilization and counterterrorism, both in discourse and in practice.”

This trend, if it continues, would be in line with a well-established critique of liberal peacebuilding, which has argued that the “liberal” narrative of international peacebuilding has always been something of a façade. According to this, the reality has long been that peacebuilding is primarily about containing the destabilizing spill-over effects of intrastate armed conflict, rather than facilitating conflict transformation or supporting positive peace. Thus, as the authority of liberal internationalism fades – as a result of changes in power globally and a declining willingness and capacity on the part of liberal “great” powers to uphold its norms and principles – then political and financial support for liberal peacebuilding also declines.

Thirdly, the rise of non-Western involvement in peacebuilding, and particular that of China, is underscoring a shift away from the promotion of liberalism as a part of these activities. This relates to a broader process of normative change associated with a transitional international order.

The relative rise in power of a number of non-Western states has heightened normative contestation in international relations, and the creation and institutionalization of norms are increasingly controversial (Newman and Zala 2018; Stuenkel 2016; Xiaoyu 2012). This has an impact upon a range of policy areas, including international peace and security mechanisms. According to Li (2014), non-Western powers are increasingly unwilling to be passive “norm takers,” and resistance can be seen in connection with a number of international issues, such as human rights and governance. This contestation reflects normative differences on core international norms relating to state sovereignty, territorial integrity, and the use of force. In this way the rising power narrative can be interpreted as a challenge to liberal norms and in particular the attachment of liberal norms to issues such as development and

trade, and the promotion of liberal norms in the “domestic” sphere. Contestation also reflects a desire among rising powers for greater control of the political agenda and thus a desire for sovereign equality and status (Paul et al. 2014; Volgy et al.; Newman and Zala 2018). The creation of parallel international financial institutions under Chinese leadership – such as the New Development Bank – demonstrates the frustration of rising powers toward the existing multilateral apparatus, as well as a shift in focus in terms of values. These different types of contestation are potentially relevant to the shifting policies of peacebuilding: in line with the increasing involvement and financial contribution of rising powers – particularly China – there comes a greater desire to control the agenda, have a greater input into decisions, and a desire for the norms of peacebuilding to better reflect their own worldview.

These international power changes are therefore driving a shift in international peacebuilding away from the liberal model in line with the growing influence of non-Western countries in these activities. China is far less likely to promote – and much less impose – norms of electoral democracy or civil and political rights as a part of its peacebuilding agenda. Its own attachment to communitarian political culture and sensitivity regarding state sovereignty and territorial integrity therefore shapes its approach to peacebuilding. This does not so far suggest an alternative “vision” of peacebuilding, but it does raise the question of whether this contributes to a decline in liberal peacebuilding as a coherent or perhaps viable project. Abdenur (2019: 50) suggests that the shifting global balance of power allows rising states “to boost their normative influence as well as operational role in international security and governance. UN peacekeeping has thus become part of a broader ‘rising power strategy’ that combines intensifying engagement even as those states remain dissatisfied with the concentration of decision-making at the hands of Western states.” However, it remains to be seen if this will evolve into a coherent model of peacebuilding.

China's Peacebuilding Activities

As a result of China's increasing support for, and involvement in, peace operations, there has been growing interest in the impact that this may be having upon international peacebuilding practices, norms, and doctrines. Specifically, a key concern for the peacebuilding field is if – and how – China's growing assertiveness in international politics will be translated into new approaches to peacebuilding or even a new doctrine. This is a part of a broader debate about global governance in a changing international order. De Carvalho and de Coning (2013) link the activities of rising powers in peacekeeping and peacebuilding closely to the changing international order, arguing that this is one instrument used by these powers to reform the global order in line with a more equitable and stable vision. In line with this, peacebuilding would ideally no longer be associated with a Western model – something associated with liberal peacebuilding – and would be more sensitive to state sovereignty and national ownership. Others (Richmond and Tellidis 2014: 578) agree that rising powers are slowly transforming the norms and practices of international peacebuilding, which involves resisting some elements of the liberal agenda, but find that “No clear alternative model, ideology, model of state, or model of peace is on offer by the BRICS or other emerging powers.”

The involvement of China in evolving international peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities is at the heart of this debate because that country is driving the transitional international order and because its engagement in peace operations has increased very considerably in recent years. As a result, China has been a particular focus for scholars interested in the evolution of peacebuilding. Zhao (2011) has argued that China's contribution to peace operations have become central to its international strategy, aimed at building harmony based upon peace and common prosperity. Others (Hirono and Lanteigne 2011) have suggested that China's peace activities have also sought to improve China's international image, as a part of its desire to spread influence and economic ties. Yet China

is aware of the suspicions of some countries regarding its motives, and this has resulted in it being quite reserved in terms of seeking to serve its direct interests through its activities. In the African context, Alden and Large (2013) found that China's peacebuilding has been characterized by an emphasis upon political stability (rather than democracy), indigenous African ownership, economic development, and the centrality of the state (see also Menegazzi 2012). This does, at least in theory, suggest a shift away from the liberal peacebuilding model.

The activities that China has been involved in are interesting from the point of view of these debates. Peacekeeping forces sent by China have tended to be engineering soldiers, medical personnel, and other logistic assets. Military observers and civilian police have also been dispatched to UN peacekeeping missions. China has still not had much involvement in political reconstruction, legal matters, or the building or rebuilding of institutions. More specifically, Chinese peacekeepers have been involved in mine clearance; eliminating unexploded ordinance; road, bridge, and airport construction; building water and power supply facilities; the transportation of personnel and materials; medical treatment and hygiene; and disease control (Zhao 2010). Thus, China tends to focus on its “hard” rather than “soft” contributions, and in line with this, it has participated in many more peacekeeping than peacebuilding missions (Li 2012). Moreover, other Chinese entities – such as civil society and private sector actors – rarely participate in international peace operations, which further reinforces the idea that China is more comfortable in traditional peace support roles. Nevertheless, in providing logistic services such as medical treatment, transportation, and communications, these activities are essential to building peace, as they create a sustainable and peaceful social environment for the areas that have experienced armed conflict.

Since the early 1990s, China has participated in 24 UN peace operations, sending a total of over 36,000 military peacekeeping personnel. China is already the second largest financial contributor to UN peace operations, with the number of Chinese

personnel who join operations being larger than that of all the other members of the UN Security Council combined (see Tables 1 and 2).

According to the statistics from United Nations Peacekeeping Website in 2019, China sent a total of 2521 peacekeepers on missions, ranking as the 11th among all other national contributors (Table 3).

China has paid a particularly important role in some African cases. According to Yuan (2014), China’s activities have focused on supporting military capacity building, participation in UN peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations, and supporting African regional organizations in building their capacity for independently resolving conflicts. China has also played a role in the provision of good offices, mediating between protagonists in African conflicts, and supporting Africa in addressing non-traditional security issues.

A key illustrative case is that of Sudan. From the signing of the comprehensive peace agreement in 2005 to the independence of South

Sudan, China’s participation in the post-war reconstruction has had four main themes. First, China has been involved in the UN operation in Sudan since 2005 and the AU/UN operation in Darfur since 2007, sending engineering service units to provide logistics support for both multilateral operations. Second, China has supported Sudan’s development assistance projects. In 2007, it agreed to cancel \$80 million of Sudan’s debt and provided \$13 million in interest-free loans for infrastructure projects. China also provided mobile boarding houses, vehicles, power stations, water pumps, and other facilities to local schools for the resumption of production and development. Third, China has more economic cooperation with Sudan outside the formal framework of multilateral post-war assistance. It supports development projects in Sudan to expand economic relations and has also built transportation and energy infrastructure following the comprehensive peace agreement. Fourth, China has participated in multilateral forums to explore solutions to the Darfur conflict and

Liberal Peacebuilding in a Transitional International Order, Table 1 Peacekeeping budget share of permanent members of the Security Council 2001–2018 (%)

| Country | Year | | | | | |
|---------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | 2001–2003 | 2004–2006 | 2007–2009 | 2010–2012 | 2013–2015 | 2016–2018 |
| China | 1.9 | 2.4 | 3.2 | 3.9 | 6.6 | 10.2 |
| France | 8.0 | 7.3 | 7.5 | 7.5 | 7.2 | 6.2 |
| Russia | 1.4 | 1.3 | 0.8 | 1.9 | 3.1 | 3.9 |
| UK | 6.9 | 7.4 | 7.9 | 8.1 | 6.6 | 5.7 |
| USA | 27.3 | 26.6 | 26.2 | 27.1 | 28.3 | 28.40 |

Sources: A/C. 5/55/38, A/58/157/Add.1, A/61/139, A/67/224/Add.1, A/70/331 United Nations General Assembly Resolution (Li 2018)

Liberal Peacebuilding in a Transitional International Order, Table 2 UN peacekeeping troops of permanent members of the Security Council (1990–2017)

| Country | Year | | | | | | |
|---------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| | 1990 | 1992 | 1994 | 2000 | 2005 | 2010 | 2017 |
| China | 5 | 488 | 60 | 53 | 869 | 2008 | 2654 |
| France | 525 | 6502 | 5149 | 493 | 600 | 1609 | 825 |
| Russia | 35 | 1056 | 1550 | 292 | 331 | 356 | 91 |
| UK | 769 | 3719 | 3820 | 565 | 384 | 283 | 705 |
| USA | 33 | 436 | 963 | 845 | 344 | 87 | 67 |

Sources: <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/troop-and-police-contributors> Visit time: March 13, 2018. Note: Statistics in 1990 are from November. Statistics in 1992 and 1995 are from December. Statistics in 2000 to 2017 are from August each year (Li 2018)

Liberal Peacebuilding in a Transitional International Order, Table 3 Personnel sent by Chinese government in UN peacekeeping

| Police | UNMEN | Troops | Staff officers | Total |
|--------|-------|--------|----------------|-------|
| 3 | 31 | 2437 | 50 | 2521 |

Sources: United Nations Peacekeeping Website: <https://peacekeeping.un.org/zh/data>

leverage China’s influence in Sudan to support the goals of the comprehensive peace agreement (Wang 2012).

The presence of China – as a non-Western state – has occasionally been politically important in securing the support of local actors. In 2007, the UN sought to deploy peacekeepers in Darfur but met opposition from the Sudanese government. Western powers had little influence upon the government because of their sanctions, while China was the only major country that maintained effective political ties with Sudan, a relationship it used to persuade the government to agree to the establishment of the African Union-United Nations Mixed Operations in Darfur. China has also been substantively involved in the peace process in DRC, Afghanistan, South Sudan, and Syria, using its political and economic leverage in various ways. It has dispatched special envoys to these countries or regions, actively participated in mediation and negotiation, and sometimes engaged in constructive dialogue with the opposition and anti-government armed forces of relevant countries, inviting them to send representatives to Beijing to participate in peace dialogue activities (He 2017).

The Evolution of China’s Peace and Security Roles

For decades after joining the United Nations, China was reluctant to participate in UN peacekeeping missions and was often a conservative voice on the Security Council, largely because of its attachment to a strict doctrine of state sovereignty and territorial integrity, and an unwillingness to accept any intrusion against the principle of domestic jurisdiction. Yet since the

1990s China has increasingly supported peace operations – even becoming as “enthusiastic supporter” (Hirono and Lanteigne 2011: 243).

Thus, in 1988, China applied to join the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations Special Committee, and in 1989 it dispatched 20 civilian inspectors to the United Nations Transitional Assistance Group in Namibia (Zhao et al. 2018). Nevertheless, while other large countries freely deployed personnel to peacekeeping operations in the 1990s, China acted cautiously toward the UN’s expansion of its peace and security work, and its involvement was more of a symbolic nature. In the first decade of the twenty-first century, the scale of UN peacekeeping shrank, and the number of personnel sent by developed countries also dropped. In contrast, China’s participation and contribution increased during the same period.

China has long adhered to the principle of “non-interference” in participating in UN peace operations – together with respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty – and this has shaped its involvement in all such activities. Nevertheless, China has gradually changed its attitude toward national sovereignty and non-interference in participating in peacekeeping, agreeing that the UN Security Council should authorize measures to protect civilians on the case-by-case basis. However, China stresses that conflict-affected states should bear the primary responsibility for protecting their own people. Moreover, it firmly believes that the Security Council is the only body that can legitimately authorize the use of force, which must be the last resort and can only work with the support of political processes, dialogue, and diplomatic means (An 2018:58).

China’s peacekeeping operations in Africa are indicative in this regard, where China has formed a unique model of peacekeeping with distinctive characteristics. In particular, China integrates development concepts into peacekeeping operations and focuses on restoring and rebuilding people’s livelihoods. Yet China has become slowly more engaged with coercion. At the end of 2012, its personnel in Mali were authorized to use reasonable force, and in 2015, the first infantry battalion sent to South Sudan was



equipped with light weapons for self-defense, mobile-armored personnel carriers, and protective equipment including body armor and helmets (Yao 2018: 133).

China's Peacebuilding Activities in Context

Participating in peace operations is regarded in China as being of importance to the building of China's national image: a platform for promoting China's diplomatic vision of building a "Community of Shared Future for all Humankind," but also an important vehicle for fulfilling China's international commitments as a "responsible major power." It thus provides an opportunity to demonstrate the peaceful yet powerful image of the Chinese armed forces, but also is helpful to cultivate the strategic confidence and enhance the patriotism of overseas Chinese (Hu 2017: 99). Similarly, Zhao (2011) suggests that China's support of peacebuilding benefits the promotion of "soft power" and thus contributes to changing the international community's perception of China.

According to Shi (2016), a number of factors explain China's increased engagement in peacebuilding since President Xi Jinping came into power. Firstly, China has pursued a more active foreign policy overall, and this is reflected in a number of multilateral issue areas. Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China in 2012, China has been more active in the international arena and adopted a further opening strategy. As a permanent member of the UNSC, it has also come to accept that it has a special responsibility. Secondly, this increased activity in peace operations arises out of a change in China's security outlook. Participation in UN's peacekeeping missions can bring stability to conflict-prone societies, promote regional peaceful development, and help to address terrorism, which benefits China's security in the long run. Thirdly, with an increase in China's engagement throughout the world, there is a need to protect overseas interests. Joining UN

peacekeeping missions is an important way of dispatching security forces overseas in line with a broad goal of stabilizing regions where China has economic interests. Finally, military and civilian deployment in peace operations is seen as a means to enhance the capacity of China's military and police forces. For example, during the peacekeeping mission in DRC, the Chinese army realized long-distance transoceanic reach for the first time and thus elevated its mobility in long-distance operational efficiency.

However, He Yin (2016: 40) argues that, despite China's permanent membership of the Security Council, it still has a low voice in peacekeeping and peacebuilding affairs and is thus not prominent in shaping peacekeeping practices and norms. Yet participation in peace operations has arguably served to bolster China's relationship with the United States and other Western governments. Military transparency and political mutual trust can be strengthened by increasing military engagement in peace missions, which is regarded and valued as a significant form of confidence building (Zhao 2011).

China has often had a different attitude to that which underpins Western approaches to international intervention and peacebuilding – something illustrated by China's opposition to UN Security Council action on the Syrian crisis (Menegazzi, 2012), which was reminiscent of historical behaviour. China remains skeptical toward elements of Western-led peacebuilding from a communitarian perspective, often citing principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, and the right of each society to find its own solutions to its challenges in line with its own culture, level of development, and needs (Wang and Zhang 2018). There remain reservations within the Chinese foreign policy establishment regarding elements of the liberal peacebuilding model – for example, in building national institutions and promoting particular types of governance – and clear differences in terms of what is believed to be feasible and legitimate (see Table 4). This is very much reflected in *China's National Defense in 2000* strategy. China's own experience of realizing domestic stability and peace has shaped its

Liberal Peacebuilding in a Transitional International Order, Table 4 The different cognition on “peacebuilding” of China and Western countries (Zhao 2010)

| | “Western” approach | Approach of China and other developing countries |
|------------------------------------|---|---|
| Purpose of peacebuilding | Liberal democracy, market economy priority | Prioritize developing economy |
| Focus of peacebuilding | Good governance | Governance with virtue |
| Principles of peacebuilding | Democracy promotion, external assistance | Principle of assistance Principle of non-interference |
| Strategic culture in peacebuilding | Preemptive | Passive reaction |
| Main ways of peacebuilding | Amend the constitution; hold general elections; set up multiparty system; build the civil society | Top-down instruction; improve the administrative function of government; improve the country’s own capacity |

approach to international peace: upholding sovereignty and independence, improving peace and stability through development, and conducting gradual democratic reforms (Information Office of the State Council of the People’s Republic of China 2000).

Above all, China’s antipathy toward anything which resembles interference is a defining characteristic of the country’s approach to peace operations, in addition to a greater emphasis upon development (Zhu 2000). It is therefore instructive that Premier Wen Jiabao suggested that the Security Council “must adhere to the Hammarskjöld principles of impartiality, consent of the parties and non-use of force except in self-defence. It should consult closely with the parties concerned, step up cooperation with regional organizations, make overall arrangements for entry and exit strategies, coordinate military and political efforts and authorize the deployment of peacekeeping missions at an appropriate time on the basis of thorough analysis of all factors” (Wen 2010).

Summary

China’s approach to peacebuilding reflects clear differences from the liberal model promoted as the international “mainstream” by Western countries since the 1990s. Given the global context – the decline of liberal internationalism and

the relative rise of non-Western states – and China’s growing interest in the promotion of peace, this does suggest an evolution away from liberal peacebuilding. China’s approach – in line with other rising powers which contribute to peacebuilding – rests far more upon principles of national autonomy and unity, a sense of culture and history, and social and economic development as a foundation for peace (Wang and Zhang 2018). China has spread the norm of “developmental peace” through aid, investment, and other international practices, and this is also in tension with some aspects of the liberal peace (He 2014: 121). Above all, the promotion of democracy, free market reform, and (re)building state institutions are certainly not at the heart of its approach to peacebuilding.

There is also a strong element of pragmatism and self-interest behind China’s engagement with international peacebuilding – connected to China’s overseas investment, security and trading ties, and its desire to elevate its own reputation as a responsible global power – which has meant that its approach is less ideological than the liberal approach. This results in less coherence and raises doubts as to whether a post-liberal approach to peacebuilding will gain traction. Yet given the limitations and controversies associated with liberal peacebuilding, the decline of a universalizing model of peacebuilding may be welcomed by many.



Cross-References

- ▶ [Conceptual Evolution of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Great Power Involvement in Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Liberal Peace in Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [NATO's Approach to Peace Operations and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding: Utopia and Reality](#)
- ▶ [Stabilization Operations and Their Relationship to Liberal Peacebuilding Missions](#)

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Liberalism

- ▶ [Emancipatory Peace](#)

Liberation Struggles

- ▶ [Popular Protest in Palestine](#)

Local

- ▶ [Feminist Peace Research](#)

Local Civil Dialogue

- ▶ [Alternative Dispute Resolution](#)

Local Peacebuilding

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Synonyms

[Communitarian peacebuilding](#); [Grassroots peacebuilding](#)

Definition/Description

Local peacebuilding refers to peacebuilding activities that take place on the local or communal level. These activities tend to focus on local communities and issues of local governance, standing in contrast to statebuilding activities such as security sector reform, institutional reform, constitution writing, and the construction of national democratic structures. Local peacebuilding examines the microlevel impacts of statebuilding as well as peacebuilding activities that develop at the local level, either for local benefit or as attempts to influence national-level policies and debates.

Introduction

The end of the Cold War and its attendant political discord between the West and the Soviet Union ushered the world into a new era of liberal dominance which orchestrated, among other things, a comprehensive form of external intervention in post-conflict countries – commonly called “post-conflict peacebuilding.” Unlike the limited

interventions that took place during the Cold War to enforce peace agreements and monitor compliance to ceasefire arrangements, peacebuilding interventions took on more expansive tasks ranging from the provision of financial and humanitarian assistance to the rebuilding of physical infrastructure and the temporary takeover of local administrations to ensure that countries emerging from civil wars do not slip back into conflict (Paris 1997, p. 55). As a concept, peacebuilding was originally conceived of in the mid-1970s by Johan Galtung as a way of creating sustainable peace by addressing the “root causes” of conflict rather than just simply ending direct violence (Hancock 2017). The term, however, became popular in the early 1990s after UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali used it to refer to the various “actions [taken] to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid relapse into conflict” (Boutros-Ghali 1992, para. 21). Since its inception, the field of peacebuilding has been guided – and dominated – by the liberal peace theory, which assumes that the introduction and application of liberal policies such as democratic elections, free market-economics, the rule of law, and tenets of good governance are enough to transform post-conflict societies into politically stable and economically viable communities.

The results of the liberal approach to peacebuilding have, however, been mixed. Whereas peacebuilding interventions in countries like El Salvador and Namibia achieved relative success in their efforts to promote sustainable peace, those in Somalia, Rwanda, Bosnia, among many others, woefully underperformed (Howard 2002; Leonardsson and Rudd 2015). Consequently, several scholars have noted the limitations of liberal peacebuilding and highlighted numerous reasons why the approach may not achieve its goal but, instead, complicate the peace sustainability process (Donais 2009; Lederach 1997; Mac Ginty 2011; Paris 2010; Richmond 2011). One such limitation that has been noted with liberal peacebuilding is its potential to overlook local contributions toward peace processes and the failure to recognize – and account for – the power differential between “local” and international actors, ultimately

creating a version of peace that is disconnected from local realities and suffers in terms of sustainability and legitimacy. To address this limitation, an increasing number of scholars and practitioners have focused on the need to emphasize the role of local individuals and communities in the context of post-conflict peacebuilding – initiating a trend that has come to be known as the “local turn in peacebuilding” (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013).

Despite the influx of literature on local peacebuilding over the last two decades, discussions on the local in the context of peacebuilding are not entirely new. Early works from the 1990s by John Paul Lederach (1995, 1997) and Adam Curle (1994), for example, emphasized the marginalization of local knowledge and needs in externally led peace interventions in Central America and the former Yugoslavia, respectively. Whereas Lederach (1997, p. 94) denounced external dominance in peacebuilding interventions as “deeply problematic” and argued that “greatest resource for sustaining peace in the long term lies in local people and their culture,” Curle called on the peacebuilding community to “reject the central role of ‘foreign experts’ and [embrace] local peacemakers as the [true] experts [in peacebuilding] because...it is they, rather than any outside experts or authorities, who have the knowledge and the acceptability to recreate a healthy society” (1994, p. 103). Following these pioneering works and others, the literature on local peacebuilding has solidified around two main approaches to address the failures of peacebuilding, the *reformist* and the *revolutionary* or emancipatory. The reformist approach sees liberal peace as flawed, but still “fixable” with the inclusion of more locals and the reorientation of interventions to specifically address local needs and concerns (Arandel et al. 2015; Autesserre 2010; Paris 1997; Selby 2013), while the revolutionary approach raises fundamental questions about the legitimacy of liberal peace interventions, calling attention to their hegemonic underpinnings as well as their entrenchment of power asymmetries between Western countries and the Global South where most of these interventions often take place (Chandler 2013; Donais 2009; Duffield 2010; Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013).

Besides the differing views on the “fixability” and legitimacy of liberal peacebuilding between the reformist and the revolutionary approaches, a number of issues including the definition and conceptualization of “the local,” the determination of the roles local and external actors must play in peacebuilding interventions, the difficulty in overcoming institutional and financial barriers to effective implementation, among many others, continue to dominate discussions in the local peacebuilding literature. More recently, another strong reaction against the feasibility of local peacebuilding has emerged in the literature. Led by peacebuilding scholars and practitioners (cf. Scheye and Peake 2005; Wong 2013), they argue that the clamor for local peacebuilding – and local ownership in particular – is “much more a rhetorical device than an actual guide for implementers” (Scheye and Peake 2005, p. 240). Thus, instead of having any meaningful impact on the way peacebuilding interventions are carried out around the world, at best, discussions on the local and local peacebuilding may have a “psychological effect” on the way peacebuilding interventions are put together. This piece provides an overview of some of the recent debates on local peacebuilding and offers a few suggestions for future research on the topic. It particularly takes note of the useful contributions peacebuilding models (such as Local Peace Committees – LPCs, Local Zones of Peace – ZoPs) have made towards the push to *localize* peacebuilding and suggests new ways through which research can help develop more understanding about their operations. It begins with a discussion of the challenges involved in conceptualizing the local and the numerous ways it has been operationalized within the literature. This is followed by a review of the main debates that have ensued on local peacebuilding. In the final section, it provides a few pointers for the direction of future research on the local and local peacebuilding.

Unpacking the “Local” in Local Peacebuilding

Despite the long association between the terms “local” and “peacebuilding” and the common

belief, among scholars and practitioners alike, that localizing peacebuilding interventions will promote more sustainable and legitimate outcomes, there is no coherent view of what the “local” in peacebuilding actually means – or looks like – in practice. Some conceptualize the local as anything other than the international, which includes national states, national NGOs, regional or local governments or local communities (cf. Piccolino 2019; Shinoda 2008). Scholars such as Debiel and Rinck (2016), McCann (2015), and Hancock (2020) take an opposite view, arguing that the local should be defined by the beneficiaries of peacebuilding programs and projects, and moreover, that in these cases, processes of empowerment, agency, and accountability are often more important than deliverables or the larger concerns of funders. Others, such as Lambek (2011, p. 216) view the local as a set of practices and relationships that are internal rather than external, while Wiuff Moe (2013, p. 45) sees the local as concerned with the intersection of relationships and relationality combined with a focus on the everyday. This approach seeks to sidestep the spatial component of the local, and while it is vital to acknowledge the power of relationships in building local agency, the fact remains that peacebuilding – like the conflicts themselves – takes place in locales and involves the exercise of power, authority, and legitimacy. Depending on an individual’s view of how the local should be conceptualized, they are likely to have different interpretations of the local turn in peacebuilding and project different expectations for what local peacebuilding success looks like. Whereas some would place the local in juxtaposition to the national or the global and emphasize the accessibility, particularity, and participatory nature of the local as the main reason why peacebuilding should be focused at the level, others stress the agency and knowledgeability of locals as the primary reason for peacebuilding to go local (Bräuchler and Naucke 2017; Hancock 2017, 2020; Lambek 2011; Öjendal et al. 2017; Sisk 2009). Ultimately, as Öjendal et al. (2017, p. 22) note, these conceptions draw attention to the importance of the local context and stand in contrast to “centralized, instrumental, structural

and large-scale approaches” that normally tend to marginalize locals in peacebuilding processes.

As empirical research on local peacebuilding continues to build steam, a growing number of scholars have begun to critically assess the conceptualizations of the local, its practicality, successes, and limitations. For the most part, while agreeing that the local lacks conceptual certainty and can be used both as a means for effective peacebuilding and liberal emancipation, they caution against the tendency to romanticize the concept and view it as a panacea for legitimacy in international peacebuilding (Leonardsson and Rudd 2015, p. 826; Mac Ginty 2015; Paris 2010; Richmond 2009). Mac Ginty and Richmond (2013, p. 770) note, for example, that local actors and contexts, like other social units, can be “partisan, discriminatory, exclusive and violent, and contain power relations and hierarchies.” It is therefore important, they argue, to forgo idealized views of the local as a harmonious unit with innate capacity to address the structural dynamics of conflict and power. Besides the tendency to romanticize the local, scholars argue that discussions of the local in peacebuilding tend to conflate local with national, and fail to distinguish between the local realities held by informal groups at the grassroots level, and those that are held by formalized civil-society groups and elites at the national level (Bräuchler and Naucke 2017; Donais 2012; Lee and Özerdem 2015b; Öjendal et al. 2017). Scholars highlight the widespread acceptance of national ownership as the guiding principle in global peacebuilding policy, for example, and ask questions about the extent to which such nationally inclined local policy is indeed representative of – and attentive to – the needs of individuals and groups (especially informal ones) at sub-national levels (Hingorani 2015; Rosenthal et al. 2015; Simons and Zanker 2014).

Others also draw attention to the vagueness of the concept and argue that the emphasis on local peacebuilding could promote a false dichotomy between the local and international and perpetuate essentialist notions of the local as a docile, dysfunctional, and apolitical group that needs to be discovered, brought-in, and empowered by external actors (Paffenholz 2015; Scheye and Peake

2005; Van Leeuwen et al. 2019; Wong 2013, p. 48). While undertaking a review of peacebuilding interventions in Burundi and DR Congo, for example, van Leeuwen et al. (2019) observed that not only did understandings of the local legitimize certain stakeholders and practices over others, they also contributed to the erroneous assumption that local actors existed and operated outside the realm of external and national influence, leading to the introduction of policies that were not feasible and/or sustainable in the long run. Essentially, the boundaries between the local, national, and international can be more complex than often let on by some proponents of the local turn (Debiel and Rinck 2016; Piccolino 2019). “The local is not necessarily exclusive of the national and international. Indeed, it is often much less ‘local’ than imagined; and is the product of constant social negotiation between localized and non-localized ideas, norms, and practices” (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013, p. 770). Moreover, as Simons and Zanker (2014) note, local actors are usually part of complex networks of relationships reaching far beyond their specific areas of influence, and that the various practices, conventions, norms, and values prevailing in particular areas of social life are never static and constantly undergo changes in their interaction with the outside world (Van Leeuwen et al. 2019). “[A] ‘local-local’ sphere entirely decoupled from national, regional or international agency simply does not exist” (Simons and Zanker 2014, p. 14), and peacebuilding processes that are isolated to the local level are even less likely to be successful. Local peacebuilding describes a focal point for action, namely at the local level, and one that is typically driven largely, if not wholly, by those residing in that locality. Peace formation, by contrast, appears to describe a set of localized practices that can be engaged in by locals, but also, by necessity, involve networking across multiple levels of focal action or place (Richmond 2014, 134). It is quite possible that some local peacebuilding efforts might involve processes of peace formation – such as the work of San Jose de Apartado in Colombia – but some might not – such as the original work of the Constituent

Assembly of Mogotes – also in Colombia – which served as the inspiration for REDEPAZ’ “100 Municipalities of Peace” program (see Hancock and Iyer 2007; Mitchell and Rojas 2012). Thus, as Mitchell and Hancock (2012) argue, without sustained deliberate efforts to connect peacebuilding activities at the grassroots (local) level to those at the national level, they will remain fragile as they are always subject to the changes in the larger conflict at that (national) level.

Evidently, the local is a very flexible, relative, and highly contested concept that defies a simple explanation. However, regardless of the difficulties involved in conceptualizing and operationalizing the concept, there is close to unanimous agreement within the peacebuilding community that “the local turn” offers a critical and analytical usefulness to the study and praxis of peacebuilding. In the view of Hughes et al. (2015, p. 818), perhaps the most crucial opportunity offered by the local to observers and practitioners of peacebuilding is “to draw attention to the [problematic nature] of defining any particular population in terms of a predeterminable set of aspirations and needs.” Thus, by emphasizing the importance of including the agency and voices of those who are on the receiving end of externally driven peace interventions, the local serves as a reminder that “international peacebuilding is rooted neither in democracy nor in some kind of cultural doxa; it is not representative and its claims to universalism can therefore never be substantiated” (Belloni 2012, p. 34; Hughes et al. 2015, p. 818). Furthermore, discussions of the local in peacebuilding demonstrate a “new level of self-reflexibility on the part of intervenors” that brings into focus the fact that external peacebuilders make decisions for and about people whom they do not know and do not speak for, and should, therefore, refrain from certain acts and practices that seek to justify their decisions a priori (Chadwick et al. 2013; de Coning 2013). Essentially, since the political, economic, social, and cultural factors that influence people’s daily lives differ from place to place, peace cannot be the result of measures taken as part of the international community’s peacebuilding template; it has to be grounded in the “everyday” realities and

expectations of the people living in those “local” communities where the interventions take place (Belloni 2012, p. 34; Hancock and Mitchell 2018; Mac Ginty 2015).

The prolonged discussion on the local and the increasing attention to its importance in peacebuilding interventions has resulted in a lively debate putting forward several ideas on how the peacebuilding community can support localized peacebuilding processes and enhance the practice of peacebuilding in general.

Main Debates

The discourse on “the local turn in peacebuilding” has broadly coalesced around two approaches, the reformist and the revolutionary. On the one hand, reformists seek to improve the effectiveness of peacebuilding interventions by emphasizing the need for broader participation by locals in the peacebuilding process; demanding more transparency and accountability from foreign “experts”; and stressing on the need for intervenors to build local capacity and strengthen local institutions (Autesserre 2014; Bellamy 2004; Odendaal 2013). From this perspective, even though international peacebuilding with its liberal underpinnings has some flaws and limitations, it can be “fixed” with the right changes and some more attention to context-specific details. Roland Paris (1997, p. 58) argues that instead of abandoning liberal peacebuilding for its tendency to instigate violence by introducing politically charged processes like democracy and capitalism at the early stages in post-conflict countries, peacebuilders should pursue “strategic liberalization” by taking a gradual approach to introduce the elements of liberalism. Thus, he calls for an “Institutionalization Before Liberalization” approach that emphasizes the building and strengthening of local institutions before potentially contentious policies of political and economic liberalization (like elections) are fully rolled out. By contrast, revolutionaries are more concerned about the overall structure of peacebuilding as currently practiced. They argue that its Western-centric approach does not, and often cannot, promote local ownership or

agency and does little to encourage the valuing of diverse perspectives and voices, especially at the local level (Donais 2009; Hancock 2017; Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013; Väyrynen 2013). Moreover, with its heavy reliance on pre-determined liberal principles often alien to the receiving countries, revolutionaries argue that international peacebuilding upholds global hegemonic/imperialistic structures and fails to confront the injustices that occur in global power politics (Duffield 2001, 2010; Jabri 2013). To improve the current practice of peacebuilding, this group therefore suggests the creation of an alternative emancipatory approach that builds peace from below, through local initiatives and everyday interactions that are legitimate and have a concrete impact on the life of citizens and communities (Eriksen 2009; Hancock 2018, 2020; Piccolino 2019; Richmond 2012).

While the discourse between reformists and revolutionaries continues to inform the theory and praxis on local peacebuilding, a good deal of literature has also discussed the role local and external actors play in peacebuilding, and the kinds of relationships and interactions that take place between the two (Boege et al. 2009; Chandler 2013; Donais 2009, 2012; Lilja and Höglund 2018; Mac Ginty 2010; Mac Ginty and Sanghera 2012). Lilja and Höglund (2018), reviewing the activities of five international organizations engaged in peacebuilding processes in Africa and the Middle East, observed that external actors perform two important functions in support of local peacebuilding: as risk absorbers and as accompanying actors. They argue that as risk absorbers, external peacebuilders with their relatively vast resources can offer financial support to local peacebuilders while building their capacity to address some of the personal and political risks they face in their operations. Similarly, external actors may also help to absorb some of the political risks associated with donors' direct engagement with local peacebuilders in opposition parties and/or non-state armed groups. By providing accompaniment, external actors can engage in activities that preserve local-external partnerships in the long run and strengthen local agency in a more sustained manner once peacebuilding interventions have been concluded (Lilja and Höglund

2018, pp. 454–425). Van Brabant (2010, p. 6) argues that external actors significantly contribute to peacebuilding by “lobbying, advocating, and raising awareness internationally on the local and international causes of the conflict and on peace initiatives by [locals].” These actors also provide comparative experiences and techniques from other settings in ways that can inform locals of the broader dynamics of the conflict, while creating a “safe space” where all sides of the conflict can come together for dialogue, training, and negotiations, if necessary (Anderson et al. 2003; Van Brabant 2010). For critical scholars such as Chandler (2013) and Jabri (2013), too much emphasis on what external actors can do to promote peace in post-conflict countries and an over-reliance on external resources for peacebuilding can undermine local agency and constrain local autonomy as well as the capacity for self-governance at the local level. Hence, there is a need to strike a careful balance between external involvement and responsible self-governance in a way that promotes accountability on the part of local and external actors, while also ensuring the legitimacy of their peacebuilding contributions and outcomes (Bojicic-Dzelilovic and Martin 2016; Hancock 2018; Narten 2009). Moreover, contrary to the idealistic representations of local “buy-in”/ acceptance of external involvement in peacebuilding, several scholars have found that the relationship between local and external actors is often contentious with locals either refusing to take ownership of external peacebuilding programs or bending them to their own goals – a result that has been referred to as *hybrid* peacebuilding (Belloni 2012; Boege et al. 2009; Kraushaar and Lambach 2009; Mac Ginty 2010).

The role locals play in peacebuilding and the extent to which it impacts on their decision to take *ownership* of the outcomes of peacebuilding programs has consequently become the subject of numerous studies on local peacebuilding. As Richmond (2012) puts it, with the increasing attention to its importance for the sustainability and legitimacy of peacebuilding programs, “local ownership” has become the latest buzzword in international peacebuilding. With local ownership, peacebuilding activities are expected to encounter minimal resistance from the local actors and be

more sustainable in the long term since their outcomes are widely seen as legitimate by the locals and not dependent on the presence of external actors or the availability of their financial resources (Poulligny 2009; Van Brabant 2010; von Billerbeck 2015; Wong 2013). Despite its increasing prominence and salience to peacebuilding, local ownership remains a loosely defined concept with vague, ambiguous, and sometimes contradictory interpretations, representing everything from a turn-key operation to full control over the design and implementation of peacebuilding programs (Hancock 2017; Lee and Özerdem 2015a; Reich 2006). As Reich (2006) observes, there is no concrete definition of local ownership, even in the policy papers or conceptual frameworks that discuss its implications and emphasize its importance. There is no clarity about which locals must be included in peacebuilding processes to enhance local ownership – (should they be state officials, civil society organizations, or indigenous groups and individuals at the community level?) – and, more importantly, the extent to which such locals must be involved for local ownership to emerge organically (Jarstad and Olsson 2012; Sending 2010; Shinoda 2008).

In the view of Donais (2012), there are two main perspectives on how local ownership can be attained in peacebuilding: the maximalist and the minimalist. From the maximalist perspective, external actors are relegated to being little more than check-writers for local peacebuilders. Thus, the best way to ensure local ownership, according to this perspective, is for international peacebuilders to support and finance peacebuilding projects that are primarily designed and implemented by locals. The minimalist perspective expects external actors to be in the driving seat of peacebuilding processes but to engage locals in a way that causes them to “buy-in” and take ownership of the outcomes of those processes. Hence, external actors may “convince and cajole” locals and build their capacities in a way that prods them to voluntarily takeover the management of externally driven peacebuilding initiatives once their interventions have come to an end (Donais 2012, p. 4). While the maximalist perspective has been criticized for not taking the potential problems of a “hands-off” doctrine such as corruption, weak local capacity, or the hijack of external resources by

local elites seriously enough (Lee and Özerdem 2015a; Reich 2006; Shinoda 2008), the minimalist view has been criticized for merely using local ownership as a rhetorical device to legitimize external interventions while denying locals of their true power and agency in peacebuilding programs (de Coning 2013; Hancock 2017; Richmond 2012). Regardless of these criticisms, Donais (2012) maintains that, if properly conceived and anchored in the principles of *shared ownership*, or partnership, and built upon processes of consensus-building taking place at all levels of peacebuilding activity (through vertical integration), local ownership can address some of the major limitations of liberal peacebuilding and inspire an improved version of peacebuilding that is *communitarian* in nature. Hancock (2017) argues that while calls for shared ownership and vertical integration are a step in the right direction, they cannot improve the practice of peacebuilding by themselves if unaccompanied by local agency, which he defines as a basic human need that must be satisfied in order to meet the psychosocial needs of human beings and their communities. Hence, instead of pursuing peacebuilding programs that exclusively satisfy the needs of local communities or those of the international community, peacebuilders can design models (such as local zones of peace, ZoPs) that “could both meet local needs for agency and also produce the deliverable results sought by international peacebuilders and funders” (Hancock 2017, p. 260). In places like Colombia, the Philippines, and El Salvador, for example, these ZoPs have through their deliberative governance structures (of public participation, procedural justice, and accountability) enhanced local agency and the legitimacy of peacebuilding programs while addressing international concerns regarding corruption and inefficient practices (Hancock 2018, p. 26).

Future Trajectories and Recommendations

It is now widely acknowledged within the peacebuilding community that the discourse on local peacebuilding has inspired new and innovative ways of thinking about how peace interventions must be carried out in post-conflict settings.

The idea that locals must be actively involved in peacebuilding processes – *if not leading them* – is migrating to the mainstream and has become largely uncontested in peacebuilding circles. When reviewing some of the more recent works on local peacebuilding, one can see how peacebuilding scholars and practitioners struggle to conceptualize and define the local in peacebuilding contexts, and how these struggles translate into operational difficulties for the implementation of “local peacebuilding” and other related concepts such as “local ownership.” As Pouligny (2009) notes, the practical application of “local ownership” to peacebuilding and humanitarian action processes has been more difficult and slower than what many scholars and practitioners had expected. However, because the international community continues to play a critical role in providing funds and organizing peacebuilding interventions for communities and groups of people whom they do not know and do not speak for, there is every reason to believe that discussions on the local and “local peacebuilding” will remain active and increasingly important within the peacebuilding community. As the research and praxis of local peacebuilding progresses, there are a few issues and areas that will require some more attention and focus. First, in reviewing the literature, it is obvious that discussions on the ways in which international peacebuilders constrain local peacebuilding is far more limited than it should be. Often, the focus is on how the international peacebuilder’s failure to recognize and include locals in peacebuilding processes will compromise the outcomes of their peacebuilding efforts and make it more difficult to attain local ownership. There is, however, very little talk and discussion of the fact that international peacebuilders have the sole power of recognition and inclusion of locals in such peacebuilding processes. With most peacebuilding organizations relying on donations and funding from advanced, Western countries to pursue their interventions in less developed, “third world” countries, the peacebuilding process is inherently tied to the global power structure and its hegemonic underpinnings. International peacebuilders, due to their less restricted access to resources in the global capitalist system, will always

wield more power and control over local actors even in arrangements that are considered to be equal partnerships or shared ownerships (Dillon and Reid 2009). It is therefore crucial for scholars of local peacebuilding to discuss whether and how external peacebuilders are addressing the grave power differentials between themselves and their recipient communities. Thus, instead of approaching local peacebuilding and the lack of “local ownership” from the perspective of external actors not including locals in their peacebuilding activities, more focus should be on how they (external peacebuilders) are in a privileged position of power to have the sole authority in determining which locals must be empowered (or disempowered) in peacebuilding processes, and more importantly how that power can be transformed to ensure more balance and equality between external and local actors.

A few scholars have begun to take on this issue and have proposed peacebuilding models that consciously transfer power to local peacebuilders and valorize the contributions of locals to peacebuilding processes. These models which include *local peace committees – LPCs* (Lederach 1997; Odendaal 2010; van Tongeren 2011), *local zones of peace – ZoPs* (Garcia 1997; Hancock and Mitchell 2007; Mitchell and Nan 1997), *infrastructures for peace – I4Ps* (Hopp-Nishanka 2013; Reychler 2002), and *local conflict management institutions – LCMIIs* (Millar 2016) emphasize the presence and effectiveness of locally derived peacebuilding initiatives while highlighting the numerous ways in which locals take charge of their peacebuilding processes even without the assistance and/or direction of external peacebuilders. Unlike liberal peacebuilding frameworks, which tend to focus peacebuilding activities at the national or state level in the hope that peace achieved at the level will automatically trickle down to the local spheres, these peacebuilding models emphasize the need for agency at the local level, as Richmond (2012) would say, and provide sustained linkages between different societal levels (top-level, middle-range, and grassroots) when used to address conflicts (Giessmann 2016; Kumar 2012; Lederach 1997). Moreover, there is evidence to

suggest that these peacebuilding models (LPCs, ZoPs, I4Ps, LCMIIs, etc.) are usually inclusive and often create space for the involvement of a diverse group of people – including women who tend to be marginalized (Adjei 2019; Donahoe 2017) – in peacebuilding processes at the local level (Hancock 2017; Hopp-Nishanka 2016; Odendaal 2012; van Tongeren 2011). Some preliminary research on the internal processes of these local peace initiatives has provided several findings. These include from Idler et al. (2015) showing that when leadership is diffuse and communication between leaders and the community is widespread, then ZoPs in an active conflict zone are better able to withstand pressures brought upon them by both armed insurgents and government forces. Likewise, earlier work by Mitchell and Hancock (2007, p. 212) notes that successful peace zones have been characterized by high levels of communal cohesion and “the existence of effective and accepted collective leadership.” Collective leadership has also been present in peace zones in West Africa (Allouche and Jackson 2019), in South Africa’s Local and Regional Peace Committees (Odendaal 2012), and Nicaragua’s Peace Commissions (Mouly 2013). Hancock’s (2017, 2018, 2020) work on agency and legitimacy tackles the issue of relationships between local peacebuilders, funding organs and the local communities that they serve. This work outlines the problems that local peacebuilders have when trying to negotiate the need for external funding, which leads to reporting requirements and accountability to funders, often limiting the peacebuilder’s ability to introduce and implement locally rooted initiatives that may depart from funder guidelines. The issues of accountability and agency remain at the center of difficulties between local communities, peacebuilders, and funders, and despite the work done by many scholars on issues of accountability upwards, downwards, and across (cf. Caplan 2005; Galtung and Tisné 2009; Pinnington 2014; Richmond 2011), little work has been done in the field to bridge the gap between donor requirements for accountability upwards and community needs for ownership and agency. As the research on local peacebuilding moves into the next phase,

more attention should be given to these locally centered peacebuilding models and especially how they can help to overcome the implementation barriers that are often associated with local peacebuilding.

Summary

In closing, it is worth noting that the local lacks a clear definition and is often marked by several complexities that go beyond the local-(inter)national dichotomy. While a few scholars including Paffenholz (2015), Simons and Zanker (2014), Mac Ginty and Richmond (2013), among others have begun to critically assess the heterogeneity of the local and discuss the problematic tendency for peacebuilders to oversimplify and romanticize the local, more research on the differences and lack of coherence within the local sphere is necessary. There should be a more conscious effort to unravel the complexity of the “local,” while paying attention to the multiple points of contestation and competition for power, resources, and legitimacy, that plays out simultaneously and differently at various levels within the local context (Van Leeuwen et al. 2019). Essentially, with the increasing awareness to the importance of locals in peacebuilding processes, it is imperative for researchers to emphasize that local actors and spaces are diverse and unique in their makeup; they are not homogenous units waiting to be discovered and empowered by (inter)national peacebuilding agents; and, for the most part, the locals themselves can disagree on what truly counts as local and on the legitimacy of the groups and individuals who seek to represent them in political processes like peacebuilding. As Simons and Zanker (2014, p. 11) note, a one-size-fits-all model of peacebuilding should not be criticized (and ultimately replaced) on the basis of a one-size-fits-all conception of the local.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Grassroots Organizations and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Peace Infrastructures](#)

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Maoist Conflict in India

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Synonyms

[Adivasi/indigenous politics](#); [Development](#); [India](#); [Intractable conflict](#); [Land rights](#); [Left Wing-Extremism](#); [Maoism](#); [Security](#)

Description

After more than five decades of unrelenting activity, the Maoist conflict constitutes one of the most enduring insurgencies India has faced since independence. Originating from the Naxalite movement ignited by the peasant uprising sparked off in Naxalbari, West Bengal, in 1967, this low-intensity conflict has a long history of resilience despite being characterized by periodic phases of transformation, expansion, and retraction since its inception. While retaining firm ideological roots in Marxist-Leninist-Maoist thought, the Maoist conflict in India has evolved from a series of localized agrarian revolts erupted in the late 1960s and early 1970s into a widespread and heterogenous revolutionary movement. In its present form, the Maoist insurgency fights against the socio-economic inequalities generated by globalization and the dispossession of land and rights of historically marginalized groups which has been accelerated by the liberalization of the Indian economy started in 1991.

In order to reflect common parlance, both the terms Naxalite (or Naxal) and Maoist are interchangeably employed in this chapter to describe the rebels and the conflict in the current phase. However, the accuracy of this word usage is largely questioned, as the Maoist movement and its socio-economic and political context have deeply changed since the events of the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Introduction

Today, India's Maoist movement does not constitute a unified force, but rather a fragmented cluster of diverse parliamentary and extraparliamentary political formations, which, though sharing a similar ideological terrain, pursue different strategies to advance a common political project aimed at building a socialist Indian state through people's democratic revolution (Banerjee 2009; Bhatia 2006; Mohanty 2006, 2015). Among these diverse groups which have been shaping the course of Maoist politics in India for decades, the Communist Party of India (Maoist) – CPI (Maoist) – is the most powerful extraparliamentary organization. Formed in 2004 through the merger of different Maoist factions and oriented to use revolutionary violence to achieve social change, the CPI (Maoist) is leading the current phase of the Maoist insurgency against the Indian government. Its activities are mainly located in the so-called central-eastern tribal belt, namely a vast territorial area which covers the states of Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha (earlier Orissa), Bihar, Jharkhand, and West Bengal, where there is a high concentration of indigenous communities and natural resources, but a long record of low human development indicators.

What is striking about the longevity of the Maoist movement is not only its ability to survive years of violent state repression, but also its lasting ideological relevance within India's political landscape. In particular, this revolutionary movement has managed to retain ideological traction by emerging as a socio-political force, which, over the years, has contributed to the growth of the debate on democracy, development, and social justice in the country notwithstanding its internal divisions and mutations (Gudavarthy 2014).

From Naxalbari to Left Wing Extremism: The Evolution of the Maoist Movement in India

One of the main transformations of the Maoist movement is certainly its recent characterization as Left Wing Extremism (LWE) and India's major

internal security threat by the Indian state following the formation of the CPI (Maoist) and its armed wing, the People's Liberation Guerrilla Army (PLGA), in 2004 (GOI, Ministry of Home Affairs 2008, 2009; GOI, Press Information Bureau 2006). This change in the state's representation of the conflict has led to a significant reformulation of the central government's response to the insurgency, which, for long decades, had been dealt with as an agrarian crisis and as a law and order issue falling within the jurisdiction of each state of the Indian federal union. The transition of the Maoist movement to the domain of security politics notwithstanding the recognition of its deep socioeconomic roots (GOI, Planning Commission 2008) has been paralleled with a growing militarization of the conflict, now engulfed in an unending cycle of violence and counterviolence, which is making the prospects of peace appear as a far and distant horizon.

To understand the dynamics which have led to the contemporary configuration of the Maoist insurgency and its perceived intractability, it is important to recall the three main phases which have marked the long history of the conflict and the course of state responses. As detailed in the following sections, the evolution of the Indian Maoist movement remains closely intertwined with the trajectory of India's democratic politics as well as the direction of the country's political economy and socioeconomic development.

First Phase (1967–1972)

India's contemporary Maoist conflict originates from the Naxalite movement, which marked the first phase of violent revolutionary politics in post-independence India (1967–1972). It was triggered by the peasant armed struggle against exploitative agrarian relations which broke out in the rural area of Naxalbari, in the northern part of West Bengal, in 1967. Even though it occurred in a peripheral region of the Indian territory and it was suppressed by the state in a few months, the Naxalbari uprising still embodies a shared symbol of revolutionary struggle for radical left movements in India. It developed in the context of deep-seated forms of injustice and destitution prevailing among poor tenant farmers and landless laborers belonging to

the communities of lower castes, Dalits,¹ and Adivasis² of northern West Bengal, who, for generations, had been demanding an equal distribution of land as well as a fairer system of crop-sharing to live a life of dignity and justice.

In the late 1960s, rural poverty, indebtedness, and exploitation were quite widespread in India. At that time, the country was mainly an agrarian society, where an inconsistent implementation of land reforms adopted in the postindependence period had failed to remove the socioeconomic privileges of a powerful rural elite (e.g., landlords and rich farmers), whose position had been consolidated by the land revenue systems introduced by the British during the colonial era (Chakravorty 2013; Frankel 2005). Moreover, social tensions in the countryside were further exacerbated by frequent food crises and by the programs of modernization of the agricultural sector (i.e., Green Revolution) implemented by the government in the mid-1960s, which generated an uneven pattern of rural development in the

country (Frankel 2005). In such an agrarian milieu, rural unrest was a recurrent phenomenon, though limited to localized and unorganized forms of peasant resistance (see Desai 1986; Sen 1982; Milbert 2012).

The armed revolt of Naxalbari erupted in the spring of 1967 and marked a defining moment in the history of India's postindependence peasant struggles. In fact, it could channel the growing social discontent into a widespread and prolonged revolutionary armed movement against land alienation and land rights. Its roots can be traced back to the revolutionary path set by two pre-independence agitations for agrarian reforms led by the Communist Party of India (CPI) before its first split, which led to the formation of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) – CPI (M) in 1964. These were the Tebhaga movement (1946–1947) (see Majumdar 1993, 2011; Sen 1972) and the Telangana armed rebellion (1946–1951) (see Dhanagare 1974; Ram 1973; Sundarayya 1973a, b, c, d). The events of Naxalbari too originated from a long period of peasant mobilization under communist leadership, yet, in this case, they left a rather distinctive and deep-rooted legacy in Indian politics. In particular, the Naxalbari uprising and its ideological foundations continue to inspire one of India's most enduring internal conflicts. Moreover, by consolidating the conceptualization of the role played by violent agrarian revolution through area-wise seizure of power in the Indian society, it permanently shaped the course of India's left politics, especially the Indian communist movement, eventually divided on which strategy – violent/nonviolent – to adopt to bring transformative changes to the socioeconomic structures of the Indian state (Brass 1973).

It must be noted that the Naxalbari revolt occurred at the apex of a series of political actions (e.g., organization of peasant committees and armed groups, forced seizure and distribution of land, armed attacks on landlords and moneylenders, cancellation of debts and land records) coordinated by a local militant group within the CPI (M), which had been active in the administrative subdivision of Siliguri (Darjeeling district) (Banerjee 2009; Mohanty 2015). Inspired by Mao Tse Tung's theorization of protracted people's war

¹The term *dalit* means “oppressed” in Hindi. It was coined by those communities which have been historically excluded from the caste system and discriminated against as untouchables in the Indian society. Even though untouchability was abolished by the Indian constitution in 1950 (art. 17), its practice and other forms of caste-base discrimination still persist nowadays. The majority of Dalits – 16.6% of the total population (Census of India, 2011) – still lack access to key resources (e.g. land) and continue to record low socio-economic indicators, especially in rural areas. These communities are officially recognized as Scheduled Castes (SC) by the Indian government, but they usually prefer to refer to themselves as Dalits. In the rest of this chapter, the word is not italicized in order to reflect its integration into common usage and vocabulary.

²*Adivasi* is a term referred to the indigenous population residing in India. In Hindi, it means “the original inhabitants of the land”. The term *adivasi* is preferred by the representative civil society rather than the word ‘tribal’ and the administrative category of Scheduled Tribes (ST). Comprising approximately 8.6% of the total population of India (Census of India, 2011), Adivasis are spread across Central India and North Eastern India. The Maoists have their stronghold in these parts of India with maximum participation of Adivasis in their guerrilla army, liberated zones, and in their mid-level leadership. For the same reasons explained in relation to the use of the word *dalit*, the term *adivasi* and its variations are not italicized in this chapter.

in agrarian societies, Charu Mazumdar – the leader of the revolutionary communists in Siliguri – steered the peasant mobilization in northern West Bengal toward a radical ideological orientation, articulated in his famous series of articles known as *Historic Eight Documents*, written between 1965 and 1967.

The Naxalbari uprising broke out after a succession of clashes between the police and agricultural laborers (lower castes and Adivasis) led to the killing of a group of adivasi villagers in Prasadjote on May 25, 1967. This incident triggered a wave of rural unrest, which swept across the area of Naxalbari for 3 months, till the end of July 1967, when a massive police action launched by the United Front – the ruling coalition government in West Bengal composed of the CPI (M) and other left forces – crushed the insurrection and arrested some of its leaders. Those who escaped police repression went underground, as did Charu Mazumdar and Kanu Sanyal, the two leading members of the Siliguri CPI (M) group. This marked the epilogue of the revolutionary armed struggle in Naxalbari. However, the ideological drive of this short-lived peasant revolt reverberated rapidly across the country.

In 1967, a series of agrarian agitations influenced by the revolutionary experience of Naxalbari broke out in other districts of West Bengal and they later spread in the states of Bihar, Odisha, and Andhra Pradesh. It was from these regional and localized rural rebellions that the Naxalite movement developed as a wider revolutionary experiment aimed at capturing political power through armed struggle at the end of the 1960s. In this first phase of revolutionary violence against the Indian state (1967–1972), the district of Srikakulam in the southern-eastern state of Andhra Pradesh emerged as an important epicenter of the Naxalite movement along with the Naxal strongholds in West Bengal such as Debra-Gopiballavpur and Birbhum (Banerjee 2006).

In Srikakulam district, widespread social unrest evolved from a revolt led by the Girijan, a community of hill-dwellers living in the region called Agency Area. Organized by local communist teachers since the late 1950s, the Girijans, who were working as landless agricultural laborers on

land lost to landowners and moneylenders, had mobilized for better wages, land distribution, and relief from debts through collectivizing as Girijan Sangham before the Naxalbari uprising (Dasgupta 1973). Eventually, the Srikakulam struggle adopted the revolutionary path defined by the communist leadership of Naxalbari (Venugopal 2013).

The integration of the Srikakulam struggle with the Naxalite movement was formalized in 1969, when the Srikakulam insurgents confirmed their support for the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) – CPI (M-L). The CPI (M-L) was established on April 22, 1969, by the national revolutionary forum All India Coordination Committee of Communist Revolutionaries (AICCCR), which was led by the leaders of the Naxalbari uprising, namely Charu Mazumdar, Kanu Sanyal, and Saroj Dutta. By opposing reform-induced change and parliamentary democracy, the CPI (M-L) channeled the country's radical forces into a revolutionary party which could offer an alternative to the revisionist positions of the CPI (M). The leaders of the Srikakulam movement consolidated their revolutionary activities according to the revised strategy and tactics indicated by the CPI (M-L) general secretary Charu Mazumdar. Mazumdar stressed the need to recenter the actions of the Naxal movement on the systematic use of guerrilla warfare and the advancement of the “annihilation of class enemies” line (Banerjee 2009; Dasgupta 1973; D’Mello 2018). This was a divisive campaign of selective killing (e.g., landlords, moneylenders), which eventually led to the internal splintering of the movement (Dasgupta 1973).

Within 3 years (1968–1971), the militant activities of the Girijan revolutionaries and Naxalite ideology expanded considerably in other districts of undivided Andhra Pradesh. Through the formation of armed guerrilla squads and sustained people's war directed toward land elites, moneylenders, and the police, the Srikakulam movement managed to seize and redistribute crops, as well as occupy land and create “liberated zones” administered by revolutionary committees (Ryotanga Sangram Samiti) in almost 300 villages (D’Mello 2018). The rapid intensification of the Srikakulam

movement and its transformation into a widespread armed struggle in 1969 were countered by the state and the central government with a heavy military response. After having declared large parts of the Srikakulam district disturbed areas under the Andhra Pradesh Suppression of Disturbances Act (1948), the Andhra Pradesh authorities launched a coordinated action against the communist revolutionaries by deploying state police forces in numbers in conjunction with thousands of paramilitary forces, namely the Central Reserve Police Forces – CRPF (Thakor 2018). By 1971, the Naxal insurgency in Srikakulam had suffered huge setbacks and losses (Dasgupta 1973; Kennedy and Purushotham 2012), especially after the killing of its main leaders by July 1970 (Mohanty 2015).

By and large, in the early 1970s, the Indian government, then led by the Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, managed to curb the Naxalite movement not only in the critical areas of West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh, but also in most states to a large extent. The scale-up of massive state-center military counteroffensives (e.g., Operation Steeplechase, July, 1 – August 15, 1971, and the deployment of the army in Birbhum in 1971, see Singh 2016), the imposition of special laws (e.g., the Maintenance of Internal Security Act – MISA), and the recourse to police encounters resulted in several arrests and killings of Naxal leaders and sympathizers in West Bengal, Bihar, Odisha, and Andhra Pradesh. At that time, counterinsurgency (COIN) activities were carried out both in rural areas and urban centers, mainly in Kolkata, where the insurgency had spread widely through the active involvement of intellectuals and students of elite colleges in Naxal politics (Banerjee 2009; Mukhopadhyay 2006).

The death of Charu Mazumdar in police custody in July 1972 marked the end of the first phase of the Maoist insurgency. With the demise of its main leader and a large number of party workers held in jail (Banerjee 2009), the CPI (M-L) entered a long period of underground activities and ideological factionalism. Intraparty differences, especially with regard to the issue of strategy and tactics (e.g., annihilation of class enemies vs. the consolidation of a popular base through

mass organizations), led to the formation of several Naxal splinter groups, which eventually weakened the movement. In this period of fragmentation, the Indian government attempted to reduce the social base of the movement through the promotion of state-led development programs and the implementation of land reforms in West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh (Banerjee 2009; Mohanty 2015; Venugopal 2013). However, scanty implementation and lack of political will limited the impact of such initiatives on the substantial transformation of the socioeconomic conditions of adivasi communities and the rural poor (Benbabaali 2016; Mohanty 2015). Far from being completely eradicated in the 1970s, Maoist revolutionary politics survived state repression and retained its appeal in the Indian society in the years that followed.

Second Phase (1980–1990)

The imposition of a state of emergency in the country by Indira Gandhi in 1975–1977 further aggravated the setback encountered by the Naxal revolutionaries in the early 1970s. During the period of Emergency Rule, the heavy suppression of any forms of political activism and dissent against the ruling government decisively subdued the insurgents and any attempts at actively reorganizing the Naxal movement, which remained underground until the ban on political organizations was lifted in 1977. Those were years of deep political and ideological churning, which ultimately defined the evolution of Maoist politics when it entered its second phase of activities in the 1980s.

In particular, the resurgence of the Maoist movement in the aftermath of the Emergency Rule was characterized by a redefinition of the strategy and tactics of the revolutionary struggle on the basis of the shortcomings experienced in the first phase. The annihilation line followed during Charu Mazumdar's leadership came under heavy criticism, and more emphasis was given to increasing popular support, expanding mass organizations, and creating base areas, crucial for the advancement of people's struggle in the country. These developments notwithstanding, the Naxal movement remained splintered in

various local groups, since differences persisted with regard to how these objectives could be achieved in practice. For example, among the diverse CPI (M-L) factions, the CPI (M-L) Liberation group led by Vinod Mishra in then undivided Bihar eventually embraced the path of parliamentary politics and mass agitations in the 1980s. After an initial commitment to armed struggle, CPI (M-L) Liberation later became an open party of the Indian Left, which is still active in the political scene of the country today. In particular, in 1982, the CPI (M-L) Liberation formed its mass organization called Indian People Front (IPF), and in 1989, it successfully contested parliamentary elections by securing a seat in the Indian parliament. In those years, the main opponent of this position – considered as a revisionist deviation from the revolutionary course set by the Naxalbari uprising – was the CPI (M-L) People War (PW) led by Kondapalli Seetharamaiah in Andhra Pradesh.

Formed in 1980 through the reorganization of a group of CPI (M-L) revolutionaries active in the region of North Telangana, PW established itself as a leading faction of the Maoist armed struggle by sizably expanding its influence beyond its original area of operation. Though endorsing the revolutionary path set by Charu Mazumdar, PW combined the activity of armed guerrilla squads with the political mobilization of adivasi and peasant communities. This was favored by the work of mass organizations and cultural groups, such as the Radical Students Union, the Radical Youth League, the Jana Natya Mandali – People's Theatre Group, the Viplava Rachayitala Sangham – and Revolutionary Writers' Association (Banerjee 2009; Haragopal 2017; Venugopal 2013). By working across various social groups and districts for a long period of time, these front organizations favored the strengthening of a wide popular base in support of PW and the Maoist movement in Andhra Pradesh. In particular, they played a crucial role in organizing the masses against exploitative agrarian relations and social oppression as well as disseminating revolutionary politics at the village level in the state (Balagopal 2006; Venugopal 2013). By the mid-1980s, the PW-led Naxal movement consolidated its

historical base in Andhra Pradesh, and it started to expand its outreach in the forest region of Dandakaranya, which has developed into the main epicenter of the Maoist insurgency in recent years (Haragopal 2017; Kennedy and Purushotham 2012; Venugopal 2013).

In the 1980s, Bihar too (then undivided) emerged as a strong base of the Naxal armed struggle since the proparliamentary group CPI (M-L) Liberation could never make a breakthrough in the area and gain ground on more radical groups operating in the state. In Bihar, the armed remobilization of communist revolutionaries resumed actively in the aftermath of the Emergency through the activities of two main Maoist parties, the CPI (M-L) Party Unity (PU) and the Maoist Communist Centre (MCC), which, like PW, influenced the course of the Maoist movement in the following years. The former developed from the folds of the original CPI (M-L) in 1982, and it was mostly rooted in Jehanabad, Gaya, Patna, and Palamu. In these areas of Bihar, the armed struggle and mass mobilization activities of the PU cadres were mostly aimed at ending the socioeconomic exploitation and caste-based discrimination of poor agricultural laborers and landless peasants, who belonged to the dalit and lower-caste communities to a large extent. The political mobilization of the rural poor in PU's base areas was primarily carried out by the Mazdoor Kisan Sangram Samiti (MKSS), the main front organization of the PU group (Bhatia 2005; Kunnath 2009).

The MCC group, instead, did not derive its Naxal roots from the CPI (M-L), such as PU and the other main Maoist groups of the 1980s. In fact, it was formed in 1969 by two Naxal revolutionaries (Kanai Chatterjee and Amulya Sen) who had opposed Charu Mazumdar's line. Known with the name of Dakshin Desh until 1975, in the 1980s, the MCC developed its areas of operation first in West Bengal (Jangal Mahal area, Sunderbans, and Midnapore) and then in Bihar (Gaya, Aurangabad, and Muzzafarpur), where it established itself as an influential Maoist force. Committed to the advancement of protracted people's war through peasant armed struggle, the MCC organized the landless peasants and agricultural laborers against

their exploitation by upper-caste landlords mainly through an underground body called Krantikari Kisan Committee (i.e., revolutionary peasant committee) (Bhatia 2005; South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP) n.d.-a).

By and large, the consolidation of Naxal base areas in Andhra Pradesh and in Bihar through the mobilization activities of PW, PU, and MCC in the 1980s marked an initial expansion of the Maoist movement in the country. However, it continued to be perceived as a law and order problem falling within the purview of each state government. As a result, responses to the second phase of the Maoist movement consisted in heterogeneous state-wise approaches, largely influenced by the socioeconomic and political dynamics prevailing in each Maoist base (Oetken 2009).

In particular, in Andhra Pradesh, the state-led response to the second phase of the Maoist movement was mainly shaped by the Congress – Telegu Desam Party (TDP) political rivalry for state power. As described above, PW could consolidate its base and expand its popular support until 1985. However, between 1985 and 1989, it faced a period of massive state repression unleashed by the TDP government, which came to power in 1984 by defeating a three-decade-long Congress rule in the state. In those years, the PW leaders and sympathizers were met with brutal police actions and indiscriminate arrests made under repressive laws (Venugopal 2013). Moreover, in 1987, Naxal activities were further curtailed through the imposition of a ban on PW and the Maoist front organizations operating in the state. However, with the Congress party's return to power in 1989, the ban was temporarily lifted and PW could reorganize its mass base in the region. Further bans on PW continued to be imposed and lifted in the years that followed depending on both the political climate and the intensity of rebel activities. This favored the expansion of the political and military influence of PW, which could benefit from a certain amount of maneuvering margin when bans and state offensives against the insurgents were relaxed (Oetken 2009; Venugopal 2013).

In Bihar, instead, counterinsurgency activities against PU and MCC rebels were carried out mostly through caste-based private militias

(*senā*), whose operations reflected the caste polarization dynamics along which the Maoist movement developed in the state (Bhatia 2005; Kunnath 2009; South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP) n.d.-b). Mostly led by upper-caste landlords to preserve their land privileges, these armed private militias tried to crush the popular support for the Maoist movement by killing Dalits and members of lower-caste communities involved in agricultural activities. Over the years, the cycle of violence between the Naxal rebels and the private militias in Bihar led to extensive caste-based massacres – especially among Dalits and lower castes – and to a further consolidation of the support for the Maoist movement in Bihar (Oetken 2009; South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP) n.d.-b).

It is against the backdrop of such regional dynamics that the Naxal rebels could secure lasting political and territorial gains in the 1980s. This favored the strengthening of the Maoist movement and the intensification of the insurgency in the third phase, which coincided with a period of major economic transformations, accelerated by the liberalization of the Indian economy in the 1990s.

Third Phase (1990s–Ongoing)

The 1990s constitute a defining period of the current trajectory of the Maoist conflict in India, now marked by a growing militarization of state-society relations in insurgency-affected areas. In those years, the Maoist movement transitioned from a long course of internal splintering and local remobilization to a phase of significant consolidation and expansion in new territories of the Indian state, which have now become not only the epicenter of the insurgency, but also regions deemed crucial for the economic development of the country. This occurred as part of a substantial rethinking of the organizational strategy of diverse Naxal groups, but also in response to the neoliberal restructuring of the Indian economy started in 1991.

In particular, the 1990s witnessed the strengthening of Maoist activities in areas populated by adivasi communities in central-eastern India, especially in Dandakaranya, a densely forested

region spread across today's states of Chhattisgarh, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, and Odisha. Here, the Naxal rebels belonging to the PW group found refuge and established guerrilla zones since the 1980s, when the Andhra Pradesh government launched a heavy wave of repression against Maoist politics, intensified by the formation of a specialized COIN police force (i.e., Greyhounds) in 1989. The 1990s saw also the consolidation of Maoist presence in Bihar and Andhra Pradesh achieved through the strategic merger of PW and PU into the CPI (M-L) People's War Group (PWG) in 1998 (Oetken 2009). By this first successful attempt at joining forces, the Naxal rebels could not only improve territorial coordination among dominant armed Naxal factions and extend their influence to neighboring states, but also step up their military strength vis-à-vis security forces.

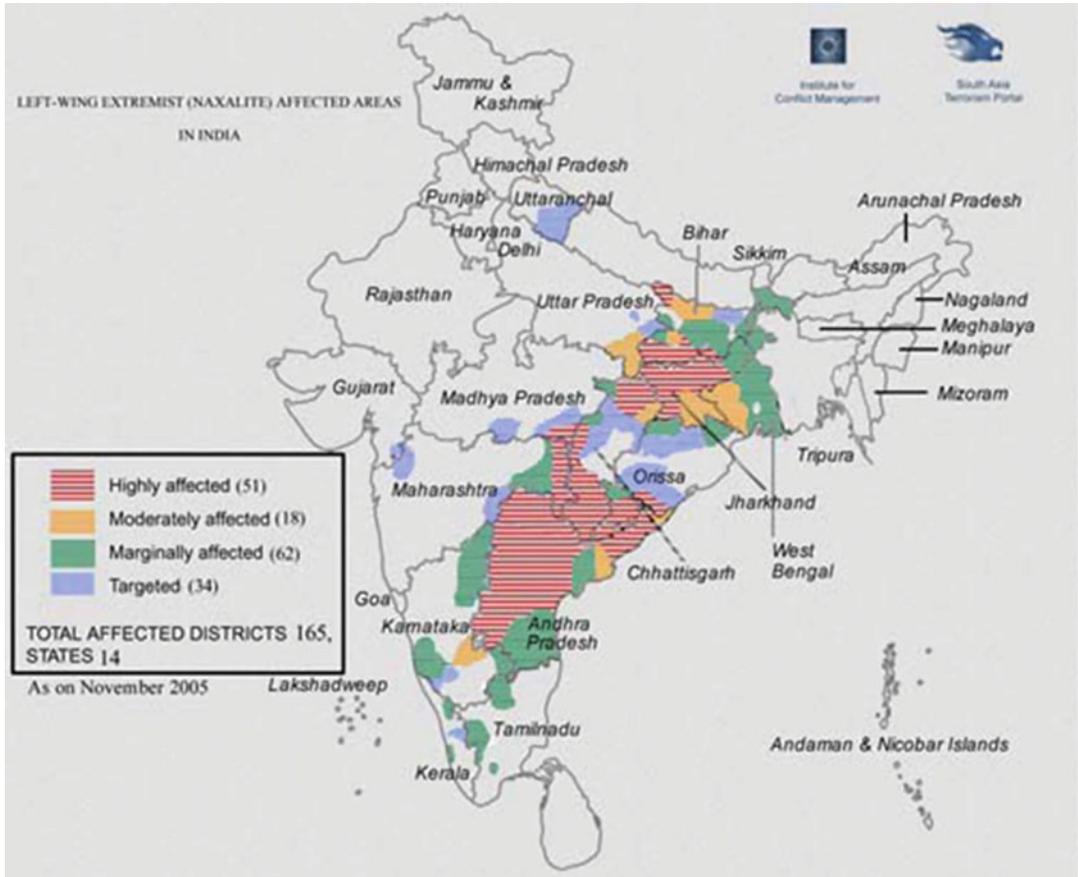
But strategic considerations aside, these developments had far greater significance for the redefinition of Maoist politics as a growing ideological challenge to the Indian state. In this regard, it is important to note that the consolidation of Maoist bases in forest areas coincided with a growing interest in these mineral-rich regions (e.g., coal, iron-ore, bauxite, and timber) by multinational corporations and the Indian state, which identified mining and resource-based industrialization as crucial sectors for economic growth. By mobilizing Dalits and Adivasis against displacement and dispossession due to state-led encroachment of their traditional lands for mining and industrial purposes, the Maoist rebels challenge the current paradigm of India's economic development.

As observed by Ghosh and Chandrashekar (2002) and, in a recent study, by Shah et al. (2018), the 30-year-long neoliberal reform program has failed to set the country on the path of sustainable and equitable growth. On the contrary, it has aggravated existing socioeconomic inequalities and discriminations among the poorest (Dalits and Adivasis) sections of the Indian society. This situation is particularly evident in the insurgency-affected states of central-eastern India, where dalit and adivasi communities have been living in conditions of abject multi-dimensional poverty (i.e., health, education, and

standard of living) for decades (see Kannan in Shah 2018). The current attention cast on the mineral-rich adivasi territories in Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha, and Andhra Pradesh by the Indian state for economic purposes has not improved the living conditions of these communities. They continue to remain excluded from India's economic growth and are entrapped in new forms of exploitation (Shah et al. 2018). The presence of Maoist rebels and guerrilla zones in these areas since the 1980s has strengthened Adivasis' struggles for land and forest rights.

The continuing relevance of Maoist politics in the current context of India's globalized economy has to be understood against the backdrop of the abovementioned dynamics of persisting conditions of oppression, deprivation, and resistance, in which – in continuity with the past – the question of land and social justice remains central (Mohanty 2015). Though remaining a highly fragmented force, whose claims and dynamics are shaped by the specific socio-political context of each region, the Maoist movement has evolved from a series of localized struggles against exploitative agrarian relations into a more consolidated and widespread political force, which is articulating an alternative to the ideological foundations of the neoliberal development policies of the Indian state. This trajectory has been accelerated after the Maoist rebels of the PWG and MCC groups merged into the CPI (Maoist) party on September 21, 2004, to form a more centralized political organization and secure Maoist presence in a compact revolutionary zone through protracted people's war. In recent years, the intensification of the Maoist conflict in central-eastern India is related to the activities of the CPI (Maoist) party, which, under the leadership of the PWG revolutionaries hailing from Andhra Pradesh, constitutes the leading political and military force of the contemporary phase of the Maoist movement.

The Indian government has been responding to the ideological challenge posed by the political struggle of the Maoist revolutionaries with strong military action and growing state repression. In the last years, this has limited the activities of the CPI (Maoist) insurgents to the hilly and forested



Maoist Conflict in India, Fig. 1 Maoist insurgency: conflict map 2005. Note: Intensity and territorial diffusion of the Maoist conflict in India in 2005. Retrieved from

South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP) (<https://www.satp.org/conflict-maps/india-maoistinsurgency-2005>)

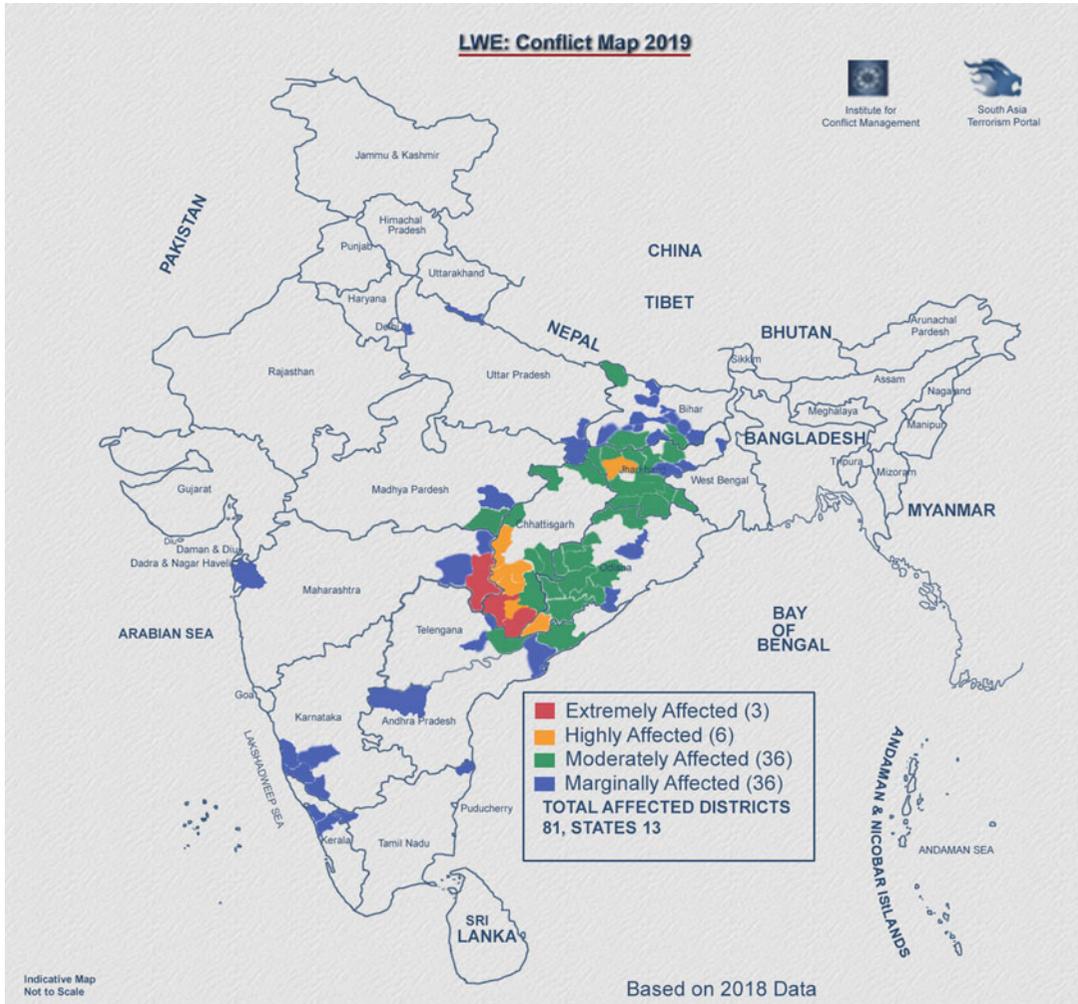
areas of central India, especially in Dandakaranya, as shown by the two maps below. Since the late 1990s, the coordination of COIN operations of the states affected by the Maoist insurgency has been centralized under the union government through the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) for better management of state-led initiatives. The escalation of the Maoist conflict post-1991 has been paralleled by a substantial transformation of the Indian state’s discourse on the Maoist movement, now categorized as Left Wing Extremism (LWE), terrorism, and India’s major internal security threat. The transition of Maoist politics to the realm of state security has led to the strengthening of securitizing measures and to an increased militarization of the conflict in the current stage,

notwithstanding the adoption of a series of development schemes to win “hearts and minds” in territories affected by the insurgency (Figs. 1 and 2).

CPI (Maoist) Ideology and Revolutionary Violence

Theoretical Logic of the Maoist Movement

The previous section encapsulates the historical trajectory of left politics in India. The following section would focus on the specificities of the CPI (Maoist) vis-a-vis its ideological underpinnings and organizational structure. An understanding of this Maoist party is imperative to recognize the resilient nature of the revolutionary movement.



Maoist Conflict in India, Fig. 2 Maoist insurgency: conflict map 2019. Note: Intensity and territorial diffusion of the Maoist conflict in India in 2019. Retrieved from

South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP) (<https://www.satp.org/conflict-maps/india-maoistinsurgency-2019>)

The founding strategy document of the CPI (Maoist), which was adopted in 2004 during the merger of two radical left parties – PWG and MCC – characterizes the Indian state as a) semi-colonial and semifeudal, and b) rife with comprador bureaucratic bourgeois/capitalism. In order to overcome these contradictions and transform the state into a socialist and classless society, the Maoists suggest the Indian revolution to be carried out in two stages. The first would be the so-called new democratic stage, and the second and final stage would be the socialist stage. The Maoists contend the Indian state to be truly independent

as it is still under imperialist forces enabled through the comprador bourgeois and capitalists.

Following the analysis of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism (MLM), the Indian Maoists advocate for a new democratic revolution which is truly the struggle for establishing peoples’ democracy through people’s protracted war. Protracted people’s war becomes the third ideological pillar of the movement. For a protracted people’s war, the party identifies the peasantry and the vast countryside of India and its geographical spread as ideal grounds for creation of revolutionary people’s army – which would eventually lead to

seizure of power by armed force and political power. The strategy document lays out the task for the people's army:

...to wipe out the armed forces of the counter-revolutionary Indian state through war and... establish their own state - the People's Democratic State and establish their own political authority. The very act of establishment of the state machinery of the people by destroying through war, the present autocratic state machinery - the army, the police and the bureaucracy of the reactionary ruling classes- is the central task of the People's Democratic Revolution of India. [CPI (Maoist) 2004a, p. 36]

The fourth ideological pillar is of mass mobilization or a united mass front. In order to mobilize and create a revolutionary consciousness, the party identifies poor peasants and agricultural laborers as the backbone of their revolutionary guards. Maoists believe to strengthen the proletarian foundations of the party would require focus on students across the country who once consolidated would be sent to rural and backward areas, "...finest revolutionaries go to the villages" [CPI (Maoist) 2007, p. 11] to integrate with the peasantry and Adivasis and continue both a covert and an overt fight against the Indian state.

The fourth ideological pillar is primarily seeking mass mobilization for seizure of the Indian state through armed action or mass militant mobilization. With denouncement of traditional organizational and mass movements, these mass mobilizations take shape in the form of what are termed as frontal organizations of the CPI (Maoist), which work toward conscientization of rural population on issues pertaining to the oppressive structures of the Indian society and practices of the federal and central government on matters such as minor forest produce, and displacement due to development activities such as dams, mineral mining, and forest use. These mass frontal organizations dynamically collectivized local communities across diverse geographical areas across boundaries of the Indian state.

CPI (Maoist) Organizational Structure

The movement in congruence with its ideological aims and objectives has planned structures that are guided with secrecy, and workings involve remaining underground. The CPI (Maoist) party

constitution's chapter 3, 4, and 7 specifically engage with the discipline of party members, principles, and structure of the party. Article 29, 30, and 31 of chapter 7 engage with the details of the organization of the movement. The party identifies two kinds of memberships – professionals and part-timers – and the organization would be embedded in local contextualities depending on the geographical divisions or spheres of production [CPI (Maoist) 2004a]. Following the principle of democratic centralism, the Maoists expect inner party democracy under centralized leadership. This in praxis translates to the idea that "the individual is subordinate to the organization, the lower level is subordinate to the higher level and the entire party is subordinate to the Central Committee" [CPI (Maoist) 2004a, chapter 5, art. 25 (a)].

Chapter 7 of the constitution lays out the broad organizational structure of the party, which includes the Central Committee (CC) – the highest body in the party. The CC is responsible for organizing the party congress, which is held once in 5 years. Followed by the CC will be Special Area Committees (SAC)/Special Zonal Committee (SZC)/State Committee (SC). The SAC/SZC/SC are the highest authority at state or zonal level. Under SC comes the Regional Committee (RC), under which are Zonal Committee (ZC)/District Committee (DC) /Divisional Committee. These committees are further devolved as Subzonal Committee/Subdivisional Committee, under which fall Area Committee (AC) and local level committees at a village level or in a factory or university.

Looking at the geographical spread of the conflict across ten states in India, the following state/zonal level committees have been formed over the years: Dandakaranya Special Zonal Committee (DKSZC), Andhra Orissa Border Special Zonal Committee (AOBSZC), North Telangana Special Zonal Committee (NTSZC), Bihar Jharkhand North Chhattisgarh Special Area Committee (BJNCSAC), West Bengal State Committee (WBSC), Punjab State Committee (PSC), and Maharashtra State Committee (MSC). These state zonal committees show the spread of the movement and various operations that continue

in the 53rd year of the movement, and new reports inform of a new formation in the Western Ghats Special Zonal Committee (WGSZC). This indicates the expansion of the movement in newer territories, which are geographically suited for their operations. Along with zonal committees, the party has regional bureaus that coordinate activities across the country. These bureaus are: North Regional Bureau, South-Western Regional Bureau, East Regional Bureau, Central Regional Bureau, and Odisha-Chhattisgarh Regional Bureau. Each of these bureaus has two CC members, and they are responsible for formulating and then disseminating the strategies and plans of the CPI (Maoist) to their zonal committees and downward.

Along with the political structure, the CC and its various bureaus and committees, is the Central Military Commission (CMC). The CMC is responsible for the maintenance and directions for the military strategies and the Peoples' Liberation Guerrilla Army (PLGA). The PLGA is formed of platoons and militia members. The membership of the PLGA is estimated to be a cadre of 8,500 men and women approximately. It is believed that the support base of the guerrilla outfit is larger than this number (Rijiju 2014) (see chapter ► [“Female Combatants and Peacebuilding”](#)). The PLGA is a precursor to the People's Liberation Army, which would continue the protracted people's war. The CPI (Maoist) calls both the PLGA and the PLA as different from “mercenary armies of the exploiting classes; it is a political army. It must be subordinate to the ideological leadership of the proletariat and serving the struggles of the people and the building of revolutionary base areas” [CPI (Maoist) 2004b, p. 100].

The PLGA has three main forces. First is the main force which comprises of platoons, companies, and special action teams, which move between guerrilla bases and areas which have a marked presence of the CPI (Maoist) and its political structures, especially the liberated zones of “Jantana Sarkar” (JS).³ The second force includes

local guerrilla squads, special squads and platoons, and divisional action teams. The last force, known as the base force, is the people's militia that is designed for self-defense or Gram Raksha Dals (GRDs- village defense squads). People's militia as the base is extensive numerically and is also the backbone for recruitment into secondary and main forces. In the Dandakaranya Special Zonal Committee (DKSZC) – which has the liberated zones of the CPI (Maoist), it is estimated that approximately 30,000 (Ramana 2011) men and women are members of people's militia. The PLGA serves as a counterforce to carry out an offensive against COIN operations by state and the paramilitary forces, which are deployed in the states of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, and Telangana.

The Bastar region in the central Indian state of Chhattisgarh is considered as the theatre of conflict between the CPI (Maoist) and the Indian state. The dense forests and the topography of the region are conducive for the sustained guerrilla tactics of the Maoists. The insurgents have created liberated zones in these areas among the adivasi communities residing in these forests. Falling mostly under the DKSZC, these liberated zones have established RPCs or Jantana Sarkar as early as 2001.

The program and policy document of the JS consistently lays stress on the need for a strong base area and people's militia which would help in maintaining and running the JS along with military consolidation for the PLGA. The JS is present at both village level and area committee level. JS is formed on the basis of population and geographical position. The population can vary between 500 and 5,000 (Bagchi 2012, p. 402). The JS at a village level has nine units: finance, judiciary, defense, agriculture, education/culture, forest, small industry, public relations, and health. Each of these consists of three or four members with a chief. The unit chief reports to the JS president who heads the council. The council consists of a vice-president, treasurer along with

³Jantana Sarkar is the Gondi (the local language spoken by the Adivasis in Bastar) word for Revolutionary People's Committee-RPC. In other parts of India, it is referred to as RPC; however, in DKZSC, the Maoist party decided to

give it a local name. Every village council has its own RPC, and each RPC has its own constitution.

members. The JS members are elected through voting by the Gram Sabha (traditional village councils). The JS is usually involved in consolidating land and redistribution of land in villages and is also actively involved in agriculture, education, and other local-level development activities. Located in the deep and dense forests of central India, the JS primarily consists of adivasi communities residing in these forests, lower caste and landless peasantry. The maximum recruitment for local guerrilla squads to military platoons and companies is from the adivasi communities residing in Bastar (for more see Bagchi 2012).

The next section would look at this issue of recruitment, the involvement of the Adivasis in the Maoist movement, and the academic and policy discussions that concern aligned themes of land alienation, social justice, and adivasi politics.

Maoist Politics, Adivasi Communities, and Assertion for Development

Scholars and activists, based on participant observations and long-term engagement in civil and political issues in central and eastern India, have attributed the spread of the conflict to structural inequalities prevalent in the Indian society. The large population of Dalits, lower castes, and Adivasis, who also are the most marginalized in the country, form a large support base and cadres of the PLGA. However, to subsume that adivasi politics is in congruence with Maoist politics would be an erroneous simplification. What is observed is a mix of adivasi assertions for their rights on resources and land alongside the Maoist assertion against dispossession and accumulation. The section would expand on the Maoists and their relationship with the communities they live in and share their everyday experiences.

Spread across central and eastern India, the Maoist movement, since 2000, found its base amid the adivasi population in these parts. The guerrillas from PW, which were active in fighting against the landholding upper caste communities in rural Andhra Pradesh and present-day

Telangana, took refuge from state security forces in these dense forests in the mid-1980s. The forest area bordering the states of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, and Odisha became a home for many members of the PW. This also marked the entry of Maoist politics in what is now considered as the seat of Maoist politics – the region of Bastar in Chhattisgarh.

The setting up of Dandakaranya marked a phase in the Maoist movement for stronger base and class conscientization among the adivasi communities. The adivasi communities in these parts have a history of resistance that predates the entry of Maoists and dates back to colonial India. Colonial policies of commanding forests and forest resources and increased taxation lead to revolts among indigenous groups (Hasnain 1983; Sundar 2007; Verghese 2016). These colonial practices, specifically in relation to the management of forest and forest resources, led to further alienation of Adivasis in independent India. In independent India, adivasi areas were governed with constitutional arrangements of cultural protection and economic welfare with the aim of assimilating them into “mainstream” society. While development efforts following through the constitutional arrangements of adivasi autonomy/self-governance were implemented through focus on education and increasing access to healthcare in adivasi areas, the state-led project of industrialization led to the exploitation of forest and forest resources for mining. This exacerbated exploitation and land alienation of Adivasis along with the dominant perception of primitivism is attached to the adivasi identity (Mohanty 2015).

The adivasi assertion took the shape of movements against displacement due to development projects such as mining, etc. The period of 1980s onward marked many people’s movements for development-induced displacement fundamentally questioning the colonial laws of acquisition of land and rehabilitation. In states such as Chhattisgarh, these movements were led by local Gandhian activists, socialists, and political leaders represented by the Communist Party of India (CPI). The entry of CPI (Maoist) cadres in these regions came at a time when left-politics did occupy a significant role in electoral politics.

This provided for a fertile ground for the Maoist leadership to engage with big mass movements on issues of land, forests, and civil liberties. The Adivasis' call for "Jal Jungle Jameen" (Water, Forest, and Land) came in congruence with the Maoist ideology of struggle of peasants and Adivasis against state-guided corporate globalization (Mohanty 2015).

The Adivasis of Dandarkanya through these engagements on land and forest rights are a stronghold for the Maoist movement. These dense forests also serve as ideal grounds to carry on guerrilla and mobile warfare against the Indian state specifically against the security architecture engaged in COIN operations. The PLGA finds its maximum recruitment and participation from the Adivasi communities. Scholars and observers of the Maoist movement, Ismail and Shah (2015) recently raised questions on whether the CPI (Maoist) requires an ideological introspection to incorporate a more indigenous conception of politics that is rooted in the adivasi constellation and their communitarian way of life. Often, the involvement of Adivasis in the movement has delegitimized democratic and people's movements on displacement, forest rights, and development – where these social organizations and activists are suspected as overground Maoists cadres and informers. Ironically, nonviolent forms of dissent in these areas are delegitimized because of the participation of Adivasis in the Maoist movement. These issues of state response are dealt with in the following section.

One of the key questions raised within Indian public intellectuals and academia engages with the resilient nature of the conflict (Tyagi 2016). Crossing five decades since Naxalbari, there is significant literature that attempts to link India's development story and the consequent social movements on resources, displacement, and dispossession cumulatively contributed to participation in seeking violent recourse for issues of social justice (Guha 2007; Gupta 2006; Haragopal 2017; Kennedy 2015; Miklian 2012; Navlakha 2017; Shah 2013). India's development story from the time of independence through the 1990s confronted challenges of land use and revival of agriculture. The modernizing project, following a

Nehruvian model of industrialization and socialism, laid stress on land as a state asset when used for "greater common good" (development). However, large social movements against displacement and dispossession, such as the National Alliance of People's Movement (NAPM), were seeking justice for communities impacted by the development model that was shaping modern India. Adivasis and Dalits were the main constituency who were affected by these projects. Fernandes (2007) observed that approximately 40% of displacement between 1947 and 2000 impacted indigenous groups, and 20% impacted Dalits and other backward castes.

Development-led displacement compounded with historical social discrimination and violence in everyday lives of Adivasis is understood as a factor in advancing and recruiting in lower cadres of the PLGA. In many instances, the Maoists with their involvement in mass people's movements on antidisplacement, demand for rights on forest and forest produce, and anti-mining movements, gained support and trust of communities who were considered "primitive" and "uncivilised" and were viewed with condescension by policy planners across the Indian bureaucracy. The huge development deficit and backwardness that coincided with the spread of the "red corridor"⁴ were acknowledged in a report submitted by the expert group on violent extremism (GOI, Planning Commission 2008). The report stressed on the need for constitutional remedy through the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 – which provides decentralized autonomy to traditional village councils for development of the area. The report suggested "...that the problem of violence and terrorism should be understood in the proper development perspective and handled politically and administratively rather than by using brute police force" (Subramanian 2010, p. 25).

⁴Red Corridor is a term that refers to the geographical spread of the Maoist movement across various states in India. The Red Corridor primarily looks at the spread and movement of Maoist party members (both combatants and other overground workers) across these districts and the dominance of the Maoist guerrillas.

State Responses

The official statement of the Indian state maintains the CPI (Maoist) and its aligned organization as an unlawful entity under the recently amended Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), 2019. The CPI (Maoist) and its frontal organizations were banned and declared as a terrorist organization (under an older version of UAPA, 1967) in the year 2009. The banning of the organization came in the backdrop of the statement of the then Prime Minister of India, Dr. Manmohan Singh in 2006, claiming Left Wing Extremism to be the “single biggest internal security threat” (GOI, Press Information Bureau 2006).

The Indian state’s response to the Maoist movement, from the time of its first articulation, considered it as a law and order issue. This lens has significantly focused on implementing a robust policing response. The armed character of the movement restricts analysis for many to seeking security response which primarily engages with assertion of territory through setting up of police camps followed by setting up of administrative offices. For most, the conflict between the India state and the Maoists is understood through the rubric of sovereignty and a fight for territory within its own national boundaries. The state acknowledges the huge development deficit and structural injustices; the response can be analyzed on a dual axis of securitized development (see chapter ▶ “Security-Development Nexus in Peacebuilding”).

Policing and intelligence gathering with the aim of “neutralising” the armed youth during Naxalbari and the subsequent attack on radical left voices in 1960s and 1970s are documented not only in academia (Mukhopadhyay 2006) and civil liberties groups, but also the avant-garde film industry of Kolkata shows representation of the time in movies directed by prominent filmmakers such as Satyajit Ray’s *Pratidwandi* (1970) and Mrinal Sen’s quadrilogy *Padatik*, *Calcutta 71*, *Patalik*, and *Chorus* (Viswanathan 2016).

A similar approach of increasing security apparatus and permitting extrajudicial attacks at local leaders is observed in Srikakulam in 1968, where an uprising sparked when two adivasi activists

were found murdered in the village of Levidi in Srikakulam district, in rural Andhra Pradesh. Increased policing as a form of antiterror activities became an integral part of the counterinsurgency programs by the various federal (state) governments. Andhra Pradesh, to counter the urban and rural networks of informers, ground workers, and militias, set up the infamous Greyhounds (since 1989), an elite force dedicated to conducting attacks and raids that considerably impacted the organizational leadership of the CPI (Maoist) and gaining cadres in “next generation of the most oppressed” (Balagopal 2006, p. 3183). With the estimates made, about 40,000 personnel from paramilitary are deployed in Bastar region in Chhattisgarh alone (IANS 2020).

The neighboring state of Chhattisgarh in Bastar, considered as a Maoist stronghold, witnessed the formation of Salwa Judum in 2005. Translated as a “purification hunt” in Gondi, Salwa Judum was presented as a citizen-led spontaneous people’s uprising against the Maoists. The Indian state through the help of local political leaders, Mahendra Karma, armed civilian villagers as Special Police Officers (SPOs) to counter the Maoist militias. The campaign recorded gross human rights violations of burning of entire villages which did not support or join the Judum forces, sexual violence against women, and pillaging of village grains and poultry. The campaign was questioned on its spontaneity, and it was later understood that the Judum forces in conjunction with the local police and paramilitary threatened entire villagers to either join the Judum or their homes and villages would be burnt down. The violence caused large-scale displacement. Many villagers left their home and hid in the forests or left their homes for neighboring states. Members of the Salwa Judum were involved in spreading violence, and the ramifications led to counterviolence from the Maoists as well. The eventual result of Salwa Judum on the ground led to fissures and fights among civilians who were related either by birth or through kinship (Balagopal 2008; Guha et al. 2006; Miklian 2009; Sundar 2006, 2016).

Although official numbers are underreported, between 2005 and 2008 (3 years), about 40,000

villagers were displaced and living in camps set for internally displaced people (IDP). It was alluded that the primary motivation was not to counter the Maoist movement, but that the Judum was used to clear up forests for mining purposes (Balagopal 2008; Miklian 2009; Sundar 2006). The Supreme Court of India in response to the Public Interest Litigation filed by a group of citizens (comprising academics, civil liberties activists, and ex-bureaucrats) in 2011 declared the Salwa Judum/SPOs as unconstitutional and directed the Chhattisgarh state to dissolve the SPOs. However, soon after, with passing of a federal legislation, Chhattisgarh Auxiliary Armed Forces Act, 2011, legitimized the presence of SPOs in the state by providing them with a new name and a new identity as District Reserve Guards (DRG). The DRGs are a federal police force, which also includes surrendered Maoists (the Center has issued guidelines of surrender and rehabilitation policy since early 2011) who are used for their local knowledge of the terrain and language (Poyam 2020; Ramana 2013).

In the new millennia, with the spread of the movement in central and eastern states of India, increased policing was complemented with the introduction of new development schemes such as Integrated Action Plans (IAP), Road Requirement Plans, Security Related Expenditure, Village Electrification Programs, Skill Development Programs, and Fortifying Police Stations and Modernizing the Police Force. The setting up of a “Left Wing Extremism” division in the Ministry of Home Affairs in 2006 charted this new course in responding to left wing extremism. Alongside these security-related responses, the central government along with federal states, introduced funds such as IAP and Special Central Assistance Scheme through which the districts (county/province) identified as “LWE affected” are provided extra assistance in bridging development deficits. However, poor implementation of these schemes is attributed to the presence of Maoist cadres. The trend for implementation of development initiatives usually follows a strategy involving paramilitary setting up fortified police camps followed by the local civil administration moving into these

inaccessible areas to implement development activities. Mohanty (2017, p. 68) observes that former Home Minister, P. Chidambaram’s “clear, hold, develop” formulation shaped the policies. In everyday lives of people living in these regions, there is often talk about lack of accountability about the development funds released and whether they are for the benefit of village communities.

Peace Talks

In the history of the conflict, there have been three instances where peace talks were initiated. These peace talks were initiated through rigorous engagement of activists, academics, and members of the civil liberty organizations with both the state and the nonstate actors. The first peace talks that took light in 2004 were initiated by a citizen collective – Committee of Concerned Citizens (CCC) formed in the city of Hyderabad, the capital of Andhra Pradesh (AP). The CCC was firm in their belief of breaking the “cycle of violence-counter violence, so that a broader process of democratic restructuring of the society could be given a chance, and the aspirations of the people who inhabited the violence torn territory could be centre staged” (Maringanti 2010, p. 45). The engagement was limited to the local state of Andhra Pradesh’s political leadership with the CPI (Marxist-Leninist) People’s War who was active in organizing the state and its neighboring borders. During the negotiations, which were brokered with spokespersons from both sides and with representatives of the CCC, reached a roadblock with demands on PW activists to move unarmed. Another weak point through the talks emerged when the People’s War demanded for the federal government to redistribute land to the Adivasis and Dalits in their area of influence. The AP government spokesperson could not comply with the demand for land reforms claiming that they did not have land records. While the representatives of the CCC saw the talks reaching a positive point, as the talks concluded, within a week of the talks ending, both warring sides

resumed with reports of violence and counterviolence. The Andhra peace talks set a precursor to the subsequent talks which both resulted in increased violence from both sides.

In 2008, in the adivasi-dominated area of Lalgarh in West Bengal, a mass movement emerged against police atrocities, sparked by a land-mine attack on the political leadership including then Chief Minister, who was a member of a coalition of parliamentary left parties in the state, and Union ministers. The response of the state security forces involved attacks on adivasi unarmed civilians including adolescent children and elderly (Bhaduri et al. 2009). Collectivized together against historical injustices and then present-day police atrocities, the people formed the People's Committee Against Police Atrocities (PCAPA). The backlash by the people led to a blockade of police and Harnad Vahini [the alleged frontal organization of the CPI (Maoist) who was responsible for the attack]. The PCAPA barricaded and blocked entry of any police, local administration, into Adivasi areas in Lalgarh. Between 2008 and 2011, Lalgarh, with the support of the CPI (Maoist), became what they described as a liberated zone. In 2011, after the election of a new Trinamool Congress government, the earlier indicated possibility of peace talks was explored. The West Bengal government, who set the agenda for the peace talks, promised an economic package, inquiry into state excesses, and forest rights for Adivasis and called for a suspension of operations for both parties to the conflict (Bhadra 2012). As a response, the Maoists had declared a cease-fire; however, the talks fell through since both parties to the conflict had not withdrawn from violent tactics. The talks ended with the killing of Mallojula Koteswara Rao-Kishenji – a polit bureau member and main negotiator on behalf of the Maoists.

The third round of peace talks came in the light of the initiative of the CCC and took place in 2010. Set in the backdrop of – “Operation Green Hunt” – a combat operation by the paramilitary and Chhattisgarh state police against the PLGA cadres, the then Minister of Home Affairs, P. Chidambaram, had appealed for a cease-fire.

Operation Green Hunt became notorious for grave human rights violations vis-à-vis the Adivasis living across Bastar and for the massive force used in dense forests as an offense against the Maoists (Bhaumik 2010; Sethi 2010). The then central government Minister of Home Affairs, P. Chidambaram, made a public call for Maoists to abjure violence for 72 h and indicated a possible call for peace talks. The call was responded by the Maoist spokesperson and the chief negotiator for the peace talks, Cherukuri Rajkumar-Azad, who extended the offer to 72 days (Varadarajan 2010), provided the government was willing to lift the ban on the organization, release key leaders, and withdraw paramilitary forces deployed across central and eastern India. The peace talks were withdrawn when the security forces allegedly picked up Azad at a railway station in the state of Maharashtra, where he was waiting to board the train to neighboring state of Chhattisgarh with a letter from Swami Agnivesh who was the chief negotiator on behalf of the Indian state (Rediff News Bureau 2010). Azad's body was found in the forests of Adilabad in the state of Telangana, and he was allegedly shot in an encounter with the state forces. Azad and Kishenjis' death served as a big blow to the peace talks paralyzing conditions for trust between the Indian state, its political leadership, and the Maoists. While the efforts of interlocutors were met with sincere engagement from the side of the Maoists, the Indian political leadership indicates a tactical use of peace talks as a part of their counterinsurgency operations (Fazal 2015). The cessation of violence is seen as a way of unravelling faces of the underground leadership of the CPI (Maoist) leading to their subsequent deaths.

Conclusions

The long course of the Maoist movement and the resilience of the Maoist rebels' insurgency in large swathes of the Indian territory notwithstanding unrelenting state repression remain a challenge for India's democracy. In particular, the longevity

of the Maoist conflict calls for a deeper understanding of the interactions among issues of social change, political protest, and democracy in contemporary societies. Currently located in the mineral-rich forest areas of central-eastern India largely populated by adivasi communities, the Maoist insurgency is questioning the legitimacy of the Indian state and the ideological foundations of the economic paradigm of the country. Since the 1980s, the Maoist presence in these territories has contributed in providing an alternative space for presenting adivasi political assertions for land rights and participation, in a way making them allies of class-focused MLM movements against displacement and dispossession in the context of a global economy. In continuity with the legacy of the Naxalbari uprising, the issues of land and social injustice prevailing among the marginalized sections of the Indian society have remained core questions in the contemporary phase of the Maoist movement. By addressing persistent structural conditions of oppression and deprivation, Maoist politics has retained its relevance in the political landscape of the country over the years.

The Indian state's response to the Maoist conflict has mainly focused on policing, judicial action, and military repression. The current categorization of Maoist politics as LWE and terrorism has delegitimized the larger structural and political questions it tries to address. In particular, the transition of the Maoist movement to the realm of security politics in the early 2000s has favored the adoption of growing securitizing measures, the militarization of state-society relations in insurgency-affected areas, and the criminalization of dissent emerging from sections of the society critical of state actions, as exemplified by the recent arrest of intellectuals on the charges of being urban Naxals (Thapar 2019). Besides limiting the possibilities of effectively addressing the socioeconomic conditions of inequality and injustice in which the Maoist insurgency is deeply rooted, this indicates a shrinking space for peace talks and conflict transformation. The recognition of adivasi assertion for rights and development could represent an important step toward a path of conflict resolution and reconciliation.

Cross-References

- ▶ Conflict Fieldwork
- ▶ Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR)
- ▶ Ethnographic Peace Research
- ▶ Everyday Peace
- ▶ Female Combatants and Peacebuilding
- ▶ Grassroots Organizations and Peacebuilding
- ▶ Intractable Conflict
- ▶ Kashmir Conflict, The
- ▶ Land Politics and Conflict
- ▶ Local Peacebuilding
- ▶ Peacebuilding–Development Nexus
- ▶ Protection of Civilians
- ▶ Security-Development Nexus in Peacebuilding
- ▶ Socioeconomic Justice and Peacebuilding

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Mapping

- ▶ [Geocoding as a Method for Mapping Conflict-Related Violence](#)

Marginalization

- ▶ [Cameroon and the Anglophone Crisis](#)

Margins

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Masculinity

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Masculinity and Conflict

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Synonyms

[Conflict](#); [Gender](#); [Insurgency](#); [Masculinity](#); [Militarism](#); [Peacekeeping](#); [UNSCR 1325](#); [Violence](#)

Definition

The concept of masculinity does not sit alone but is understood in relation to notions of femininity within the broader concept of “gender” or the *structure of gender relations*. This is the way in which the social environment constructs men and women’s social positioning with reference to assumptions around embedded gender defined roles and traits and attaches specific values and ideas to frequently unquestioned, societal gender hierarchies, or socially accepted gendered norms (Connell 2005; Kimmel 2000). Masculinity, although affiliated to the male body, is therefore interlinked with idealized beliefs and discourses around what “men *should* be like” or what men naturally *are* like (Duriesmith 2016, p. 27; Flood 2002). Relationally, this is supported by theories of what women naturally *are* and *should* be and typically built around gender binaries such as men as active, public, and strong and women as

passive, private, and weak (Cohn 2013). These beliefs and assumptions about the natural condition of men and masculinity impact upon the male sense of identity, which is then reproduced in gendered social action.

The association of masculinity with conflict is complex. Cultural and social understandings of masculinity typically place men as more violent and with a greater affiliation to war-making institutions such as the military. Although it is recognized that there is not one type of masculinity and that masculinities are changeable and contested, assumption around what it means to be a man have very real consequences for the practices of conflict. Taking masculinity seriously helps us understand better why conflict takes place, how conflict is fought, who is impacted, and in what way. This entry covers areas of subtopics in the masculinity and conflict literature such as hegemonic masculinity, military masculinities, and the role of masculinity in wartime violence and sexual violence. Also covered are some areas of newer research that examines alternative masculinities in non-state armed groups, peacebuilder masculinities and the notion of the “new man” masculinity.

Introduction

Early ideas around masculinity took biology as a starting point, claiming that the male body was the fundamental determinant of masculine traits and personality (Fukuyama 1998). This was challenged in the 1980s and 1990s as sex-role theorists exposed how masculinity, or masculine behavior, is influenced by social structure (Brod 1987). However, while this was a welcome shift in positioning, it failed to take account of the influence of other identity factors such as class and race that may also intersect with notions of masculinity. It was not until the introduction of the pioneering work of R.W. Connell (1995) in the 1990s that a more comprehensive understanding of masculinity was developed, one that took into account the diversity of masculinities and recognized that masculinity is changeable in response to shifting structures of gender. From

this position Connell (2005, p. 71) defines masculinity as the simultaneous workings of: the constructed positioning of “masculine identity in gender relations,” the “practice through which men and women engage their place in gender,” and the “effects of these practices in bodily experience, personality and culture.” This work has influenced many later masculinity scholars, leading to a proliferation and broadening of literature on the topic. Scholarship on masculinity and violence has sought to explain why the majority of violence is carried out by men and which men (or women) are targeted for violence (Kirby and Henry 2012). Moreover, scholarship on masculinity and conflict has now become an important dimension of the gender literature on peace and conflict. From these works has developed further concepts such as “toxic masculinities” aimed at capturing the impact that certain harmful masculinities may have on society and institutions by perpetuating discriminatory gender norms or even lead to masculine extremism (Pearson 2019). To challenge the dominant focus in the conflict literature on masculinity and violence, there is also an expanding body of works on alternative masculinities in conflict that also takes into account queer perspectives and profeminist masculinities (Myrttinen et al. 2017; Ortega 2012; McKeown and Sharoni 2002). These other areas of scholarship on masculinity and conflict are particularly important in more nuanced analysis of the field.

Hegemonic Masculinity

Despite the existence of multiple masculinities within societies, there tends to be an ideal type – or *hegemonic* – masculinity that influences the way men, both consciously and unconsciously, construct their own masculinity (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005). This is the notion that “in a context of multiple masculinities, one form always dominates the hierarchy” and is a measure through which men can reference their own notions of masculinity (Duncanson 2013, p. 13). Typically, hegemonic masculinity has been associated with idealized notions of masculinity and as a phenomenon that maintains masculine power and strength. Notions of hegemonic masculinity

that valorize warriorhood, strength, and power may influence masculine identity and behaviors and thus play a role in promoting violence and contribute to fueling conflict. However, given masculinity's cultural construction, hegemonic masculinity does not necessarily have to be in opposition to gender equality but may take other forms in response to the social structure (Connell 2002). In masculinity research, scholars have traditionally found the concept of "hegemonic masculinities" useful as an analytical tool (Duncanson 2013).

Masculinity and Conflict

Constructed peacetime understandings of masculine power, and expectations around what men *should* be, have direct implications for war and militarism. For example, through masculinity's association with warriorhood, violence, and strength, war maybe framed as an ultimate expression of manhood (Mackenzie 2015). Moreover, notions of masculinity can shape perceptions of reasonable responses to potential conflict and thus justify war and armed violence as a natural response to contentious politics.

A further masculine assumption that has implications for conflict is that of being the "protector." This is the idea that the man, as the traditional head of the house, should be the protector of the family, or at the national level, the masculine state is understood as the protector of the citizens. In conflict, the notion of "masculine protection" associated with the idealized understanding of "men as protectors" may intersect with racial assumptions that become justifications for conflict. For example, the US intervention in Afghanistan has been argued to have been legitimized in the media as an intervention carried out on behalf of saving Afghani women from Afghani men (Shepherd 2006). From this perspective it was portrayed from a hegemonic western perspective to be an act of "masculine protection" – to save Afghani women from Afghani men – without taking into account the legacy of US influence on the rise of the Taliban. Notions of masculine protection in the justification of war are often built

on assumptions around men and violence and perpetuate the idea that women are in need of protection – typically by *some* men – from *other* men (Razack 2004).

Wartime Violence in Conflict

Critical feminist scholars have highlighted how gender can be understood as a meaning system. Traits such as "active," "public," "violence," and "protection" are frequently aligned with masculinity, whereas the binary opposites such as "passive," "private," "peace," and "victim" tend to be associated with femininity (Cohn 2013, p. 12). Even where dominant conceptions of masculinity do not idealize violence, research has shown that violence can be seen as an "acceptable means of attaining other symbols of manhood, such as wealth or access to women" (Wright 2014, p. 5). Furthermore, constructed understandings of the ideal man render men who are unable to achieve societal masculine expectations more susceptible to participation in armed groups or more likely to carry out domestic violence (Duriesmith 2016; Wright 2014). Problematically, constructed notions of masculinity that associate violence and dominance with valorized understandings of what it means to be a man play a role in fueling conflict and insecurity (Zarkov 2012).

In times of war, valorized masculine expectations may be manipulated and called upon, resulting in high levels of masculine violence, and thus influence how wars are fought (Myrntinen 2015; Duriesmith 2016). Where masculine violence, or the ability to be violent, is expected among men under certain peacetime conditions, this may become exacerbated during conflict and thus restructure the boundaries of acceptable forms of violence and take on different meanings in conflict (Duriesmith 2018). Recent research into the conflicts in Sierra Leone and South Sudan highlights that in such "New Wars," preexisting notions of masculinity influenced the types of violence carried out and thus explained the "widespread use of sexual violence, abduction, pillage and torture" (Duriesmith, 2016, p. 123). This understanding of

masculinity also contributes to the transformation of armed groups into warrior groups (Ibid., p. 4).

Unfortunately, essentialist assumptions around masculinity do not recognize the realities and diversity of men and women's lives but instead serve to perpetuate gender inequalities and violence, both structural and physical (Connell 2005; Enloe 1993). Such gendered assumptions also have implications for men in conflict, for example, the association of masculinity with aggression presumes men as more violent within armed groups, or it may affect the way former male fighters are perceived in post-conflict. In addition, by promoting masculine expectations, men who do not fit such expectations may encounter discrimination or be targeted with violence.

Masculinity and Wartime Sexual Violence

Where peacetime gendered assumptions and cultural norms maintain widespread gender inequality and perceive women as passive homemakers or symbols of the community, this may also contribute to the perpetration of sexual violence during war (Baaz and Stern 2009; Duriesmith 2016; Marks 2013). Similarly, peacetime masculine norms that condone gendered violence and masculine sexual entitlement also play a role in heightened sexual violence during conflict. This was very much the case in the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in Sierra Leone where, despite being prohibited, rape and sexual violence was widespread. The RUF promoted marriage within the institution. These were often forced, and wives were subject to high levels of sexual violence and rape. However, this was not viewed as problematic as masculine sexual entitlement in marriage is acceptable in broader society, particularly due to notions of the ownership of wives (Marks 2013). This is not to say that women are merely passive victims in armed rebel groups, instead it tells us more about how masculinity may be understood during war, as an exaggeration of peacetime gender norms.

In a similar vein, sexual violence against men in conflict can also be understood to stem from

exaggerated notions of masculinity and power. Although less recognized, male rape by men is widespread in conflict as has been documented during the wars in the former Yugoslavia and currently in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Male rape in conflict, maybe understood as an act of masculine power and aggression with an aim to feminize, dehumanize, or weaken the victim. Where masculinity intersects with nationalism or ethnicity, male rape may be targeted at men from the opposing ethnicity in order to feminize the "other." Hague (1997) has argued that this explains the high levels of male rape by Serb forces against Muslim men during the Bosnian war.

It should be noted that although this position builds a picture of how peacetime notions of masculinity impact on wartime violence, this does not assume that all men engage in violence. There are many men that do not commit violence and even those that participate in or support an armed group may not commit violence. Some scholars have highlighted how masculinity scholarship on peace and conflict that focuses primarily on violent forms of hegemonic masculinity, renders other masculinities, in particular, nonheterosexual masculinities as "invisible" (Myrttinen et al. 2017). It is important, therefore, to recognize that despite the link between masculinity and violence, there are multiple masculinities in both peacetime and war.

Military Masculinities

Scholars have argued that the ideology of militarism is built on hegemonic notions of masculinity that associates men with heteronormativity and valorized warriorhood associated with aggressiveness, bravery, and toughness (Higate 2012; Whitworth 2004; Richter-Montpetit 2007; Hearn 2012). Military training is identified as a method of indoctrination of such idealized military masculinities, which, in turn, has ramifications for how masculinity is understood and performed within the military.

Whitworth's research into the Canadian military has shown how idealized masculinities are

drilled into recruits through “violent, misogynistic, racist and homophobic messages,” as well as a sense of entitlement during training (Whitworth 2004, p. 154). Military training regimes are also known to use misogynistic epithets as a tool in hazing in the military socialization processes. This leads to a shared respect and admiration for the “ideal masculine model” which is confirmed and exacerbated by “rivalries between different groups of men and their efforts to prove their masculinity” (Enloe 1993, p. 98). These power struggles are frequently expressed in gendered terms, with the threat of being feminized used to humiliate or ensure adherence to the rules of group of men in military drills (Whitworth 2004). This has been observed in army training with the archetypal use of “woman,” “girl,” “queer,” and “faggot” to put down those who are failing to complete the various physical challenges associated with manliness (Duncanson 2015; Higate 2012). Importantly, these strategies of feminization, although directed at men, have an impact on women by reinforcing “feminized” qualities of inferiority and constructing forms of *hypermasculinity* (Duncanson 2015, p. 235).

The critical feminist stance on military masculinity identifies the “heteronormative” culture of military institutions as celebrating heterosexuality and in doing so encourages recruits to pursue it. This is the idea that “*real men* and *real soldiers* chase women at any available moment” (Duncanson 2013, p. 19). This notion has very real implications for women who are part of the military institution or those who are in close proximity. For example, a study of the US military in 2008 found that 30% of military women were raped while serving, 71% were sexually assaulted, and 90% had suffered instances of sexual harassment, many of which were not reported (Benedict 2009). Moreover, evidence of the impact of military masculinities on women can be inferred via the high levels of wartime sexual violence carried out by state armies, such as the Serb military in the former Yugoslavia (Alison 2007; Hague 1997) or in Sri Lanka against Tamil women (Sooka 2014). Evidence of legitimized aggressive heteronormativity is also found in the scholarship on the rise in prostitution around military bases (Enloe

1988), or the history of “comfort women” in the Japanese military (Soh 1996). In addition, recent concerns have been raised around sexual abuse carried out by peacekeepers and how military masculinities associated with sexual power and racial dominance have contributed to this, for example, among the UN peacekeepers in Bosnia (Reese 2002) or French peacekeepers in the Central African Republic.

The Peacebuilding Masculinity

There is much agreement among scholars that masculinities are multiple and have the potential for change. Hence recent scholarship has highlighted that shifts in institutional norms and training practices within militaries may provide alternative ways in which masculinity is understood and performed in military institutions (Duncanson and Woodward 2015). This work often examines the shift toward a greater focus on peacekeeping in contemporary militaries. For example, Haaland’s (2012) work on the Norwegian Armed Forces found that changes toward a greater focus on peacekeeping missions in the 2000s led to shifts in masculine norms that did not display the same level of valorization of aggression and violence as demonstrated earlier work on military masculinities. Instead, the study identifies that qualities valued as representative of being a good soldier were “endurance, a good sense of humour and personal initiative” (Ibid., p. 73). Although the study maintained that women military personnel still had to prove themselves to become “one of the boys,” women were unconcerned about sexual harassment and violence (Ibid., p. 73).

The introduction of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security that promoted the increase of women’s participation in the military and other security institutions advocates for a greater recognition and response to wartime harms against women. This resolution has, arguably, led to changes in gender policy in many militaries and subsequently led to shifts in acceptable notions of military masculinity (Duncanson and Woodward 2015, p. 8).

In the British military, research has shown that changes in military practice have led to the construction of a type of “peacebuilder masculinity” that is more focused on “skills and practices of communication, negotiation, humanitarianism, sensitivity, compassion and empathy” (Duncanson 2015, p. 241). However, Duncanson (2013) also notes that some military men felt that peacekeeping activities were a weak form of military action and that experience of proper conflict was what they signed up for. In the Irish Defence Forces, the recent Gender Action Plan associated with UNSCR 1325, which promotes the equal opportunities of men and women in all roles, ensures a zero tolerance of gender-based violence, and includes rigorous gender training and briefings in all military career paths, has been described by its members to have contributed to shifting masculine norms in the institution.

However, feminist skeptics have argued that despite its progressive orientation, the “peacebuilding masculinity” may lead to the revering of a type of “new man,” which then has the potential for reconstructing gender hierarchies but in a different form (Khalili 2011). In a military context, this has been referred to as a softer version of masculinity based on being “tough but tender – intelligent, sophisticated, humane and companionate, discriminate in the use of force but also being convincing warriors when required” (Duncanson 2013, p. 61; Higate and Henry 2004). Inadvertently, this has the effect of reinforcing the “women as victims” narrative which maintains masculinity’s position as the protector, further perpetuating masculine power. Moreover, other scholarship has shown that in contexts where men are part of advocating for greater gender equality, the “new man” identity becomes part of the new patriarchy, which monopolizes the drive for gender equality and thus overshadows women’s work in this area.

Alternative Masculinities in Non-state Armed Groups

Much of the literature on masculinity and non-state armed groups identifies how conflict

exacerbates harmful masculinities. However, there is another set of literature that examines the role of ideology and wartime indoctrination in regulating masculine behaviors. Such literature is often focused on men’s responses to women’s participation in armed groups that espouse a more gender-equal ideology than in exist in society. For example, Ortega (2012) notes that in three non-state Marxist groups in the Latin American context (The Shining Path in Peru, M-19 in Colombia, and the *Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front* (FMNL) in El Salvador), the revolutionary ideology and the way that gender was organized in the group produced “alternative masculinities.” The intense indoctrination process, coupled with more gender-equal institutional structures, produced expressions of masculinity not based on the “devaluation of women” but based on an equality of respect (Ibid., p. 491). These alternative expressions of masculinity accommodated “tenderness” between male comrades and the acceptability of public displays of emotion (Ibid., p. 491). She notes that there existed important “mechanisms of self-control and peer pressure,” which, through the intense ideological education programs, were instrumental in mitigating stark dichotomies between concepts of masculinity and femininity (Ibid., p. 503).

This was also the case in Nepal, where the Maoist ideology of the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) promoted women’s inclusion resulting in roughly 40% women’s participation by the end of the conflict. Men recall increasing their respect for their female counterparts after experiencing women’s capabilities in warfare. Thus, PLA masculinities, although maintaining a valorization of typically masculine traits such as warriorism, self-sacrifice, and being capable on the battlefield, shifted to be more supportive of gender equality and women’s empowerment (Riley 2019). This contributed to deconstructing embedded gender discriminations both within the armed group and within greater society.

Work on the role of ideology in influencing masculine performance also provides some insight into why some armed groups do not engage in sexual violence (Wood 2009; Hoover Green 2016). For example, the lack of sexual

violence carried out by the LTTE in Sri Lanka and the FMLN in El Salvador or the EZNL in Mexico is argued to be as a result of ideological indoctrination and party policy that maintained tight control over notions of masculine sexual entitlement (Wood 2009). This is in contrast to fundamentalist conservative ideologies that are based on the devaluation of women and masculine sexual entitlement such as in the context of ISIS against Yazidi women, where practices of women's sexual slavery were sanctioned by the ideology and group practices.

However, revolutionary forms of conflict masculinity that claim to advocate for greater gender equality may also lead to the construction of other forms of masculinity which exude other forms of masculine power. Revolutionary leaders that claim to be enlightening the masses in the fight for a new society may perform displays of higher intellect and strength, resulting in a type of machoism that perpetuates patriarchy in a different form. For example, Abimael Guzman, the notorious leader of Sendero Luminoso, was frequently portrayed with thick glasses with a book under his arm, highlighting his superior intelligence. Yet while promoting the empowerment of women in his speeches, the conflict he was responsible for, led to extreme levels of gender-based violence, particularly against indigenous women. Similarly, some other forms of revolutionary masculinity may promote greater equality but are not sympathetic to men that don't fit the typical image of the heterosexual revolutionary. For example, in the Cuban context, the masculinity exuded by the revolutionary leaders was not sympathetic to homosexuality or men that did not portray stereotypical masculine attributes. As a result, part of the revolutionary "hygiene program," included the forcing of homosexuals into military camps to cleanse them of their nonrevolutionary masculinity (Butler 2012, p. 72).

Pro-feminist Masculinity and Future Directions

Despite the skeptical position on "new man" masculinities, the role of male gender champions remains vital in peace and conflict work. There

are, of course, many men who advocate for a more feminist agenda, and recent scholarship has highlighted the need to recognize male participation in promoting gender equality (Ashe 2007; Connell 2014; Kaufman and Kimmel 2011). There is also evidence of gender champions in a military context who have been at the forefront of advocacy around the harmonization of gender policies across militaries. Thus the excellent work of many other men working to promote peace and greater gender equality should not be overshadowed by only focusing on toxic masculinities and their association with violence. This is an area of scholarship still underdeveloped and therefore provides an avenue for future scholarship.

Future scholarship in the context of masculinity and conflict would also do well to place a greater emphasis on more nuanced and comparative work on military masculinities that goes beyond single studies on militaries in from the global North. Given the dominance of militaries from the global South within peacekeeping missions, a lack of emphasis on military masculinities in the African and Asian context remains an oversight. A greater understanding of masculinity and its intersections with class, race, and ethnicity continues to be crucial to understanding the dynamics of conflict and conflict transition, as well as remaining vital in identifying areas of intervention in the transformation of harmful gender hierarchies.

Summary

This brief examination of the field of masculinity in conflict has firstly provided a definition that locates masculinity within the structure of gender relations. It has highlighted the ways in which stereotypical gender norms that align masculinity with militarism, warriorhood, and ideals of masculine protection have implications for the way conflict is fought and how masculinity is performed during conflict. The discussion also introduced the concept of hegemonic masculinity as a useful way of understanding dominant forms of masculinity, both at the societal level

and within militarized institutions. Where hegemonic peacetime notions of masculinity associate men with violence and sexual entitlement, this may become exacerbated during conflict and have devastating implications for women and other men, particularly where they intersect with ethnicity or nationalism. However, it is important to avoid essentialism that only associates masculinity with violence in conflict. As reiterated throughout the discussion, there are multiple forms of masculinity, and it is important to also take account of the numerous men who work to promote peace. Moreover, masculinity is changeable in response to shifts in the social structure. This has been demonstrated through the examination of shifts toward “peacebuilder masculinity” within peacekeeping forces or the notion of “alternative” or “revolutionary masculinities” in armed groups that espouse greater gender equality. However, feminist scholars caution the celebration of the “tough but tender” peacebuilder masculinity or the pro-equality revolutionary masculinity as one through which gender hierarchies can be deconstructed. Instead this “new man” masculinity, as it is often termed, may contribute to reconstructing gender hierarchies in different forms. Despite an already burgeoning literature in this field, continued scholarship on masculinity remains vital in further deepening knowledge on the dynamics of conflict and conflict resolution.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Female Combatants and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Feminist Peace Research](#)
- ▶ [Gender Justice and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Maoist Conflict in India](#)
- ▶ [Perpetrator Research](#)
- ▶ [Unintended Consequences of Peace Operations/Sexual Abuse and Exploitation by Peacekeepers](#)
- ▶ [Violent Conflicts in South America](#)
- ▶ [Youth Bulge and Conflict](#)
- ▶ [Youth Gang Violence in Honduras](#)

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Mass Atrocity Crimes

► R2P and Prevention

Measuring Peace

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Definition

Measuring peace refers to efforts to ascertain the nature and the extent of peace that prevails in a

given state or territory. It serves to provide an indication of how robust or resilient is the peace in question. Peace can be measured on a local, national, or regional basis. At a minimum, efforts to measure peace are concerned with the risk and likelihood of conflict relapse; more ambitiously, efforts to measure peace may be concerned with assessing the broad quality of the peace.

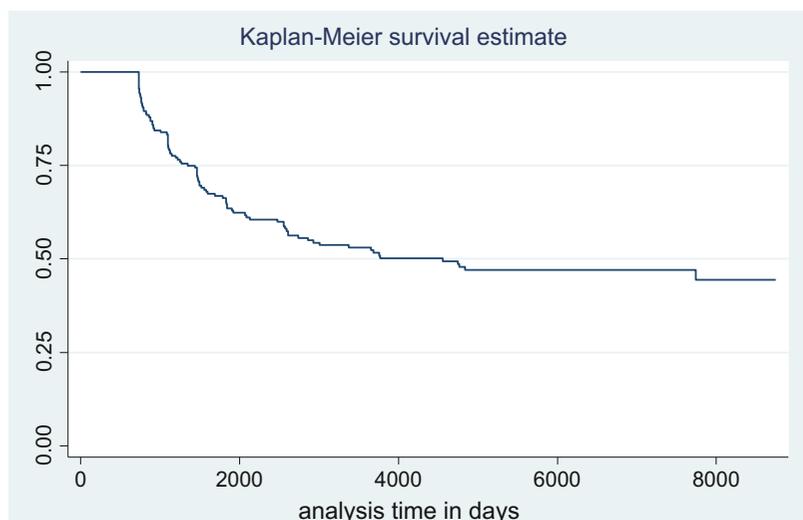
There is no single or, for that matter, agreed procedure for measuring peace. Indeed, it is often the case that multilateral organizations and donor governments do not measure peace. With respect to peacekeeping and peacebuilding, for instance, there is a tendency to focus narrowly on operational performance and mandate implementation in particular. Mandates, however, are often the fruits of political compromise and do not always reflect the requirements for achieving a sustainable peace. Despite this tendency, innovations in operations assessment are attracting the interest of policy analysts and policy makers increasingly, with implications for measuring peace.

The Importance of Measuring Peace

The vulnerability of conflict-affected countries to conflict relapse is the principal reason for the importance of measuring peace. Using a Kaplan-Meier survival estimator, it is possible to chart how long peace has endured in all civil wars for

which such data exists (Caplan and Hoeffler 2017). In the post-Cold War period from 1990 until 2013, there were 210 “peace spells,” that is, 210 periods of peace that lasted for at least 1 year following the termination of an armed conflict. (Note: these are not 210 separate civil wars; a single civil war can stop and restart and thus have multiple peace spells.) Figure 1 shows how many peace spells broke down in this period and when this happened. It shows how long peace survived as measured in days. In the beginning, it can be seen that almost all peace spells survive for a short period of time at least: after 2 years, 99.5% of all peace spells survived, i.e., only half of 1% of all peace spells failed, and armed conflict recurred. After 3 years, 82.8% of all peace spells survived. But after 12 years, only about half of all peace spells survived. That is a high rate of peace failure. Indeed, if one extends the timeline and focuses on conflict-affected countries rather than on conflict episodes, 105 countries suffered civil wars in the period between 1946 and 2013, and of these more than half (59 countries) experienced a relapse into violent conflict – in some cases more than once – after peace had been established (UCDP/PRIO 2014). To the extent that measuring peace can capture the vulnerability of the peace of a country emerging from violent conflict and inform policy appropriately, it may be able to limit or foreclose the possibility of conflict relapse.

Measuring Peace,
Fig. 1 Peace survival
1990–2013. (Source:
Caplan and Hoeffler 2017)



Another reason for the importance of measuring peace, closely associated with the foregoing, is the costs of peace maintenance. Approved expenditure for UN peacekeeping operations in the 2019–2020 financial year came to \$6.5 billion – up from \$464 million in 1990 – and this is the cost of UN peacekeeping only; it does not include the cost of other UN peace consolidation efforts, nor the costs associated with the efforts of other organizations (United Nations 2019). Indeed, regional peacekeeping, especially by European and African security organizations, has undergone a very substantial expansion since the end of the Cold War alongside the growth in UN peacekeeping, as seen in Fig. 2 (Williams 2016). To the extent that these external actors can take an accurate measure of peace, they will be better positioned to decide on whether and how to recalibrate their forces in support of building a self-sustaining peace and thus help to ensure that peace operation expenditure is money well spent.

The measure of peace is also important as it is one criterion by which peacebuilding success may be evaluated. However, assessing peacebuilding performance needs to be distinguished from measuring peace.

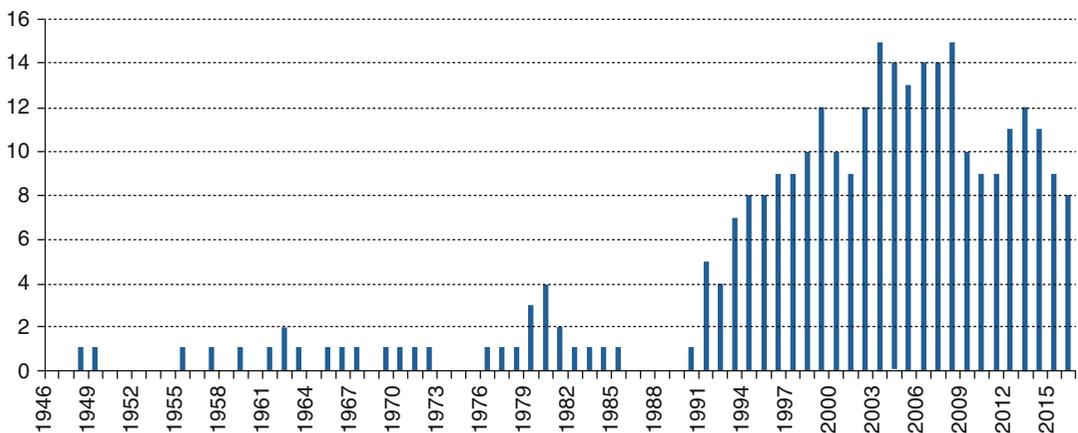
Ways of Measuring Peace

There are many different ways of measuring peace (Makoond 2019). In part these differences reflect the various ways of conceptualizing peace

(Caplan 2019). The classic distinction between “negative peace” (the absence of armed conflict) and “positive peace” (harmonious relations within a society) is the basis of two fundamentally different approaches to measuring peace (Galtung 1974, 1985, 1990). The first lends itself to quantitative and comparative analysis and the second to more qualitative analysis, although mixed approaches are also possible and increasingly common.

Negative peace is a minimal conception of peace insofar as the absence of armed conflict is considered to be the minimum condition for any peace. A minimal conception of peace is reflected in the broad body of statistical analyses concerned with the study of peace. The two most widely utilized data sets in this regard are those developed by the Correlates of War Project (CoW) and the Uppsala Conflict Data Program/Peace Research Institute Oslo (UCDP/PRIO). Both data sets measure the presence or absence of armed conflict and thus indirectly the presence or absence of peace (Sarkees 2010; UCDP/PRIO 2014).

Both CoW and UCDP/PRIO employ thresholds of violence in terms of “battle-related deaths” to determine whether and when a war or an armed conflict has occurred (the two terms represent different magnitudes of violence). The advantage that such an approach affords is that it provides a standard that is used widely and thus allows for comparability of findings among researchers.



Measuring Peace, Fig. 2 Regional peace operations since 1946. (Source: Williams 2016)

These data sets have generated a rich body of scholarship as a consequence, most of it using quantitative research methods.

Scholars have also undertaken to measure peace employing positive conceptions. To cite one example, Klein, Goertz, and Diehl have devised a “peace scale” to describe the quality of relations between states, ranging from rivalry at one end to positive peace at the other, using a number of different indicators such as “diplomatic hostility” (emblematic of rivalry) versus “diplomatic coordination” (indicative of positive peace) to capture objective and subjective factors of appreciation across the spectrum (Klein et al. 2008). With appropriate modifications the scale could arguably be used to describe the quality of intrastate relations as well.

Indicators and indices are also common forms of measurement of both negative and positive peace (and cognate conditions such as stability and resilience). These include but are not limited to the Global Peace Index, the Positive Peace Index, the World Peace Index, and the Fragile States Index. In contrast to the CoW and UCDP/PRIO data sets, which focus narrowly on numbers of battle-related deaths, peace indicators are generated by combining heterogeneous sets of data. For instance, the Fragile States Index is constructed on the basis of millions of pieces of information derived from thousands of articles, reports, and data sets that are analyzed using software developed specifically for this purpose (Fund for Peace 2019). The information is used to generate scores for 12 social, economic, and political/military indicators for most of the world’s countries. Countries are then ranked on the basis of the scores that they receive.

A highly localized approach to measuring peace is the “Everyday Peace Indicators” (EPI) project, which uses focus groups with conflict-affected communities to identify indicators of peace that the individuals within these communities employ informally to measure peace. Such indicators might be the ability to sleep at home at night without fear of rebel or government attack, the ability to walk safely from a shop or a bus stop, and the ability to access public services

without intimidation (Firchow 2018; Firchow and Mac Ginty 2017). The EPI project reflects the broader interest among scholars and practitioners in the “local turn” in the study and practice of peacebuilding (Leonardsson and Rudd 2015).

Key Issues

Measuring peace is beset with difficulties. The strength of the CoW and UCDP/PRIO data sets – the fact that the standard they employ is strictly defined – is also their weakness. If battle-related deaths fall just below the threshold – 999 or less in a given year in the case of war, 24 or less in the case of armed conflict – this qualifies as peace for the purposes of these data sets. Indeed, many violent conflicts worldwide persist below either threshold (e.g., Gaza), and yet it is difficult to conceive of these states or territories as peaceful. This difficulty reflects the shortcoming of the use of negative peace as an analytical tool: if relations between parties to a conflict are fraught, a state or territory will be considered to be at peace provided that the threshold in battle-related deaths has not been crossed. As Johan Galtung has observed “if [killing] were all violence is about, and peace is seen as its negation, then too little is rejected when peace is held up as an ideal. Highly unacceptable social orders would still be compatible with peace” (Galtung 1974).

There are other problems associated with reliance on a negative peace conception for the purpose of measuring peace. One is that the absence of violence, where it does occur, may merely reflect a period of preparation for the resumption of larger-scale fighting (“the calm before the storm”). There is also the issue of the distribution of violence (localized vs. generalized) in a country and the relative impact of conflict intensity (i.e., the number of battle deaths relative to the size of the population), neither of which is captured by these data sets, although advances in geo-spatial data collection are making the production of more finely differentiated data sets possible (Dittrich Hallberg 2012).

As indicated, scholars and practitioners have sought to redress these problems by focusing on positive conceptions of peace. However, unlike with the notion of negative peace reflected in the data sets above, there is no agreed understanding among analysts of what constitutes a positive peace. The lack of consensus gives rise to divergent assessments of peace. Compare, for instance, Roland Paris's positive assessment of peace and peacebuilding in Eastern Slavonia/Croatia under the UN transitional administration UNTAES with Peter Wallensteen's comparatively negative assessment of the same, which turns on the salience of "dignity" as a requisite factor (Paris 2004, 107–110; Wallensteen 2015, 39–41).

Indicators and indices are of questionable value for the purpose of measuring peace. While considerable amounts of data may underpin a single indicator, the numerical representation of such a highly complex phenomenon as peace (or stability or fragility) necessarily eliminates critical context from the phenomenon (Davis et al. 2012, 8). It does so *necessarily* because simplification (or reductionism) is precisely the objective: it is the basis of the appeal and the utility of these indicators, whose primary intended users are policy analysts and policymakers for whom the ranking or banding of countries can facilitate decision-making with respect to aid allocation, security assistance, and other aspects of foreign relations. With a few notable exceptions, indices have limited predictive value: they provide little information about the potential future trajectory of a country toward conflict relapse. What indices offer, rather, is a snapshot of a country at a given point in time.

Finally, many measures of peace are top-down and externally generated that fail to take local perspectives into consideration sufficiently. One exception, noted above, is the Everyday Peace Indicators project. Admittedly, however, it is not always easy to incorporate local perspectives if only because conflicted and conflict-affected states or territories are often heterogeneous and polarized. As a consequence, there may not be a single or shared view of the characteristics of, or requirements for, peace in such communities.

Future Directions

The difficulties identified above notwithstanding, there have been innovations in assessment practices that have salience for efforts to measure peace. In 2012–2013, for instance, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) developed internal guidelines for early warning, allowing for a more structured approach to the identification of potential conflicts and crisis situations, and rolled out a conflict analysis toolkit and a set of early warning indicators for use in the organization's field operations. The toolkit and indicators together provide a framework for the systematic analysis of conflict settings at the local, regional, national, and international levels, including but not limited to assessments of the robustness/fragility of the peace established in the aftermath of violent conflict. By the OSCE's own reckoning, in the first year since the introduction of the framework (to July 2013), the OSCE Secretary-General raised concerns about "worrying developments" that threatened the peace arising from this analysis on 11 occasions with respect to the OSCE region (Caplan 2019; Neukirch 2014).

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) also undertook to enhance its assessment capabilities with the adoption of a new assessment framework by its International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan in 2012. Among several noteworthy features of the new approach was its reliance on inputs from ISAF subordinate or supporting commands in the field, who were thought to offer valuable granular perspective on local conditions, notably with respect to security, governance, socioeconomic conditions, and regional relations. These inputs provided the essential foundation for a composite assessment of progress that produced a more holistic examination of available data relevant to peace consolidation (Caplan 2019; Schroden 2014).

Benchmarking represents another practice that has relevance for measuring peace. Benchmarking is a form of evaluation that uses specified standards (a value, process, or state of

affairs), the attainment of which, it is thought, contributes to the realization of an operation's broad objectives. Recent years have seen the increased use of benchmarking as a mechanism within the UN system (Stave 2011). By mid-2014, 7 out of 17 UN peacekeeping operations and 2 out of 13 special political missions had introduced benchmarking. Although not all of the benchmarks have been concerned explicitly or exclusively with sustainable peace, benchmarking has the potential to bring greater rigor to measuring peace consolidation (Caplan 2019; United Nations 2010).

Efforts are under way to develop a comprehensive performance assessment system within the United Nations that would be grounded in a context analysis that identifies the key drivers of change and assesses how much effect a peace operation is having on influencing those dynamics. The system could conceivably be calibrated to reflect the requirements for a consolidated peace and thus make a further contribution toward efforts to measure peace (De Coning and Brusset 2018).

Cross-References

- ▶ [Assessment of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Conceptual Evolution of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Peace Measuring Approaches](#)

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Measuring the Implementation of the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda

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Synonyms

[Evaluation](#); [Guidelines](#); [Judgement](#); [Quantification](#)

Definition/Description

The women, peace, and security (WPS) agenda is a broad-ranging set of ambitions pushing for the inclusion of women and a gender perspective in global peace and security processes. How can we, and should we, measure the implementation of the agenda? To consider this question, this chapter focusses on the WPS indicators devised by the United Nations (UN) system during 2009–2010 to explore the changes that these indicators have prompted within international peacebuilding and peacekeeping processes. A perspective informed by feminist technoscience highlights how indicators are powerful ordering activities that produces gendered knowledge about peacebuilding, peacekeeping, and security practices. Through exploring this, the chapter unpacks feminist concerns alongside the positive feminist and gendered transformations bought about partially because

The research in this chapter was made possible by a British Academy Small Research Grant for the project “Do we know gender in peacebuilding?” All interviews were held during 2016 and 2017 with current or former UN staff, or with civil society organizations closely working with the UN agenda, in New York City, USA. Research participants have been granted anonymity

of the institutional advocacy prompted and supported by the UN’s WPS indicators.

Introduction

Multiple attempts have been made to capture the effectiveness of peace interventions (see ► [“Measuring Peace”](#) and ► [“Assessment of Peace Operations”](#)). It is no surprise then, that the United Nations’ Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda has also been subject to measurement both within the United Nations (UN) system and beyond. The WPS agenda encompasses ten resolutions initiated by UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (October 2000). Taken together, the resolutions recognize that women and a gender perspective matter in global peace and security processes, including, among other things, negotiating a peace agreement, to peacekeeping missions, to thinking about participation and protection of women in rebuilding post-conflict societies. The agenda is broad-sweeping, and so capturing, measuring, and tracking the implementation of its various goals is challenging.

The chapter discusses the UN’s own 26 WPS indicators, designed primarily to assess the performance of the UN System in achieving WPS goals. The meaning of “indicator” has a “certain vagueness” and there is no agreed definition (Green 2001, p. 1076; Davis et al. 2012, p. 73). However, it is useful to understand indicators in the following way: *a means of allowing us to capture information about something in a simplified and processed format that allows us compare, contrast, and evaluate standards or performances*. There are three core components to this definition: (1) the capture of information; (2) the simplification and processed format; and (3) the judgement of standards or performance. Thinking about indicators in this way draws attention to how indicators are part of the “technocratic turn” in international peacebuilding, where interveners seek out bureaucratic, standardized, apparently rational and efficient ways of explaining and organizing their activities (Mac Ginty 2013, p. 57). Put together, this helps us understand how indicators are a technology of knowledge creation that has gendered outcomes.

Measuring Women, Peace, and Security

Measuring the WPS agenda is not straightforward. The agenda is wide-ranging; developing a set of indicators is always a politically subjective process, and gender goals are particularly difficult to capture. There was a very real concern that with an agenda as broad as the WPS agenda, that measurements and reporting could turn “WPS into a depoliticized, technocratic process” (Olsson and Gizelis 2019, p. 129). That said, there was a strategic push by gender advocates within the UN System to develop indicators for the WPS agenda. Advocates felt that progress on achieving the ambitions of UNSCR 1325 had been limited even at the end of its first decade. Concerns were raised within the UN System that implementation had been constrained by “the absence of a single coherent and coordinated approach, guided by a clear framework with concrete and specific goals and targets” (Security Council 2010, p. 30).

In response to these concerns, in October 2009, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) passed its fourth “Women, Peace and Security” resolution: UNSCR 1889. Within the resolution, there was a request for “a set of indicators for use at the global level to track implementation of its resolution 1325 (2000).” Gender advocates within the then United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM, now merged into UN Women) steered the development of these indicators under the slogan “Women Count for Peace” (Castillo-Diaz and Cueva-Beteta 2018, p. 1). The slogan was a “wordplay on women being perennially pushed aside and counted out during and after armed conflict, on the one hand, and the belief that stronger data on women, peace, and security issues would help change this reality, on the other” (Castillo-Diaz and Cueva-Beteta 2018, p. 2). The “1325 indicators,” alongside the Report of the Secretary-General on Women’s participation in peacebuilding (better known as the Seven-Point Action Plan), and the Strategic Results Framework on WPS formed a tripartite attempt made during 2010 to develop a more comprehensive and measurable approach to implementing UNSCR 1325.

To develop the indicators, stakeholders across a number of UN entities and civil society actors formed a working group. They discussed a longlist of 2500 indicators already within the UN System on gender and peacebuilding, selecting 26 indicators by April 2010 (Castillo-Diaz and Cueva-Beteta 2018). In September 2010, these indicators were approved and published within the Secretary-General report on women and peace and security (Security Council 2010, pp. 27–48). The hope was that the framework would consist of “an agreed set of goals, targets and indicators to guide the implementation of the resolution in the next decade” (Security Council 2010, p. 31).

The indicators established a wide-ranging set of ambitions linked to UNSCR 1325, including:

- Reporting on the prevalence and pattern of sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict situations
- The operational gender-responsive systems in place to monitor, report, and respond to violations of women and girls’ rights during ceasefires, peace negotiations, and after conflict
- Tracking of the number and type of actions taken by the Security Council in relation to UNSCR 1325 and how far Security Council missions address specific issues relating to women and girls
- The percentage of peace agreements with specific provisions for women and girls
- Women’s share of senior positions in UN field missions
- Percentage of senior gender experts in field missions
- Representation and participation of women in peace processes and national and local governance; the proportion of UN budgets related to indicators and targets to address strategic gender issues, or funding disbursed to relevant civil society organizations
- The extent to which Truth and Reconciliation Commissions include provisions to address the rights and participation of women and girls (Security Council 2010, pp. 33–48)

In the first decade of these indicators, reporting on all 26 indicators has become increasingly rigorous, with each being discussed in the Secretary-General reports on women, peace, and security published every autumn. An annual report may not sound like a transformative measure, but it is a significant shift in global governance with resourcing and staffing implications. While there has been an annual report every year since 2004 (Coomararaswamy 2015, p. 33), earlier reports did not have the same kind of structure and effect through the UN System that they did after 2010. (Interview 2016_21). The indicators served to ensure “a lot more progress both policy-wise and programmatically” as a result of the reporting requirements around them (Interview 2016_11). The remainder of this chapter identifies a number of institutional shifts as a result of these indicators.

Feminist Transformations

Understanding how indicators have potentially transformative effects draws on the idea that they are a “technology of knowledge creation” (Engle Merry 2016, p. 27). Critical and feminist technoscience perspectives allow us to recognize that indicators are an ordering activity which packages and presents knowledge in a way that can be easily consumed (Engle Merry 2016, pp. 29–31), and, crucially for our purposes, draws attention to the power of indicators in producing gendered knowledge that shapes the world we live in. Applying John Law and Vicky Singleton’s characterization of feminist technoscience (Law and Singleton 2000, pp. 766–767) to our thinking about the work of indicators allows us to conceptualize indicators as social and material practices recursively generating new social and material practices, knowledges, and versions of the world, *with gendered ramifications*. Indicators are a technological practice that can sustain – and yet hold the possibility of transforming – gendered agendas and practices in peace and security processes. The question is, how can we “transcend” from technocratic processes to meaningfully transformative peacebuilding processes

(Podder 2021, p. 4) that have positive gendered outcomes?

Among feminist scholars, there is an apprehension that the use of indicators to measure progress towards the achievement of gender equality turns gender equality into a set of tick-box goals focused around a measurable activity rather than the *actual* achievement of gender equality. That is, the claim presented is that gender equality (the goal) can be achieved “once the activities (capacity-building, networking, advocacy, lobbying and research) are completed. The completed activities would further result in commitment and capacity” (the outcome), which would be monitored as a change in “attitudes, perceptions and beliefs (indicators of change)” (Jauhola 2013, p. 151). The focus on monitored outcomes places the emphasis on *progress* conceptualized within specific parameters. “Progress” is never easy: is it the imposition of white, Western feminist goals? Is it the emphasis placed on a particular vision of modernity? Is the proposed progress transformative enough? Here, we can see that there are political consequences to what is quantified and transformed into knowledge.

A related feminist concern about the use of indicators relates to the substance of what is being achieved. Madeline Rees, the Secretary-General of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom, worried about

... the emphasis on counting the number of women in different fora, whether it be in parliament, whether it be in governance structures. We’re going to count them as warm bodies and not ask about substance. (Cited in Onyesoh et al. 2020, p. 23)

For Rees, the disquiet is that numerical representation produces knowledge that misses crucial things about what women do, alluding to a concern that women do not always act for women.

Similar concerns are also voiced with the WPS indicators, in particular if we hone in on the indicators aiming to capture women’s representation and participation in peace processes. One indicator seeks to assess the participation of women’s civil society representatives formally included in the peace process. As one research participant

pointed out, these indicators say nothing about the quality of the consultation: we do not know if “the mediator drove by a group of women’s organisations, slowed his car down and shook a hand, or whether it was ongoing, systematic, systemised consultations on content-specific and strategic issues of the peace talks” (Interview 2016_24). An indicator seeking to quantify the representation of women among mediators, negotiators, and technical experts in formal peace negotiations also prompts feminist unease about focusing on descriptive over substantive representation.

However, those designing the initial indicators felt that they had to balance – and trade-off – a number of considerations around developing measurable and meaningful indicators that would achieve the political goals gender advocates wanted. One commentator noted that capturing the quality or value of engagement is challenging: for instance, in assessing the contribution of a female mediator during a peace negotiation. On the one hand, you could say that a female mediator is “very good, she’s very effective, she has an impact, [while on the other hand] civil society might totally disagree and feel that she doesn’t represent their views. . . so we would get into this whole tit-for-tat if we had qualitative indicators,” making it difficult to assess progress (Interview 2016_16). So, from this perspective, tracking the numbers of female mediators over time helps reveal trends and prompts the UN System to assess the gains made in this area (Interview 2016_16). Furthermore, if female mediators are not appointed, then it “allows us [within the UN System] to increase advocacy” in these particular contexts where peace negotiations are happening (Interview 2016_18). For feminists and gender-change advocates working within the UN System, some indicators serve as a means to achieving positive gender outcomes, even where they are fully aware of the limitations of these indicators.

The value of the indicators in supporting feminist and gendered advocacy within the UN System is evident upon investigation of the tenth indicator. This indicator measures the percentage of UN field missions with senior-level gender experts, appointed at P5 level or above. P5 is top

of the professional scale, and is considered by the UN System as a mid-career professional, requiring at least 10 years of progressively responsible work experience (UN Careers 2021). The initial impetus behind the selection of this indicator came from a concern that “posts that are committed to gender equality work are at lower levels than comparable posts on other issues” (Yasmeen Hassan, Dir. of Programs at Equality Now, cited in Deen 2009). The context for developing a specific measurement of specifically *senior* gender advisors related to a concern with raising the overall profile of gender equality work within the UN System. Reading the Secretary-General reports between 2011 and 2020 reveals that there was a lot of work to promote, reinforce, and refine action to ensure that senior gender advisors were embedded within UN peacekeeping and special political missions.

Initial reporting on this indicator in 2011 was vague, noting that 100% of field missions managed by the (then) Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) had a gender component, and 60% are headed by a senior gender expert. It was also noted that 46% of field missions managed by the (then) Department of Political Affairs (DPA) have gender advisors, while the rest have designated gender focal points (Security Council 2011, p. 12). This reporting lacks detail on the number of *senior gender experts at P5 level* or above: instead, we are told about gender components, advisors, or focal points. We are given no indication of how many are holding a position that is graded P5 or above. Interviewees suggested that there was a tendency for DPKO to fill the P5 post intended for a senior gender expert with someone not doing gender work (Interview 2017_02). In short, there was limited reporting on the designated indicator, and reporting in this vein continued for a few years.

However, tracking the reporting on this indicator throughout the decade reveals that there are attempts to further institutionalize and entrench senior gender expertise within field missions. Alongside the indicator already described, it was also recommended in 2015 that a senior gender advisor should be embedded within the office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-

General – that is, the office of the field mission head (Coomararaswamy 2015, p. 284). Both actions served to reinforce more rigorous reporting: the 2017 Secretary-General report on the 1325 indicators includes a footnote elaborating that “of the 25 gender advisers across field-based missions led by the Department of Political Affairs (23) and offices of special envoys (2), three are at the D-1 or P-5 level and six are at the P-4 level” (Security Council 2017, p. 22). Interviewees noted that the indicator was useful in pushing some entities within the UN System to make their gender advisors more senior (Interview 2017_02).

While issues remain around the deployment of gender advisors within UN peace processes, the indicators have proved useful for feminist and gender advocacy within the UN System. An independent assessment noted that “between 2016 and 2018 there was a defunding and downgrading of gender advisor posts within peacekeeping missions, one of which was restored to its previous P5 grade as a result of advocacy” (Allen 2019, p. 8). The requirement for annual reporting and accountability has ensured that attention has been focused on this issue, and enabled a systematic (technocratic and bureaucratic?) way of generating gender-positive change, and more effective implementation of UNSCR 1325.

Summary

Scholarly analysis about the use of data in peacebuilding note that “technocracy can be seen as a political intervention and mechanism” (Mac Ginty 2017, p. 697). Indeed, we should pay attention to which indicators are being used to measure implementation of the WPS agenda because “the choice of indicators by policymakers explicitly defines – and potentially delimits – the WPS agenda” (Castillo-Diaz and Cueva-Beteta 2018, p. 191). There are a number of feminist concerns about the use of indicators, namely in that they limit the possibilities of transformation. However, as this chapter has suggested, there may be opportunities to utilize the enthusiasm for global measurement to achieve certain feminist

goals that can be more effectively captured within the constraints of technocratic processes.

Beyond the UN’s own 26 WPS indicators, there are a number of other ways of measuring the implementation of UNSCR 1325. These include the WPS Index produced by Georgetown and Peace Research Institute of Oslo, intended to draw together international data sources to provide a measure of women’s well-being and empowerment, and the WPS National Action Plan database produced by the University of Sydney and LSE to present data about current and previous national action plans, among others. These both capture knowledge about WPS in different locations, namely member state/national-level implementation, and so have very different effects and may provoke different concerns or questions. How we measure the implementation of UNSCR 1325 is a point of contestation, and it remains important that the knowledge produced is used to achieve meaningful, gender-positive outcomes, ensuring the focus remains on implementation of the WPS agenda, as opposed to merely gathering information for the sake of having information.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Assessment of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Measuring Peace](#)
- ▶ [Women, Peace and Security Agenda](#)

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Med-arb

- [Alternative Dispute Resolution](#)

Mediation

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Keywords

Mediation · Peacemaking · Conflict resolution

Introduction

In 2017, United Nations (UN) Secretary-General António Guterres recognized mediation as “essential, flexible and effective tool which is utilized for conflict prevention, management and resolution by the United Nations and a wide range of other organizations and actors” (UN Secretary-General 2017, p. 6). Mediation is defined as “a process of conflict management, related to but distinct from the parties’ own negotiations, where those in conflict seek the assistance of, or accept an offer of help from, an outsider [...] without resorting to physical force or invoking the authority of law” (Bercovitch 2009, p. 343). Thus, mediation, at a minimum, denotes the assistance by a third party to a negotiation between two or more conflict parties to find a peaceful agreement (see also “Negotiation,” “Peace Agreements”). It has become a standard international response to armed conflicts since the end of the Cold War (Gowan and Stedman 2018; Greig and Diehl 2012). This is reflected in research, which has produced relevant knowledge on how to render mediation more effective. It has thereby strongly relied on positivist approaches with rationalist conceptual frameworks and quantitative methodologies. While producing important findings, it has left three main gaps, calling for more disaggregated findings, a stronger focus on ideational aspects, and awareness of changing macro-level factors in the broader world political context of mediation.

Development

While some mediation endeavors were conducted during the Cold War,¹ its use substantively increased in its aftermath. Indeed, more mediation attempts took place during the 1990s than in the 44 years from 1945 to 1989 (Greig and Diehl 2012)². This increase has been accompanied by three trends. First, a multiplication of actors involved in mediation (Iji 2005; Lanz and Gasser 2013). While most mediation endeavors were undertaken by powerful states or the UN during the Cold War (Crocker et al. 1999), they were joined by other actors in its aftermath, such as regional organizations (Gartner 2011; Mediation Support Network 2012) and non-governmental actors (NGOs) (Convergne 2016b). Second, the proliferation of mediation actors has led to an increased institutionalization and professionalization of mediation (Convergne 2016a) with different states, regional organizations, and the UN establishing specialized mediation support structures and publishing policy documents providing concrete guidelines for mediators on how to make their interventions more effective (African Union 2014; Council of the European Union 2009; OSCE 2014; United Nations 2012)³. Third, the objective of mediation has seen an important expansion. While during the Cold War, the main goal was to contain conflicts, the post-Cold War years saw a broadening of the mediators' mandates toward addressing the root causes of conflicts. This was in line with the broader liberal international environment dominant at the end of

the Cold War. Thus, mediators were confronted with increasing demands to promote liberal norms, such as human rights, gender equality, and transitional justice. One norm that has become particularly prominent is inclusivity. Acknowledging the insufficiency of elite deals in achieving a liberal transformation of conflict contexts, the participation of women and civil society actors in peace negotiations has come to be considered an important element to increase the legitimacy of a mediation process and the probability of lasting peace (Hellmüller 2019; Hirblinger and Landau 2020; Paffenholz 2014) (see also ► “Civil Society Inclusion in Peace Mediation”, ► “Women and Peace Negotiations in Cyprus”).

Existing Research on Mediation

Along with these developments, the research agenda on mediation has expanded. Thereby, the focus has mostly been on the conditions for effective mediation. As Wallensteen and Svensson (2014, p. 315) put it, mediation scholars ask “under what conditions international mediation may bring about peaceful change; in other words, when is mediation effective in transforming destructive conflicts into constructive pursuits.” Indeed, the majority of studies explores the relationship between mediation effectiveness as dependent variable and factors influencing the onset or process of mediation as independent variables (Beardsley and Danneman 2015, p. 2; see also Duursma 2014, p. 81; Kleiboer 1996, p. 361).

Dependent Variable: Effectiveness

The mediation literature does not provide an unanimous definition of success (Kleiboer 1996, p. 361; Vuković 2014)⁴. Some scholars consider the occurrence of mediation already as a success (Frei 1976, p. 69), while others define success as ending violent behavior (Regan 1996; Regan and Stam 2000) or as

¹ Examples include the United States, in the Middle East and Southern Africa, the Soviet Union in Tashkent and between India and Pakistan over Kashmir, and the UN between Iran and Iraq and in Cyprus (Crocker et al. 1999, p. 6).

² Lundgren and Svensson (2020) note a reverse trend with a declining number of armed conflicts receiving mediation in the last 15 years.

³ For instance, the UN Mediation Support Unit, the European Union (EU) Mediation Support Team, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Mediation Support Team, the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Mediation Support Team, and specialized mediation teams in Switzerland, Germany, Sweden, and other countries.

⁴ I use the terms effectiveness and success of mediation interchangeably. Some authors distinguish success and effectiveness and take the latter to refer to instances in which the outcomes of a mediation process correspond to the objectives set by the mediator (Kleiboer 1996).

the signing of a peace agreement (Beardsley et al. 2006; Bercovitch et al. 1991; Rauchhaus 2006; Savun 2008, 2009). Some also define effectiveness as the fulfilment of the mediator's objectives (Smith 1985; Touval and Zartman 1985, p. 14).

Recent analyses of mediation effectiveness have tried to go beyond the abovementioned indicators to provide more nuanced assessments of success. They can be distinguished according to whether they focus on the durability or the quality of peace (Duursma 2014). One way of analyzing the effectiveness of mediation is by looking at the durability of peace *after* the signing of a peace agreement (Beardsley 2008, 2011; Werner and Yuen 2005). Beardsley et al. (2006) distinguish between short-term and long-term effects of mediation (see also Beardsley 2008, 2011). They argue that mediation creates incentives that favor short-term achievements, such as providing information, leveraging costs or increasing benefits, and monitoring and enforcing peace agreements. Yet, while conflict parties may agree to concessions in the short term, they may find them insupportable in the long term. This is because mediators cannot provide information regarding the future and will lose interest over time, and monitoring and enforcement missions are unable to endlessly maintain their security guarantees (see Duursma 2014). Another way of analyzing effectiveness is by looking at the quality of peace in terms of the provisions in the peace agreement or the post-agreement disposition, for instance, whether a country is democratically governed after the signing of a peace agreement (Nathan 1999; see Wallensteen and Svensson 2014). A study by Svensson (2009) provides an example of a success measurement based on the quality of peace. He argues that biased mediators are more likely to help parties find agreements with provisions assumed to lead to lasting peace, such as "political or territorial power sharing, international guarantees, repatriation, and provisions for amnesty" (Svensson 2009, p. 464). Thereby, he provides a differentiated way of measuring success in terms of the quality of the peace agreement.

Independent Variables: Onset and Process

Concerning the independent variables, they can be grouped in two parts. First, factors that

influence the onset of mediation related to the timing of a mediation process and reasons for it. Second, factors that influence the process of mediation in terms of the styles and characteristics of mediators.

Mediation Onset

Studies on the onset of mediation are concerned with the question about when and how a mediation process starts. They assess three main aspects: the conflict context, the conflict parties' motives to engage in mediation, and the mediators' motives to accept to act as a third party. With regard to the context, Zartman's ripeness theory is relevant (Zartman 1985). He states that two main conditions determine whether a conflict is ripe for resolution or not. First, a mutually hurting stalemate defined as a situation in which the parties incur high costs (hurting) and from which they cannot unilaterally escalate the conflict to win it militarily (stalemate). Second, the conflict parties must consider mediation as a way out of the conflict, which means that it must provide them with a valuable alternative to fighting⁵. Zartman (2001, p. 9) specifies that these two subjective conditions are necessary but insufficient for the initiation of negotiations as ripe moments also need to be seized. This means that a ripe moment increases the chances of a negotiated settlement but does not predict it. In that sense, ripeness is not an either-or situation, but best thought of as "concatenation of conditions under which the prospects for successful negotiation grow more favourable" (Greig and Diehl 2012, p. 125)⁶. The ripeness theory has given rise to an important debate in the study of mediation with different scholars building on it

⁵He later added a third condition, which is that the conflict parties must have legitimate spokespersons to represent them in the mediation process, but he classifies it as being of secondary importance (Zartman 2001, pp. 10–11).

⁶The absence of a ripe moment for mediation does not mean that mediators cannot do anything. As Crocker (1992, p. 471) states, "the absence of 'ripeness' does not tell us to walk away and do nothing. Rather, it helps us to identify obstacles and suggests ways of handling them and managing the problem until resolution becomes possible." Mediators can use different strategies to "ripen" a conflict by helping conflict parties realize that a ripe moment is at hand or contribute to ripening it (Pruitt 2005, p. 7).

(Goodby 1996; Haass 1990; Kriesberg and Thorson 1991; Maundi et al. 2000; Stedman 1991). Greig (2001), for instance, has supported the theory of the mutually hurting stalemate with quantitative data, while Pruitt (2005) has developed the theory of “readiness” rather than “ripeness,” focusing on the parties’ individual perceptions, rather than on their joint assessment of a given context. He argues that mediation is more likely when the conflict parties realize that they cannot win a conflict and when they become aware of the high costs of the conflict and the perceived risks of continuing it.

This relates to the conflict parties’ motives, which is the second aspect. The parties decide *whether* to accept mediation and *whose* mediation to accept (Maundi et al. 2006; Zartman 2008). In general, parties will engage in mediation if they expect it to help them fulfill their preferred outcomes and will select the mediator with whom they are most confident to achieve their interests (Maundi et al. 2006). In other words, they need to expect the benefits from engaging in mediation to be higher than the ones from pursuing the conflict. Different considerations are at play. Working with a mediator, rather than engaging in direct negotiations with the adversary, may reduce reputational costs at home and the negative effects of making concessions (Zartman 2008). Moreover, rejecting an offer of mediation may incur harm, in terms of reputational costs or relational consequences with the mediator. At the same time, parties may not only engage in mediation for so-called genuine motives. Indeed, scholars have distinguished genuine from devious motives (Richmond 1998). Genuine motives mean that parties come to a mediation process with a real interest in finding a peaceful solution to the conflict. On the contrary, “devious disputants” are those actors “that undertake bargaining with their adversaries with no intention of striking a bargain” (Beardsley and Danneman 2015, p. 8; see also Richmond 1998). Motives of such devious disputants to engage in a mediation process can include to gain political support and recognition, or they can use it as a stalling tactic to get a breather from the war in order to regroup and rearm (Beardsley 2011).

Concerning mediators’ motives, mediation comes at a price for mediators as well, such as

reputational or political costs that can come from unaccepted offers for mediation or failed mediation attempts (Greig and Regan 2008, p. 762). Therefore, actors must have sufficient interest in a given conflict in order to offer their mediation in the first place. Greig and Diehl (2013, pp. 78–93) distinguish between three factors. First, actors may offer their mediation for humanitarian motives in terms of their desire to prevent a conflict from escalating or to halt the violence (Crocker et al. 2004). Beardsley (2011) argues that intergovernmental organizations and NGOs are particularly likely to engage based on humanitarian motives. Second, mediation may be offered based on national interests as it constitutes a foreign policy tool to deal with challenges, such as conflict spillover or refugee flows, or advance national interests, such as expanding political influence or defending a given status quo (Beardsley 2011; Bercovitch 2002; Greig and Regan 2008; Zartman 2008). It can also be used to preserve existing trade relationships, alliance ties, or historical relationships with the conflict country in question (Greig and Regan 2008; Regan and Aydin 2006). Third, a mediator may get active due to organizational interests. Many international and regional organizations have the maintenance of international or regional peace and security as their main *raison d’être*, and they may get involved in mediation to uphold this mandate and confirm their role in international affairs (Bercovitch 2002).

Mediation Process

Scholars analyzing how aspects pertaining to the mediation process influence success mostly focus on two factors related to the mediators: their styles and their characteristics. Regarding mediation styles, the literature proposes different taxonomies to classify them (Silbey and Merry 1986; Touval and Zartman 1985; Wall and Rude 1985)⁷. Despite various terms used, all authors differentiate the

⁷Touval and Zartman (1985) distinguish between communication, formulation, and manipulation; (Bercovitch 2009) between communication, procedural, and directive styles; Kressel and Pruitt (1985) between reflexive, substantive, and contextual mediation styles; and Curran et al. (2004) distinguish between forcing and fostering.

styles based on the mediator's influence in the process. Thereby, they usually distinguish three broad styles ordered according to an increasing level of intrusion by the mediator. The first style is a communicative style where the role of the mediator is limited to channeling information or facilitating contact between the conflict parties. The second style is facilitation or formulation, which foresees a more active role of the mediator in terms of structuring the mediation process and even formulating specific solutions as a proposition to the parties. Finally, the third style is directive or manipulative in that the mediator influences the content of the negotiations by offering incentives to the parties to accept a specific outcome, threatening with disincentives, or setting ultimatums. One of the most prominent studies analyzing the link between mediation style and outcome is by Beardsley et al. (2006). The authors show that a manipulative mediation style is most likely to lead to a formal agreement and contribute to crisis abatement in the short term, while a facilitative style is most likely to increase the prospects for a lasting reduction of tensions in the long term.

Regarding the characteristics of mediators, two aspects have attracted most attention, namely, mediator bias and mediator leverage. Concerning bias, policy-makers and practitioners conventionally portray mediators as impartial third parties (United Nations 2012). In the literature, however, there is an ongoing debate on whether biased or unbiased mediators are more effective. Some scholars argue that unbiased mediators are more successful and even consider impartiality as a key definitional element of mediators (Moore 1986; Rauchhaus 2006; Spencer and Yang 1993; Wehr 1979). They see the absence of bias as central to achieving effective outcomes because it installs trust with the parties in the mediation process. On the other hand, some scholars assert that bias toward one of the conflict parties increases the probability of a mediation process to be successful (Favretto 2009; Kydd 2003, 2006; Smith 1985; Svensson 2007; Touval 1975). They put forward three main reasons: First, because biased mediators have stakes in the conflict and are thus willing to incur sacrifice and are more likely to put substantive resources and efforts into finding and

implementing an agreement (Beardsley and Danneman 2015; Favretto 2009). Second, because they can influence the party they are closer to. The party not aligned with the mediator accepts this because it hopes that the mediator will be able to convince the adversary party of a deal it would otherwise not have accepted (Kleiboer 1996, p. 370; Svensson 2009, pp. 448–449; Vuković 2015b, p. 419). Third, because they are more credible in relying information and guaranteeing settlements and can thus help the parties overcome credible commitment problems (Beardsley 2013; Beardsley and Danneman 2015; Svensson 2007).

A similar debate concerns mediators' leverage. Some authors say that leverage increases mediation effectiveness as mediators "with muscles" can use it to cajole conflict parties toward an agreement (Bercovitch and Gartner 2006; Crocker et al. 1999; Kydd 2003; Savun 2008; Sisk 2009; Touval 1992; Touval and Zartman 1985). They argue that mediators with power can increase the costs of war for the disputants, they can raise the benefits for signing an agreement, or they can provide compliance and monitoring mechanisms once an agreement is reached (Greig and Diehl 2012, p. 118). Other authors caution against mediation with power as it can create artificial incentives or deadlines eventually harming the peace process (Nathan 1999).

Gaps and Avenues for Further Research

The above-described inquiries into the link between the onset and process of mediation and its effectiveness have mostly been conducted based on positivist approaches. This has led to a clear theoretical and methodological trend in the mediation literature. Theoretically, it has drawn heavily on rational choice models and particularly bargaining theory (Beardsley et al. 2006). Scholars usually start with the assumption of rational actors pursuing their self-interest and view imperfect information as the reason for the onset of war (Fearon 1995; Wagner 2000; Werner and Yuen 2005). In that view, mediators become manipulators of the bargaining environment

(Duursma 2020) as they can create material incentives to entice parties into agreement (Zartman 1985)⁸. Methodologically, quantitative approaches dominate the mediation literature. While some mediation scholars provide comparative case studies (Assefa 1987; Crocker et al. 1999, 2015b; Mandell and Tomlin 1991; Nathan 1999; Zartman 1985), large-N studies are more common. This led to the establishment of important datasets and groundbreaking quantitative insights based on them (DeRouen Jr et al. 2011; Harbom et al. 2006; Melander et al. 2009; Regan et al. 2009). Yet, they have arguably come to miss a qualitative complement to nuance and contextualize some of the findings (Beardsley and Danneman 2015; Wallensteen and Svensson 2014). This theoretical and methodological focus has led to gaps in the recent mediation literature. The following three are particularly noteworthy and constitute at the same time promising avenues for further research.

Disaggregated Analyses

Due to its quantitative focus, mediation research has produced results that often remain at a high level of aggregation. Disaggregation is needed to complement these analyses with regard to the actors, the process, and the conceptualization of success. Regarding *actors*, current mediation research does not always clearly distinguish between mediation by individuals, states, NGOs, regional organizations, or international organizations. Yet, depending on their mandating institution, mediators may have different resources, constraints, and normative frameworks that influence the way they approach a given peace process. More insights on each actor's specificities, comparative advantages, and challenges would be relevant. Concerning the *process*, current research often fails to distinguish between different phases and forms of a mediation process (e.g., pre-negotiation or negotiation, proximity or direct talks, inclusive or exclusive mediation, etc.). Scholars do not always specify the phase or form of a process for which their insights are valid.

Relatedly, specific dilemmas and difficult decisions that mediators face in their daily activities also remain underexplored, as the analytical grid of current mediation research is too wide-meshed⁹. Finally, mediation research should also further disaggregate how it analyzes mediation *success*. While efforts are underway to provide for more nuanced understandings of success, as mentioned above, the majority of authors still conceptualizes success in terms of the outcome of a mediation process. This overlooks incremental progress toward reducing violence or finding an agreement during a mediation process. For instance, examining the impact of an ongoing mediation process on the parties' propensity to use violence, their internal cohesion, or their relations with their constituencies or analyzing the procedural and substantive progress made toward an agreement would provide for more fine-grained success indicators.

Ideational Aspects

A second gap stems from the assumption in bargaining theory that actors are rational and driven by self-interest, which leaves ideational factors in mediation largely unexplored. Although some research has been conducted on the role of culture (Avruch 2004; Black and Avruch 1998; Inman et al. 2013) (see ► [“Culture and Conflict Resolution”](#)) and norms in mediation (Hellmüller et al. 2017, 2020; Kastner 2015; Mandell and Tomlin 1991; Vuković 2015a), they remain the exception rather than the rule. Yet, ideational factors affect both conflict parties and mediators. Conflict parties are not only driven by rational cost-benefit analyses, but values, norms, and ideas play important roles, especially when it comes to trust-building and finding mutually acceptable agreements (Burton 1990; Kaufman 2006; Kelman 2005). Moreover, studies on mediation outcomes often ignore the impact of mediation on the parties' long-term relationship (Duursma 2014, p. 94). At the same time, ideational factors influence the way mediators act. The institutional normative framework in which they are embedded, their own core values and

⁸For a critical view on this materialistic focus, see Duursma (2020) and Hellmüller et al. (2020).

⁹Kraus et al. (2019) provide a noteworthy exception.

convictions, and their normative socialization all play an important role in the way they approach a given mediation process (Hellmüller et al. 2017, 2020).

Changing World Political Context

By analyzing factors that contribute to mediation effectiveness, the mediation literature has mostly focused on the inner workings of mediation. While assessing contextual factors of mediation, the impact of the broader world political environment on mediation has rarely been taken into systematic consideration¹⁰. This may partly be because the unipolar liberal international order dominant at the end of the Cold War constituted a favorable environment for the spread, institutionalization, and professionalization of mediation. Yet, with the recent shift toward a more multipolar world order and the concomitant questioning of the liberal international order, reflections about the implications of these changes on the role of mediation as an international peacemaking tool become relevant. Of particular importance for mediation is the trend toward increased internationalization and regionalization of armed conflicts (Allansson et al. 2017; Melander et al. 2016; Petterson and Eck 2018; Petterson et al. 2019). Thereby, the US and Russia have become the main external warring parties since 2001 and 2014, respectively (Petterson and Eck 2018; Petterson et al. 2019; Wallensteen and Petterson 2015). The blockage of the UN Security Council on deciding on the actions to take in conflicts such as Syria, Libya, or Yemen points to the need to reflect on mediation in these changed circumstances. In the end, the relevance of mediation research will also depend on the way it is able to inform practice and policy on navigating an increasingly complex international world order.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Alternative Dispute Resolution](#)
- ▶ [Civil Society Inclusion in Peace Mediation](#)

- ▶ [Culture and Conflict Resolution](#)
- ▶ [Negotiation](#)
- ▶ [Peace Agreements](#)
- ▶ [Women and Peace Negotiations in Cyprus](#)

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¹⁰Crocker et al. (2015a) and Zartman (2020) are exceptions.

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Definition

Memorials are objects, structures, or (real or virtual) places that serve to focus the memory of conflict related violence. By pinning memory to a location, they fix it in place. Memorials serve as vessels for information in a metaphorical but also in a highly material way, for they are archives of facts and artifacts, storage spaces for documents, images, and sometimes also human remains. Memorials, in addition, are sites to learn about past atrocities, both cognitively and emotionally, and educate visitors through images, metaphors, and symbols as well as, in many cases, texts, videos, and guided tours. In transitional justice processes, memorialization serves as a means of symbolic reparation, thus expanding the scope of dealing with the legacy of violent conflicts and repression from tribunals, truth commissions, and monetary reparations to memorials and commemorations.

Mediation-Arbitration

- ▶ [Alternative Dispute Resolution](#)

Melanesia

- ▶ [Sources of Peace in a Developing Island State](#)

Memorials and Transitional Justice

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Synonyms

[Commemoration](#); [Dealing with the past](#); [Memory politics](#); [Symbolic reparations](#)

Introduction

In 2019, Rwanda commemorated the 25th anniversary of the genocide against the Tutsi which left about 800,000 people dead and the society deeply divided. Today, there are about 27 memorials in the country to serve as places of commemoration and remembrance (Genocide Archive Rwanda n.d.). Similarly, other countries that have experienced violent conflict have erected memorials, transformed sites where the violence took place or opened memorial museums to draw attention to the atrocities. This global rush to commemorate atrocities (Williams 2007) is a rather new phenomenon, though, and it is firmly situated in wider practices of peacebuilding. In recent years, this has manifested itself in the field of transitional justice, where memorialization serves as a means of symbolic reparation. The scope of dealing with the legacy of violent conflicts and repression has thus been expanded from tribunals, truth commissions, and monetary reparations to memorials and commemorations

(Buckley-Zistel and Björkdahl 2017; Buckley-Zistel and Schäfer 2014). Such efforts are based on the assumption that dealing with the past always requires revisiting the past as well as considering the future in order to prevent new violence.

In contrast to other mechanisms of dealing with the past, such as trials or truth commissions, memorials are seen as less costly and potentially more spontaneous, so that they have turned into attractive forms of engagement in a postviolence society, again contributing to their present popularity. A number of different actors may initiate memorial sites, ranging from civil society groups to national governments or international organizations. Outside actors play an increasingly important role in the memorialization processes of countries that emerge from violence. They do so by offering targeted advice or by setting up working groups on memorialization to engage practitioners in reflecting on the memorialization process in their country (Barsalou 2014; Mannergren Selimovic 2013). This may include study tours to the memorial sites of other countries in order to learn how these deal with their pasts.

Constructing memorials to violence and transitional justice, however, have not always been thought of together but emerged as separate practices. It is only recently that they have been linked due to a range of similar perspectives and objectives as discussed in this chapter. Earlier (war) memorials gave testimony to a nation's invincibility and the heroic acts of fallen soldiers yet have turned more towards commemorating victims and civilian casualties. There is thus a shift in terms of the subject of commemoration. This parallels more recent developments in the field of transitional justice where there is a turn from initially strongly focusing on perpetrators (for instance in trials) to victims and their concerns. Today many transitional justice initiatives see victims as one of the main target groups and have expanded the "tool-kit" from truth commissions, tribunals, lustration processes, and so on to memorials and commemorations, which are usually presented as symbolic reparations to victims of injustices.

Defining Memorials

Memorials are material objects, structures, or (real or virtual) places that serve to center the memory of something, in our case conflict related violence. In the most banal sense, memorials keep a particular memory alive: they are constructed to commemorate an event in the present so that today, yet also in the future, visitors will be reminded of the atrocity. This is based on an understanding of memory as having a preventive function in deterring individuals and groups from repeating an atrocity. "Never again" is thus a frequently used phrase, in particular with reference to the Holocaust, and often displayed at memorial sites. For instance, the Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial Site contains a monument on which these words are written in Yiddish, French, English, German, and Russian.

Memorials also serve to fix information in place. They pin memory to a location, such as illustrated by the often cited ancient Greek anecdote of Simonides of Ceos, the sole survivor of a collapsed house who was able to identify all persons who had been in the house with him despite them being severely disfigured by the accident. Simonides identified the dead by recalling where they had been sitting when the roof fell in. By pinning information to a particular site, he was able to remember. This anecdote suggests that having a physical and material reminder such as a memorial serves to prompt particular memories about a past. For instance, the two square water features at the *National September 11 Memorial* in New York, where the two towers of the World Trade Center once stood, pin the memory of the terrorist attack to this particular location (Fig. 1).

Memorials, moreover, contain information. They serve as vessels for information in a metaphorical but also in a highly material way. In the latter sense, they are archives of facts and artifacts, storage spaces for documents, images, and sometimes also human remains. By keeping these objects, they prevent them from being forgotten. For instance, memorials from Tuol Sleng in Cambodia and the Kigali Genocide Memorial in Rwanda to Yad Vashem in Israel display images

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Fig. 1 National September 11 Memorial in New York, USA



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of the dead, while walls of names are central to the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, D.C., and the Srebrenica-Potočari Memorial Center in Bosnia (Fig. 2) Memorial museums such as the German Democratic Republic (GDR) remand prison Berlin-*Hohenschönhausen* contain (and maintain) furniture, security equipment, and other relics of the past as part of their collection (including smell by using GDR cleaner). In Murambi in Rwanda and the Killing Fields in Cambodia, actual human remains such as skulls, bodies, and hair form part of the memorial aesthetics.

Memorials, in addition, are sites at which to learn about past atrocities. They educate visitors through images, metaphors, and symbols as well as in many cases texts, videos, and guided tours. Yet memorials are also impulses for emotions related to the past atrocity; they employ a specific aesthetic style that does not inform visitors cognitively but affectively so that they learn differently.

Their material, style, and form may provoke sentiments such as sadness, intimidation, despair, or claustrophobia. They are thus places where heritage hurts (Sather-Wagstaff 2016; see also Mannergren Selimovic 2018). For instance, the *Srebrenica–Potočari Memorial and Cemetery for the Victims of the 1995 Genocide* combines photographs, film, and the exhibition of individual victims' stories as well as pieces of clothing found in mass graves into a powerful emotional experience.

Disaggregating Memorials

Importantly, there is not just one form of memorial but many. To begin with a focus on their location, they may be material objects at the actual places where the atrocities occurred or at any other location that is considered to be appropriate. For

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Fig. 2 Srebrenica-Potočari Memorial Center in Srebrenica, Bosnia



instance, as stated by way of introduction, there are many memorials in Rwanda at the sites of the crimes to commemorate the genocide, but there is also a memorial to the Rwandan genocide in Brussels entitled *Under the Same Sky*. The objects may take different forms such as statues, crosses, abstract figures, walls of names, and the like. Some memorials are more like memorial museums in confined spaces that can be entered and that house objects, texts, videos, and/or other displays to educate visitors on the past. The Robben Island Museum in the former prison in which Nelson Mandela was held during Apartheid in South Africa is one such example. Increasingly, virtual and web-based memorials are gaining traction, since they are easy and inexpensive to set up and reach a wide audience, as exemplified by the countless websites to commemorate the terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001. Impromptu memorials are makeshift memorials, often at the place of violence, where people spontaneously paint graffiti or leave cards, flowers, or letters to commemorate an event. After the terrorist attacks in Barcelona in 2017, the street *La Rambla* was plastered with small items; Tahrir Square in Cairo is decorated with many murals to commemorate the victims of the Arab Spring.

Yet it is not only the location that has an effect on the type of memorial, the scope, and form of violence to be remembered do, too. In cases where violence was mainly top-down, such as during dictatorships, and where a culture of impunity

prevails, memorials tend to be strongly advocatory by exposing crimes that often occurred clandestinely and/or remain unacknowledged by society at large. Turning former torture centers into memorials, such as in the memorial *Londres 38* in Santiago de Chile, depicting the plight of the disappeared or opening the doors of former prisons are ways of showing (and in a sense proving to) the public what happened. Civil wars during which violence occurred vertically between two or more parties to the conflict tend to either produce memorials with the aim of reconciliation by presenting the views of all parties to the conflict or conversely to reinforce the division between them. In the latter case, the aim is not to make amends but to highlight the victim status of one's own group and to maintain the division of society. This is, for instance, apparent in the Black Friday Memorial in Northern Ireland to commemorate members of the Irish Republican Army (IRA) who died in confrontations with the Royal Ulster Constabulary and British troops. In cases of one-sided mass violence and genocide, many memorials depict shock and horror by displaying human remains, graphic images, or abstract sculptures. The rationale behind this is to point to the enormity of the crime and the innocence of the victims. The Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum in Phnom Penh, for instance, displays picture walls of the persons killed, paintings show torture scenes and blood stains are still visible on the floor of the former detention center (Fig. 3).



Memorials and Transitional Justice, Fig. 3 Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum in Phnom Penh, Cambodia

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Moreover, memorials are deeply embedded in societies and are thus also effected by prevailing social and cultural norms – sometimes with the intention to perpetuate these norms, sometimes with the intention to challenge them. Let's take gender as a social category that informs memorial aesthetics. One often recurring theme in memorials is the *pietà* (the word for pity in Italian): a depiction of the Virgin Mary holding the dead body of her son Jesus on her lap. For instance, the *New Wache* in Berlin, which serves as the “Central Memorial of the Federal Republic of Germany for the Victims of War and Dictatorship,” houses a sculpture by Käthe Kollwitz entitled *Mother with her Dead Son* which follows this form. Similarly, the Vietnam Women Memorial in Washington depicts female nurses, one of which cradles the body of a seriously injured or dead soldier on her lap (Fig. 4).

The examples are based on a very traditional understanding of the roles of men and women during violent conflicts. Men fight and die, women are civilians or supporting staff who care

for yet also mourn men, their husbands and sons. In contrast, Kurdish women who survived the Iraqi army's Anfal operations against the Kurdish areas, killing mainly men, refuse to be portrayed as passive victims and opted for a form which depicts them as agents (Mlodoch 2012). A photo exhibition shows them as strong, confident women covered all in black and holding an image of the person they lost in front of their upright chest.

The Changing Scope of Memorials

Even though memorials have been around for much of human history, there has been a more recent trend towards a memory imperative (Levy and Sznajder 2002), i.e., a duty to remember, and an increase in the construction of monuments and museums to commemorate atrocities. In the literature, this is often dated back to the 1970s and 1980s, when – with reference to the Second World War and the Holocaust – commemoration gained

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Fig. 4 Vietnam Women Memorial in Washington, USA



significance (Winter 2006). This included a change in focus regarding what, and who, should be remembered. At the same time, while until recently memory work and the construction of memorials developed predominantly within the confines of nation-states, global conditions – or conditions of globalization – have had a strong influence on remembrance and the construction of memorials (Assmann and Conrad 2010; Levy and Sznajder 2006). Due to the media, the Internet as well as the activities of norm entrepreneurs, memory, and memorialization are increasingly turning transnational.

Linked to this transnationalization is the fact that memorials are becoming increasingly multidirectional. In the past (and in many cases still in the present) there has frequently been rivalry amongst various victims' communities regarding the enormity and singularity of a particular crime, leading to a form of competition between victims' groups. More recently, though, a number of

memorials have explicitly referenced other crimes and situated themselves in a *longue durée* of mass violence, often with the Holocaust as a central reference point. This multidirectional memory, to use Rothberg's term (Rothberg 2011), indicates that, instead of competing with each other, different memory projects benefit from each other by mutually affirming each other. The emergence of Holocaust memory, he suggests, has contributed to the possibility of other victims of mass violence articulating their demands, even highlighting and enhancing their memory, and memory itself. This has led to a more intensely shared memory – and a sharing of memory – which disentangles memory from collective memory, links victims' groups, and cuts across spatial, temporal, and cultural sites. As illustrated below, the Kigali Memorial Center, where one room is dedicated to other genocides such as Srebrenica, Armenia, and the Holocaust, serves to illustrate this point.

Despite this transnational tendency, however, memory remains profoundly local. For importantly, the atrocities to be remembered took place in a particular locality. They directly affect people who live in physical proximity to the events, who have to deal with the consequences of the rupture and to whom remembrance serves an important political function. Aesthetically, the globalized style of memorials contrasts with the specific location. Sites of atrocities which turn into memorials or memorial museums in particular are composed of local, tangled relics and material cultural heritage (Mannergren Selimovic 2018; Viebach 2014) that deeply root the site in place as exemplified by the Choeung Ek memorial in Cambodia where a Buddhist stupa holds the skulls of people killed in the Cambodian genocide. They give each site an idiosyncrasy that is unique and exceptional. There are thus both local aspects of memory culture and locally vernacularized aspects of a global memory culture (Fig. 5).

The Changing Aesthetics of Memorials

Given that memorials work through their form and shape – i.e., their aesthetics – it is important to consider this aspect in more detail. As stated above, they do not simply communicate information on a cognitive basis, but also work with emotions that are evoked in visitors to the site. In the following, I broadly categorize memorial aesthetics according to the terms imposing, counter- and affirmative memorials. This categorization serves primarily analytical purposes and thus, as it necessarily constitutes a simplified depiction, does not apply to all memorials.

Imposing memorials send a clear message to the visitors and leave no room for interpretation. They often use durable and strong materials such as marble or granite and depict symbols and shapes that are easy to interpret, such as religious insignias, nationalist symbols, or heroic figures. Although they are still around today as illustrated



Memorials and Transitional Justice, Fig. 5 Choeung Ek memorial, Cambodia

by the Soviet War Memorial in Berlin, they were particularly prominent prior to the First World War, when they often glorified wars, war heroes, and nationalism (Fig. 6). Rather than reflecting on the causes and consequences of violence, they sought to introduce historical closure. After the experience of extreme violence during the First World War, the strength of the nation and the virtue of fighting were increasingly challenged, a development which was also reflected in memorial design, leading to a shift away from monumental memorials to victories towards unambiguous memorials to death (Koselleck 2002: 320). This led, *inter alia*, to an increase in the establishment of memorials and tombs to the Unknown Soldier and to a stronger focus on ordinary soldiers who lost their lives for their country (Kattago 2015: 185), rather than war heroes. Even though still imposing, they became more humble and displayed the pain of violence through dead bodies, pietas, or lists of names of fallen soldiers.

A further change occurred after the horrors of the Second World War and the Holocaust, leading to the establishment of counter-monuments (a term coined by Young (1992)). Counter-monuments critically engage with the object of remembrance as well as with the practice of

remembrance itself. This derives from an understanding that it is impossible to adequately represent atrocities. Some artists turn to abstract art to combine the wish to remember with the impossibility of finding an adequate material representation. Importantly, they portray an unwillingness to introduce closure through a memorial, thus standing in stark contrast to the fixedness and certainties of imposing memorials. An important aspect of counter-monument is hence that instead of introducing a sense of closure, comfort, and certainty, their objective is to keep visitors engaged and thinking (Young 1992: 270).

Affirmative memorials, lastly, assert that it is imperative to remember. They pick up the aesthetics of abstraction of counter-monument, but instead of questioning the possibility of remembrance they contend that commemoration is an obligation. Affirmative memorials hold that there is a duty to remember. Aesthetically, instead of figuratively expressing a particular idea, as imposing memorials do, they often draw on minimalism and conception art, and work with pictures, moving images, sound or objects. Many contemporary memorials, such as the Memorial for the Victims of National Socialist Euthanasia Killings in Berlin, seek to involve visitors by making them walk through and engage with the site, engrossing them

Memorials and Transitional Justice,
Fig. 6 Soviet War Memorial in Berlin, Germany



in a multilayered, ambivalent sensual experience, rather than imposing meaning on them (Fig. 7). Some memorials look like works in progress or seem unfinished; they do not come equipped with a plaque that explains their form or even the past atrocity.

Affirmative memorials are highly relevant for transitional justice processes. The wish to commemorate and to provide symbolic reparations to victims of the conflict is central to both, so that they feature strongly in transitional justice processes. But let us look at the link between memorials and transitional justice in more detail.

Memorials as Transitional Justice

In transitional justice processes, memorials serve as symbolic reparations to the victims of violence and as an acknowledgement of past pain. This is based on the assumption that the particular attention

victims receive through a memorial gives them back some of the dignity they lost during the violence. The UN *Resolution on Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law* (2005) stipulates this clearly when referring to commemoration as an important means of symbolic reparation. If violence was perpetrated against a group on the basis of a particular aspect of their collective identity (e.g., faith, origin, sexual orientation, ethnic belonging, or race), public recognition of the injustice bears the potential to strengthen this aspect of their collective identity and turn it into something to be valued and appreciated. More recently, constructing a memorial has even become part of the sentences passed by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in order to “dignify the memory of the victims” (Inter-American Court of Human Rights 2009: 113).

Memorials and Transitional Justice,
Fig. 7 Memorial for the
Victims of National
Socialist Euthanasia
Killings in Berlin, Germany



Memorials are frequently established in order to stimulate open debates during and beyond transitional justice processes, so that visitors think critically about the causes and consequences of violence. This may include past violence but also future discrimination, oppression, and hatred in one's own society and beyond (Brett et al. 2007). As sites of conscience, they promote the idea of “never again” and call upon visitors to be active in preventing future violence. This goes hand in hand with a strong educational focus expressed in workshops, lectures, film, interactive displays, and tours. To illustrate, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D. C., a very well visited site, offers many explanatory features, including clips, information on digital devices, and texts in its main exhibition. In its shop it sells thermos flasks (and in doing so commodifies remembrance) with the words “never again starts with you” and shirts with the print

“think about what you saw” and “what you do matters” (Fig. 8). On a global level – and in line with the transnationalization of memory – memorials may serve to create a sentiment of shared global responsibility to prevent future violence (Stone 2009).

Furthermore, it is often hoped that involving various parties to the conflict in the process of conceptualizing and building a memorial encourages an atmosphere of mutual respect as well as an understanding of the suffering of the other parties, and that this contributes to an improvement of relations between them. This requires memorials to be designed in a way that narrates the past so that all parties can identify with it and thus contributes to the transformation of the conflict. This is closely connected to the last aspect: memorials may serve as vehicles to (re-)build a violence-torn society or nation. On the national level, this involves practices that enhance national



Memorials and Transitional Justice, Fig. 8 United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, USA

identification in order to bind citizens into a collective national identity (Ashplant et al. 2000: 7).

In cases where transitional justice is primarily sought by a group whose suffering has not been widely acknowledged, memorials may be erected in order to obtain some recognition and to draw attention to past atrocities. For victims, they become moments of assertion of their rights – of which they were deprived in the past – giving them back at least some form of agency. For many, having their voices heard may be an important element of justice in the phase of transition.

So far, the positive link between transitional justice and memorials has been stressed. And yet, memorials are a mixed blessing. The past they seek to refer to, the meaning they seek to establish, and the social change they seek to introduce are not beyond contestation and frequently give rise to struggles over the right interpretation of the past. Memorials are therefore often sites of contestation. In particular, memorials that mainly portray the view of one party to the conflict may cause resentment and antagonism and have a negative effect on the transition from violence to peaceful coexistence by producing and re-producing enmity among the parties to the conflict.

These links between memorials and transitional justice illustrate that they may reinforce each other – but also conflict. As with transitional justice mechanisms more generally, if and how they increase antagonisms and to what extent very much depends on the position of the individual onlooker or the party to the conflict. In societies in transition, there are many views and interpretations that change over time. It is thus important not to read too much importance into the contribution of memorials in transitional justice processes, there is little conclusive evidence that all the hope put into memorials to advance the transition of postviolence societies to sustainable peace are indeed borne out (Bickford and Sodaro 2010; Björkdahl et al. 2017).

The Kigali Genocide Memorial

In order to commemorate the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, the Kigali Genocide Memorial was

established in 2004. According to its website, it serves as a place of remembrance and learning about the genocide against the Tutsi as well as the final resting place of 250,000 victims (Kigali Genocide Memorial n.d.-a). The memorial is a large complex consisting of a building with three permanent exhibitions, a wall of names (yet to be finished), the Genocide Archive of Rwanda, a library, several Gardens of Reflection, an amphitheater to host commemoration events, and three mass graves. It is placed near Rwanda's capital Kigali (i.e., not in an authentic place where atrocities occurred) and functions as the country's official commemoration site where major events take place, state visitors as well as tourists may pay their respects to the victims, and relatives may mourn the loss of their loved ones.

One central objective of the memorial is to educate visitors on the genocide. This rationale is expressed in the statement that “[i]t is through education that we can prevent mass atrocities from occurring in our communities” (Kigali Genocide Memorial n.d.-b), thus invoking the notion of “never again.” Tours are guided – either by a person or an audio guide – and cover the three permanent exhibitions. The largest exhibition entitled *The 1994 Genocide Against the Tutsi* is dedicated to explaining the history, development, and scope of the genocide by using show cases, displays, objects, film, pictures, and a catalogue. It also outlines the development of Rwandan society from the time before colonialization to the atrocities of 1994 based on a narrative of unification as generally promoted by the Rwandan government. The second exhibition called *Wasted Lives* is dedicated to other occurrences of genocide and mass violence, some of which have not been labeled genocide in International Criminal Law. In line with Rothberg's argument about multidirectional memory, as introduced above, the memorial hence situates itself in a *longue durée* of extreme violence by referring to Armenia, Namibia, the Balkans, Cambodia, and the Holocaust. The *Children's Room*, lastly, is dedicated to the memory of the many babies and children which perished during the genocide.

Aesthetically, due to its many different buildings, exhibitions, and features, the memorial

works with a large variety of styles and forms that are adapted from transnational and local memory culture. The gardens are densely filled with plants and flowers and provide spaces for withdrawal and personal reflection. Both the Wall of Names and a Wall of Pictures of victims in the exhibition space remind the visitors that it was not a large anonymous group of people who were killed but individuals with a name, a face, a life. The Wall of Pictures, for instance, is composed of personal photos of victims which depicts them in everyday situations or private events such as birthdays or weddings, emphasizing their humanness against the backdrop of the dehumanizing aspect of the genocidal violence. This effort to individualize victims is also repeated in the catalogue of the exhibition by showing their identity cards (Fig. 9). Emotionally, the *Children's Room*, in particular, seeks to provoke strong sentiments of

sadness and grief among the visitors. In addition, the genocide exhibition section *During the Genocide* works with darkness, audio testimonies of individual survivors, graphic descriptions, and shocking images of violence and authentic objects such as machetes in order to communicate a multi-sensual message of terror and horror. The memorial also works with human remains in the form of the skulls and bones of victims, which are exhibited behind glass, as well as personal belongings found at massacre sites, such as clothes, rosaries, and books. Regarding the function of the memorial as a burial place, it is necessary to have mass graves since the excavation of bodies continues, yet these bodies also provide the memorial with a sense of authenticity, because they link the physical consequences of the genocide – dead bodies – to the site. They make visitors aware that the dead are always around them,



Memorials and Transitional Justice, Fig. 9 Kigali Genocide Memorial/Aegis Trust catalogue page 47

contributing to a solemn atmosphere as in a cemetery. Overall, the site itself strongly affirms the necessity to remember, both explicitly and implicitly, and can thus be categorized as an affirmative memorial.

The Kigali Genocide Memorial is one of many memorials to commemorate the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, but due to the fact that it serves as the national memorial and that it houses a comprehensive exhibition to explain the events, it has a special status and thus relevance (Friedrich et al. 2018). Most other memorials are located at authentic sites and display the context of violence and atrocity without much analysis, apart from the tours offered by guides. The memorial in Kigali, however, represents the current state of the art in memorial design and didactics and bears strong similarities to other memorial museums, such as the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., in terms of combining commemoration with education and personal reflection. Initially, the site served as a burial place for unidentified victims of the genocide. From 2000 the UK-based nongovernmental organization Aegis Trust transformed it into a memorial, which was inaugurated on the 10th anniversary of the genocide in 2004. This international involvement, as well as the support of various international donors over the years, testifies to the transnational character of the place. Today, the Kigali Genocide Memorial is a popular tourist destination in a country that does not attract large numbers of visitors and can thus be considered a site of dark tourism (Lennon and Foley 2000).

As explored above, memorials to violence are often contested. Regarding the Kigali Genocide Memorial, one of the most contentious issues is its dominant – and imposing – narrative about the history of the genocide, its depictions of Rwandan society, and its exclusive reference to Tutsi as the sole fatalities of the genocide and the civil war in the context of which the genocide occurred (Jessee 2017). In essence, the permanent exhibition *The 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi* portrays Rwanda as a country of unity and harmony prior to the arrival of first German and then Belgian colonial rules. It was the colonial administration,

so the argument, that turned socio-economic identity groups into racial identities, polarized and politicized them, and thus paved the way for the deep-seated hatred which provided the ground for the massacres of 1994. This is also reiterated in the catalogue of the exhibition which concludes “[w]e had lived in peace for many centuries, but now the divide between us had begun . . .” (Kigali Memorial Center/Aegis Trust 2004: 9) (Fig. 10). Without reiterating the contestation of various narratives on the history of Rwanda in great detail in this chapter, it is important to point out that this account is highly contested within as well as outside of Rwanda (Buckley-Zistel 2009; Eltringham 2004; Mannergren Selimovic 2017; Sodaro 2011). In addition, out of the three ethnic groups in Rwanda, only victims of Tutsi ethnic belonging are represented in national remembrance. There were also fatalities among the Hutu (the group out of which the genocide perpetrators emerged) as well as among the Batwa, yet they do not find representation in the memorial. There is, however, a more recent trend in commemoration politics to point out heroic acts by Hutu individuals who saved Tutsi.

As a consequence, the Kigali Genocide Memorial serves as a memorial, i.e., as a site for visitors to Rwanda to pay their respects and to be educated on the events, yet also as a place for the Rwandan government to articulate its particular version of the past. In this sense, the idea is for the memorial to serve as a vehicle for nation-building. In the vocabulary of the Rwandan government, it should promote “unity and reconciliation.” Given that the government has a very strict policy of sanctioning people who question this narrative (in the worst case with reference to a law against divisionism that prohibits engaging critically with the different views on Tutsi, Hutu, and Batwa), memorialization in Rwanda is highly political and conflictual. In this sense, the Kigali Genocide Memorial is an affirmative memorial that imposes a particular view on the past, present, and future. It does not leave any room for interpretation of or reflection on the causes and consequences of violence but sends out a clear message, making further personal interpretation superfluous.



Memorials and Transitional Justice, Fig. 10 Kigali Genocide Memorial/Aegis Trust catalogue page 8–9

Conclusions

Memorials fulfill an important social and political function in countries that have experienced violent conflict. They serve as reminders of past atrocities, educate people on the causes and consequences of violence, and store information about the atrocities in a particular locality. Using memorials in transitional justice processes is a rather new phenomenon which has gained much traction in recent years. This is based on the hope that memorials provide some form of justice and symbolic reparations for the victims and contribute to a culture of “never again” and thus peacebuilding. And yet, as the example of the Kigali Genocide Memorial illustrates, memorials may also be contested if they seek to determine a particular interpretation of the past and impose their narrative on visitors by designing an

exhibition that tells a clear story about the events. In deeply divided societies, memorials may thus contribute to continuous resentment and antagonism between the parties to a conflict if they are used as a political tool.

And yet, as the discussion on the different aesthetic forms of memorials indicates, memorials can also be designed in a way that does not communicate a clear and imposing message but leaves scope for interpretation. One of the most striking memorials in this regard is the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin. It consists of 2711 concrete steles in parallel rows yet at slightly different heights through which visitors can walk to become immersed in the site (Fig. 11). The memorial works purely with the personal, physical experience – i.e., with emotions. There are no signs to explain or interpret the structure, although there is a detached underground information



Memorials and Transitional Justice, Fig. 11 Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin, Germany

center, which educates visitors on the Holocaust more generally. The Holocaust Memorial has been criticized for the absence of information about the atrocity, yet – truly in the spirit of the counter-monument discussed above – it does not want to impose a particular view about the past but instead open the minds and horizons of the visitors to think for themselves. In this sense, it democratizes memorialization because everybody can – and should – reflect on the past.

What does this mean for memorials in deeply divided societies that emerge from violence, though? How can memorialization be kept open and alive, as well as still the wish of survivors for some form of justice? How can it prevent new governments from imposing their version of events? These and many more questions need to be considered when constructing memorials as measures in transitional justice processes, so that memorials may contribute to building peace.

Summary

In transitional justice processes, memorialization serves as a means of symbolic reparation, thus expanding the scope of dealing with the legacy of violent conflicts and repression from tribunals, truth commissions, and monetary reparations to memorials and commemorations. This is based on the assumption that dealing with the past always requires revisiting the past as well as considering the future in order to prevent new violence. And yet, memorials are a mixed blessing. The past they seek to refer to, the meaning they seek to establish, and the social change they seek to introduce are not beyond contestation and frequently give rise to struggles over the right interpretation of this past. In particular, memorials which mainly portray the view of one party to the conflict may cause resentment and have a negative effect on the transition from violence to peaceful coexistence.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Art and Reconciliation](#)
- ▶ [Conflict, Memory, and Memory Activism: Dealing with Difficult Pasts](#)
- ▶ [Hybrid Courts and Transitional Justice](#)
- ▶ [Human Dignity and Transitional Justice](#)

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Mock Trials

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Moldova-Transnistria Conflict

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Synonyms

[De Facto State](#); [Disintegration](#); [Division](#); [Secession](#); [Soviet](#); [Unrecognised State](#)

Definition

The internationally recognized territory of Moldova is divided between the area controlled by the Moldovan capital, Chişinău, and the de facto independent state of Transnistria. For the most part, the two regimes are divided by the Dniester River, and, consequently, Transnistria and Chişinău-controlled territories are sometimes referred to respectively as “left-bank” and “right-bank” Moldova. The conflict between Moldova and Transnistria originally flared up as Soviet power ebbed during the late 1980s and early 1990s. Transnistrian fears for the fate of the Russian language and of the possibility of Moldova uniting with Romania were at the root of the conflict. The clashes began in December 1991, intensified the following May, and culminated on June 19, 1992 when a large-scale military battle took place to determine which side would control the city of Bender. The battle for Bender ended as Russian forces intervened and Moldovan forces were driven out of the town. The conflict claimed approximately 1000 lives. The ceasefire negotiated in July 1992 has held ever since. Today, Transnistria (officially the Pridnestrovian Moldavian Republic, or PMR) is a post-Soviet unrecognized state with Russia being its primary source of external support. While renewed military hostilities are considered very unlikely, a transformative conflict settlement has also proved elusive.

Background

Between the First World War and the Second World War, much of what is now Moldova, then called Bessarabia, formed part of Romania. Transnistria has had a different historical trajectory. Between 1924 and 1940 the Moldavian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (ASSR) was an autonomous republic of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (SSR) encompassing modern-day Transnistria – with the exception of the strategically important town of Bender (Tighina in Romanian) – along with territories that are part of contemporary Ukraine. Following the Ribbentrop-Molotov pact, and a decision of the USSR’s Supreme Soviet, a new Soviet Socialist Republic of Moldova, with a

territory of 33,846 km², was created on August 2, 1940, from a part of the Moldavian ASSR roughly equivalent to the present-day Transnistria and a part of Bessarabia (annexed by Soviet forces from Romania on June 28, 1940).

During the Soviet-era, Moldovans of Bessarabian origin were not trusted with the same degree of political power as Transnistrians, and until 1989 the latter always supplied the first secretaries of the Republic's communist party (King 1999, p. 134). The traditional Latin alphabet of the Romanian language, used by the majority of right-bank residents of the Moldovan SSR, was replaced with the Cyrillic alphabet to encourage the perception that Moldovan constituted a separate nationality from Romanian. Within Transnistria, the Russian language predominated as a means of communication (Comai and Venturi 2015, pp. 890, 900). When the USSR collapsed, the international community recognized the 15 Soviet Socialist Republics – the highest status of a region within the Soviet Union – as independent states and facilitated their speedy entry into the United Nations. Consequently, international law stipulates that Transnistria is part of Moldova, although successive Moldovan governments have been unable to impose their authority on the region. The unrecognized Pridnestrovian Moldavian Republic (PMR) is sandwiched between Moldova and Ukraine with a territory of 4163 km². It has its own security forces and currency (the Transnistrian Rouble). Home to approximately 130,000 people, the Transnistrian capital of Tiraspol is where the PMR parliament, president, and government agencies are located.

The populations of Moldova and Transnistria have been substantially reduced as a result of natural loss and migration. The last Soviet census of 1989 recorded 4,337,600 living in Moldova, of whom approximately 700,000 lived in what is now Transnistria. In 2019, the population of Moldova was estimated to be 2,681,735 while a census held in the PMR 4 years earlier put the population residing there as 475,665 (Fomenko 2017, p. 7). Whereas Romanian-speaking Moldovans constitute the majority of the population of Chişinău-controlled Moldova, Transnistria's population is more diverse with no ethnicity enjoying a majority. Rather, Russians, Ukrainians, and Moldovans live

there in almost equal numbers, together making up around 93% of the population (Transnistrian Ministry of Economic Development 2017) with Russian being the lingua franca. Over the years, the authorities in Tiraspol have tried to transcend these ethnic differences by encouraging a common Transnistrian identity. While a common Soviet experience has resulted in very large sections of the population being indifferent in practice to religious adherence, Moldovans and Transnistrians share a common Eastern Orthodox Christianity.

Origins of the Conflict

In 1988, the Moldavian Supreme Soviet returned the Moldovan language to the Latin alphabet and on August 31 of the following year made Romanian the sole official state language. The new legislation permitted the removal of officials who did not meet the required proficiency by January 1994 and led to strikes in Transnistria. In April 1990, the Moldavian Supreme Soviet adopted a tricolor resembling that of Romania as the state flag. Local authorities throughout Transnistria refused to recognize the flag and continued to fly the flag of the Moldovan SSR. The following month, the Moldovan Supreme Soviet dropped all Soviet references in the state's name, which was now changed to the Republic of Moldova. In September 1990, the Moldovan legislature declared its sovereignty and nullified the transfer of Bessarabia from Romania to the USSR by the 1939 Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. As Transnistria had not been part of Bessarabian Romania but, rather, had been part of the Soviet Union prior to the 1939 pact; annulling the Nazi-Soviet pact also invalidated Transnistria's status as part of Moldova. Transnistrians responded by establishing the Pridnestrovian Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic. Furthermore, they announced their intention to secede from Moldova and urged Gorbachev to admit Transnistria into the USSR and for continued Soviet control. The Moldovan parliament elected Mircea Snegur as president with broad executive powers and mobilized thousands of Interior Ministry troops for service not only in Transnistria but also in the region of Gagauzia, which also entertained secessionist ambitions (Kosienkowski 2017). Influential elements within the Soviet

military and security services sometimes supported the Transnistrians as part of their efforts to keep the union together.

On April 1, 1991, the Transnistrian parliament announced the establishment of its own state bank and declared that enterprises under its control would not contribute to the Moldovan state budget, a significant decision given that the overwhelming bulk of Moldovan industry was located in Transnistria. Just over 3 weeks later, on August 27, 1991, the legislature in Chişinău declared Moldova's independence. Following the failed coup against Mikhail Gorbachev, Transnistrians repeated their intention of seceding from Moldova. Igor Smirnov was elected Transnistria's first president on December 1, 1991, a position he would hold for two decades (Igor Smirnov, interview with the author, Tiraspol, 2016). One week later Moldovan presidential elections returned Mircea Snegur, who had been the only candidate. Separatists in Transnistria and Gagauzia boycotted the election (King 1999, pp. 183–196).

A brief but intense war between Moldova and Transnistria resulted in the deaths of approximately 1000 people (almost 400 died in May 1992 alone) (Roper 2004, pp. 108–110). The peace agreement that concluded on July 21, 1992, established a three-party (Moldova, Russia, and Transnistria) Joint Control Commission to supervise the cease-fire regime, implement agreements on withdrawal of armed forces and other groups, including weapons and ammunition, and provide a security regime in the Security Zone as well as contribute to the peaceful settlement of the conflict by political means. Current conflict management initiatives include a trilateral peacekeeping operation, three-level negotiations within the “5+2” format combined with confidence building measures including “Bavaria conferences,” and externally funded joint projects involving Moldovan and Transnistrian authorities, civil society representatives, and the wider population.

Russia

With its 14th Army ensconced in Transnistria for almost three decades, the Kremlin is a decisive

player. In 2004, the European Court of Human Rights concluded that Transnistria “remained under the effective authority, or at the very least under the decisive influence of Russia, and in any event it survived by virtue of the military, economic, financial and political support that Russia gave it” (ECHR 2004, para. 392). Russia provides huge energy subsidies to the PMR. It was estimated that in 2019 Transnistria owed over USD 7 billion in unpaid energy bills. These gas subsidies constitute about 48% of Transnistrian GDP during the previous decade. In other words, almost half of Transnistria's economy exists thanks to this gas subsidy. In addition, revenue from gas sales to enterprises and private consumers in Transnistria constitutes 35% of the region's budget (Newsmaker 2019). Russia also provides pension top-ups to senior citizens in Transnistria that have acquired Russian citizenship.

Burned by its experiences during the 1990s when many post-communist states in Central and Eastern Europe joined NATO, the Kremlin has sought a guarantee that a united Moldova which includes Transnistria would never join the western military alliance. Moldovan leaders have occasionally claimed that Russia's offers to cooperate on the Transnistrian issue have been framed in terms of Moldova's geopolitical orientation. In 2006, the then Minister for Reintegration and Moldova's Chief Negotiator for the Transnistrian conflict, Vasili Sova, described relations with Russia as follows:

... our Russian partners make us understand that the position of Russia is connected with the internal policy of Moldova and they make us understand that if Moldova refuses to integrate with the EU, if its vector of movement won't be directed towards Europe, then they could talk with Chişinău in a different way ... They let us know that Russia is willing to use every way to keep its influence in the region and in the whole of Moldova. (Vasili Sova, interview with the author, Chişinău, 2006)

The geopolitical sentiments of Moldovans have since become more complex. In 2019, only 19% of the population was recorded as having a positive attitude to their country joining NATO (International Republican Institute 2019, pp. 61–62). Russia and the EU are considered to be equally important political and economic partners. The desire of Moldovans to become a member of the EU is only

slightly greater (47% vs. 37%) than becoming a member of the Kremlin-sponsored Customs Union, with enthusiasm for the EU far more pronounced among the young (International Republican Institute 2019, pp. 58–60).

External Trade and International Engagements

The Transnistrian economy is particularly dependent on external trade. Its industry heavily relies on natural gas that is imported from Russia without payment and sold in Transnistria below market rates, an arrangement that allows the Transnistrian economy to remain competitive (Ó Beacháin et al. 2016: p. 433). The EU, right-bank Moldova, and Ukraine are the core markets for Transnistrian producers. Transnistrian companies obtain registrations on the right bank of Moldova to benefit from facilities offered by the Moldova-EU Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA). Unlike other Transnistrian businesses that can register in right-bank Moldova and trade internationally, Transnistrian banks are denied such options and are isolated due to their inability to access licenses in Moldova. Remittances sent to Transnistria by labor migrants, most of whom work in Russia, prop up internal consumption. About half of the officially employed workforce is engaged in the public sector. The economic plight of Transnistrian residents is alleviated by relatively generous social security benefits and subsidized utility rates. Large public sector and pension expenditure result in the Transnistrian public budget's chronic deficit of up to 40%. The deficit is partially covered with proceeds obtained through the sale of imported Russian natural gas (Comai 2018: pp. 105–109).

Many within the Moldovan, Transnistrian, and, indeed, the Ukrainian economic and political elites have benefited from the anomalous character of Transnistria's economy (Oazu Nantoi, interview with the author, Chişinău, 2006). Much of the Transnistrian economy is concentrated in the hands of a small number of powerful individuals, many of whom cooperate with counterparts on the right-bank of the Dniester, which has created vested interests opposed to integration with

Moldova. Energy and metals are the main Transnistrian imports and exports, entering Transnistria as prime material and leaving as ready-made products for sale. According to Transnistrian data, foreign trade turnover in goods in 2018, including trade with right-bank Moldova, amounted to USD 1913 million (Transnistrian Customs Agency 2019). The trade balance was negative and stood at minus USD 519 million (–43% of total).

Similar to the right-bank Moldova and Ukraine, Transnistria is affected by labor emigration. About a quarter of working age Transnistrians work abroad and remittances sent by labor migrants are an important driver of consumption in Transnistria. This source of income has decreased in recent years due to currency depreciation in Russia, where three-quarters of Transnistrian labor migrants (about 70,000 people) head in search of work (Fomenko 2017, pp. 16, 21). According to the International Organisation for Migration, workforce emigration is causing “critical depopulation” (Fomenko 2017, p. 35). Up to half of Transnistrian households rely to some extent on remittances (Fomenko 2017, p. 45) and these are normally used for private consumption rather than for investment (Ostavnaia 2017, p. 135). Over two-thirds of all remittances in 2018 came from Russia (Transnistria Republican Bank 2018). Furthermore, most Transnistrians hold multiple passports and will apply for as many as possible with a view to maximizing their rights and privileges. Russian, Moldovan, and Ukrainian citizenship are the most widely distributed in Transnistria. In parallel to this process, many Moldovans have Romanian passports, and this has facilitated mass migration to the European Union (Ganohariti 2019; Tabachnik 2019, pp. 99–104).

The OSCE

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) has primary responsibility for negotiations to achieve a settlement of the Transnistrian conflict. It remains a convenient substitute for the involvement of great powers and absolves them from acting in their own name. The OSCE is less an organization than a forum (the original name referred to it being a conference), has a

rotating leadership, and the Secretary General is a civil servant. Moreover, the OSCE participating states have no hierarchy, it works by consensus, and an institutionalized veto is given to each member. For three decades a number of mechanisms have been employed for conflict management purposes. These include a trilateral peacekeeping operation composed of Russian, Moldovan, and Transnistrian military that is entrusted with the responsibility of monitoring a security zone separating the territories controlled from the Moldovan capital of Chişinău and the Transnistrian capital, Tiraspol. This in turn is directed by a Joint Control Commission (JCC) composed of Moldovan, Transnistrian, and Russian representatives, with Ukraine and the OSCE acting as observers. Parallel to these activities are those of “The Permanent Conference on Political Issues in the Framework of the Negotiating Process for Transdnistriean Settlement” or, as it is more commonly known, “the 5+2 political process.” These negotiations involve the two conflicting parties along with Russia, Ukraine, and the OSCE as mediators. Since 2005 the talks format has been expanded to include the EU and the United States as observers (thus “5+2”). The negotiations within the format are now conducted at three levels: the annual high-profile “5+2” conference; the “1+1” meetings, in which the two sides directly negotiate with each other through their political representatives; and the expert working groups (currently 13), established by the sides in different fields which bring together specialists from relevant structures in Moldova and Transnistria.

The closest the Moldovan and Transnistrian leaderships came to agree a new dispensation was in 2003 with the Russian-brokered “Kozak memorandum” (officially titled the Russian Draft Memorandum on the Basic Principles of the State Structure of a United State in Moldova). This proposed a united asymmetric federal state of Moldova under which Transnistrian senators would be able to block changes to the constitution (Wolff 2011). Negotiations for this agreement were conducted in complete secrecy and without consulting the OSCE, EU, the United States, Ukraine, or other interested parties. When western

powers learned of the deal, they persuaded Chişinău to withdraw at the last minute. President Putin was reported to be on the verge of flying to Moldova to oversee the agreement’s signing (Popescu 2010, p. 46). The EU and United States believed a settlement based on the Kozak memorandum would paralyze the united Moldovan state and make it dependent in perpetuity on external (i.e., Russian) mediation to achieve the consensus necessary to devise and implement government policies. The Kozak memorandum reflected a consistent theme in Russian foreign policy toward the Moldovan-Transnistrian conflict. Rather than endorsing Transnistria’s independent statehood, Russia preferred the region to be part of a federal or confederal Moldova, and to enjoy such wide-ranging powers that it could block any attempt to integrate Moldova into Euro-Atlantic institutions.

Moldova’s rejection of the Kozak memorandum triggered a breakdown in settlement talks. In 2012, official “5+2” negotiations resumed following a nearly six-year hiatus. These OSCE-brokered talks have provided a regular forum for discussion between the conflicting sides for mutually beneficial cooperation and defusing potential crises. In 2017–2018, the settlement process witnessed remarkable progress, with Chişinău and Tiraspol signing and implementing a number of agreements on long-standing issues. In addition to the opening of the Gura Bicului-Bychok Bridge in November 2017, the sides implemented agreements in 2018 related to the participation of vehicles from Transnistria in international road traffic, the access of Moldovan farmers to their lands in the Dubăsari area, the functioning of Latin-script schools on the left bank, and the apostilization of Transdnistriean university diplomas by the Moldovan Ministry of Justice to facilitate their use abroad. The negotiations have still failed to produce a comprehensive agreement that would transform the conflict.

The European Union

During the 1990s, the European Union left the issue of the Transnistrian conflict to the OSCE. This policy of inertia was reversed in 2002 due to

the inauguration of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and the impending EU enlargements, which brought its membership to Moldova's borders (Popescu 2010). Moldova negotiated an ENP Action Plan that involved integrating parts of the *acquis communautaire* into national legislation. The EU played a key role in scuppering the Kozak plan as High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana, phoned Moldovan President Voronin to warn of the consequences of signing up to the deal (Popescu 2010, pp. 46–47). President Voronin shifted the emphasis of his foreign policy orientation toward the EU and away from Russia, not least because of the fallout from the Kozak memorandum debacle and the breakdown of the five-party settlement talks. Consequently, the Moldovan government increasingly requested that the EU take a more active role in the settlement process.

Viktor Yushchenko's inauguration as president of Ukraine in 2005 following the much-publicized Orange Revolution enhanced Moldova's position vis-à-vis Transnistria (Kennedy 2010). During the subsequent 5 years (2005–2010) the EU became more involved in efforts to ameliorate the Moldova-Transnistria conflict though its energies were largely confined to those areas of potential improvement that did not rely on Russian support. Foremost among these was the policy of combating corruption and the shadow economy in Transnistria. The EU's most ambitious initiative during this period was the European Union Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine (EUBAM) established in 2005 at the invitation of Presidents Yushchenko and Voronin. Its brief was to monitor smuggling and trafficking along the 472 km border shared by Transnistria and Ukraine over which Chişinău exercised no control (Vasili Sova, interview with the author, Chişinău, 2006). EUBAM enjoyed a double advantage in that its operation did not depend on the Kremlin's goodwill and its mandate was not overtly political but rather a technical endeavor to assist in the fight against "weapons trafficking, smuggling, organised crime and corruption" (Council of the European Union 2005). It recognized that such endeavors might "contribute to wider efforts to find a viable

and sustainable solution to the Transnistria conflict" (Council of the European Union 2005).

Complementary to EUBAM was the European Union's policy of helping Moldova to overcome some of its domestic economic and political problems with a view to the state becoming more attractive to residents in Transnistria. On March 23, 2005, Adriaan Jacobovits de Szeged was appointed the first EU Special Representative (EUSR) to Moldova (in 2003 he had held the position of special envoy to Moldova of the Dutch chairmanship of the OSCE) and he was succeeded by Kalman Mizsei who served as EUSR from March 2007 to February 2011, after which the position was discontinued. Neither of the EUSRs was based in Moldova, but they played a valuable role in gathering information and playing a diplomatic role for the EU not least because the EUSR compensated for the paucity of EU member state embassies in the country (only three in 2004). Although the EU (along with the United States) joined the five-party settlement talks in 2005 as an observer, in practice its level of participation does not differ from the others.

The EU slowly increased its efforts to encourage Transnistria to have closer ties with Chişinău. A number of measures – the granting by the EU of the Generalized System of Preferences Plus trade regime to Moldova in 2006, the introduction of a new customs regime the same year, and the extension to Moldova of the Autonomous Trade Preferences – had the combined effect of shepherding Transnistrian companies to Chişinău to register with the authorities there in order to access EU markets. Moreover, Moldova's trade has switched from being focused on the former Soviet Union, as was the case during the 1990s and reoriented its trade and political engagement toward the EU. Since 2008, the majority of Moldova's exports are destined for the EU market and EU assistance to Moldova doubled to €250 million between 2007 and 2010 (Popescu 2010, p. 57). However, a scandal in 2014 involving elements within the political elite stealing approximately one billion USD from three Moldovan banks (equivalent to 15% of Moldova's GDP) resulted in the EU, along with the IMF and World Bank, freezing financial assistance to Moldova (Calus 2016, pp. 27, 68, 80).

When the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area between the EU and Moldova entered into force in July 2016 it provided an additional stimulus for Transnistrian business to cooperate with the Moldovan authorities in order to access EU markets. However, the EU has been much less successful in promoting more politicized conflict resolution endeavors that require Russian approval. A good example was the rejection in 2006 of EUSR Jacobovits's proposal to change the peacekeeping format in Transnistria so that it was transformed from a Russian-dominated force to one jointly administered by Russia and the EU. This echoed Jacobovits 2003 proposal when, as special envoy to Moldova during the Dutch OSCE chairmanship, he proposed a widening of the peacekeeping format. The plan was stymied by opposition or skepticism within key EU states, which feared that the European Union would unduly antagonize Russia and was an open-ended commitment without a guarantee of success.

The obstacles facing the EU in promoting conflict-resolution efforts remain substantial. As one senior EU official put it:

We have an entire new generation in Transnistria which hasn't known what Moldova means. They do not consider Moldova as a motherland and when you read the history textbooks in Transnistria you understand why they don't want to be with Moldova. [Moreover] . . . you have a growing disinterest for [the] Transnistrian issue amongst the population [of Moldova]. Studies . . . show that in Moldova you have more than 50% of the population predict that their future is within the EU whereas in Transnistria it is not really this. If you ask them, they want to be with Russia. [interview with the author, Brussels, 2011]

Summary

As the Soviet Union began to dissolve, fears of Moldovan/Romanian unionism and discrimination against non-Romanian speakers triggered secessionist opposition among the majority Slavic population of Transnistria. Because the Soviet collapse rendered continued membership of the USSR untenable, Transnistrians switched their stated goal to independence but have kept the

door ajar to unity with Russia. Utilizing the 1992 ceasefire and peacekeeping operations within Transnistria, Russia froze the conflict in an unresolved state, which has enabled it to exert leverage on all parties to the conflict. The Moldovan government stresses the inviolability of borders and territorial integrity of the country. It claims that the Transnistrian problem has inhibited economic development and influenced negative social, economic, and political trends. While Russia has participated as a nominally neutral mediator in international efforts to resolve the conflict, Moldovan governments have emphasized Russia's role in prolonging the conflict citing, for example, the large subsidies that Russia gives to Transnistria and the presence of Russian troops in the region. Opinion polls and focus groups suggest that Transnistria is not an issue of high priority for the electorate (International Republican Institute 2018: p. 33) and, thus, the Moldovan political elite have more room for maneuver than, say, their counterparts in the South Caucasus. The OSCE is the principal forum for mediating the conflict but as an organization composed of civil servants, the vast majority of whom work there temporarily, it can only provide a platform. Any responsibility for deadlock rests with member states and not with the OSCE. Despite the oft-proclaimed relative ease with which a solution should be found, a final settlement has proved elusive.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Balkanization](#)
- ▶ [Georgian-Abkhaz Conflict](#)
- ▶ [Troubles, The: The Northern Ireland Conflict](#)

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Monitoring and Evaluation

- [Colombian Peace Agreement 2016](#)

Mozambique

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Synonyms

[Civil war](#); [Southern Africa](#)

Definition

Following centuries of Portuguese colonialization and years of anti-colonial struggle, Mozambique

became independent in 1975 under the leadership of the Mozambican Liberation Front (Frelimo). Between 1977 and 1992, this country endured an extremely violent war that opposed the government of Frelimo and the Mozambican National Resistance (Renamo). A peace accord was signed in 1992 after a long process of mediation, and its implementation was overseen by a United Nations mission, set up to monitor the first multiparty elections in 1994.

For nearly 20 years after the peace agreement, Mozambique was considered a successful case of peacebuilding. It kept political stability and positive macroeconomic indicators while receiving a large amount of foreign aid. Notwithstanding this, poverty has been a persistent problem, with Mozambique remaining one of the poorest countries in the world. Moreover, despite several institutional reforms and the emergence of new parties, Frelimo has constantly maintained political and economic dominance in the country. In 2013 this scenario and many pending issues that were not resolved with the peace agreement, in particular related to disarmament and demobilization, led to the resumption of violence by an armed faction of Renamo and its leader Dhlakama. A new peace agreement was signed in 2014, followed by renewed escalation of the conflict in 2015. In August 2019 a third peace deal was signed between Frelimo and Renamo. In October general elections took place, and, once more, Frelimo's candidate and current president, Filipe Nyusi, won. As widely shown in the news outlets, elections have been marked by violence and many irregularities, being contested by the opposition. It is unclear at the moment whether the peace deal will hold. Besides the contested elections, Renamo's has been fragmented after the death of its former leader, and an armed faction still threatens both the government and the current Renamo's leader.

Introduction

Mozambique gained its independence from Portugal in 1975 and was devastated by a protracted violent conflict between 1977 and 1992.

Notwithstanding the relative political stability since the signing of the peace accords, and the massive amount of foreign aid that flew to this country in the following two decades, Mozambique is still one of the poorest countries in the world, ranking 180 in the 2018 UNDP Human Development Index (UNDP 2019). Many of the problems this country faces today are reminiscent of unresolved issues that go back to the war as well as colonialism, and which were not resolved with the 1992 peace accords, in particular political centralism, inequality and lack of opportunities, and the shortcomings of a minimalist and incomplete process of security sector reform. All these contributed to the resumption of violence in 2013.

Colonialism and Early Independence

One of the key effects of colonialism in Mozambique was the institutionalization of several mechanisms of social stratification that affected the choice for a revolutionary alternative during the independence struggle. Before the arrival of the Portuguese, in 1498, Mozambique was organized into different communities with independent chieftaincies. This social structure was drastically affected by the arrival of the Portuguese, in particular from 1629, when the system of land grants called *prazos* was introduced. The *prazo* was a kind of feudal administrative scheme, which granted the settler the land and the responsibility to secure revenues and the local population's submission to the Portuguese administration (Newitt 1997). From the eighteenth century on, most of the revenues of the *prazos* came from the slave trade to Brazil and Cuba. After the slave trade was prohibited, most of the colonial profit came from the export of labor and transit fees to the region, in particular to South Africa, which was then undergoing a mineral revolution (Hall and Young 1997).

In 1930, following the coup d'état in Portugal, Salazar introduced a much more centralized system of administration, leading to a revision of the concession's system and forcing farmers in Mozambique to produce rice and cotton. In

addition, a new law was introduced forcing the majority of African men to work as contract laborers for a state or private enterprise for at least 6 months to pay their taxes (Hanlon 1984). Salazar also introduced in 1953 the *Regime do Indigenato* (Indigenous Regime), dividing Africans and mulattos into two different groups: the *assimilados* (those who could read and write Portuguese, rejected “tribal” customs, and were employed in the capitalist economy) and the *indigenas* (the majority who were not considered citizens and remained subject to customary law) (Isaacman and Isaacman 1983). While virtually anyone could become an *assimilado*, in practice only a small minority was able to ascend to this status. Ironically, while the purpose of assimilation was to create a class of black Portuguese with the aim of preventing possible nationalist movements, it was the *assimilados* who were mostly exposed to the contrasts of inequality and racial prejudice, something that contributed to the increased discontent with and rejection of the colonial system.

After Salazar’s death, his successor Marcello Caetano introduced a series of reforms in order to delink the metropolitan economy from that of the African colonies, but by now the impetus toward independence was high and hard to contain. While resistance took place in many forms all throughout the colonial period, it was through the creation of Frelimo that the idea of independence through revolution took a more organized and concrete form. Frelimo was created in June 1962 as the fusion between several emerging movements, having Eduardo Mondlane as its first leader.

The anti-colonial war started officially in September 1964. Internal divisions within Frelimo were particularly acute during the first years, reaching a peak in the late 1960s. Following Mondlane’s death through a parcel bomb, Samora Machel assumed the leadership of the movement, consolidating its radical and revolutionary agenda. This ideological commitment permeated the many experiments of social engineering during the anti-colonial war, carried within the so-called liberated zones and which would set the basis of the post-independence agenda.

After years of intense fighting, independence ensued on June 25, 1975, precipitated by yet another *coup d’état* in Portugal. It was preceded by a series of meetings and accords, which laid the foundations for the progressive transfer of political and military power to Frelimo and provided the legal basis for the transition (Hall and Young 1997).

The same day Mozambique gained independence, Frelimo nationalized land and, 1 month later, the social sectors of law, medicine, education, and funeral services (Hall and Young 1997). While health and education showed overall impressive results, the effects of this radical agenda were far more controversial in the field of the economy. A major problem the new country faced was the massive exodus of white people, which resulted in the abandonment of virtually all existing businesses, the disappearance of most skilled and semi-skilled workers, and the creation of massive unemployment. Facing this pressure, Frelimo opted to seize the abandoned businesses starting a process of state intervention, but this did not prevent the radical fall of crop exports. The situation was hardened by natural calamities and got even worse when Frelimo decided to enforce the United Nations sanctions on Rhodesia, which was one of its most important trading partners.

The economic situation led Frelimo to rethink its agenda. The Party’s Third Congress in 1977 would provide a much more radical response to the crisis reflecting the party’s turn toward a Marxist-Leninist agenda. In practice this meant a strong commitment to fight imperialism, including internally, by tackling the colonial bourgeoisie, the small and middle internal bourgeoisie, as well as “marginal elements from the labouring classes, corrupted by the process and crimes of the colonial war” (Frelimo 1977). Key to this process was the expansion of Frelimo’s political base, which took place through several mechanisms, including the investment on the creation of mass democratic organizations, such as the Organization of the Mozambican Woman (OMM), the Mozambique Youth Movement (OJM), and the Production Councils. While these organizations created space for dialogue and reflection, they were also instrumenting to allow the progressive penetration

of the party's ideology into the masses. What was called "democratic centralism" represented, in fact, the merging of party and state while ensuring a constant contact with the base (Hanlon 1991). The effects of this system were so pervasive that they are still present in contemporary Mozambique and greatly affect the quality of this country's democracy.

In the economy realm, Frelimo's strategy for industrialization was based on agricultural surplus and included, first, investing heavily in state farms and, second, investing in cooperative schemes along with the project of "villagization" – the building of the communal villages. These policies turned out to be extremely problematic, especially because they were distant from the reality of the rural population and revealed the actual gap that existed between the ideology of Frelimo and the values of everyday rural Mozambicans. Discontent was heightened by the fact that most of the communal villages were created with a high degree of compulsion under the pressure of the war and natural disasters. From 1978, there were also cases of forced villagization (Hanlon 1984; Abrahamsson and Nilsson 1995). These different dynamics influenced the development of the war at a later stage.

The 1977–1992 War

Understanding the war in Mozambique requires navigating through both the external facets that ignited and sustained the conflict and the internal dimensions related to the legacies of the colonial period and Frelimo's model of statebuilding. On the external front, the regional landscape played a key role. Being a socialist country surrounded by apartheid South Africa and white-dominated Rhodesia, Mozambique was perceived as a threat to the regional balance, particularly given its role in supporting other liberation movements. The creation of Renamo, the Mozambican National Resistance, which became the enemy of Frelimo, goes back to 1974, when an agreement was made between the Rhodesian Central Intelligence Organisation and Portugal. Renamo was meant to be a fifth column to spy on the Zimbabwe African

National Union (ZANU) guerrillas based in Mozambique (Finnegan 1992). The first attacks from Rhodesia were a response to Mozambique's decision to apply sanctions to that country as well as its support for ZANU guerrillas. Later, Renamo's tasks were broadened to include the destruction of infrastructure, targeting the country's state apparatus.

At this stage, Renamo contingents included personnel of the elite black units of the Portuguese colonial forces, who fled Mozambique before or immediately after independence, and members of the Flechas unit (a counter-insurgency unit created by Portugal to fight Frelimo and controlled by the Rhodesian Intelligence) (Hall and Young 1997). These were later joined by inmates freed from Mozambican re-education camps, former Frelimo soldiers imprisoned for corruption who had guerrilla and military skills, as well as some *régulos* (local authorities).

In 1980, as the Rhodesian war ended, and black-ruled Zimbabwe emerged, Frelimo hoped that no further harm would come from this front. However, with the rise of the government of Prime Minister P. W. Botha, South Africa entered the phase of the doctrine of Total Strategy, which included the pursuit of an increasingly more aggressive war against the enemies of apartheid. As a result, an agreement between a South African military commander and his Rhodesian counterpart resulted in the transfer of Renamo to South Africa. With South Africa's massive investment, Renamo became a real machine of destabilization. By 1982 it had destroyed 840 schools, 12 health clinics, 24 maternity clinics, 174 health posts, 2 centers for the handicapped, and 900 shops as well as kidnapped 52 foreign technicians and killed 12 (Hall and Young 1997, p. 129).

Internationally, with the intensification of the Cold War and the policy of "constructive engagement" toward South Africa, the United States, while not officially supporting Renamo, cancelled all aid to Mozambique (Abrahamsson and Nilsson 1995). This posture was mirrored by other donors, who also refrained from sending aid, even in the face of the humanitarian crisis that took place in the early 1980s and which ended up killing 100,000 people by starvation (Hanlon 1991).

Trapped between the war, natural disasters, and lack of aid, Frelimo was forced to join the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as a condition to be able to reschedule its debts and obtain relief aid. Another condition was to start peace negotiations with South Africa, leading to the signing of the Nkomati Accord in 1984, whereby Mozambique committed to stop supporting the anti-apartheid movement African National Congress and South Africa committed to stop supporting Renamo. South Africa, however, never complied with the accord. Instead, just a few months later, its aid to Renamo actually escalated (Hanlon 1991). Moreover, the resumption of aid did not compensate for the major loss in agricultural production (Abrahamsson and Nilsson 1995). In urgent need of credit, especially to import food, Mozambique entered the era of stabilization agreeing to its first structural adjustment in 1986 and shifting away from the socialist experiment. The side effects of aid and adjustment in Mozambique were multiple and included aid dependency, the undermining of the state's legitimacy, and market distortions. These further contributed to the war, by feeding local grievances.

Internally, one of the main problems faced by Frelimo was the contradictory relationship between its modernizing ideals and the values held by the peasantry. Frelimo's policies were based on Marxist ideologies, but in practice peasants and revolutionaries had different objectives; the former just wanted their land back from the colonizers, while the latter wanted a new society (Cahen 1987; Chingono 1996). The way the communal villages were implemented further fuelled the contradiction between ideology and reality. Geffray (1991), in his study of the district of Eráti in Nampula province, noticed that, while initially there was rural support for the implementation of the communal villages, this support highly diminished as people's displacement became more coercive; this further enhanced local conflict dynamics. This tension was compounded by the fact that land governance was de facto linked with the local authorities – the *régulos* – who in turn were stripped of their powers by Frelimo. This created resentment and, in the worst case, led some old *régulos* to support Renamo.

Other studies disputed the extent to which Geffray's analysis was generalizable to Mozambique as a whole. Roesch (1992), for instance, observed that very few communal villages in the province of Gaza were the result of coercive government actions. Manning (2002) furthermore showed that not everyone rejected how Frelimo stripped traditional authorities of their power, as, in many cases, the *régulos* were linked to the colonial abuses. According to O'Laughlin (1992) and Chingono (1996), more than the issue of identity, what was at stake in the war was Frelimo's strategy of accumulation based on wage-sectors, which undermined peasants' security, pushing them to the poverty zone.

Notwithstanding these different interpretations and internal variations of the relationship between Frelimo and the rural population, the fact is that Renamo consciously used the contradictions embedded in Frelimo's social transformative agenda in order to gain support. In particular, Renamo stressed its role as promoter of democracy and pluralism (a discourse that is still resonant today). Notwithstanding this, Renamo also relied heavily on violence and brutality to recruit soldiers. Indeed, most of Renamo's recruits were abducted and stayed in their camps under threats and extreme psychological pressure, punishment for escaping being usually death (Gersony 1988; Minter 1989). Also, all those who were captured had to spend several days as captives and testified to terrible acts of violence. Given the duration of the war and the intensity of violence that took place in Mozambique, it is remarkable how peace endured following the peace accords of 1992.

The Peace Process

The peace process in Mozambique was influenced by several factors. Firstly, with the demise of the Cold War, the United States increased its interest in fostering peace in Mozambique, whereas the Soviet Union drastically cut its military support to Frelimo. Regionally, the end of apartheid paved the way for the end of South Africa's support to Renamo. Zimbabwe, the main regional supporter of Frelimo, faced increasing internal contestation

of its involvement in its neighbor's war. These factors, along with the constant droughts and the social economic effects of structural adjustment, had a major impact on the parties' capacity to pursue war eventually leading to a stalemate (Hume 1994). Internally, in 1989, Renamo held its first party congress kick-starting its progressive transformation from an armed faction into a political organization. The same year, Frelimo held its Fifth Party Congress officially calling off the socialist experiment and committing to promulgate a new constitution.

Negotiations between Frelimo and Renamo were pushed by a few members of the Protestant and Catholic churches, notably the Community of Sant'Egidio, and several neighbors (Kenya, Zimbabwe, later Botswana, and Malawi). Formal peace talks started in July 1989 and were later mediated by a collective body comprised of four observers from the Catholic Church and hosted by the Italian government culminating in the General Peace Agreement (GPA) on October 4, 1992. The UN was tasked to ensure and monitor its implementation. Donors had a major influence on the process contributing financially as well as with advice to each of the parties (Hume 1994; Syngé 1997).

The GPA consisted of seven protocols focused on military, political, and humanitarian issues and included a timetable for the elections and its monitoring mechanisms. While very comprehensive, it also contained several problems. In particular, many elements were not adequately discussed, including practical elements related to military questions, guarantees, and the ceasefire itself (Hume 1994; Syngé 1997). Despite this, and while critiques of UNOMOZ (the UN operation in Mozambique) abound (Syngé 1997), there is a general consensus that the mission was successful in ensuring the non-resumption of the armed conflict and in establishing a minimum level of trust between the parties in order for elections to take place in a stable environment.

The first Mozambican elections were set for October 27–28, 1994. Its final phase was marked by tensions and several incidents, including threats and allegations of intimidation. One day

before the election, Renamo's leader, Afonso Dhlakama, announced a boycott stating that there were several irregularities in the process (Syngé 1997). However, the National Elections Commission decided that the election should go ahead and, at the last minute, extended the process for a third day. Notwithstanding the boycott, Mozambicans went to the poles in large numbers, leading Dhlakama to lift the boycott at the end of the second day. The results gave victory to Frelimo's candidate Joaquim Chissano with 53% of the presidential votes against 35% to Dhlakama. In the National Assembly, Frelimo won 129 seats against 112 for Renamo. The elections were considered fair overall by international observers (Syngé 1997). On December 9, 1994, Chissano was sworn in as president marking the end of the UNOMOZ mandate and the start of its withdrawal.

It is important to highlight that, if the formal negotiations were key to guarantee peace in Mozambique, so were the many local and civil society initiatives aiming at reconciliation. Differently from South Africans, Mozambicans ruled out the option of a truth commission and preferred, instead, to focus on forgiveness and social reintegration (Van Den Bergh 2009). The reasoning for this was the general understanding that punishment would only delay peace and it was very difficult at that stage to clearly separate victims and perpetrators of violence.

At the national level, the mass organizations played an important role in preparing people for peace. They joined the seminars promoted by the Association of European Parliamentarians in Africa (AWEPA) and the Christian Council of Mozambique (CCM) which aimed to explain the peace agreement and its implications for the daily lives of citizens (Van Den Bergh 2009). The churches also engaged in several activities at the grassroots level before and after the peace agreement.

At the local level, a series of endogenous initiatives for social reconciliation took place based on spiritual rituals for social reintegration. As the vast majority of the Mozambican population was rural, local rituals played a fundamental role in

consolidating peace and promoting reconciliation as well as restoring communities and restabilizing social order. Honwana (1996) noted that these rituals were widespread after the war and often a precondition for social reintegration, e.g., for families to accept ex-child-soldiers back home. They were specifically important because they spoke the language of these communities being in line with their social cosmology and defining their identity and sense of belonging.

Peace Times

Until 2013, Mozambique had often been portrayed in the policy and academic literature as a peacebuilding success story. Three main reasons accounted for this label: firstly, unlike other countries that went through peace processes during that same period, in Mozambique the war did not resume after the signing of the peace accords; secondly, the previous rebel movement, Renamo, successfully transformed itself into a political party taking part in government; and thirdly, over the following 20 years, the country showed a remarkable level of economic recovery following the recommendations of the international financial institutions. This picture, however, says very little about the concrete effects of peace to everyday Mozambicans, especially the vast majority living in the rural areas. Under closer scrutiny, several indicators show that the peace dividend was in fact very asymmetrically distributed (Pitcher 2002; Hanlon and Smart 2008; Maschietto 2016). Additionally, important matters remained unresolved with the peace accords, in particular in the domain of the security sector reform. These events call into question the dominant view that reconciliation in Mozambique was ever successful; as Bueno (2019) observes, not only there exists a problem of inclusion that affects both the political and economic sphere, but also there has never been a systematic attempt to recreate a national narrative based on truth-seeking and justice. As discussed below, this scenario has progressively widened the conflictual dynamics that contributed to the resumption of violence in 2013.

The Development Landscape

Notwithstanding the steady positive economic indicators, notably an average of 7% GDP annual growth and relative low inflation rates over two decades, Mozambique never managed to become self-sufficient. The period of structural adjustment, which started during the war, hit harshly the social sector, and the rushed and fast-paced process of privatization led to a situation where a small bureaucratic elite (of Frelimo) suddenly became the new entrepreneurial class, contributing to strengthening the party's power (Hanlon 1996; Pitcher 2002). Additionally, the high influx of aid during this period also made Mozambique one of the most aid-dependent countries in the world bringing along serious problems of accountability, sovereignty, and sustainability.

In the second half of the 1990s, as the number of foreign investors in Mozambique increased, the country moved toward the phase of the so-called megaprojects concentrated mostly in the mineral sector. These projects have been criticized on their developing potential, in particular, because the contracted firms have major tax and fiscal exemptions leading to the loss of great potential state revenue, but also because the projects create few jobs, do not contribute to the diversification of the economy, and increase the country's economic vulnerability (Hanlon and Smart 2008; Cunguara 2012). The agricultural sector, which is crucial for the livelihoods of most of the population, has been neglected, compounding the still high level of poverty. As of today, Mozambique still depends on imports for most of its consumer goods including food, in particular from South Africa. Moreover, the Mozambican economy has suffered from extremely low international competitiveness, a situation magnified by the lack of adequate infrastructure, the inefficient government bureaucracy, and the poorly educated workforce all of which are worsened by the high levels of corruption.

Corruption has been indeed a central problem in Mozambique. One of the biggest challenges for fighting corruption is linked to the strong relationship between Frelimo and the overall functioning of the state apparatus, which has become stronger under President Guebuza (2005–2015). During

this period, the distinction between the private and the public sphere has been increasingly blurred as the discovery of mineral resources in the country has created a major rush from several members of the government to create enterprises in order to control part of the extractive sector (Weimer et al. 2012).

Exemplar of the appropriation of the state for private interests was the recent scandal of the hidden debts. The scandal was revealed in 2016, when it became public that semi-public entities in the country (Mozambique Asset Management/MAM, ProIndicus, and the Mozambique Tuna Company EMATUM) had taken on debts backed by government guarantees without the approval of the National Assembly, which is against the law. The total debt surpassed one billion USD. Officially, the loan was taken to back the establishment of tuna fishing and maritime security business, but there were numerous flaws in the process and several schemes of corruption. The discovery of the loan led to the suspension of all general budget support from the G14 group of donors and was followed by an audit and the international investigation involving the banks which provided the loan (Credit Suisse and VTB). One of the main consequences of the hidden debts scandal has been the sudden slowdown of economic growth, leading to a default, not least due to the sudden decrease in foreign investment.

Complementing this complex macroeconomic picture is the everyday landscape of development. According to a 2018 World Bank report (Baez Ramirez et al. 2018), as of 2014/2015, the share of Mozambicans living below the poverty line was 48.4%, which means that there is a trend in poverty reduction. Nevertheless, it is also the case that in absolute terms the number of poor has increased from 11 million in 2002/2003 to 12.3 million in 2014/2015, largely due to the rapid population growth. According to the latest Human Development Report, Mozambique scored 0.437, staying at the very bottom of the ranking (180 out of 189 countries), along with countries such as Mali, Chad, South Sudan, and Niger (UNDP 2019). Poverty is compounded by the disconnection between the levels of economic growth and its redistribution, leading to high

levels of inequality (Hanlon and Smart 2008; Baez Ramirez et al. 2018). Moreover, whereas for many years poverty reduction policies were conducted in line with the Action Plans for the Reduction of (Absolute) Poverty, the Mozambican versions of the World Bank/IMF Poverty Strategy Reduction Papers, critics have noticed that these policies have generally focused on the achievement of the MDGs leaving aside aspects such as how productivity (especially agriculture, the basic pillar of livelihood of most Mozambicans) may affect the former (Cunguara 2012). The result is the low level of competitiveness of the agricultural sector, which in turn affects the levels of poverty.

The State of Democracy

The economic and development landscape in Mozambique cannot be separated from the political scenario and the state of democracy. While formally being a multiparty democracy, the dominance of Frelimo since the peace accords has been a central feature of the political scenario. Frelimo's dominance is the result of several factors that enhance this party's ability to dominate the political landscape, including the rigid and hierarchic structure of the party, its high level of organization and resources as compared to the opposition, the very fragmentation of the opposition (which led to a split in Renamo and the creation of the second main opposition party, the Mozambican Democratic Movement, MDM, in 2009), Frelimo's control of the economy, and the fact that, while formally independent, the executive in fact dominates the legislative and the judiciary (Hanlon and Smart 2008; Morier-Genoud 2009; BTI 2018).

Frelimo's dominance is reflected in the elections. Since 1994 there have been general elections every 5 years (for president and the Assembly of the Republic and since 2009 for provincial Assemblies as well), and since 1998 elections have taken place also at the level of an increasing number of newly created municipalities. As of January 2020, Frelimo has won all presidential elections (1994, 1999, 2004, 2009, 2014, and 2019) as well as the majority of seats in Parliament and most municipal elections (1998,

2003, 2008, 2013, 2018) (although municipal elections have been much more contested and have provided more space for the opposition to consolidate its presence). With different degrees, irregularities have been reported in virtually all elections. These have included problems with the registration process, limitations of the freedom of assembly and movement, ballot box stuffing, and vote counting issues, among others detailed in the many issues of the Mozambique Political Process Bulletin, edited by Joseph Hanlon and the Public Integrity Centre since 1993, as well as by the media. These problems have been compounded by the politicized nature of the National Electoral Commission and its ability and effectiveness to oversee the electoral process, as well as by the highly uneven playing field between the parties, reflected in the discrepant access to resources for political campaigning that favors Frelimo (Manning 2010; Azevedo-Harman 2015).

The 1999 elections were particularly tense as the results were very narrowly in favor of Frelimo's candidate, then president Joaquim Chissano. This prompted Renamo to contest the results and led to a series of protests that ended in clashes with the police, 40 deaths during confrontation, and the subsequent death of over 80 prisoners in an overcrowded prison in Montepuez (Reuters 2000). The 2014 elections, also contested by Renamo, ended up intensifying the conflict that had resumed in 2013 and leading to an even more complex and violent election process in 2019 (see next section).

Political centralism has increased sharply during the presidency of Armando Guebuza. Indeed, during his two mandates, Guebuza strengthened the power of Frelimo by further merging the party and the state apparatus, including by turning a blind eye to corruption and the progressive control of the extractive sector by members of the Frelimo party (Weimer et al. 2012; Fael and Cortez 2013). Additionally, Guebuza adopted a strong confrontational stand toward Renamo, something that compounded the resumption of the conflict in 2013. Guebuza unsuccessfully tried to amend the constitution to run for a third term. Still, while unable to run again, and notwithstanding the split inside Frelimo between

moderates and pro-Guebuza, he was able to influence the choice of the next Frelimo's candidate, former defense minister Filipe Nyusi, in an attempt to keep his influence strong in the forthcoming governments.

Political centralism in Mozambique directly affects the existing space for civil society to be active and effective. Since the introduction of the multiparty system, the number of civil society organizations (CSOs) has grown significantly; however, their effectiveness is hindered by a series of structural aspects, most of all the strong political competition between Frelimo and Renamo. Fear of intimidation, retaliation, and emotional unease, all affect the perception of freedom that individuals have to speak up their minds (Francisco et al. 2007; Maschietto 2016). This is enhanced by the fact that often CSOs do not have financial autonomy and their ability to function depends on the good will of the government bureaucracy.

More recently, constraints on political freedoms have been on the rise. Freedom of assembly has been infringed by the police on several occasions in recent years (BTI 2018). Freedom of expression has also been challenged repeatedly. In 2015, Carlos Nuno Castel-Branco, a renowned Mozambican academic, and Fernando Mbanze, editor of the independent newssheet Mediafax, faced trial in Maputo, due to an opinion post published on Facebook back in 2013, criticizing then president Guebuza and his administration. The post was interpreted by the State Prosecutor's Office as act of libel against the president, something classified as a crime against state security in Mozambique (Fauvet 2015). The trial unleashed strong reactions worldwide. Castel-Branco and Mbanze were eventually acquitted, but the fact that the trial happened in the first place was alarming. To make things worse, just 3 days before their trial, journalist Paulo Machava, editor and owner of the electronic newspaper *Diário de Notícias*, who was also organizing a manifestation to be held against the trial, was murdered while doing his morning exercises. He was shot by men who were following him in a vehicle (Reuters 2015). These and other episode contribute to a climate of pressure and fear among journalists

and intellectuals in the country, resulting in a high degree of self-censorship.

At the level of the everyday, the gains arising from democracy are even more diffused and less clear, since the willingness to express oneself critically can have direct effects in terms of one's ability to have access to basic resources for their livelihood. This reflects an imbalance between the formal gains of civil liberties in contrast to the material benefits of democracy, which, in turn, affects the functioning of democracy (Maschietto 2016). As a large number of people do not have secure livelihood options, they feel the need to get attached to politics or silence criticism for fear of losing what is, in fact, their citizens' rights. This problem is further linked to the complex relation between citizenship and political culture in Mozambique. As Macamo suggests (2017, p. 4), as much as during colonialism, the idea of citizenship during independence was fundamentally based on the assumption that "individual liberty is a function of a national political project, and not necessarily inherent to the individuals themselves." Therefore, citizenship is not perceived as a natural individual right, but something that is only possible through the existence of the state, which, additionally, confers upon itself the right to determine what is "good" for everyone, a legacy from the liberation war.

The Shortcomings of the Security Sector Reform

The peacebuilding process in Mozambique has been characterized by a marked emphasis on economic development and political issues, in contrast to a much more modest engagement with the reform of the security sector (Lalá 2006). Unsurprisingly, security matters were the most sensitive in the context of the peace negotiations. The high level of distrust between the parties and the lack of adequate information along with the fear of mediators of ruining the progress of the negotiations eventually led to a situation where this realm was minimized in order to foster the peace accords.

Demobilization was particularly challenging. For starters, no party knew exactly how many

troops they had and how many were killed during the war. Additionally, soldiers of the Armed Forces of Mozambique (FAM) were reluctant to give up arms until they were sure about the new process of recruitment. On top of this, and unexpectedly, soldiers of both sides were unwilling to enter the new army (Synge 1997; Van Den Bergh 2009). Demobilization eventually proceeded, and reintegration was pushed by the creation of a Reintegration Support Scheme (RSS) of monthly support for 2 years in cash, to be paid for 6 months by the government and 18 months by donors (Vines 2013).

The constitution of the new armed forces was a crucial element to ensure stability in the immediate after war. The creation of the new Armed Forces of Defence of Mozambique (FADM) needed to be in place before elections and work as a stabilizing force once the UN mission was concluded. Following the negotiations, the plan was for the FADM to be constituted by 30,000-strong army on the ground before the elections, 50% from each party. This number turned out to be far too optimistic and overstated the willingness of soldiers to reintegrate. In practice, the final selection of new soldiers amounted to 12,195 (8,533 from Frelimo and 3,662 from Renamo); this number was further reduced to 11,579 as there were too many middle-level officers, so some of the volunteers had to be demobilized (Vines 2013).

Disarmament was also highly resisted by both Frelimo and Renamo. Eventually, under pressure, a process of arms collection took place, but only 200,000 weapons were collected. These were handed over to the government and, according to records, only 24,000 have been destroyed (Leão 2004).

More broadly, looking at the long term, the security sector reform in Mozambique was based on three central aspects that included the training of a few battalions for the new armed forces, a clear institutional division between the armed forces and the Ministry of Defence, and the assurance that a civilian would serve as a minister and would report before Parliament. These were, nonetheless, limited targets to ensure the effectiveness and good governance of this sector

(Lalá 2006). Notably, the reform remained largely limited to the defense arena, not including the police and the intelligence (and the integration of these sectors, including the integration of Renamo in the latter). This compounded other problems, such as the fact that, while the armed forces have always been subject to civilian (political) control (even before independence), the peace accords failed to democratize its oversight. Additionally, the transfer of ex-armed forces personnel to the police (especially for high command posts) led to Renamo's further suspicion and ultimately facilitated the tacit acceptance of Renamo's leader maintenance of a personal guard, which never disarmed (*ibid.*). As discussed below, these factors affected the resumption of violence 20 years after the peace agreement.

Renewed Conflict in 2013

The resumption of violence in 2013 must be understood along the persistent patterns of political centralism, the lack of proper redistribution of the peace dividend, the incomplete process of security sector reform, and the more recent discovery of mineral resources in the country.

The new surge of instability started in April 2012, when clashes between Renamo ex-combatants – Renamo's leader Dhlakama's "Presidential Guard" – and the government riot police took place in Nampula, then the residence of Dhlakama. On October 2012, Dhlakama moved to Gorongosa, where Renamo held its base during the war, making threats of resuming the war and dividing the country in two as well as urging a revision of the 1992 Peace Accords. In 2013, reacting to the electoral law approved in December 2012, Renamo started to engage in a series of activities which included ambushes on cars, lorries, and buses as well as military convoys; the blocking of one of the main transport arteries of the country; and the boycott of the 2013 municipal elections. Frelimo, then under the presidency of Guebuza, responded by resorting to military power in order to contain these actions, but at the same time it pushed for negotiations, emphasizing a conciliatory speech and the primacy of peace.

On October 17, 2013, the army occupied a Renamo's base, where many members were gathered to commemorate the anniversary of the death of the movement's first leader, Matsangaissa. Soon afterward, Dhlakama pulled out of the 1992 Peace Accords. This situation alarmed Mozambicans, many of whom started to flee from the region where the clashes were taking place. According to a Chatham House Report, all through 2013 at least 60 people were killed and more than 300 injured (Vines et al. 2015, p. 23). After months of clashes, Renamo actually succeeded in changing the electoral law making a much criticized deal with Frelimo that was later endorsed in Parliament and which marked a significant setback in the democratic procedures that regulated the National Elections Commission and its executive secretariat. This deal maintained the politicized nature of the National Elections Commission, in charge of organizing the 2014 elections, only altering the number of members of each party and the total number of members (5 would be from Frelimo, 4 from Renamo, 1 from MDM, and the remaining 5 from civil society) and excluding from the body an attorney appointed by the Higher Council of the Public Prosecutor's Office (Fauvet 2014). The deal further politicized the Electoral Administration Technical Secretariat (STAE), the executive body responsible for implementing the elections, which now would also include political appointees. Finally, the deal was agreed without previous consultation to the National Assembly, only later submitted for approval in the context of the urgent "spirit of reconciliation," which, ultimately, led to the concession of most of Renamo's requests.

Still, clashes continued, and only after several rounds of negotiations, on August 24, a ceasefire was agreed upon, followed by a peace agreement on September 4, just ahead of the 2014 elections. The agreement included amnesty to all Renamo members from 2012 until the date of the accord, and Dhlakama agreed on a plan of progressive incorporation of Renamo ex-combatants into the Armed Forces and the police. Yet, many important items remained to be negotiated, in particular, specific aspects related to security and defense, the separation of the state apparatus from the

political parties, and unspecified economic matters included in the agenda.

Notwithstanding what seemed an initial victory of Renamo and its insurgency, the 2014 October elections did not pave well for this party. Filipe Nyusi won the presidency with 57% of the votes and Frelimo won 144 seats in the National Assembly. Dhlakama obtained 37% of the votes and Renamo got 89 seats. MDM candidate Daviz Simango won 6% of the votes, and the party got 17 seats in the National Assembly (Mozambique Political Process Bulletin 2014). Both Dhlakama and Simango rejected the results, and in January 2015, Renamo boycotted the opening of the National Assembly. Additionally, Dhlakama demanded that provincial autonomy was given to the provinces where Renamo had won the majority of votes (Nampula, Zambézia, Tete, Manica, and Sofala), bringing decentralization at the heart of the conflict agenda. In Mozambique, the provincial governors are appointed by the central government. This is due to the bifurcated decentralization system in this country, which provides devolution power only to the municipalities (which have been created gradually), while the provinces and districts have deconcentrated administrative powers. Dhlakama's demands were turned into a bill proposed by Renamo in the National Assembly, only to be rejected based on its supposed unconstitutionality. At the time, constitutionalist lawyer Gilles Cistac contested this argument publicly, something that cost his life (he was murdered in March that year, in what was considered a politically motivated assassination) (Ganho 2016).

These events led to the escalation of the conflict, the resumption of violence, and several clashes between Renamo and state forces through 2015 and 2016. In December 2016 Dhlakama announced an unexpected truce, which was extended a few times, until it was extended indefinitely in May 2017. In the meantime, peace talks resumed, fostered by a Contact Group created by president Nyusi, which included several international governments. In 2018 an agreement was finally reached between Nyusi and Dhlakama, including a decentralization agreement incorporating constitutional amendments and the

signature of a memorandum of understanding on military affairs allowing for the launch of a second DDR process (AIM 2018; Kössler 2018). Dhlakama never saw the approval of the constitutional amendment, passing away on May 3 that same year due to health issues. According to the amendment, mayors, provincial governors, and district administrators will be appointed by whichever political party win a majority in the municipal, provincial, or district assembly. While providing space for more participation of the opposition in the country's politics, the amendment also transferred political power from voters to the parties. This was a setback to democracy, but politically the agreement paid off. Following the death of Dhlakama, the presidency of Renamo passed to Ossufo Momade and in August 2018 Momade and Nyusi signed a new DDR agreement. A final peace deal was signed the next year, on August 6, 2019, followed by general elections in October.

Current Situation

The leading up to the general elections held in October 2019 was probably the tensest so far in Mozambique and was condemned by many actors, including the Mozambican civil society, the European Union, and Human Rights Watch. There were several episodes of abuses, such as the arbitrary arrest of opposition candidates and violations of the right of peaceful assembly (CIP 2019b; Wan 2019). Also, about 300,000 ghost voters had been registered in the province of Gaza (Pitcher 2019).

Many episodes of violence also took place from supporters of all parties and included attacks to houses, beatings, and arsons. A shocking episode was the assassination of a leading civil society election observer, Anastácio Matavel, who was shot ten times by men in a driving car. Matavel was just coming out of a training session for other national observers in Xai-Xai, Gaza province, and the event took place about a week before the elections. As the car crashed soon afterward, killing two of the five men, it was soon discovered that four of them were members of

the national police force. These and many other episodes were covered in length by the media and summarized in several editions of the Mozambique Political Process Bulletin.

In this context, Frelimo's victory was not surprising, although the margin of victory was astonishing: Filipe Nyusi won the presidency with 73%; Frelimo gained 184 of 250 parliament seats, while Renamo won 60 (losing 19 as compared to the previous government) and MDM only 6 (as opposed to 17 it previously had) (CIP 2019a). Frelimo further won all 10 governorship and 628 seats in provincial assemblies, compared to 156 for Renamo and 10 for MDM (*ibid.*).

At the time of writing, the results are still being contested, and many actors, including the Mozambican civil society, have released critical statements about the electoral process, not least of all the posture of the National Elections Committee and of the Constitutional Council. There is no perspective, though, that contestations will lead to any significant change in terms of political power redistribution. The question to be asked is how this scenario will impact the dynamics of violence that have formally stopped with the 2019 peace agreement. And here the perspective is not optimistic.

For starters, there is the problem of Renamo's fragmentation. The choice of Ossufo Momade as new leader of Renamo following Dhlakama's death was not accepted by all factions within Renamo. A self-denominated Renamo Military Junta, led by Mariano Nhongo (who proclaimed himself president of Renamo), is active and has called for a revision of the peace agreements signed in 2019 by Momade. Nhongo further stated that he will never recognize the leadership of Momade (even though the latter has been elected as party leader during a Renamo's congress) and has claimed responsibility for several attacks taking place in central Mozambique after the elections (although he denied responsibility for previous attacks) (AIM 2019b). So far it is unclear the actual support that Nhongo has and what will be the Junta's role in the new political scenario.

Besides this, another major problem today in Mozambique, which is not directly connected

with the old Renamo-Frelimo rivalry, but which affects conflict and peace dynamics, is the occurrence of several attacks and brutal violence in the northern province of Cabo Delgado, where a radical Islamic group that calls itself Al-Shabaab has operated since the end of 2017. The group has been carrying attacks that include beheadings and burning houses, terrorizing the population of several districts in Cabo Delgado. A recent report on the matter (Habibe et al. 2019) notices that this group has links with networks of the Somali-based jihadist group Al-Shabaab. Nonetheless, as also noted in the report, access to this group and research in the regions where attacks have taken place are extremely difficult, many journalists having been detained. The government of Mozambique has denied any links of this group with international terrorist networks and has taken a hard-line stance on the matter, something that resulted in clashes and death tolls on both sides, as well as of civilians. How this will develop, and how it will affect the government, its resources, and the overall investment in defense, is to be seen.

On top of this, there are still pending issues from the peace agreement that need to be resolved, demobilization and reintegration being a case in point. An initial deadline to dismantle the residual forces of Renamo was August 21, 2019, but while this process started, it stalled as the focus went to the electoral process (AIM 2019a). Giving the split inside Renamo, it is not clear how many armed men will be in fact disarmed and reintegrated.

Summary

After being considered a successful case of peacebuilding for 20 years, violence has resumed in Mozambique, driven by several unresolved issues that go back to the 1992 peace accords, but also bringing new elements related to the way democracy has materialized in this country, not least of all by maintaining a very asymmetrical distribution of the peace dividend.

It is too soon to assess the extent to which peace will endure this time. It seems important

though to stress a major difference between the 1992 peace agreement context and the current one: if in 1992 there was a clear war fatigue and many hopes toward peace, the current setting is one of disillusionment with the peace that came through. This general disillusionment has many facets. For starters, while Renamo military wing had several ex-combatants, there are indications that there has been new recruitment of fresh participants (Vines 2019), which suggests that armed violence is not just residual, but may be seen as still an option for political change by part of the population.

While there is no doubt that unresolved issues from the past have influenced the current scenario, it is also the case that new elements are at play, particularly related to the distribution of the country's wealth. It should be noted that other forms of violence are also present in Mozambique that have not necessarily been analyzed within a context of "violent conflict" and which, nevertheless, are important components of the current scenario. In fact, over the last years, different forms of violence have been on the rise, notably lynching, kidnapping for ransom (which involve highly sophisticated organized crime networks), politically motivated violence, and attacks to local authorities in different districts, besides the attacks in Cabo Delgado (Faleg 2019). While apparently different in nature, these different manifestations of violence can be analyzed as indicating the complex relationship between society and the state and the constant dispute regarding what are the parameters of legitimacy of the social contract. Some of them can further be seen as extensions of the violence from war times now assuming a new shape (Bertelsen 2016). Importantly, they point to the dispersion of power and power contestation, something that can be heightened in periods of social distress and in contexts of increased perceived inequality – something that in the case of Mozambique is further accentuated by the recent discovery of mineral resources and the competition for its control and management (Weimer forthcoming).

In summary, understanding the different dynamics of violence in Mozambique – beyond the main stage of political conflict – and the

prospects for a more inclusive and just peace requires engaging with the different layers of the political, social, and economic changes and continuities which are at the heart of the continuous process of state and nation-building. If anything, the Mozambican case shows that peacebuilding success cannot be measured in a short time span of 5 or 10 years after peace agreements are signed. On the contrary, the sustainability of peace is conditioned by the serious addressment of structural issues and the more equalized distribution of the peace dividend.

Cross-References

- ▶ Colonialism
- ▶ Mediation
- ▶ Peacebuilding
- ▶ South Africa

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NATO's Approach to Peace Operations and Peacebuilding

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Introduction

Peace operations and peacebuilding are about policies and state and non-state actors that get involved in these policies. As a military alliance established to deter and defend against the Soviet Union during the Cold War, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is not intuitively associated with the notions of peace operations and peacebuilding.

With the end of the Cold War though, NATO embraced a broad crisis management agenda that led the organization to run what it calls peace

support operations, from the Balkans to Afghanistan and even Libya. Those missions have shed light on the Organization's nature, combining a mix of a "liberal peace" aspiration with a more traditional *Realpolitik* agenda. Although NATO would not easily refer to those missions as being about peacebuilding, what peace support operations are supposed to do is largely about creating the security conditions for peace to be built.

In this context, the 2014 Russian aggression in Ukraine led NATO to come back to its fundamental, though dormant, collective defense mandate. Simultaneously, NATO's crisis management agenda became secondary.

As of 2016, NATO conceptualized the notion of "projecting stability" as a core task, alongside collective defense. In many ways, projecting stability is a new phrase for crisis management and contains an important peacebuilding dimension. But NATO's aspiration to play a key role in projecting stability, most notably towards its southern periphery, is also facing conceptual, political, and operational challenges. NATO wants to contribute to building peace worldwide, but its record, added-value, or local perception show a more complex picture.

NATO's Peace Concept: Definitions

Although NATO has been involved in a variety of peace operations since the early 1990s, conceptual thinking about "peace operations" or

“peacebuilding” has remained limited within the institution, and overall those two terms are not germane to NATO parlance.

Back in the 1990s, NATO referred to “peace support operations,” “crisis response operations,” and to the broad term of “crisis management” to refer to operations launched outside the framework of article 5 of the Washington Treaty (so-called non-article 5 operations). A few months before the Atlantic Alliance engaged in former Yugoslavia (see below), the 1991 Strategic Concept asserted that “In the event of crises which might lead to a military threat to the security of Alliance members, the Alliance’s military forces can complement and reinforce political actions within a broad approach to security, and thereby contribute to the management of such crises and their peaceful resolution” (NATO 1991).

The 1999 Strategic Concept referred to the Alliance’s “commitment, exemplified in the Balkans, to conflict prevention and crisis management, including through peace support operations,” which reflected NATO’s determination to “shape its security environment and enhance the peace and stability of the Euro-Atlantic area.” (NATO 1999).

Ten years later, the 2010 Strategic Concept made “crisis management” one of the three core tasks of NATO, together with collective defense and cooperative security; crisis management is defined as a mix of political and military tools to “help manage developing crises that have the potential to affect Alliance security, before they escalate into conflicts; to stop ongoing conflicts where they affect Alliance security; and to help consolidate stability in postconflict situations where that contributes to Euro-Atlantic security” (NATO 2010). The term “stabilization operations” is also often referred to in particular in the Afghan context (and in reference to the US terminology) to capture the role of the military in contributing to negative peace (Sloan 2016).

These broad definitions do not refer to “peacebuilding” per se yet NATO’s activity in crisis management includes the task of contributing to building peace in an unstable environment.

In 2001, a NATO document titled “Peace Support Operations” stated that these operations are

“designed to tackle the complex emergencies and robust challenges posed by collapsed or collapsing states in an uncertain and evolving strategic environment”; they “involve military forces, diplomatic and humanitarian agencies and are designed to achieve a long-term political settlement or other specified condition.” These operations also involve a “spectrum of activities, which may include Peace Enforcement and Peacekeeping as well as Conflict Prevention, Peacemaking, Peace Building and Humanitarian Relief” (NATO 2001).

At its core, while NATO’s conception of peace support operations is inherently military-focused, and potentially coercive, it is not fundamentally dissimilar from what other actors such as the UN or the EU do in their respective peace operations. Peace support operations are multifunctional and multilayered activities; insofar as NATO primarily offers the military component of a broader international response, that component is aimed at “creating the necessary conditions for other organisations to do their work and so create a stable, self-sustaining secure environment” (NATO 2001).

In legal terms, with the exception of NATO’s operation against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1999, all NATO peace support operations have been legally grounded in a UNSC Resolution. Formally, the large NATO peace support operations such as IFOR/SFOR in Bosnia-Herzegovina, KFOR in Kosovo, or ISAF in Afghanistan have also been deployed with the consent of the host states.

NATO Embraces Crisis Management

The Balkans

NATO was created in 1949 as a collective defense organization, i.e., a military alliance aimed to deter any potential enemy to take aggressive action against NATO’s member states and to collectively defend its member states if attacked. Throughout the Cold War, the collective defense mandate prevailed and prevented any scenario involving NATO troops in any form of peace operation; this, during the Cold War, was simply not NATO’s job.

Among many other strategic effects, the end of the Cold War fundamentally altered NATO's *raison d'être* and policy (Yost 1998). The collapse of the Soviet Union deprived NATO of its enemy, and with it of its central collective defense mandate. As there was no longer any threat to defend against, why would NATO continue to do collective defense, except as a general, and secondary, insurance policy? This was reflected in academic and policy debates by suggestions of a potential demise of NATO, for lack of a *raison d'être* (Mearsheimer 1990; McCalla 1996).

In parallel, the evolution of the European security environment in the early 1990s, in particular the Yugoslav conflicts, was conducive to a positioning by NATO that, practically, gave it a new role. As of the second half of 1992, while war was raging in Bosnia-Herzegovina (and had stopped for a while in Croatia), NATO became involved in the management of these conflicts, initially through its contribution to the implementation of economic embargoes in the Adriatic Sea and no-fly zones over the territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and then through more kinetic activities (Schulte 1997; Kaufman 2002). In 1995, NATO conducted air strikes against the Serbian forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina, leading to the opening of peace talks and eventually to the signature of the Dayton Peace Accords. NATO then deployed a 55,000 strong force (Implementation Force, IFOR) to contribute to the implementation of the Accord.

A few years later, the Atlantic Alliance engaged in an air campaign against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to put an end to president Milosevic's repressive policy against the Kosovar population in Serbia. The operation was run on humanitarian grounds, but with no UN Security Council backing, which arguably undermined both its legality and legitimacy (Mandelbaum 1999; Roberts 1999). The operation also marked a shift away from peace support to open coercion. Contrary to the UN or the European Union, NATO's conception of crisis management includes war-type activities (as will be seen in Afghanistan and Libya), which can furthermore take place outside of a solid international law framework if deemed necessary (Frantzen 2004).

NATO's war-fighting operation was followed by a more traditional peacekeeping-type mission deployed in Kosovo as of June 1999 (KFOR) and still operating in 2019 (Mulchinock 2017).

Overall, the 1990s transformed NATO into a peacekeeping actor; and – with the above-mentioned noticeable difference with the UN/EU on coercion – NATO's peacekeeping role is comparable to what other peacekeeping actors do.

NATO's Crisis Management, from Afghanistan to Libya

The 911 events in New York and Washington led to the first ever invocation of the Washington Treaty's article 5 (that says that an attack on one NATO member is considered as an attack on all). Yet NATO as an Alliance was not involved in the military operation ('Enduring Freedom') launched by the US and a few other states against the Taliban regime in Afghanistan in the fall of 2001. In parallel with Operation Enduring Freedom, a Stabilization operation was created in Afghanistan by a coalition of states; this operation, called International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), was then taken over by NATO in August 2003.

This marked a qualitative evolution of NATO's role in crisis management. Through ISAF, not only did NATO move far from Europe to embrace a more global role but it also ran a new kind of operations, combining traditional peacekeeping and more robust counter-insurgency tasks. ISAF closed the debate about NATO's out-of-area operations, while opening new discussions about the Comprehensive Approach and the necessity to make security and development actors work together, NATO's value-promotion mandate, and the nature of NATO's defense posture (Morelli and Belkin 2009; Rynning 2012; Auerswald and Saideman 2014).

NATO's crisis management role was then further tested in Libya in 2011. In the context of the so-called Arab Springs that unfolded in Tunisia and then Egypt in 2010, Western powers, most specifically France and the UK, advocated for a military operation against Libya's Qaddafi aimed at protecting the civilian population under the threat of massive violations of human rights

(Weighill and Gaub 2018). The operation was authorized by the UN Security Council (UNSC Res. 1973 of 17 March 2011). It was launched on humanitarian grounds, in reference to the “Responsibility to Protect” norm (Hehir and Murray 2013); yet the shift in the objective from civilian protection to regime change, and the subsequent overthrow and killing of Qaddafi was largely interpreted as misuse of the norm (Carati 2017).

Furthermore, the destabilization of Libya that followed – and its spill-over effects on the Sahel region – made any argument by which NATO acts as a security provider or peacebuilder difficult to support. In lieu of projecting stability, NATO could also be, even if unintentionally, projecting instability.

The Return of Power Politics, NATO's Crisis Management Loses Precedence

The Ukraine Moment

2014 marks a turning point in NATO's role as a crisis management actor. On the one hand, NATO puts an end to the largest crisis management operation ever run by the Alliance – the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan – after 11 years of presence. The Alliance remains in Afghanistan with its Resolute Support Mission, a noncombat operation mandated to support the Afghan armed and security forces.

On the other hand, NATO's posture and post-Cold War trajectory is altered by Russia's invasion and annexation of Crimea in the spring of 2014. This event leads to a significant reorientation of NATO's policy, back to the original collective defense mandate, and away from the crisis management agenda (Moore and Damon 2017).

At the NATO Summit that follows the Ukraine crisis, the Allies adopt a Readiness Action Plan (RAP) that aims at responding to the “challenges posed by Russia and their strategic implications.” Officially, the Plan is both about collective defense and crisis management, yet in reality the focus is ostensibly on the strengthening of NATO's defense posture vis-à-vis Russia (NATO 2014). The RAP includes so-called assurance

measures and adaptation measures. The assurance measures include continuous air, land, and maritime presence and meaningful military activity in the eastern part of the Alliance, both on a rotational basis. Adaptation measures are about the responsiveness of NATO's forces, in particular the NATO Response Force (NRF), and how they could be used in the hypothesis of an escalation with Russia. In November 2014, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg states that the Readiness Action Plan is “the biggest reinforcement of our collective defence since the end of the Cold War. And it is my top priority to implement this plan in full and on time” (Stoltenberg 2014).

Crisis Management's Lost Relevance?

One consequence of this reorientation is that NATO's crisis management role becomes secondary. Two reasons explain this evolution. One is the prominence of collective defense in the context of the resurgence of a potentially aggressive Russia. The salience of the Russian threat makes it politically difficult for NATO to focus on two simultaneous tasks, and crisis management suffers as a consequence. This is especially the case as crisis management is sometimes perceived as less of a strategic necessity than the territorial integrity of NATO member states.

The second reason has to do with crisis management as an activity and what it means for NATO. Taking the operations in Afghanistan and Libya together, quite a few member states and observers would point to a certain intervention fatigue, and question the effectiveness and relevance of intrusive and complex military operations. “What is it that these operations have achieved that makes the world safer?” is not an easy question (Joint Analysis and Lessons Learned Centre 2015; Hardt 2018; Engelbrekt et al. 2015). Such questioning is not specific to NATO and would apply to the broad constellation of international interventions, be they UN-led, EU-led, African Union-led, or run under the auspices of coalitions; how have these operations contributed to international stability over the last 25 years is not so obvious. There is, however, a specificity of NATO operations in that they are principally military, raising the question of what a

military response can bring to problems that are always much broader and for the resolution of which NATO can therefore only be in support.

As a consequence of these trends, in 2019, NATO is engaged in (only) four peace support operations: in Afghanistan (Mission Resolute Support), in Kosovo (KFOR), in the Mediterranean Sea (operation Sea Guardian), and in Iraq (NATO Mission Iraq), for a total of more than 20,000 troops deployed (NATO website 2019a). Yet apart from the Afghan mission that counts 16,000 troops, other operations are limited in scope and hardly make NATO a significant peace-maker.

Projecting Stability: The New NATO's Crisis Management Agenda

What Is "Projecting Stability"?

In a post-Ukraine and post-ISAF moment, NATO has started to re-think its crisis management and cooperative security agenda, to introduce a new concept: "projecting stability" (Berti and Diaz-Plaja 2018). The concept was formally launched by NATO Allies at their 2016 Summit in Warsaw. The Summit final communiqué states that "The greatest responsibility of the Alliance is to protect and defend our territory and our populations against attack, as set out in Article 5 of the Washington Treaty. And so renewed emphasis has been placed on deterrence and collective defence." It then poses that "At the same time, NATO must retain its ability to respond to crises beyond its borders, and remain actively engaged in projecting stability and enhancing international security through working with partners and other international organisations" (NATO 2016).

At the core of the projecting stability agenda is the nexus between internal and external security: the fact that the security situation at the periphery of NATO member states inevitably impacts the security within NATO, and therefore requires to be factored in. As stated by NATO Secretary General, "if our neighbors are more stable, we are more secure" (Stoltenberg 2016). NATO therefore needs to play a role in contributing to stability at its periphery, through military-focused

activities such as capacity-building, defense institution building and sector reform, training, as well as through the type of peace support operations that have been run over the last 25 years.

In geographical terms, "projecting stability" is principally looking southward. This has to do with the instability that has characterized NATO's southern neighborhood over the last 10 years or so, with associated consequences in terms of state fragility, terrorism, or massive migrations. NATO officially pursues a 360-degree approach, implying that it must respond to threats coming from all directions (NATO 2018); yet implicitly, while the Deterrence and Defense agenda of NATO looks east to respond to Russia's aggressive policy, projecting stability is more of a Southern policy. And these two tasks have tended to replace the three core tasks (as defined in the 2010 Strategic Concept) of collective defense, crisis management, and cooperative security.

In practice, projecting stability operates the merger between crisis management and cooperative security. It draws on the operational dimension of crisis management (i.e., the deployment of military assets) and on the various cooperation formats that fall within the cooperative security portfolio, such as the Mediterranean Dialogue, the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative, or the Partnership for Peace.

This said, there is also a sense of restraint in "projecting stability" compared with past activities, at three different levels: first, the value-promotion agenda that theoretically characterized NATO's operations in the past (from Afghanistan to Libya) is less central to projecting stability. The very word "stability" implies a retrenchment from past commitments as it is less transformative. Projecting stability is more about ensuring a certain level of resilience and functioning public authorities than it is about promoting liberal values. In this sense, projecting stability connects to the cooperative security core task, as defined in the 2010 Strategic Concept. Second, NATO insists on the consent-based nature of projecting stability. The objective is to establish cooperation with countries that would request assistance and to promote a locally owned process as much as possible. Of course, in many cases, NATO

remains in a position of dominant actor providing assistance to politically weaker partners, yet the intent is to minimize the effect of such imbalance. Third, there is a recognition that the military dimension to “building peace” is necessary but not sufficient, and that NATO can therefore only contribute to broader efforts. This leads NATO back to the debate about the Comprehensive Approach and the necessity to reach out to civilian actors, be they local or international. In this context, the NATO-EU dialogue becomes particularly important, as the EU theoretically provides assets that NATO is lacking, in terms of financial resources or more security-focused and civilian capacity (Tardy and Lindstrom 2019).

This is not to say that large-scale operations or even coercive ones are ruled out under “projecting stability.” A lesson from the last 20 years is that unexpected developments can lead to unexpected responses, as shown after 9/11 or in Libya. And policy documents refer to crisis management operations as being part of the projecting stability agenda, as is the case of Operation Resolute Support in Afghanistan, which is a capacity-building mission but nonetheless counts 16,000 personnel.

There is also a strong conflict prevention dimension to projecting stability. The focus on resilience and capacity-building in states that are potentially exporting insecurity reflects intent to prevent a given situation to further deteriorate, for the good of that particular state, and ultimately for NATO's own good. This is to be supported by a better understanding of security evolutions in the South, through the newly-established Strategic Direction South (the so-called Southern Hub), mandated to “provide NATO a strategic-level lens to better anticipate, preempt, limit, and overcome challenges” (NATO website 2019b).

The Dilemmas of Projecting Stability

NATO's approach to peace operations or peacebuilding is marked by the nature of the institution as well as by the recent history of what its operations have been. On the one hand, NATO presents itself as a security and defense actor that aspires to contribute to international peace and

security, notably through crisis management or projecting stability. Some of its past or present activities, in Bosnia-Herzegovina or Kosovo (post-1999), are very similar to what the UN or the European Union do in their own peace operations. On the other hand though, NATO is by nature an institution that develops an interest-driven agenda that is not necessarily compatible with what a liberal internationalist peacebuilding agenda carries. Most specifically, NATO's past operations in Kosovo (air operation), Afghanistan, and Libya and the controversy that these operations led to inevitably alter the reading of NATO's peace agenda. As a military alliance counting the USA, France, or Turkey as members, NATO can hardly be perceived as a benevolent actor that pursues a cosmopolitan agenda.

This said, in its peacekeeping/peacebuilding policy, NATO faces the same kind of dilemmas as any other peace actor, in terms of political support by its own member states, clarity and complexity of mandates, lack of local buy-in or ownership, and uneasy coordination with other actors. At these four levels, the literature on peacebuilding and how its main stakeholders struggle in delivering on their respective mandates is relevant to NATO's own policy and practices (Koops et al. 2015).

Beyond these issues, NATO is currently facing two sets of challenges in relation to its peacekeeping/peacebuilding role. One is operational and has to do with the added-value of a military-focused organization in tackling multifaceted threats that are not necessarily military related. The sources of instability at the Southern periphery of the Alliance are arguably diverse and relate to a wide range of issues – political, economic, societal, environmental, etc. – for which NATO displays no obvious competence or comparative advantage. The military or security dimension of stability can be essential, and NATO does have an expertise and resources in this domain, but how can NATO play a decisive role when the military dimension is only part of a much wider equation, or when the problem at stake is simply not military in nature? This begs the question of the operationalization of projecting stability and how NATO

can maximize the role that it can play, alongside other actors and activities.

The second challenge is more political and asks whether NATO should be engaged in crisis management or stability promotion. Given the difficulties encountered in Afghanistan or Libya, the resurgence and immediacy of the Russian threat, and the above-mentioned operational complexity, whether crisis management must continue to absorb political attention and resources is not unanimously accepted within the Alliance. It may even be seen as a diversion by some observers or member states that would want to prioritize collective defense over any other function (Keller 2017). The role of NATO in counter-terrorism (CT) is part of this conversation. Counter-terrorism at the Southern periphery of the Alliance is theoretically central to NATO's policy; yet only a few member states have a clear vision for NATO in this respect, and the consensus on prioritizing CT is in the end minimal. This debate is sometimes referred to as the "East versus South" debate (the East being about Russia and the South being about North Africa and the Middle East) and touches upon NATO's internal cohesion and purpose. It shapes policy discussions within the Alliance and would influence any forthcoming debate on NATO's future core tasks.

Summary

NATO was created as a collective defense organization and evolved, with the end of the Cold War, as a crisis management actor. This implied tasks that pertain to the broad field of peace operations and peacebuilding, as illustrated in Bosnia-Herzegovina or Kosovo. From the early 1990s up to the 2014 Ukrainian crisis, NATO could even have been described primarily as a crisis management actor. As such, NATO was more politicized, and more coercive, than other crisis management actors such as the UN or the EU, but not different to the extent that it would be in a distinct groupings.

This changed with the 2014 Ukrainian crisis; not only did the crisis bring collective defense

back, but a certain crisis management fatigue also appeared with Afghanistan. Crisis management became secondary to NATO's agenda and identity as a consequence. With projecting stability, NATO intends to redefine its own crisis management role, while acknowledging the limits of its political and operational capacity. NATO still wants to be a peace-maker, by providing security where, in the end, it would matter for itself. Whether NATO member states all agree that this should be a core task for the Alliance, and whether local recipients of NATO's projecting stability activities all concur that NATO is the appropriate response to their own security problems, are yet to be secured.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Assessment of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Collective Security and Collective Responsibility in International Interventions](#)
- ▶ [Conceptual Evolution of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Evolution of Practice in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations](#)
- ▶ [Great Power Involvement in Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Liberal Peace in Peace Operations](#)
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Negotiation

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Synonyms

Bargaining (see Negotiation); Distributive negotiation; Dual-concern models; Integrative negotiation; Negotiation climate; Negotiation phases; Negotiation power; Negotiation process; Negotiation strategy; Negotiation styles (see Negotiation Strategy); Negotiation tactics; Win-lose negotiation (see Distributive Negotiation); Win-Win negotiation (see Integrative Negotiation)

Definition

Negotiation is a common process for resolving a wide variety of disagreements over both tangible and intangible interests among two or more parties with common interests to motivate finding a mutually acceptable solution.

Description

“Negotiation is a process in which explicit proposals are put forward for the ostensible purposes of resolving specific disagreements among two or more parties with both conflicting and common interests” (Ikle 1964). The heart of this definition is the requirement that the parties involved have *both* conflicting and common interests. Without conflicting interests, there are no differences to be resolved; without common ones, there is no motivation to resolve the differences.

However, negotiations are unlikely to solve disagreements in belief, as the history of theological disputes demonstrates or when the parties have little or nothing in common and absolutely contradictory beliefs as to where justice and fairness lie, such apparently as the parties to the Middle East Peace Process. Furthermore,

practices vary both between and within cultures, usually in manageable ways (Khan 2019; Gelfand and Brett 2004) but sometimes in extreme ways such as occurred during the 1953 Korean War truce talks (Joy 1955). Negotiators sometimes engage in “bad faith” or “surface” bargaining with no intention to reach agreement, hence inclusion of the word “ostensible” in the definition. Negotiations are not limited to two-party disputes, although at some point the number of parties can become unmanageable and other methods such as arbitration, mediation, voting, representation, or hierarchical management may prove more effective. Thus, in addition to the fundamental requirement for both conflicting and common interests, Mnookin (2010) suggests five considerations in deciding whether negotiation is likely to be useful:

- The tangible and intangible interests at stake
- The likely achievability of at least a minimum acceptable settlement
- The probable outcome of negotiation compared with alternative strategies
- The cost, precedents set, secrets disclosed, and time lost in negotiating
- The likelihood that opponents actually will carry out any agreement reached

Mnookin suggests that even if likely to fail, negotiation *may* improve relationships so be worthwhile in the long term, nor does negotiating preclude employing simultaneous alternative strategies. Strikes and wars often continue during negotiations. Nelson Mandela, based on “a calm and sober assessment of the political situation. . . fifty years of non-violence had brought the African people nothing but more repressive legislation, and fewer and fewer rights,” negotiated with the South African government while leading a guerrilla army, thus changing the balance of power in his favor at the negotiating table.

The Negotiation Climate

Several theorists (e.g., Pruitt 1988; Rahim 1990; Thomas and Kilmann 1974) suggest that the

relationship between two parties depends primarily on only two factors: concern for one’s own goals with and concern for the relationship with the opponent. Both vary from low to high depending on circumstances and the specific conflict of the moment, and the combination largely shapes the negotiation climate and the tactics employed, as seen in Fig. 1. It cannot be assumed that each party will have the same levels of concern and thus may pursue quite different strategies and tactics.

A person with little interest in the outcome tends to avoid conflict particularly if the relationship is more important than the issue. A husband may care a lot more about his relationship with his wife than what sort of sofa she chooses for the living room. On the job the next day selling cars, he doesn’t really care what the family-car buyer he probably never will see again thinks of him, he just wants to get the highest commission he can (to pay for that sofa); so the relationship is likely to be competitive. But, when the buyer for the biggest company in town needs an instant replacement for a wrecked car, he will want her coming back whenever they need a new car, which is frequently, and so will work to meet her needs. However, as noted above, it cannot be assumed, with several dealers to choose from, that she will have the same collaborative attitude.

These dual-concern models pass many tests of good theory. In using only two variables to predict behavior, they are parsimonious. They are logical and conceptually empirical despite practical difficulties in reliably measuring the independent variables. However, some individuals may employ

the same strategy regardless of the situation based on their personality or allow their emotions to dominate rational assessment.

Distributive Negotiation

Traditional bargaining, now often called “distributive” or “win-lose,” divides naturally into phases, although theorists differ somewhat as to what and how many there are. A common formulation specifies four, labeling them preparation, exploration, bargaining, and closing (Churchman 1995). The phases are descriptive, not prescriptive. Negotiations often involve more than one issue. If so, negotiators may go through each issue phase-by-phase, may go through each phase issue-by-issue, or may follow some combination, and may skip phrases or take breaks within or between phases during which the situation is reassessed.

The effort and time appropriate, available, and consumed by preparation vary considerably from one negotiation to another. A tourist in the Middle East buying a souvenir is unlikely to have done much more preparation before heading into the bazaar than noting the high-priced examples available from the shop in his five-star hotel. Once home and in the market for a new TV or car, he is likely to confer with his family on preferences, consult evaluations of various brands and models, and search the Internet to learn the advantages, disadvantages, options, and prices available of each model being considered. Back in his office at the Department of State preparing

Negotiation, Fig. 1
Dual-concern models of negotiation

| | | | | |
|-------------------------|--------|---|---|---|
| Concern for Your Issues | High | Contend (Pruitt) Dominate (Rahim) Compete (Thomas) | | Problem-solve (Pruitt) Integrate (Rahim) Collaborate (Thomas) |
| | Medium | | Compromise (Thomas) Compromise (Rahim) | |
| | Low | Inaction (Pruitt) Avoid (Rahim) Avoid (Thomas) Low | Medium | Yield (Pruitt) Oblige (Rahim) Accommodate (Thomas) High |

Concern for Your Opponent

for an international conference on climate change, he is likely to be part of a team of economic, political, scientific, technical, and other specialists such as media who will work for months considering possible venues and timing, collecting information on the likely concerns of other nations, identifying and defining issues, setting goals, developing and ordering proposals by preference, searching for unintended consequences, and working out roles for team members and strategies and tactics for the actual bargaining.

The most crucial preparatory decision is the “deadlock price [or point],” sometimes called a “reserve” or “security” price, on each issue. Deadlock prices are the points at which negotiators will stop making concessions and end the negotiation without an agreement. It also is useful to pre-plan “Optimistic” and “Realistic” settlements, as well as a “First” offer (forming the mnemonic FORD). These four points form a “bargaining range.” Agreement is theoretically possible if the bargaining ranges of the parties overlap. The negotiation “dance” settles where within those overlapping ranges agreement will be reached. Subjects participating in bargaining simulations did better when they had such intermediate targets in addition to deadlock prices (Raiffa 1982).

Instead of Deadlock, Roger Fisher and William Ury (1981) proposed identifying one’s Best Alternative to Negotiated Agreement, now commonly referred to by its acronym BATNA. It encourages negotiators to consider their options if agreement is *not* reached as a way of determining the minimum acceptable agreement. A simple example is the buyer who wants a car to get to work. The BATNA would lead to consideration of alternatives such as riding a bike (not forgetting to consider year-round weather), carpooling, or taking a bus, the costs and convenience of each helping to decide how much to spend on a car and thus what sort of car to buy.

The exploratory phase begins when negotiators first meet and focuses on relationships and communicating needs to opponents. Negotiators make or renew acquaintance, explain their interests and needs, listen to opponents’ interests and needs, and more generally try to establish an advantageous bargaining climate. The time and

approaches taken vary with how well negotiators already know one another as well as with culture, personality, power, history, the issues at stake, the venue, and the agenda, whether formal or informal. If the negotiations are high profile, both sides may have a media strategy aimed at constituents, opponents, and the public.

The transition to the bargaining phase often is seamless. It shifts the emphasis to making, justifying, and responding to proposals, perhaps ambiguous at first. Classic bargaining tactics dominate this phase (e.g., Churchman 1995; Lewicki 1999; Zartmann and Berman 1982). Ellen Raider (personal conversation) uses the mnemonic AEIOU to classify them. Slightly reformulated, A is for attacking opponents, E is for evading issues, I is for informing opponents, O is for opening tactics, and U is for unifying tactics that lead to agreement. Proposals include an offer, vague or specific, partial or complete (“we might be able to pay a little more if you were able to deliver sooner” vs. “we will pay \$525 including shipping for delivery next Monday”), and might include conditions, threats, or ultimatums. They often include a face-saving rationale for making concessions. Counter proposals can be nearly instantaneous or can come after further discussion or caucusing.

Whenever there are as many or more issues as there are negotiators, and they differ as to their relative importance to the opponents, negotiators can “link” or “logroll” them to mutual advantage. Consider the situation in Fig. 2. If the negotiators use the common tactic of splitting the difference evenly, each will receive half the value of each item for a total value of \$1.50. If instead Negotiator 1 concedes all of Item B to Negotiator 2 in exchange for receiving all of Item A, each negotiator receives \$2 in value, a 33% increase for both parties. Total value grows from \$3 to \$4. Of course, intermediate positions to total surrender on issues are possible. The most common such

| | Item A | Item B |
|-------------------------|--------|--------|
| Value to Negotiator One | 1 | 2 |
| Value to Negotiator Two | 2 | 1 |

Negotiation, Fig. 2 The linkage principle



linkages in sales negotiations involve quality, quantity, and time. In turn this suggests that increasing rather than reducing the number of issues being negotiated improves the likelihood of a mutually advantageous and satisfying agreement. It is a major tactic by which *both* distributive and integrative negotiators “enlarge the pie” under consideration.

The fourth, closing, phase becomes possible when one or more proposals meet the needs of all parties. An agreement might include recognition of the need for ratification by higher authority, an effective implementation or delivery date, provisions for monitoring performance, and methods for resolving disputes. While most terms will be specific, it is not uncommon for some to be left ambiguous or specified for later settlement rather than delay implementation of what can be agreed to at the moment.

The closing itself may vary from a simple “OK” or handshake to a formal written document completed by dignitaries in formal signing ceremonies. One way to evaluate the agreement is to calculate the value of the difference between the agreed and one’s deadlock price divided by the number of hours spent preparing for and completing the negotiation. However, apart from the difficulty of valuing some agreements, just as poker players seldom reveal their cards if everyone else folds lest it give away whether or not they were bluffing, negotiators seldom reveal their deadlock price to others even after agreement lest it affects future negotiations, so the calculation usually can be made only for one’s side.

Integrative Negotiation

Integrative negotiation, often called “win-win” or “principled,” is the fashionable alternative to distributive bargaining. As suggested by dual-concern models, it becomes more likely when the parties have high regard for one another and high concern for the issues at stake, that is, when the upper right-hand corner of Fig. 1 describes the situation. It has been particularly successful in labor-management disputes mediated by the US

government’s Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, which suggests a five-stage process.

The goal of the first stage is a mutually acceptable definition of the problems or conflicts. The parties complete this stage jointly. The model calls for depersonalizing issues and focusing on the primary problems while identifying and keeping less important ones out of the picture for the moment.

The parties complete the second stage separately and focus on clear identification of their own interests (Lax and Sebenius 1986), taking positions or developing proposals at this point.

The third stage focuses on finding as many options as possible that *might* meet the needs identified in stage two. The major technique is collective brainstorming by all parties with one idea inspiring the next, with the usual rule that criticism of suggestions is not permitted at this stage.

The fourth stage requires the parties to develop relevant criteria for assessing options such as cost, impact on company competitiveness and thus survivability, legality, likelihood of approval by union members, retention of workforce, and technical feasibility.

The fifth stage requires assessing each third-stage option on the basis of the fourth-stage criteria. Often, negotiators vote as to whether or not each option meets each criterion. Sometimes options are referred to a committee for evaluation. The results presented in a simple grid often make the best resolution obvious. Even when this does not happen, the process usually narrows the choices sufficiently to make agreement easier and quicker.

Distributive vs. Integrative Negotiation

Just as a football team must be prepared to play both offense and defense, negotiators regardless of their preference need to be prepared for both distributive and integrative strategies (Churchman 1995; Lewicki 1999; Raiffa 1982; Zartmann and Berman 1982). The common criticisms of distributive negotiations fail to explain why it survives despite the availability of a supposedly superior

approach. Even when integrative negotiation does occur, Mnookin (2010) argues anecdotally that without continued training, negotiators soon revert to distributive practices.

The Role of Power

Negotiating power comes in many forms and can be positive, the power to do, or negative, the power to prevent, regardless of what the other parties regard as desirable, fair, or just. It can be real, perceived, or ephemeral, either increasing, stable, or declining over time. The party that appears more powerful often is busier, so perhaps less able to prepare or assign its best people to every negotiation.

Generally, power increases with the number of different ways negotiators have to meet their needs. The negotiator with an eminent deadline usually is in a weaker position, particularly if the opponent knows it and can delay. Some situations impose deadlines that give one side real power. For example, farm workers have more negotiating power at harvest time when farmers fear losing their entire crop to delay; teachers at the end of a long holiday when parents want a break from the constant squabbling of their children or schools are scheduled for accreditation visits. Knowledge – economic, legal, technical, of precedents, or of opponents' tastes and ambitions – enhances power. Resources – equipment, money, skilled personnel, supplies, and the like – often are sources of power. Authority – the real or pretended limits on ability to make or refuse agreements – along with personal characteristics such as audacity, charisma, glibness, integrity, persistence, and ruthlessness are common sources of power.

Negotiators increase power by manipulating its sources. They add technical experts or articulate or charismatic spokesmen to their team. Sometimes they delay negotiation until an advantageous time. They can exploit or create divisions to weaken opponents. They can suggest an agenda that arranges items to their advantage, present a draft agreement that will shape the situation to advantage, or volunteer to take meeting minutes

thus gaining control of the record. If weak, they can search for allies, appeal to the opponent's good nature, or beg for mercy (Churchman 1995; Lewicki et al. 1997).

Conclusion

Negotiation has proven a useful tool for settling many if not all types of conflict for thousands of years in a wide variety of circumstances and cultures providing that the parties involved have some common interests to motivate finding a mutually acceptable solution. However, it is a complicated tool that must be learned through continual study, observation, and practice.

Summary

Negotiation is a common process for resolving a wide variety of disagreements over both tangible and intangible interests among two or more parties with common interests to motivate finding a mutually acceptable solution.

Appendix

Fifty Negotiation Tactics

Brief definitions follow of common tactics used by negotiators combined in myriad ways (Churchman 1995). Also Known By [AKB] names are given at the end of each definition.

Acceptance Time: The time between hearing a proposal and deciding how to react to it.

Agenda: The issues to be resolved in the order they are to be negotiated.

Ambiguity vs. Clarity: The degree of equivocation or specificity in a proposal or statement.

Authority: The limits superiors placed on what agreements a negotiator can conclude.

Back Channels: Off-the-record, often secret, discussions outside the formal negotiating process, often conducted by an intermediary.

Bad Guy/Good Guy: The bad guy tries to intimidate and soften opponents. The good guy

seeks concessions and agreement by being helpful and understanding. AKB Mutt and Jeff.

Bargaining Climate: The relationship, friendly to antagonistic, cooperative to competitive, among negotiators, as well as general context affecting the negotiating situation.

Bargaining Range: All offers a negotiator will make on each issue. If it overlaps those of opponents, then there is a settlement range within which agreement *should* be possible.

Better Than That: An attempt to get an undefined concession by saying, simply, "You've got to do better than that."

Bluffing or Lying: A negotiator can bluff or lie by commission, omission, interpretation, or arithmetic calculation.

Body Language: The notion that negotiators reveal real meaning by uncontrolled expressions or gestures. In fact, they may be acting, revealing, or meaningless. AKB Nonverbal Communication.

Bottom Line: The total benefits and costs of a deal, intended or not.

Boulwarism: Named after the GE negotiator who made his first offer his last. AKB, First and Last Offer.

Caucus: A private meeting requested by the negotiators on one side.

Closing: Providing a basis for bringing negotiations to a successful conclusion.

Concession Making: Reducing (for the seller) or increasing (for the buyer) the last offer made, sometimes with conditions such as a deadline. AKB Tit-for-tat.

Deadlines: The time or date by which a negotiation must be concluded one way or another, whether real or a bargaining tactic to put pressure on opponents to settle.

Deadlock: Suggesting or threatening to end negotiation unless the opponent meets some condition. Closely related to the idea of "Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement" abbreviated BATNA. Also, it can refer to an outcome rather than a tactic if no agreement is reached.

Delay: Slowing the negotiating pace, often in hope conditions, will change favorably for one's side.

Divide and Conquer: Weakening opponents by exploiting any differences within their ranks.

Empathy: Understanding or pretending to understand and sympathize with how opponents feel.

Face Saving: Reframing issues to make concessions easier for oneself or opponents. AKB Reframing.

Good or Bad Faith: Negotiating with or without intent to reach agreement or carrying out a bargain as agreed. AKB Surface Bargaining.

Haggling: Alternating concessions often in ritualistic fashion with little or no discussion until agreement or deadlock is reached.

Ignorance: Feigned or real lack of understanding to obtain or verify information.

Information. Information disparities among parties are common. Guard against being taken advantage of by a deficit through preparation and caucuses while putting any advantage to good use. Information can include knowledge of opponents gathered by varied means. Sometimes, providing an overwhelming combination of relevant and irrelevant or trivial information in hope of overwhelming or confusing opponents. AKB Snow Job.

Linkage: Discussing two or more issues together so concessions on one can be exchanged advantageously for concessions on the other. AKB Log Rolling, Tie-ins, Tradeoffs.

Listening: Assessing what opponents say both factually and in terms of how they feel about what they are saying, sometimes emphasizing one's understanding to improve the Bargaining Climate.

Objections: Explanations of why opponents' proposals are unsatisfactory, aimed at testing the resolve of opponents or in hope of obtaining concessions.

One-text Procedure: A draft agreement revised by each party in turn until all are satisfied.

Perseverance: Taking the time to avoid hasty agreements that often leave negotiators with the uneasy feeling that additional concessions could have been gained or that some issues were overlooked.

Persuasion: Trying to convince opponents that the current offer is the best they can get and that it is fair and meets their needs.

Power: The ability to reward or prevent action.

Precedent: Prior agreements, current conditions, *fait accompli*, laws, or past decisions or other basis for or agreements, offers, or concessions.

Preconditions: Effort to obtain advantage before negotiations start, including but not limited to manipulating the agenda, selecting the venue, or impressing opponents. AKB *Fait Accompli*.

Proposal: A suggestion as to how to resolve one or more issues, also used for purposes such as showing resolve or reducing opponents' hopes. It might include concessions, conditions, or time limits and may be partial or complete, firm or flexible, and specific or ambiguous.

Questions and Answers: Questions can obtain or give information, keep things moving, or challenge opponents politely. Answers may be clear or not, complete or not, relevant or not, true or not.

Raisin Picking: Obtaining bids from competitors and then either using the lowest bid on each component to develop a counter proposal or (less often) trying to buy each component at the cheapest price in the separate bids and assembling them oneself. AKB Cherry Picking.

Reverse Auction: Sellers are told who they are bidding against to encourage each to offer the best possible price. AKB Belly-up Negotiation.

Salami Slicing: Asking for small concessions in succession especially after all seems settled until the opponent says "No." AKB Nibble, Nickle and Diming, One Step at a Time.

Sibylline Books: Offering an attractive price lacking essential components that increase the price. Bait and Switch are unethical variations offering nonexistent items (the bait) to lure the buyer to a more expensive alternative (the switch). AKB Bait and Switch, Low Balling, Take back.

Signal: An ambiguous or disavowable statement or action to alert opponents of one's willingness to negotiate or to explore particular approaches to resolving a conflict. AKB Trial balloon.

Silence: Silence can emphasize a point, give oneself time to think, convey disappointment, or gain listener attention.

Split the difference: Suggesting closing at a point usually but not always half-way between recent positions.

Strawman: A false or unimportant issue raised and defended at length in hope eventually of entirely conceding it for something of importance. AKB Red Herring, Throwaway.

Take it or Leave It: Attaching the phrase or a similar one such as "best and final" to an offer to indicate that it is the last a negotiator will make, true or not. AKB Best and Final Offer.

Threat: An ambiguous warning of probable consequences if a demand is not met.

Timing: Tactics used or points raised too soon or too late can lose their effectiveness.

Toughness: The tougher the negotiator, the slower and smaller the concessions. Getting tougher signals approaching deadlock.

Ultimatum: A threat that is specific as to what must be done by what time to avoid undesirable consequences for failure to agree, concede, or comply with a demand.

Venue: Negotiations can be on your territory, the opponent's, alternate between the two, be on neutral territory, or take some form of communication such as letter, phone, or the Internet.

Cross-References

► [Urban Peacebuilding](#)

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Nonviolence and Civil Resistance

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Definition/Description

Nonviolence or civil resistance is a collective political action outside the formal institutions or procedures of the state that avoids the systematic or deliberate use of violence or armed force. Nonviolence as a form of collective political action tends to occur through civil society groups or social movements, reflecting failures, weaknesses, or limits to conventional state-based politics. Civil disobedience is an exemplification of nonviolence as a separate category of political activity, distinct from both conventional parliamentary politics and violent resistance.

A distinction is sometimes made between principled and pragmatic nonviolence, or between those who seek alternatives to the use of violence for moral reasons and those who employ the methods of nonviolence because of their tactical and strategic effectiveness. Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. are often identified as principled proponents of nonviolence, while Gene Sharp is identified as a theorist of nonviolent struggle or civil resistance for pragmatic or strategic reasons.

Both principled and pragmatic nonviolence require a sustained and consistent commitment to the use of nonviolence as the basis for effective civil resistance. Pragmatic nonviolence can be linked to negative peace because it provides an innovative set of techniques or methods aimed at avoiding violence for political purposes. Principled nonviolence connects to a broader vision of

social justice involving the peaceful or nonviolent resolution of conflict at multiple levels, and as such can be linked to positive peace.

Introduction

Nonviolence or civil resistance is a collective political action outside the formal institutions or procedures of the state that avoids the systematic or deliberate use of violence or armed force. As such, nonviolence is a form of political action that can be distinguished both from state-based institutional politics and from political violence or armed resistance (Schock 2003, p. 705).

Nonviolence as a form of collective political action tends to occur through civil society groups or social movements, reflecting failures, weaknesses, or limits to conventional state-based politics. Civil society groups and social movements use nonviolence where they do not have access to conventional parliamentary politics, in highly undemocratic or dictatorial regimes, for example, or where there have been significant failures in the decision-making procedures of the state. Nonviolence has been used successfully to dismantle dictatorships, end colonial rule, resist foreign aggression, and preserve and extend democratic practices and human rights. According to Gene Sharp, one of the foremost theorists of nonviolence: “It is a complex type of struggle that has been applied against ruthless dictatorships, as well as in relatively democratic societies” (Sharp 2005, p. 511).

Those who employ the methods of nonviolent political action, as distinct from various forms of political violence or armed struggle, do so sometimes for moral reasons, through pacifist objections to the use of violence for political purposes, for example, but more often for pragmatic reasons, because of the unavailability of the means required for armed struggle, for instance, or because the methods of collective nonviolent action are seen to be the most effective under the circumstances. This connects to a classic distinction in much of the literature on nonviolence, between those who choose its methods primarily

for principled (or ethical) reasons and those who use nonviolence primarily for pragmatic (or strategic) reasons. Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr., are often identified as principled proponents of nonviolence, for example, while Gene Sharp is identified as a theorist of nonviolent struggle or civil resistance for pragmatic or strategic reasons.

Mahatma Gandhi and *Satyagraha*

Mohandas (Mahatma) Gandhi (1869–1948) is regarded as one of the seminal figures in the development of the theory and practice of nonviolence. He began his career as a political activist while working as a lawyer in South Africa, pioneering the techniques associated with his method of *satyagraha* or mass nonviolent civil disobedience in response to government discrimination against the Indian community in that country. He returned to India in 1914 and became a central figure in the lengthy struggle against British colonial rule, as well as many other campaigns for social and political reform in India (involving the caste system and Hindu-Muslim relations for example). He was assassinated by a Hindu extremist in 1948, just months after India achieved its independence. Gandhi's thought and practice has been hugely influential on subsequent generations of nonviolent activists worldwide, such as Martin Luther King, Jr., in the United States.

Gandhi derived many of his central ideas or concepts about nonviolence from his interpretation of Indian religious and philosophical concepts and traditions. *Ahimsa* is often used as a synonym for nonviolence (as a moral principle) and *satyagraha* as a synonym for nonviolent action, in Gandhian thought. *Ahimsa* (from the Sanskrit or Gujarati) literally means non-harm or non-injury (*a-himsa*), to living things in thought, word, and deed. “For Gandhi, *ahimsa* was the belief in the sacredness of life and the refusal to do harm to living things, an interpretation that was based on the deep-rooted Hindu tradition of not doing harm” (Mayton 2001, p. 308).

Gandhi coined the term *satyagraha* “by joining the Sanskrit *satya* (truth) with *agraha* (holding

firmly)” (Dalton 1993, p. 9). Thus, for Gandhi, *satyagraha* means “truth-force” or “soul-force.” “Satyagraha is literally holding on to Truth and it means, therefore, Truth-force” (Gandhi 1961, p. 3). Furthermore, the “truth” in “truth-force” or *satyagraha* involves a commitment to nonviolence or *ahimsa*. *Satyagraha* thus finds its source or motive in nonviolence as an ethical or moral principle.

For Gandhi, *satyagraha* involved testing the commitment to nonviolence or *ahimsa* against specific situations of conflict or injustice to see how it can be applied (which is why he called his autobiography *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*) (1982). In other words, Gandhi used the term *satyagraha* to describe the application of the principle of nonviolence (or *ahimsa*) to collective action to achieve social and political change. Hence, according to Joan Bondurant, “*Nonviolence* when used in connection with *satyagraha* means the exercise of power or influence to effect change without injury to the opponent” (Bondurant 1965, p. 9).

Gandhi's salt march of 1930 is a prominent example of his use of *satyagraha* to link a specific example of injustice under British colonial rule to the broader campaign for Indian independence. The colonial government had monopolized the manufacture of salt and levied a tax on its sale since the nineteenth century. As such, it represented or symbolized the many injustices associated with British colonialism in India. Thus, the immediate objective of the salt march and the campaign it initiated was to end the injustices associated with the British salt monopoly. The broader objective of the salt march, however, was to promote the campaign for Indian independence through breaking Indians' complicity with British colonial rule and demonstrating their capacity for political mobilization.

The salt march sparked a nationwide series of protests and civil disobedience, involving the production and sale of salt, that lasted for a year, until the Gandhi-Irwin Agreement of March 1931. Gandhi himself was arrested, as were prominent leaders of the Indian National Congress (Sharp 2005, p. 105). As many as 100,000 Indians were also arrested and “placed in prisons, detention

camp, and improvised jails” during the salt satyagraha of 1930–1931 (Sharp 2005, p. 110).

Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Ethics of Nonviolence

Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929–1968), promoted the use of the methods of nonviolent political action in his role as a leader of the US civil rights movement from the time of the bus boycott in Montgomery, Alabama (1955–1956), to his assassination in 1968. King was influenced in his commitment to nonviolence by the example of Mahatma Gandhi as well as his interpretation of Christian theology. King rose to prominence soon after being appointed pastor of a Baptist church in Montgomery and obtaining his doctorate in systematic theology. Like Gandhi, King combined a strong principled or ethical commitment to nonviolence with an awareness of its effectiveness in supporting struggles for justice and equality. He stated that he “found in the nonviolent resistance philosophy of Gandhi...the only morally and practically sound method open to oppressed people in their struggle for freedom” (King 1958, p. 85).

King’s ethical commitment to nonviolence is exemplified by the central connection he makes between nonviolence and “the principle of love” as a guiding precept for efforts to achieve political change, using the Christian theological concept of *agape*, or the love of God for human beings operating through the human heart. King defines *agape* as disinterested or unconditional love. It is unconditional in that it is “not set in motion by any quality or function of its objects” (Watley 1985, p. 124). As such, he distinguishes *agape* from *eros*, or aesthetic or romantic love, and *philia*, or reciprocal love between friends, the affectionate love of friendship. In this sense it is not a sentimental or affectionate emotion, as he states repeatedly, but provides instead the basis for ethical interaction between human beings, even in situations of social and political conflict. Thus, King states: “The nonviolent resister not only refuses to shoot his opponent but he also refuses to hate him” (King [1958] 1991, p. 19).

King also followed Gandhi in employing a wide variety of the methods of nonviolent political action to help achieve specific political objectives. In the case of the civil rights movement, these objectives were associated with ending segregation and legalized discrimination against African Americans in the United States, and its achievements include the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The use of nonviolent methods by the civil rights movement involved marches, public protests, boycotts, and civil disobedience. The civil rights movement resisted white supremacist and police violence and directly challenged attempts to criminalize or suppress activists through jailing or imprisoning them while retaining a commitment to nonviolence during this period. A seminal event was the march on Washington for civil rights in 1963, when King delivered his famous “I have a dream” speech to hundreds of thousands of people in front of the Lincoln Memorial.

Gene Sharp and Strategic Nonviolence

Gene Sharp (1928–2018) was a prominent and highly influential US scholar of nonviolence who developed a systematic and comprehensive theory of nonviolent political action, emphasizing its pragmatic or strategic dimension. Sharp provides a thorough and detailed analysis of the dynamics and effectiveness of nonviolence as a method of political and social change in his three-volume study *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* (1973). The central ideas from Sharp’s theory of nonviolent political action were summarized and distilled in his book *From Dictatorship to Democracy* (2012) (originally published in 1993), which has been used as guide to civil resistance in numerous countries, from Myanmar to Serbia.

Two basic components of Gene Sharp’s theory include his three categories of nonviolent action as well as his three mechanisms of nonviolent political change. Sharp catalogued 198 specific methods of nonviolent action in the second volume of *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* (*The Methods of Nonviolent Action*), ranging from petitions to the creation of parallel governments or

sources of political authority. Each of these 198 methods falls into one of three general classes or categories of nonviolent action: protest, noncooperation, and intervention. All three categories of nonviolent political action can be combined as part of an effective nonviolent strategy. Furthermore, each category involves different levels of intensity in the confrontation between the nonviolent activists and their opponents.

The methods of nonviolent protest include demonstrations, petitions, marches, and so on. Nonviolent protests are symbolic actions that aim to communicate dissent, “draw public attention to a claim or grievance,” express “the unity and determination of the resistance,” and “challenge the uncommitted to take a stand in relation to” an issue, according to Michael Randle in his book *Civil Resistance* (1994, p. 112).

Noncooperation involves the deliberate withdrawal from participation in economic or political systems governed or controlled by the opponent, so that it becomes difficult for those systems to continue to function. Nonviolent noncooperation includes strikes, boycotts, and various forms of civil disobedience.

Nonviolent intervention involves more active forms of civil resistance that go beyond noncooperation and directly challenge the power of the opponent. Nonviolent intervention can involve both the disruption of established institutions or behavior patterns and the creation of new institutions or behavior patterns that are preferred. Disruptive methods include nonviolent occupations or blockades, for example, and as such involve a more direct confrontation with one’s opponent than does noncooperation. Creative methods of nonviolent intervention include establishing alternative institutions and even in some cases a parallel or substitute government.

Sharp also talks about three mechanisms of political change resulting from nonviolent action: conversion, accommodation, and coercion. Through the “conversion” mechanism, the opponent accepts the aims of those engaged in nonviolent action. This involves a process of persuasion, perhaps through an appeal to a common set of values or norms (such as democracy or human rights).

In the case of “accommodation,” the opponent grants at least some of the activists’ demands, even though they have not been convinced or persuaded by them. They do so voluntarily, perhaps because the cost of continuing to deny them has become too high. According to Michael Nojeim: “In nonviolent accommodation. . .the opponent undertakes a cost-benefit analysis and concludes that the costs of continuing to fight the nonviolent activists exceed the benefits” (Nojeim 2004, p. 35).

Through “nonviolent coercion,” the power of the nonviolent activists has increased, and the power of the opponent has decreased, to such an extent that the opponent has no choice but to grant their demands. According to Sharp, nonviolent coercion must be available as an alternative to violence (which is also coercive) in those situations where neither conversion nor accommodation will work.

Nonviolent protest as a category of political action can perhaps be more closely associated with “conversion” or persuasion as a mechanism of political change since it is essentially a form of communication. Noncooperation can aim at least initially at some form of accommodation with the opponent, since it involves inflicting economic or political costs upon them to convince them to change their behavior or policies. Nonviolent disruptive intervention, on the other hand, can become increasingly coercive, designed to force the opponent to concede at least some of the activists’ demands.

Nonviolence and Civil Disobedience

Civil disobedience is one of the central methods of nonviolent political action, employed during campaigns led by both Gandhi and King, for example. Civil disobedience can be defined as the deliberate violation of specific laws in order to achieve publicity for a cause, mobilize public opinion, and put pressure on the government or those with political or economic power. It is an obvious exemplification of nonviolence as a separate category of political activity, distinct from both conventional parliamentary politics and violent resistance. Civil

disobedience can be seen as one of the more controversial methods associated with nonviolent political action, precisely because it involves breaking the law and confrontation with state or government authorities, in both democratic and nondemocratic systems of government.

Two defining characteristics of democracy are important in terms of justifications for civil disobedience within a liberal democratic state: popular sovereignty and equality before the law. Popular sovereignty is important, for example, because it means that the people themselves make the laws to which they are subject and which the protesters will then claim they are justified in breaking. Similarly, equality before the law suggests that no individual or group has a right to break a law that others have an obligation to obey.

Thus, as Michael Walzer points out, it is important to acknowledge that for “many political philosophers...there exists a *prima facie* obligation to obey the laws of the most inclusive organized society of which one is a member, that is, for most men (sic), the state.” However, Walzer also points out “the existence of a *prima facie* obligation to obey means no more than that disobedience must always be justified” (Walzer 1970, p. 16). In other words, obedience to the law is not an absolute obligation under all circumstances.

Gandhi, for example, justified civil disobedience only as a method of last resort, even if he used it himself on numerous occasions. Other lawful means of achieving change must have been tried and have failed, such as conventional parliamentary politics, negotiation, and protest. Thus, Gandhi used civil disobedience as a final phase of a *satyagraha* campaign, methods such as communicating dissent or other forms of noncooperation having been ineffective or unsuccessful (Nojeim 2004, p. 39).

John Rawls provided an influential definition of (and set of criteria for) justified civil disobedience within a liberal democracy that explicitly connects it to nonviolence. Rawls defines civil disobedience as: “a public, nonviolent, conscientious yet political act contrary to law usually done with the aim of bringing about a change in the law or policies of the government” (Rawls 1973, p. 364).

The conscientious (as distinct from criminal) motivation of those who engage in civil disobedience can be demonstrated by both its public and nonviolent character but also by their appeal to a higher law. This “higher law” can be either positive (or human-made) or natural (e.g., in the form of a universal moral principle). Thus, the civil rights activists in the United States appealed to the US Constitution (and the Supreme Court) against state or county segregation laws. They also appealed to universal moral principles (or shared values within the society) to justify their actions (including civil disobedience), such as human dignity or racial equality. In other words, for those who engage in civil disobedience: “their illegal conduct...was motivated by respect for some moral principle which, in the judgment of the protestors, was violated by the law and which deserved greater respect than the law itself.” It is this “conscientiousness that sets it apart from ordinary criminality” (Bedau 1991, p. 9). King’s famous “Letter from Birmingham City Jail” was written to defend the use of civil disobedience to achieve civil rights in the southern United States, after one of his numerous arrests for participating in nonviolent direct action.

Civil disobedience can be used to challenge specific unjust or discriminatory laws in a democracy, where constitutional methods have failed or are unavailable for some reason, without challenging or undermining the system of government as a whole. In fact, such focused or targetted civil disobedience can strengthen or improve a democratic system through reforming or eliminating laws inimical to civil liberties or preventing equal representation and participation in the political life of the state.

Paradoxically perhaps, according to King, civil disobedience can express “the very highest respect for law” precisely because those who engage in it are willing to pay the price for doing so in order to reform and change unjust laws. “I submit that an individual who breaks a law that conscience tells him is unjust, and willingly accepts the penalty by staying in jail to arouse the conscience of the community over its injustice, is in reality expressing the very highest respect for law” (King [1963] 1991, p. 294).

Pragmatic Versus Principled Nonviolence

In some ways it seems that there are important differences between proponents of pragmatic and principled nonviolence, and yet both approaches require a sustained and consistent commitment to the use of nonviolence as the basis for effective civil resistance. This suggests that the division between principled and pragmatic proponents of nonviolence is an artificial one, and yet it retains its usefulness as an analytical device for distinguishing between the motives or reasons for the use of nonviolence as well as perhaps as a basis for identifying a broader vision of a fully just society.

According to Thomas Weber, for example, Sharp asks “whether nonviolence as a political technique can be separated from nonviolence as a moral principle” and comes to the conclusion that “belief systems and techniques are separable” (Weber 2003, p. 255), in other words, that one does not need to be a pacifist to employ nonviolent political action effectively. “Sharp differentiated the techniques of nonviolence from any set belief system, suggesting that the action and strategy were what made a movement nonviolent” (Hallward and Norman 2015, p. 20), and not moral opposition to the use of violence as such.

Thus, according to Sharp: “The primary rationale for use of nonviolent struggle has nothing to do with an ethical or religious rejection of violence” (Sharp 2005, p. 511) but rather with its efficacy as a mechanism for achieving political and social change. There is no point in preaching about the immorality of war and violence. The need, instead, is a practical or pragmatic one of developing alternative, nonviolent forms of conducting conflict and struggle.

Nonetheless, Sharp claims that the effectiveness of these methods depends at least partly upon their nonviolent character (Sharp 2005, p. 511), because of their capacity for mass popular mobilization, for example. According to Kurt Schock: “The basis of power of nonviolent resistance is the sustained mobilization of large numbers of people, which generates pressure from outside the

system in order to give challenges greater leverage within institutional political and legal channels.” He goes on to claim that “armed movements are less likely to mobilize broad-based support and the support of influential allies; the barriers to participation are higher in violent movements” (Schock 2015b, p. 184). Erica Chenoweth and Maria J. Stephan provide a thorough analysis of reasons for the strategic effectiveness of nonviolence in their groundbreaking empirical study of civil resistance, *Why civil resistance works: The strategic logic of nonviolent conflict* (2011).

Gandhi and King, on the other hand, both had a profound ethical commitment to nonviolence, derived from a broader philosophical, theological, or even cosmological vision. Gandhi, for example, distinguished between “nonviolence as a policy” (pragmatic) and “nonviolence as a creed” (principled) (Sharp 1979, p. 96). Gandhi and King, however, were also innovative political strategists and were concerned with the effectiveness of nonviolent political action for achieving their political objectives. The moral commitment associated with principled nonviolence has a practical dimension because it can provide the *satyagrahi* with the confidence and courage necessary to persist with nonviolence “even in the face of severe repression and danger” and to continue with the discipline of nonviolent political action (Sharp 1979, p. 106).

Sharp, as a proponent of pragmatic nonviolence, is concerned with developing effective methods of exerting power to achieve social and political objectives, which involves defeating one’s opponent, while for proponents of ideological or principled nonviolence such as Gandhi, the focus is on transforming human relationships (especially conflict) to achieve truth, understood as human unity and the satisfaction of fundamental human needs. For Gandhi, this connects to a quest for some sort of political order that transcends the limitations of the conventional state and conforms more closely to the full ethical requirements of nonviolence or *ahimsa*. Similarly, King spoke of the “beloved community” as encapsulating the broader values of social justice he associated with nonviolence.

Michael Randle suggests that civil resistance in general involves a combination of the tradition of individual moral dissent, expressed by pacifism and conscientious objection to war, for example, with organized collective action for social or political change, manifested in struggles for national independence or workers' rights, for instance (Randle 1994, p. 22). Proponents and theoreticians of nonviolent action often claim that Gandhi was among the first to combine these two traditions of individual moral commitment and dissent, reflected in his principled approach to nonviolence, with a practical concern for the methods of collective action to achieve political and social change. King wrote, for example, that "Gandhi was probably the first person in history to lift the love ethic of Jesus above mere interaction between individuals to a powerful and effective social force on a large scale" (*Stride toward Freedom*, 1958, p. 84).

Sharp, for instance, does not extend his skepticism concerning principled nonviolence to Gandhi, since he distinguishes *satyagraha* as a form of collective nonviolent political struggle from the tradition of individual or individualistic dissent he finds embodied in Western pacifism. One of Sharp's books, for example, is called *Gandhi as a Political Strategist*. According to Sharp, "Nonviolence for Gandhi was not only personal but also social and political" (Sharp 1979, p. 92). This suggests that what is required is an understanding of nonviolent political action that incorporates both its pragmatic and its principled elements, acknowledging the power dimension of political or social change (its pragmatic aspect) while expressing concern for the intrinsic moral worth of human beings and human relationships (its principled aspect).

Summary

Nonviolence or civil resistance can be identified as a distinctive form of political action, separate from both state-based politics and political violence. As such, it involves collective action, often through civil society organizations or social movements, to

achieve social or political objectives without the systematic or deliberate use of violence. Civil disobedience provides an obvious illustration or example of the distinctive character of nonviolence as a category of political action, since it involves noncooperation or even confrontation with the state or those in positions of political authority but without the use of violence.

A distinction is sometimes made between principled and pragmatic reasons for using nonviolence or civil resistance, exemplified by Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr., on the one hand, and Gene Sharp on the other. This distinction is useful analytically to help us understand different dimensions of nonviolence, although in practice Gandhi and King were masterful political strategists, while Sharp recognized that the consistent use of nonviolence strengthened its effectiveness as a form of political action.

These links between the pragmatic and principled dimensions of nonviolence and civil resistance connect to broader issues in the analysis of peace and conflict. We can ask, for example, whether nonviolence can be reduced to an innovative set of techniques or methods that avoid violence for political purposes. This involves focusing on nonviolence as a form of negative peace aimed primarily at eliminating or at least reducing or containing violence as a mechanism for achieving social or political change.

On the other hand, we can connect nonviolent political action or civil resistance to a broader vision of social justice involving a commitment to forms of social and political organization based on the peaceful or nonviolent resolution of conflict at multiple levels, from interpersonal to community, national, and even international relations. Such a commitment would also involve cognate norms or values that form part of this vision of social justice, such as the exclusively peaceful or nonviolent protection of human dignity and human rights. Thus, this broader vision of the role of nonviolence connects to positive peace, because it does not merely address political violence as a negative phenomenon but also suggests positive and constructive components of a society that recognizes the connection between social justice and peace.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Pacifism and Peace](#)
- ▶ [Socioeconomic Justice and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Search for Peace, the](#)

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Nonviolent Peacekeeping

- ▶ [Unarmed Civilian Protection/Peacekeeping](#)

Nonviolent Protection

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Normalization of Violence

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O

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Offline and Online (De)radicalization: An Overview of the Case of Kosovo

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Introduction

Given that radicalization is tied to global, sociological, and political drivers as well as ideological and psychological factors, its polarizing tendencies can be witnessed among various ethnic,

religious, and cultural population groups. While radicalization into violent extremism can take many forms, following the rise of transnational terrorist organizations such as Al Qaeda and Islamic State (IS), the term has become largely associated with religiously inspired, and specifically Islamist-based, non-state violence. If historical cases of radicalization and violent extremism serve as a reference, it can be understood that prevalent extremist ideological tendencies can change over time based on the social and (geo)-political context. While the concept of violent extremism broadly implies any kind of “engagement in violence associated with radical political, social, cultural, and religious ideologies and groups generally” (Holmer 2013, p. 1), the contemporary intention is to prevent the spread of two particular forms of extremism (though not only): religious-based extremism and nationalism. There are increasing policy statements for “whole-society approach” (Pilkington 2018), which are reflective of an inductive line yet, not grounded empirically.

The existing trends of extremism and radicalization echoes a complex picture with no single driver whereas the general observation of scholars is lack of understanding the complexities pertaining violent extremism (Neumann 2016; Roy 2017). The EU defines violent extremism broadly, as any extremist group aiming to impose certain political or religious ideology, and often through the use of force (EU Council 2017). The prevailing security challenge is depicted by

extremist groups who communicate through a distorted form of Islam, also conducting terrorist activities throughout Europe (Neumann 2016). In the Western Balkans, the rise of Islamic extremism became a new phenomenon dating from the arrival of Mujahedeen elements in early 1990s in countries such as Bosnia and Herzegovina (Azinovic and Jusic 2015, p. 70), as well as with the end of conflicts (Kosovo, North Macedonia) through the work of camouflaged NGOs and individuals from the Gulf States. The peak of the challenge was revealed by the time over 1000 individuals from the Western Balkans joined foreign conflicts in Syria and Iraq whereby there are hundreds of supporters still present in the countries and propagate the extremist ideology (Kelmendi 2018, p. 6).

The same challenge is equally found with the rise of nationalism and right-wing extremism. Nationalism is indigenous type of extremism in the Western Balkans with daunting consequences in the past whereas is being re-brought by different political parties and right-wing groups (Mujanovic 2018). The increasing narrative of nationalism is manifested into different forms of populism often promoting mono-ethnic states to the detriment of multiethnicity which has been cultivated in the last two decades – albeit limitedly – across the region. The failure to apply a more holistic approach in preventing further widespread of extremism, may lead to a heightened regional insecurity and violence, with direct implications for the EU.

This entry is based on the research conducted in the framework of the PAVE project and discusses the concept of offline and online radicalization potentially leading to violent extremism (PAVE 2020). It also examines main government and nongovernment de-radicalization initiatives in Kosovo. The first section provides an overview of how the concept of radicalization is defined in the current research, drawing on the work of different scholars and practitioners. The section notes the bias in the current research of linking the concept of radicalization with the Muslim religion. The discussion addresses both offline and online radicalization process. The second section discusses how the concept of

de-radicalization is defined in the current research, including how different governments have responded to online radicalization. The third section provides an overview of the government and nongovernment de-radicalization initiatives in Kosovo that focus on community resilience and reintegration of radicalized individuals in the society. The last section offers concluding thoughts about the current state of research and the way forward.

Radicalization and Its Manifestation(s)

There is little agreement among scholars and practitioners when it comes to defining the concept of radicalization. What we know is that radicalization is not a new phenomenon and waves of its violent and terrorist expressions have been present historically, although, arguably, as a concept it has become more popular in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, against the United States. While today radicalization is normalized as a negative connotation, from a historical perspective, the term was also used to refer to progressive ideas. For instance, during and in the aftermath of the American Civil War in 1865, the concept *Radical Republicans* was used to refer to members of the Congress who promoted emancipation of the slaves as well as believed in the equal rights and opportunities for the freed blacks. In other words, “ideas that are radical at some point could be liberal or even conservative for another.” (Kaya 2020, p. 3). The connection between radicalization and violent actions is relatively new. Comparatively speaking, it should be noted that across all past expressions of radicalization – the number of radicalized individuals who commit to violence has been extremely low.

Since radicalization often takes place at the intersection of an enabling (structural) environment characterized by factors such as deprivation, exclusion, experience of perceived injustice, and a personal trajectory such as alienation/identity crisis, radicalization has emerged from social processes and conditions common to societies throughout modern history, encompassing numerous radical and (revolutionary) social movements

(Sageman 2017). Thus, current efforts to conceptualize radicalization often borrow from the social movement theory (SMT), viewing social movements as “[a] set of opinions and beliefs in a population, which represents preferences for changing some elements of the social structure and/or reward distribution of a society.” (Zald 1987, p. 2).

Ideological and behavioral radicalization is an important dimension of our understanding of radicalization as a cognitive process. According to Peter Neumann (2013, pp. 874–875), a key difference in radicalization can be located between the “political ideas that are diametrically opposed to a society’s core values,” or “methods by which actors seek to realize any political aim.” In other words, one of the challenges in defining radicalization is the extent to which we connect (ideological) radicalization with violent actions. Neumann (2013) continues that for some governments it is mainly a cognitive process while for others there is explicit connection with violence. On the other hand, Timothy Williams (2019, p. 86) holds that ideological and behavioral radicalization “co-exist and influence each other.” In this sense, we can understand radicalization both as an incremental process of adopting extremist views and ideas but not necessarily acting on them, as well as a process through which extremist ideas influence an individual to commit violent extremist acts.

Radicalization, can be understood, both as a social, psychological, and ideological process of a person increasingly becoming receptive of radical views that also justify violence as means of achieving political goals (PAVE project, 2020). Trip et al. (2019) hold that radicalization can be viewed as a functional as well as descriptive phenomenon. While from the functional perspective radicalization is seen as a “preparation for intergroup conflict,” descriptive definitions denote a change in “beliefs, feelings, and behaviours that justify intergroup violence.” (Ibid, para. 3). Therefore, radicalization is often a diverse and multifactorial phenomenon that is difficult to pinpoint to a single variable or driver. It is a complex process whose understanding requires an all-encompassing approach that takes into account sociopolitical

contexts, groups’ dynamics, and individual circumstances. Radicalization can translate into more tangible actions often leading to – what is widely being referred – violent extremism. Violent extremism is usefully defined as “the active adjustment of an ideology and associated praxis to challenge the state and its elites, usually through violence” (Joffe 2012, p. 1), while as a phenomenon most commonly observed among the marginalized. In the policy circles, violent extremism is aimed to be prevented through different holistic means, otherwise defined into Prevention of Violent Extremism (PVE). There is no internationally agreed definition of PVE yet, according to Rosand “PVE is intended to capture non-kinetic and proactive measures to prevent and counter efforts by violent extremists to radicalize, recruit, and mobilize followers to violence” (2016, p. 1).

Indeed, while Islamist radicalization dominated the terrorism research and policy responses at the international level in the post 9–11 context yet, the far right in recent years has posed a growing threat to security and peace. The current scholarship seems to overlook the impact that the wars following the breakup of Yugoslavia in the 1990s had in creating the modern far-right extremism movement, which also inspired people from Europe to join the Serbian (Orthodox) and Croatian (Catholic) armies out of religious convictions (See for more information on the war of the breakup of Yugoslavia: Denich 1994; Anderson 1995). Both Anders Breivik and the attacker of Christchurch/New Zealand, among others, were partly inspired by Serbian nationalism (Coalson 2019). But promoting ethnic-division and hatred is only part of how nationalistic ethno-political radicalization is manifested in the Western Balkans. It is also shaped by the perceived threat from Islam echoing a similar theme across the EU.

Another dimension of the national ethno-political groups in the Western Balkans is their international links, especially to Russia. Kosovo holds a particular relevance for Serbia and is an important space where ethno-national extremism combined with religion are performed (Vllasi 2020). While Pro-Russian nationalist groups are most widespread and active in Serbia, they also operate across borders in Serb-inhabited areas of

neighboring countries, such as North Kosovo (Prague Security Studies Institute 2019). In addition to promoting interethnic hatred, these groups disseminate anti-Western propaganda and a narrative that aims to undermine Kosovo's territorial integrity (Ibid). The militarization of these groups – such as through reported training in Russia, youth indoctrination, and individuals joining pro-Russian forces as foreign fighters in Ukraine – is of concern (Ibid). But perhaps the most worrisome aspect of this phenomenon is the current alarming lack of information regarding the different pathways in which right wing extremism takes root and evolves in Kosovo. National ethno-political radicalism in the Western Balkans is also manifested through anti-liberal and anti-EU narratives (Kelly 2019).

The Online and Offline Dimensions

As radicalization and violent extremism studies experienced an exponential growth in the past two decades, various scholars have purported that there are multiple paths towards radicalization and violent extremism, cautioning from any attempts to draw causal relationships between the interrelated factors. Increasingly, there is a focus on psychological factors influencing an individual's cognitive susceptibility to violent extremist thought/ideology. The internet has undoubtedly transformed the communication and networking culture, and in doing so, it has created ample opportunities to expand, diversify, and access the general populace or particular targeted audience – an opportunity that has been seized by extremist groups. Determining the exact role that the internet plays in the radicalization process is subject of disagreement in academia, though there is certainty that online channels such as social media platforms, are widely utilized to spread radical ideologies, leading to an increase in extremist content that is not confined to the use of a particular entity or group (Conway 2017). A RAND report investigating 15 cases of violent extremism shows that the internet can serve as a source of information, communication, and of propaganda for extremist ideology, while also enhancing opportunities to accelerate the process of radicalization (Behr et al. 2019).

Central to the scholarly debate on the internet's role in the radicalization process is the question whether online propaganda is more effective than physical social networks (Meleagrou-Hitchens and Kaderbhai 2017). As online platforms are increasingly becoming main spheres of interaction among people, and especially youth, the internet is being viewed as instrumental in “normalizing” both radical ideas that lead to violent extremism and terrorism. Torok (2013) argues that the challenge lies in determining “the mechanisms and power relations that underlie this phenomenon of online media used to promote radicalization which in some cases can develop into terrorism” (Ibid). Narratives of victimization play an important role in the process of radicalization, especially with respect to online radicalization. Part of the reason for this is the capacity of the online platforms to have a wider reach and also the nature of the online platforms that sustain an information environment that is free from filters that check against facts and reality. In other words, this has to do with the so-called “post-truth” which means that the online platforms are more suitable to appeal to beliefs and emotions of the people (Anderson and Rainie 2017). Online radicalization narratives often involve shock and awe tactics or moral shock campaigns. Aarten, Mulder, and Pemberton (2018, p. 558) hold that: “The link between victimization experiences and radicalization can be direct, with victimization experiences serving as a causal factor in the development and extremity of religious and political views that may motivate political violence and terrorism.”

Studies investigating drivers of radicalization in Kosovo, with a primary focus on individuals who joined the foreign conflicts in Syria and Iraq, have attributed a mix of factors to the phenomenon. According to Kraja (2017, p. 5) some of these factors include “weak economy, political instability, poor education system and the rise of various Islamic nongovernmental organizations competing in Kosovo's newly democratized public sphere,” and less stringent circumstances, such as issues of identity, belonging and social isolation or outright exclusion”. They also found that extremist propaganda videos disseminated online

have been vital for Islamic State's (IS) recruitment efforts. A study on the use of online narratives targeted to the Kosovo audience shows that IS exploited the vulnerabilities of the postwar society grappling with "forging an identity, past grievances pertaining to the 1998–1999 war such as wartime rape and the perceived bias against Muslims" and used this to "incite recruits from Kosovo to join its war efforts in the Middle East." (Kraja 2017, p. 6). In addition to this "the IS narrative to Kosovo's public is a power play that lures its followers with the promise of an alternative way of life in the so-called caliphate, purportedly compliant with *Sharia*." (Ibid, p. 6). Another report by the Kosovar Centre for Security Studies (KCSS) found that Imams have a tendency to develop their own profiles on social media platforms such as Facebook or Twitter and publish sermons and other lectures. This can be both important for counter-narrative measures as well as potentially be abused to promote radical content by lectures or sermons not sanctioned by religious authorities (Jakupi and Kelmendi 2019). The most worrisome finding of the report is that online extremist narratives are much better organized and effectively disseminated than counter-narrative activities including alternative narratives conducted by nongovernment organizations and state institutions (Ibid). However, there is a lack of evidence to suggest that an individual's radicalization took place exclusively online, whether from consumption of online propaganda or through virtual socialization. Studies suggest that the separation between online and offline environments is artificial and does not reflect the reality of pathways into violent extremism (Beadle 2017, p. 13). Instead, radicalization appears as "a blend of interconnected social processes in the 'real' as much as the 'virtual' domain" with the internet serving as a platform for these mechanisms, "a socializing setting through engagement with radical discourses exploiting vulnerabilities and hedging into social communities" (Ibid.).

Yet, a key difference between offline and online radicalization seems to be that spaces of offline radicalization are generally easier to identify, such as religious places of worship, educational establishment, and prisons. However, given

the ubiquity of virtual communication, online radicalization seems difficult to both pinpoint key venues of concern, as well as devise responses that are effective. A particularly important challenge for online radicalization is also the cooperation and relationship between government and regulatory bodies and companies that have created and manage social platforms or other online communication means. There seems to be an inherent tension in deploying counter radicalization measures online, without the state appearing to establish comprehensive interception abilities that can infringe upon civil liberties and rights of citizens.

Toward Understanding De-radicalization

The current research does not provide conceptual or operational clarity concerning de-radicalization, challenging efforts to effectively address the issue of radicalization. What we know is that governments seem to increasingly recognize the importance of reintegrating in the society individuals that committed violent or terrorist acts (Horgan and Braddock 2010). But, is the goal to pacify the citizens and target their ideology or manage and prevent their potential violent behavior? (Veldhuis 2012). In a generalized context, de-radicalization refers to attempts to counter and oppose the radical doctrine, the ideological positions, or interpretations that are utilized to justify radical views as well as violence in their pursuit. Although de-radicalization, understood more broadly as the reversal of radicalization processes, remains a significant strategic policy objective in countering violent extremism, the approach suffers from a number of shortcomings. The overarching shortcoming has to do with difficulty in translating programs into a mere de-radicalization of individuals: the practice shows that the maximum de-radicalization program could reach is disengagement of individuals (Holmer 2013, p. 1).

While behavioral and cognitive elements of de-radicalization are seen as important for disrupting the radicalization process, they are often not clearly identified. That is because there

are inherent challenges to determine whether changes in behavior match changes in objectives/intentions – exacerbated by the fact that de-radicalization programs are often implemented in prison contexts where inmates have strong incentives to misrepresent their views.

When it comes to de-radicalization, existing literature is also marred by a lack of empirical research investigating drivers to de-radicalize. De-radicalization programs tend to have a more limited focus on cognitive factors and the socialization context without accounting for other structural conditions. Some studies show that the process of de-radicalization is affected by the nature and trajectory of radicalization of the individual. Lina Grip and Jenniina Kotajoki (2019, p. 391) hold that “the degree of voluntarism, motivations for joining extremist groups (including ideological beliefs) and role and time spent in the organisation are suggested to have an impact on disengagement and reintegration processes.”

Disengagement and reintegration are conceptually part of exit efforts. Disengagement is a closely associated concept with behavior and cognitive elements of de-radicalization. It refers to the efforts not oriented towards convincing an individual to abandon her/his radical worldview or beliefs, but to influence the radicalized individual to disengage from violence. Disengagement is often implemented through programs that seek to develop critical thinking or counter the radical beliefs by a figure of authority. While disengagement, or the ability to desist violence, can occur without de-radicalization, it may not be possible to achieve de-radicalization without associated changes in belief, behavior, and modes of belonging. This implies a third stage – rehabilitation and resocialization. For example, in Kosovo, the government planned for a de-radicalization program that involved bringing vetted Imams to have sessions in the correctional facilities with violent extremist offenders, including foreign fighter returnees from Syria and Iraq. The goal was to counter radical ideological views through religious teachings that dispel extremist propaganda. However, because the program was sponsored by the government and was heavily promoted

to show the institutions’ resolve to fight radicalization, the vetted Imams were seen as “Western collaborators.” This significantly impaired the credibility of Imams among the targeted audience in correctional facilities and rendered the program unsuccessful.

Effectively targeting and distinguishing between offline and online factors in the radicalization process has become a daunting task in de-radicalization efforts. In the framework of online de-radicalization, disruption is a central theme. The disruption approach is defined by the UK government as “working with filtering companies, disrupting the use of the internet for extremist messaging and increasing the use of the internet to promote alternative views to the radicalised messages that may otherwise be accessed.” (Behr et al. 2019, p. 4). There are two levels that top the disruption activity: (1) a technical element which involves tracing and tracking radical content online, including different channels or handles in social media platforms that disseminate such information and (2) a narrative component, disseminating counter-narratives online to the radical content.

With respect to the technical dimension of online de-radicalization through disruption, in 2017, companies such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube established the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism (GIFCT). The forum provides direct support, including through technology and knowledge, as well as helps coordinate main stakeholders to disrupt extremist content in their platforms (GIFCT 2017). While important progress has been made by tech companies to counter radicalism and prevent their platforms from being abused by extremist groups, a key challenge remains the versatility of these groups. Groups promoting radicalism and extremist ideas if blocked or removed by a particular channel from an online social media platform, simply open a different one. One way that GIFTC has responded to this is by creating a data of “hashes” which is used as a digital fingerprint to track radical activity online (Macdonald 2018).

Overall, the burgeoning field of preventing and countering violent extremism (P/CVE) research has been exploring factors that make individuals

or groups more vulnerable to radicalization. While many studies have looked into individual-level factors, in the more recent years, there is greater focus on exploring the role of communities, a meso-level type of analysis of investigating the issue. This presents a paradigm shift in the conceptualization of violent extremism – shifting away from a pathways approach focused on a person's radicalization trajectory, and towards an ecological view that takes into account how characteristics of the social environment can either incite or reduce involvement in violent extremism (Weine 2013). This increased attention towards community resilience is grounded on research that identifies community engagement as one of the main factors determining the presence, prevalence, or absence of violent extremism across contexts (Jakupi and Kraja 2018). Thus, strengthening community resilience has become the goal of numerous projects operating within the P/CVE framework, explicitly or implicitly also targeting some aspect of de-radicalization. The next section examines in more detail government and non-government initiatives that seek to build community resilience against radicalization.

Kosovo's Response to Radicalization and Violent Extremism

This section examines government and non-government initiatives in Kosovo that have demonstrated potential for building resilience in communities and for empowering local communities to intervene to prevent or disrupt the process of radicalization of members in their midst. Moreover, it explores initiatives that tie rehabilitation and reintegration efforts for individuals formerly associated with violent extremist group, including foreign fighter returnees and their family members. While the majority of available information derives from Kosovo's experience in addressing Islamist-motivated radicalization, there is a notable absence of projects or initiatives targeting right wing or specifically far right extremism. Unsurprisingly, the lack of political attention to address the issue of ethno-based extremism, particularly among Serb-majority municipalities, has

led to a neglect of the issue among civil society and donor community alike.

In mapping out good practices or promising initiatives for community resilience a few initial challenges become apparent that should be recognized – namely, an ambiguity over the understanding of community resilience and a lack of systematic impact assessments of implemented P/CVE projects. To begin with, one of the challenges in identifying good practices for strengthening community resilience against online and offline radicalization is the lack of an agreed-upon definition of the concept itself. Based on an inductive thematic analysis of definitions and descriptions, community resilience remains an amorphous notion that is perceived and applied differently by different actors (Patel et al. 2017). This implies that too many projects may often be mistakenly labelled as functioning to strengthen community resilience. Alternatively, a number of projects that even though they work on supporting core elements of community resilience such as local knowledge, community networks, and relationships, or resources, they are not categorized as such.

Many projects seem to also employ counter-narratives to push back against extremist recruitment and propaganda. Counter-narratives aim to offer a positive alternative to extremist propaganda, or to deconstruct or delegitimize extremist narratives (Silverman et al. 2016). Nevertheless, while the counter-narrative approach has gained widespread acceptance, Glazzard argues that it is built on very shaky theoretical and empirical foundations (Glazzard 2017). Reed (2018) confirms that there is a lack of empirical evidence to support underlying assumptions in current counter-narrative approaches, but he also adds that the challenge is in identifying which narratives work and why. This underscores the need for the use of rigorous standards and methodologies to ensure a more effective approach, including a clear theory of change, monitoring and evaluation provisions, and application of lessons learnt in future counter-narrative campaigns (Ibid., p. 3).

The absence of systematic impact assessments as a result of inconsistent and incoherent

monitoring and evaluation practices for P/CVE projects is factor that hinders efforts to identify good practices on community resilience. The evaluation of projects aimed at building community resilience is one of the main ways to assess the effectiveness of programming. Yet, practitioners can only test their programs reliably when adopting rigorous research designs, but these are often the most difficult and costly research designs to implement (Ambroznik 2018). What does constitute a good practice? What are some of the criteria used in determining whether a project has had a positive impact on community resilience, or online and offline de-radicalization more specifically? Are these criteria being applied, monitored, and evaluated consistently? In the countries/case studies that are subject of this research, there is a significant dearth of projects that seem to provide clear answers to these questions.

Kosovo citizens primarily identify through their ethnic backgrounds, i.e., Albanians, Serbs. Religion has always been a secondary source to identification, especially to Albanians who maintained religion largely in the private sphere. Kosovo's majority Albanian population is Muslim, but there are strong Albanian-Catholic as well as Protestant communities. The Serbian community in Kosovo which represents over 5% of the population is predominantly Orthodox-Christians. Kosovo is a secular state, and as Isa Blumi (2005, p. 2) notes Kosovar Albanians "have traditionally practiced Islam in ways unique to the region, practices which included the synthesis of a number of local forms of spiritual traditions which ultimately evolved into complicated rituals in which Muslims and local Christians often shared the same spiritual site." Some journalists have described Kosovo's approach to practicing Muslim religion as "Islam lite" (Irish Times 2012). In other words, secularity is not only a legal status of the state of Kosovo, but the very nature of its society.

In the aftermath of the war in 1999, Kosovo started to receive much needed help from other countries, including from Gulf States, which also brought along a variety of programs that promoted different schools of interpretation of Islam,

including Wahhabism (Gall 2016) as a more conservative strain. After 1999, Kosovo's indigenous Islamic tradition was challenged by the external influence of faith-based organizations which came mainly from Gulf States and propagated a version of religious doctrine that sought to breed intolerance and oppose secularism (Blumi 2005). Kosovo postwar situation, including socioeconomic vulnerabilities were abused and exploited to create "an environment conducive to radicalization." (Shtuni 2016, p. 1).

Government of Kosovo has undertaken a number of initiatives to curb the radicalization process, especially in the aftermath of the phenomenon of foreign fighters in the country, which saw an estimated 400 citizens travel to Syria and Iraq to join violent extremist groups such as IS. Kosovo is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. In 2015, the government approved a national "Strategy on Prevention of Violent Extremism and Radicalisation Leading to Terrorism 2015–2020" as well as the Law on Prohibition of Joining the Armed Conflicts Outside State Territory (Kosovo Assembly 2015). Kosovo's Financial Intelligence Unit is part of the Egmont Group which strengthens cooperation internationally against money laundering and finance of terrorism. In line with efforts to strengthen the strategic and legal framework to prevent and counter violent extremism and terrorism, Kosovo is in the process of updating key strategic documents, including the strategy against terrorism. The strategy against terrorism and the strategy for the prevention of violent extremism is expected to be merged in one document and be in line with European Union (EU) acquis.

Kosovo is the only country in the Western Balkans to have established a specialized unit to focus only on rehabilitation and de-radicalization programs. The Division for Prevention and Reintegration of Radicalized Persons (DPRRI) operates under the Department for Public Safety of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The purpose of DPRRI is to coordinate and monitor the reintegration process of radicalized individuals, and those repatriated from foreign conflicts. Ministry of Justice of Kosovo has established a rehabilitation and de-radicalization program in the Kosovo

Correctional Services which primarily includes vocational training opportunities. The Ministry of Justice also launched a program with the Islamic Community of Kosovo to provide imams in the prisons to address the ideological dimension of radicalization and provide counter-narratives, but as mentioned earlier, this program was terminated.

Besides DPRRI, at the local level, the Ministry of Internal Affairs in 2016 piloted a new mechanism for early detection and prevention called the Referral Mechanism. This program proved not to be very successful in the Municipality of Gjilan with only 12 cases of early detection among youth and successful rehabilitation and reintegration in the society, through a combined intervention of peer support, family support, and counselling. The government plans to establish similar mechanisms across all municipalities of Kosovo. In addition to this, each municipality in Kosovo has established Municipal Community Safety Councils (MCSC) which are security forums where the Police Station commander participates in regular monthly meetings and reports for the security situation. MCSC include also participants from civil society, religious leaders, community leaders, and departments from the local municipal government. MCSC play an important role in de-radicalization efforts by facilitating coordination and mobilization of resources.

With respect to online de-radicalization, the government of Kosovo adopted the National Cyber Security Strategy and Action Plan 2016–2019 which states that “Extremist and radical groups are increasingly using Cyberspace for organisation and media propaganda to promote their activities, recruit new members, organize terrorist actions, and thus pose a threat to national security of the Republic of Kosovo.” (MIA 2015, p. 11). The strategy includes “incitement to terrorist acts and glorification of violence” as part of the definition of cybercrime. The strategy utilizes the concept cyberterrorism and refers it as a preferred choice for “terrorists because it can be accomplished with only modest financial resources, with anonymity, and from a great distance.” (Ibid., p. 7). However, the action plan comes short of outlining concrete measures for online de-radicalization.

Civil society in Kosovo has been a pioneer of de-radicalization efforts, including promoting important policies which the government has adopted and working more broadly within the P/CVE framework. For instance, Global Community Engagement Resilience Fund (GCERF) is a global fund that aims to strengthen community resilience by supporting local initiatives to address the drivers of violent extremism. GCEF operates in seven countries, including Kosovo where it has worked with local partners on awareness, life skills training, development of alternative narratives, leadership training, cultural and sports activities, etc. It is important to note that GCERF does not distinguish between targeting online (de)radicalization and offline (de)radicalization, though based on the type of the projects they support, it is evident that implemented activities often cover both. Although GCERF publishes information regarding project (local) partners, activity type, total resources allocated in Kosovo, there are no publicly available assessment reports on project impact – which makes it harder to evaluate whether the implemented activities follow a theory of change or resources match its stated goals. GCERF has a new supporting scheme 2020 for Western Balkans Countries which support countries to strength community resilience against violent extremism and support region in rehabilitation of the repatriated individuals from conflict zones. Under the AFM, GCERF will fund consortia of CSOs to implement initiatives aimed at enabling the environment for rehabilitation and reintegration of RFTFs and their families (GCERF 2020).

Resonant Voices Initiative (RVI) is a regional project in the Western Balkans that aims to counter terrorist propaganda, hate speech, disinformation, harassment, and intimidation present in the online sphere. This initiative addresses (de)radicalization primarily in the online sphere. It seeks to provide a platform for networking journalists, activists, and community leaders who challenge dangerous messages online, it maps online radicalization trends, and it offers training, mentoring, and technical support to counter-narrative campaigns. In such a manner,

they purport to mobilize local actors to address the “weaponization” of information that targets vulnerable audiences and disrupts community cohesion with their target communities involving a diverse set of stakeholders. As part of their programs to build community actors’ skills to develop counter-narrative campaigns, they claim to provide training on impact metrics, which is encouraging in terms of testing campaign outcome. However, there is no publicly available study that provides a comprehensive analysis of how impactful the RVI projects have been. Without such a study, it becomes harder to determine the rigor of RVI project monitoring and evaluation practices and the consistency of their coherent application throughout different projects.

The Dutch Embassy in Kosovo, supported through the Netherlands’ Fund for Regional Partnership and MATRA fund has implemented a series of projects in Kosovo that target community resilience. For instance, the “Building Resilience: Communities against Violent Extremism” project is currently being implemented with the purpose of strengthening community resilience through inclusivity. This project aims to empower local communities in Kosovo, targeting women and youth to mobilize informal resilience networks against violent extremism. This project seeks to also provide local communities a platform to address security-related concerns as well as information how to facilitate the reintegration process of conflict-zone returnees. As a result of this project, one of implementing partners (KCSS) has established a Women’s Security Forum – which is the only platform in Kosovo to provide women across different municipalities in Kosovo an open venue to discuss security issues through a gender-sensitive lens. These forums offer a chance for women to address their concerns related to security, including radicalization and violent extremism, and to discuss ways in which they can mobilize in their communities to address these issues. While there is no specific targeting of online or offline (de)radicalization, the multimedia coverage of the project on raising awareness about violent extremism and how to facilitate the reintegration of FFs and their family members allows for a wider audience reach. Similarly,

data are currently lacking in terms of monitoring and evaluation of these projects, which could help to determine their impact.

In Kosovo, there are also programs that focus on some of the most vulnerable groups affected by radicalization and violent extremism. For instance, “Youth for Youth- increasing resilience among the vulnerable youth in Kosovo” is a project that is currently being implemented in Kosovo to support the reintegration of children returnees from the foreign conflict zones in Syria and Iraq. While the main target audience of this project are the children returnees, children from other backgrounds participate in project activities as well – to avoid stigmatization and promote inclusiveness. This project targets offline (de)radicalization by promoting social skills of the children returnees and facilitating their reintegration in society. Its strength lies on engaging directly with the affected communities from violent extremism, fostering cooperation between civil society and institutional representatives that lead rehabilitation and reintegration efforts for FTFs and their family members. However, as the project is ongoing, to date there are no evaluations of the project activities in achieving the intended project goals. Needless to say, rehabilitation and reintegration programs present a long-term approach to tackling the issue of radicalization and violent extremism whose actual effectiveness we will be able to see years or even decades later.

It should be noted that in mapping of initiatives with the purpose of building community resilience against violent extremism, projects which function primarily in an unstructured or informal manner have not been taken into account. This entry mapped out a number of initiatives that fall within the selected criteria to support community resilience to highlight the type of projects that are being implemented in Kosovo. However, this entry does not provide an extensive evaluation of the impact of such initiatives in increasing community resilience against online and offline (de)radicalization. To a great extent, such an undertaking hinges upon publicly available data on community resilience projects and the (lack of) project monitoring and evaluation reports. Moreover, the P/CVE moniker attached to projects that

seek to build community resilience often garners criticism for being too narrowly tailored to violent extremism when other issues are of equal or greater concern to communities (Weine 2015). The design and implementation of projects to foster community resilience against online and offline (de)radicalization is also donor driven, which in turn is influenced by countries' broader strategic policy framework to counter terrorism and prevent violent extremism, which may conceptualize the term resilience differently and as a result seek different ways to engage with the communities.

Summary

There is a myriad of academic and policy research showing that there is no "one-size-fits-all" definition of radicalization and violent extremism. The reason for having no widely agreed definition and concept has to do with different drivers leading to individual or structural radicalization and also the evolving types of ideological underpinnings of radicalization. There is also often a thin line dividing certain groups from transmitting their radical views from freedom of expression, especially if this is not translated into antagonizing society or, most importantly, being manifested into violence. While radicalization can greatly challenge societal cohesion and cause structural problems in every community, it is violent extremism which represent a severe concern for physical security, thereby upholding the level of fear among communities.

Kosovo case is indeed a relevant example which showed a trajectory of increased radicalization cells which have been nevertheless diminished promptly as a result of societal response. There is no single individual or structural drivers which led to tens of Kosovans joining foreign conflicts in Syria and Iraq yet, it could be concluded that diverse set of identity, socioeconomic, and individual drivers have led to many of them being prone to radical ideas. Kosovan community has cultivated for centuries certain level of resilience such as: family influence, mediation, wisdom of "community pride", mobilization

against external "evil" as well as other factors, all of which – along many other factors – could have contributed to the purpose of preventing further widespread violent extremist ideologies. This is being helped through the support of number of international initiatives which, after reaching some level of donor coordination, have managed to produce tangible results. In short, community resilience combined with limited state's foothold marks a recipe for decreasing the potential of radicalization and violent extremism.

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Ohrid Framework Agreement, The

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Synonyms

Consociational democracy; Minority rights; North Macedonia; Peace agreements

Definition

The Ohrid Framework Agreement is a peace agreement which marked the end of the interethnic conflict in North Macedonia (This article uses the new constitutional name of North Macedonia resulting from the Prespa Agreement and the subsequent constitutional changes in 2019 (Final Agreement 2019). The name “Macedonia” is used when referred to in original quotations) in 2001 between

the Macedonian state and the ethnic Albanian guerilla group, the National Liberation Army. It is an agreement which ensured education, language, decentralization, and equitable representation rights for non-majority communities which constitute at least 20% of the population. Non-majority communities in North Macedonia are the Albanian, Turkish, Bosnian, Serbian, Romani, and Vlach communities, whereas the threshold of 20% at the state level is only reached by the Albanian community, at the local level all communities reach the threshold in a given municipality or municipalities. The Ohrid Framework Agreement laid the foundation for a power-sharing arrangement in the country. The constitutional and legislative amendments that the Agreement entailed have largely changed the political and legal landscape of the country enabling the inclusion of the ethnic Albanian and other communities and advancing their equal and equitable treatment.

The Ohrid Framework Agreement

The Ohrid Framework Agreement (OFA) ended the 2001 interethnic conflict in North Macedonia (see chapter ► “Ethnic Conflict in North Macedonia”) between the Macedonian state and ethnic Albanian fighters under the Albanian National Liberation Army (NLA), establishing the pillars of consociational democracy (Lijphart 1977). The OFA had to address numerous issues and disparities of the society of North Macedonia and most importantly had to instill trust and legitimacy in the state for all communities. As Bieber (2020) notes, until the 2001, state legitimacy had been a key challenge to the authorities particularly in regard to the Albanian community. He adds that despite the fact that Albanians had been formally included in the government since the state’s independence in 1991, it still “remained dominated by the Macedonian majority, with few Albanians employed by the state and the constitutional and institutional self-understanding of a nation state. This only changed (partially) through the 2001 conflict and the Ohrid Framework Agreement” (Bieber 2020, p. 21). The role of the conflict goes hand in hand with the OFA because the

conflict accelerated the solutions to issues that non-majority communities, particularly the ethnic Albanian, had been trying to articulate and advocate for since 1991. North Macedonia left Yugoslavia without a conflict and through a peaceful process, and as a result many of the institutions and practices of the way the state functioned under Yugoslavia, as well as many of its disparities, remained, or even deepened, including its relations with non-majority ethnic groups. As Bieber succinctly notes, “[w]hile North Macedonia lacked a revolutionary moment as in Serbia or a clear democratic breakthrough as in Croatia, the Ohrid Framework Agreement was a turning point” (Bieber 2020, p. 55). The OFA became the first major challenge in the new state and, as such, reconfigured the relationship of the state with its citizens.

The OFA was agreed upon in the town of Ohrid, from where it gets its name, and was signed in the capital of Skopje on August 13, 2001. The agreement was signed by President Boris Trajkovski, who was also the initiator of the talks; the leaders of two of the major ethnic Macedonian political parties, the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization-Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity (VMRO-DPMNE) and Social Democratic Union of Macedonia (SDSM); and the two major ethnic Albanian political parties, the Democratic Party of Albanians (DPA) and the Party for Democratic Prosperity (PPD) (it is important to note that the NLA had no separate representatives in the negotiations, instead being represented by the ethnic Albanian political parties). Lastly, the OFA was also signed by two witnesses, Special Representative of the European Union (EU) Francois Leotard and Special Representative of the United States (USA) James Pardew, who were the main mediators and guarantors of the agreement. While Florian Bieber and Soren Keil (2009) have noted that North Macedonia and indeed any of the countries in the Western Balkans cannot be considered as “a fully fledged consociational democracy” (p. 340), the OFA has been instrumental in establishing a power-sharing arrangement along the lines described by Bieber and Keil (2009) as one that “supports the inclusion of different ethnic groups

in decision-making bodies at the central, regional and local levels, allows for the self-governance of these groups and provides them with veto rights or other comparable protections from being outvoted” (p. 340).

The agreement rests on the basic principle that there “are no territorial solutions to ethnic issues” (OFA 2001, Article 1.2, p. 1) as the NLA did not pursue an outright secessionist agenda (Bieber and Keil 2009, p. 345), thus the agreement reaffirms the territorial integrity of the state. The OFA rests on five pillars: decentralization, non-discrimination and equitable representation, parliamentary representation, education and use of language, and expression of identity. These pillars largely represent the main grievances that the ethnic Albanian population living in North Macedonia had. While the OFA mentions the word “Albanian” only once in its main text when referring to the cessation of hostilities, it has widely been used by the ethnic Albanian community to increase its rights and representation within the country, which will be further explored in the following section. However, the agreement itself uses the term “communities of at least 20%” or makes referrals to “at least 20% of the population”, not mentioning any community in particular. In addition to its main text, the OFA holds three annexes that set out the way in which it will be implemented, namely, Annex A, Constitutional Amendment; Annex B, Legislative Modifications; and Annex C, Implementation and Confidence-Building Measures. The annexes show that the OFA “was conceptualized as a framework” (Spaskovska 2010, p.14) which “implies a process of legal development rather than the conclusive settlement of all issues relating to interethnic relation” (Bieber 2004, p. 244), therefore setting out guidelines for steps that needed to be agreed with a broader consensus in parliament. The OFA did not include a detailed framework such as the so-called Ahtisaari Plan for Kosovo, leaving many aspects open to further deliberation and change.

The development of a decentralized government established under Article 3 of the Agreement constitutes a key pillar for its implementation and addressing the concerns of ethnic Albanians. Decentralization is a tool which ensures that

governance is closer to the citizens and which can enable a more equitable share of resources. It also constituted a key request by ethnic Albanian leaders and NLA fighters. Since the NLA did not seek secession, substantial decentralization of the country would enable adequate and equitable representation and distribution of resources starting from the local level. The Agreement foresees a new census under Article 3.2 along with a revisiting of the municipal boundaries of the country. The new census, which was carried out in 2002, was particularly important for an agreement which bases the distribution of rights on the percentage of the communities. This aspect of the Agreement has, over the years, become a further point of contestation with communities arguing about the real number of the different communities which could either enable or inhibit the enjoyment of more rights (Vrgova 2015; for more details on the politics of censuses, see chapter ► “Census Politics in Deeply Divided Societies” in this volume). As decentralization serves to tackle representation and an equitable distribution of resources (due to fiscal decentralization), Article 4 of the OFA targets nondiscrimination and equitable representation, including the equal treatment and the equitable representation of communities in terms of employment. The issue of employment had to be addressed due to the large disparities particularly in the public sector, as at the time of the conflict in 2001, “84.5% of the employed were ethnic Macedonians, while only 7.5% were Albanians” (Brunnbauer 2004, p. 580). This large disparity is why employment in the public sector constituted one of the priority issues for the NLA and the Albanian political parties. Article 4 also regulates the employment of judges, specifying that for the Constitutional Court “one-third of the judges will be chosen by the Assembly by a majority of the total number of Representatives that includes a majority of the total number of Representatives claiming to belong to the communities not in the majority in the population of Macedonia” (OFA 2001, Article 4. 3, p.3). The inclusion of the employment of judges is particularly important, as even in contemporary North Macedonia, as the trust of the judicial system among the Albanians and other

minorities continues to be lower than among ethnic Macedonians (Taleski et al. 2016, p. 33). This has been a result of the handling of highly sensitive cases, such as the Sopot case, where a group of Albanians were arbitrarily convicted and arrested (Taleski et al. 2016) affecting the public perception of the legal system among ethnic Albanians.

OFA's Article 5 addresses the issue of parliamentary inclusiveness in the sense that it establishes a mechanism through which issues that are important to non-majority communities are approved by them as well. Thus, Article 5 establishes the principle of a qualified two-thirds majority, or what has come to be known as the Badinter majority (Spaskovska 2010, p. 14) which requires a double majority from the ethnic Macedonian representatives and the representatives of other communities, on issues such as education, language rights, local finances, the city of Skopje, use of symbols, etc. All of these issues that need a Badinter majority are issues for which Albanians had been struggling to create inclusive policies on in the first decade of the republic, setting up a new mechanism to improve the quality of representation. Since non-majority communities themselves have never constituted a majority without the votes of Macedonian parties, the adoption of laws that would affect them would be very difficult; with the Badinter majority, their influence on policies affecting them is guaranteed. There are two other pressing issues that the OFA addresses, which were part of the NLA demands and those of Albanian political parties: education and the use of languages that are not the Macedonian language. The OFA guarantees education in the primary and secondary level in the "students' native language" (OFA 2001, Article 6, p. 3) which was also previously foreseen with the Constitution of the country and is to the benefit of several non-majority communities in North Macedonia, with teaching provided in Macedonian, Albanian, and Turkish. What was novel in the OFA is the guarantee of state funding for university-level teaching. This responded to a long-held priority of enabling education in Albanian as political parties had "consistently campaigned to give Albanian a more prominent place as a language of instruction in the educational system, arguing in particular that the unavailability

of higher education through the medium of Albanian discriminates against the Albanian-speaking population" (Brown 2000, p. 130). If we consider the fact that at the point of the OFA being signed the only university that filled this condition- teaching university level classes in Albanian- was the University of Tetovo which was still an illegal entity (Koppa 2001, p. 51; for more details, see chapter ► "[Ethnic Conflict in North Macedonia](#)"), the provision for state funded university education was an important step in ensuring improvement in the area of university education for the Albanian community. More specifically, with the OFA, the state funding is provided for education in the language spoken by at least 20% of the population which has ensured higher education in Albanian, as they continue to be the only non-majority community that meets the threshold.

The OFA also sets out to regulate the use of language at the national and at the local level. Brown (2000) notes that a "key concern in Albanian political activism within Macedonia has been the place of the Albanian language in the state" (p.130) and the issue of the use of the Albanian language continues to be a concern in contemporary politics. The persistence of this issue is a result of the difficulty the parties faced in reaching a clear agreement on settling the status of the Albanian language during the OFA negotiations, which is why Article 6 regulates the use of languages by affirming that Macedonian and its alphabet is the official language, as well as any other language which is spoken by at least 20% of the population (OFA 2001, p. 3) however the use of language as stipulated in the Agreement has yet to be implemented fully. At the local level, any language other than Macedonian spoken by at least 20% of the population is also official, whereas languages which are spoken by less than 20% of the population are delegated to a decision by the local authorities. To date, the language threshold at the national level includes only the use of the Albanian language, in addition to the Macedonian language, whereas at the local level there is more diversity with Serbian, Turkish, Bosnian, Romani and Vlach languages having official status either by reaching the threshold or by voluntary voting of the city council. The expression of identity constitutes the last pillar upon

which the OFA is built and, as the other pillars, is shrouded in the historical context of the country. In 1997, the mayor of Gostivar, a city in the southern region of the country, was arrested due to showing national symbols of another state, in this case the Albanian flag, and four people died in the clashes involving the incident (Koppa 2001, p. 44; for more details, see chapter ► “Ethnic Conflict in North Macedonia”). In Article 7 of the OFA (2001, p. 3), local authorities are allowed to use emblems which mark a community’s identity, next to the state emblem. This is a particularly important aspect as it opened up the state to allowing the expression of identities other than the ethnic Macedonian. The protection of public space for the display of only state symbols, which in themselves were perceived to constitute symbols which are largely significant to the ethnic majority of the country, contributed to the feelings of exclusion of other communities from public space and from engaging more actively with the state. The OFA main agreement text finishes with this issue and goes on with the stipulations on the implementation of the agreement. The next stage for the Agreement to be transposed into legislation was its presentation at the Assembly for its adoption, which constituted an important second stage of negotiations, considering that the implementation of the OFA would need to be followed with the development of further legal and regulatory frameworks, which are still ongoing to this day.

Accommodation of Communities Post-OFA

The constitutional and legislative changes which have been adopted to enable the full implementation of the OFA have been several and have spanned a longer period than initially foreseen due to contestations and disagreements by different political actors. One point of contention regarding the Constitution at the outset was the changes to the Preamble. The agreement itself already poses a wording for the Preamble; however, this is not the same wording which was later adopted by the members of parliament. The main difference between the text suggested in the OFA

and the Preamble which was later adopted is that the wording on the OFA is largely civic-based, while the agreed wording was “[c]arved along ethnic lines but also ambiguously evoking civic values” (Spaskovska 2010, pp. 14–5). To illustrate this, see the Preamble of the 1991 Constitution of the Republic of North Macedonia that states:

Taking as the points of departure the historical, cultural, spiritual and statehood heritage of the Macedonian people and their struggle over centuries for national and social freedom as well as for the creation of their own state [...] as well as the historical fact that Macedonia is established as a national state of the Macedonian people, in which full equality as citizens and permanent co-existence with the Macedonian people is provided for Albanians, Turks, Vlachs, Romanians and other nationalities living in the Republic of Macedonia [...]. (Constitution of the Republic of North Macedonia 1991, Preamble)

Preambles are significant because they delineate the belonging to the state, who is an insider and who is not. The Preamble of the Macedonian constitution was contentious because it very clearly established the state as belonging to the Macedonian people. Hence, the wording for the Preamble stipulated by the OFA to replace the original text suggested a strictly civic interpretation, whereby it lists the citizens of the state as the “owners” of the state rather than citing any one particular group or people:

The citizens of the Republic of Macedonia, taking over responsibility for the present and future of their fatherland, aware and grateful to their predecessors for their sacrifice and dedication in their endeavors and struggle to create an independent and sovereign state of Macedonia [...]. (OFA 2001, Annex A)

However, this wording was not satisfactory for ethnic Macedonian parties, as they also wanted to include the national element to it; therefore, the Preamble which was agreed upon with Amendment IV to the Constitution of the Republic of North Macedonia stipulated the following:

The citizens of the Republic of Macedonia, the Macedonian people, as well as citizens living within its borders who are part of the Albanian people, the Turkish people, the Vlach people, the Serbian people, the Romany people, the Bosniak people and others taking responsibility for the present and future of their fatherland [...]. (Constitution of the Republic of North Macedonia, Amendment IV).

The compromise text initiates the Preamble with the word “citizens” but goes on to list them, separating the Macedonian people primarily and then listing the other communities living in North Macedonia while not entirely abandoning the “hierarchization” of belonging. This formulation of the Preamble has remained the same and has received wide consensus although there is recurring criticism that the opportunity for building a civic country was missed at this critical juncture. Ljubica Spaskovska (2010, pp. 23-4) argues that the “ethno-national conception of citizenship, emphasising the ‘ownership’ of the country by its ethnic Macedonian majority [...] was replaced after the 2001 conflict by an ethnicised one, whereby belonging to one of Macedonia’s ethnic communities became the primary factor.” However, this was already the case with the previous formulation of 1991, only that now, with the OFA, a different way of the enactment of citizenship through ethnicity among non-majority communities was introduced. The text which was agreed upon shows the persistent importance of symbolism and of ethnic groups in North Macedonia, which did not cease to matter with the instillation of the OFA into the constitutional and legal framework of the country.

The hesitation toward a more open conception at the outset was to be expected, as well as a hesitation toward change, as “power-sharing systems must be conceived of as being more flexible and process oriented, eventually leading to a diminishing of ethnic identity, rather than static and unchangeable” (Bieber 2004, p. 239). Indeed, the implementation of the OFA and the changes that it has caused in the topography of politics in North Macedonia must be understood as a long process which still influences contemporary politics and thinking. Firstly, the OFA and its subsequent legislative amendments had important implications on the electoral system and representation in the country. With the changes to the Law on Local Self-Government in 2002 (Закон за локална самоуправа 2002) and the Law on Territorial Organisation of the Local Self-Government in 2004 (Закон за Територијалната Организација на Локалната Самоуправа во Република Македонија 2004), there was a significant reduction in the number of municipalities,

from 123 to 84 (Spaskovska 2010, p. 15). This has important implications, because by changing the borders of municipalities some municipalities, mainly in the southwest region, such as Struga and Kichevo, where a majority of ethnic Albanians live, would have new municipal borders where the ethnic Albanian population would be a majority within the municipality, which would result in more locally elected officials being representative of ethnic Albanians and other non-majority communities living in a given municipality. In short, these municipal border changes ensured that there would be units of local self government which were governed by the majority in a given unit (municipality) even if the community was a non-majority community at the national level, better reflecting the population living within the borders of the unit. The same applies for the municipal border changes within the city of Skopje, which was separated into 11 municipalities with the aim of having equitable representation of communities across the capital. If the city had been considered as one unit, that would have meant a limitation to the exercise of rights such as the use of language and education at the local level for non-majority communities since the 20% threshold would be harder to reach. Ognen Vangelov (2017) notes that negotiations between the political parties on the municipal border changes also “focused on gerrymandering in ethnically mixed areas [...] [t]he junior Albanian partner insisted on creating a number of municipalities where Albanians would become new majorities in Western Macedonia” (p. 27) which would have implications for local elections and the representation of parties representing non-majority communities, including the ethnic Albanian parties, in winning mayoral and city council positions. The reduction of municipalities would also have important implications for the enjoyment of other rights, most notably in regard to language rights, whereby a community has to constitute at least 20% for its language to be official at the local level, which with shifting municipal borders would be reached by more communities at the local level. In a context where even adequate local representation had been elusive to non-majority communities, this

was a significant step forward. Nevertheless, it has made the electoral system an enabler of ethnic politics, as “for two decades the Macedonian electorate has been caught up in the web of constant ‘ethnification of the political process’” (Bieber as cited in Spaskovska 2010, p. 21). This shows another aspect of the complexity of multiethnic politics in North Macedonia and of the challenges of the OFA. Namely, neither the agreement nor the changes that it foresaw guarantee reserved seats for communities, as is the case in Kosovo, for example. Thus, the crux of the electoral balance of the current system, which at the same time has been a vicious circle of ethnic politics, is the fact that for communities to be represented in the Assembly or at the local level by a member of their ethnic group, if this is to be considered (as it has mostly been) the most adequate form of representation, then ethnic politics and rhetoric will not altogether be missing from the political space.

Another important change foreseen by the OFA and implemented by constitutional and legislative changes is the principle of a qualified two-thirds majority or the Badinter principle, which enables non-majority communities to have an influence on decision-making on issues which directly affect them. This principle has considerably shifted decision-making as other communities have the power to stop legislation that is harmful to them, or not in their interest. This would not have been able to be achieved without this principle as party representing nonmajority communities would be able to reach a sufficient number of seats to veto policies. However, this principle has also been criticized for not enabling the influence of all communities. As Bieber and Keil (2009) explain:

This concept, which is also part of the Macedonian Constitution, ensures the recognition of all minorities- not only the Albanian population of Macedonia. This form of special majorities is, however, limited to the areas of constitutional changes, culture, language, education, identification and symbols, plus the laws on local self-government. This rather restricted form of (indirect) veto rights, while having the advantage of avoiding constant blocking, has been criticized for the enforcement of Macedonia’s binational division and the dominance of the Albanian minority over other minorities in Macedonia. (p. 353)

Indeed, due to the constitutional, legislative, and political changes that OFA has entailed, it has often been criticized within the country and more generally that instead of promoting the consolidation of a multiethnic state, the OFA has created a binational state “that empowers Macedonians and Albanians at the expense of smaller minorities” (Bieber and Keil 2009, p. 352). Jelena Džankić (2015) notes two weaknesses of the agreement: first, it “induced the ethnic fragmentation of citizenship and hardened the lines between the ethnic Macedonians and ethnic Albanians; and second, it increased the perception of the identity threat both from inside the country and from the outside” (p. 85). Though it must be noted that citizenship in North Macedonia was already fragmented before the OFA, the criticism of the agreement that what should have done away with fragmentation is simply reinforcing it through other lines, is a poignant one.

However, this criticism cannot be directed solely at the Agreement itself, but rather to the reactions of the political elites and the population toward it. The strengthening of fragmentation particularly is due to a diverging narrative on the meaning of the OFA and its importance to the political and social landscape of the country. Namely, while ethnic Albanians lauded the agreement as a victory, ethnic Macedonians largely considered the Agreement as a loss. Robert Pichler (2009) highlights this divergent vision by noting that:

[b]y establishing a system of power-sharing, the former model, which favored the ethnic Macedonian majority, was abandoned. In exchange, ethnic Macedonians were guaranteed the territorial integrity of the Macedonian state, a circumstance that excluded any territorial solution to ethnic conflict, something, however, they had regarded as self-evident from the very beginning. As a consequence, the OFA was seen by Albanians as an important step forward, whereby Macedonians regarded it an unjust and forced compromise that rewarded the use of violence against the democratically elected state institutions. (p. 218)

This perspective of the OFA persists to the present day, as it has never stopped being a target for ethno-national rhetoric. Ognen Vangelov (2017) cites a study 7 years after the signing of the

agreement, whereby “70% of the ethnic Albanians believed that the agreement provided a good long-term solution for Macedonia, while only 30% of Macedonians agreed” (p. 26). Brunnbauer (2004), on the other hand, notes a different aspect to the agreement by stating that the “new constitution combines the concept of civic citizenship with elements of *de facto* consociationalism, and satisfies the demand of the Albanian minority to help shape the destiny of their country using a collective voice” (p. 565). Indeed, despite the weaknesses that it has, the OFA managed to open up the space of Macedonian politics and society to include the ethnic Albanian and other communities in state-building and to give them a voice in their future within the state.

The Agreement’s Implementation Influence in Contemporary Politics

The implementation of the OFA is still not a *fait accompli*; however, large strides have been made in recent years. In the first years after its signing, the OFA faced considerable challenges, leading Ulf Brunnbauer to note that the first 2 years “proved that external monitoring, support and occasionally intervention is crucial for the realization of the planned reforms because, without international mediation, the political parties in the Republic of Macedonia hardly find compromises on [...] vital issues” (as quoted in Bieber and Keil 2009, p. 359). The reforms that the OFA entailed continue to lead to polemics, the most significant of which is the use of language. While the OFA and the subsequent Amendment V of the Constitution established that the official language of the state is the Macedonian language and its Cyrillic alphabet and “[a]ny other language spoken by at least 20% of the population” (Constitution of the Republic of North Macedonia, Amendment V), the implementation of this provision was lagging behind. This led to the 2008 Law on the Use of Languages, which was considered insufficient by all ethnic Albanian parties because it was not being implemented and because it did not address the application of the use of languages in different areas, such as education or culture, leaving a lot of

space for interpretation, thus making the law very selective and not providing a solution to the issue of the use of language. As a result, with the 2017 parliament, a new law on the use of languages was adopted and came into force on January 14, 2019. The 2019 Law on the Use of Languages make the 2008 Law void and invalid. The public debate on the adoption on the Law on the Use of Languages was ethnically charged, with strong opposition by several Macedonian academics, often with the use of racist language and invoking strong ethnonational rhetoric (Gruevska-Madzovska 2018), showing how sensitive the topic of minority rights still is in the context of North Macedonia.

This might be a result of what Spaskovska (2012) calls the “‘fractured’ nature” (p. 392) of the citizenship framework post-OFA. However, the fractured nature of the state has been its fixture since its independence, and with the signing of the OFA, the fracture became further defined and regulated. For all its merits and shortcomings, the OFA initiated a top-down process of inclusion, which makes its implementation difficult, further hampering policies which would enable a move beyond it. Even the Assembly was not in agreement with all the OFA represented which is why changes to the Constitution took longer to adopt and implement. The citizens, too, continue to have two separate interpretations of the meaning of the OFA and the meaning of a multiethnic society. However, not all has been lost; there have also been new opportunities for the country in establishing the legacy of the OFA and its spirit. With the constitutional changes which were necessitated by the change of the name as a result of the Prespa Agreement between North Macedonia and Greece, the Preamble of the Constitution was changed yet again, and this time, it was changed to also include the OFA as one of the key documents which characterize the state (Constitution of the Republic of North Macedonia, Amendment XXXIV). In addition, the parliamentary elections of 2016 presented for the first time large cross-ethnic voting, as many ethnic Albanians chose to vote for a traditionally ethnic Macedonian party. As a result, the government advanced the concept of “one society” with the adoption of the National Strategy for the

development of the concept of one society and interculturalism 2020-2022. These recent changes and shifts were mainly made possible due to the wave of protests which encapsulated the country between 2013 and 2016 which saw the mobilization of different ethnic groups to combat state capture and illiberal practices by the VMRO-DPMNE-led government. This was a significant shift as the protests and movements culminating with the Sarena Revolucija (Colorful Revolution) were the first instance where different communities were participating in protests together in large numbers, across the country. These were followed by counterprotests which were heavy in nationalist rhetoric and chants, showing that in North Macedonia, still, with every step forward, there is also a step backward. In the context of the fulfillment of the vision set out by the OFA, it can be concluded that it continues to be a process which is often challenged by political and intellectual elites. Its legacy and influence on the state have been significant in that it has enabled the expansion of access and belonging to the state for the different communities living in the country and has established the foundations for the construction of a multiethnic democracy and inclusive society which remains an unfulfilled mission.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Census Politics in Deeply Divided Societies](#)
- ▶ [Culture and Conflict Resolution](#)
- ▶ [Divided Cities](#)
- ▶ [Ethnic Conflict in North Macedonia](#)

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the coercively imposed behavioral changes or produce physical, mental, or emotional damage, injury, or death. The rise and decline of organized brutality have historically been shaped by a variety of social processes among which three stand out: the cumulative bureaucratization of coercion, centrifugal ideologization, and the envelopment of micro-solidarity (Malešević 2010, 2017, 2019).

The cumulative bureaucratization of coercion is an ongoing and open-ended historical process that refers to the continuous increase in the organizational capacity for coercion and the enhanced capability to internally pacify social order through the monopolistic threat of the use of violence. Since complex social organizations require hierarchical division of labor, discipline, efficient systems of coordination, and control, they inevitably rely on coercive means to implement organizational goals. This is obvious for military, police, insurgencies, and other armed institutions, but the same organizing principle underpins nearly all complex systems – from hospitals and schools to private corporations and religious institutions. All of these organizations deploy coercive penalties for insubordination and disobedience. Although the cumulative bureaucratization of coercion predates the formation of first states, there is no doubt that state formation has been the most significant historical mechanism for its development and expansion. More specifically since first states emerged through warfare in early Mesolithic (c. 12,000 BCE), this process has historically been dependent on the proliferation of the war-state-society nexus (Malešević 2014). The coercive organizational power has historically expanded through warfare but also through other forms of organized violence including slavery, serfdom, corvée labor, religious persecutions, and political massacres among many others.

The bureaucratization of coercion has historically been cumulative in a sense that coercive power has continued to expand over the last 12,000 years. This is not to say that this process is teleological or even evolutionary. Although some coercive organizations have disintegrated, have been destroyed or merged with others, or have experienced substantial decline and downward trends, the coercive organizational power as

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Oppression

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Organized Brutality

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Definition

Organized brutality is a concept that refers to the social and historical phenomenon where the growth in the coercive, ideological, and micro-interactive capacities of social organizations often leads to the increase of physical or non-physical forms of violence. The focus here is on the collective violence through which social organizations intentionally or unintentionally foster

such has largely continued to expand and proliferate throughout the world (Malešević 2010, 2017). For example, Roman and ancient Chinese empires have disappeared, but their places have been taken by other states and civilizations that have managed to continue to increase their respective coercive organizational capacities. Hence contemporary states such as the USA, Russia, or China possess much more coercive organizational powers than any of their historical predecessors. Although this process has been continuous for many centuries, the cumulative bureaucratization of coercion has largely accelerated in the last 200 years as the nation-states gradually established a monopoly on the legitimate use of violence over their territories (Tilly 1985; Weber 1968).

One of the main reasons why bureaucratization of coercion has been cumulative is the fact that organizational power is isomorphic, meaning that efficient and successful organizations tend to be imitated and replicated. Hence as Kumar (2017) demonstrates, the leading imperial states from Ottomans, Romanovs, and Habsburgs to more recently French and British have grounded themselves in the legacy of the Roman Empire and have emulated many of the Roman practices in its organization, ideology, warfare, and politics. These isomorphic features are most visible in the technological sphere as military organizations generally tend to copy and use new technological inventions – from stirrup, chariot, and gunpowder to catapult, canon or nuclear bombs, and drones.

The continuous increase in the coercive organizational power was also dependent on rise of state apparatuses and vice versa. Both Tilly (1985) and Mann (1993) have analyzed how state formation and organized violence have been mutually constitutive processes. With the proliferation of warfare in early modern Europe, the rulers were forced to reform and expand their bureaucratic apparatuses and also to invest in science and technology with the view of building better networks of transport and communication as well as better weapon systems. The proliferation of continuous warfare played a crucial role in the centralization of state power which in turn fostered other social organizations to adopt a similar model of

hierarchical control. The last several centuries have witnessed a continuous and cumulative bureaucratization of coercion which is particularly visible in the ability of states and other organizations to expand their infrastructural reach, surveillance capacities, social penetration, and organizational dominance (Malešević 2010, 2017).

In addition to ever-increasing coercive powers, organized brutality is also rooted in ideology. More specifically as the cumulative bureaucratization of coercion involves violence and force, its long-term success is often premised on attaining a degree of legitimacy. Since human beings cannot be dominated for long through the physical force alone, all social organizations tend to deploy different normative codes to justify the existing systems of organization. Throughout history rulers utilized mythological and religious discourses, imperial creeds, dynastic claims, and civilizing missions among many others to successfully legitimize their right to rule. However, before the modern era, much of political justification was vertical in a sense that the rulers had to justify their claims to their fellow aristocrats and much less so to ordinary, mostly peasant, population. After the French and American revolutions and the Latin American war of independence, the gradual expansion of the idea of popular sovereignty legitimacy has become a much more significant ingredient of organizational domination. Thus, in modernity most complex social organizations focus extensively on ideological justification. The state rulers rely on nationalism and other ideological doctrines to legitimize their right to govern, while other social organizations deploy a variety of ideological doctrines to justify their existence. In this context modernity opens a space for greater presence of ideological power. Ideological creeds became central to the process of legitimization but also as means to mobilize large numbers of individuals for political goals. Whereas in the premodern context military power was built around the temporary alliances of nobility, as one could not arm peasants who would easily turn weapons against their masters, in modernity the entire population can be mobilized for violent conflicts. Hence the proliferation of ideological power goes hand in hand with the

expansion of coercive organizational capacities. While in the traditional world the rulers had no organizational or ideological capabilities to mobilize large number of people to fight in wars, revolutions, insurgencies, or rebellions, in modernity organized violence becomes a public affair that requires a degree of public support and public involvement. In this sense modern social organizations require that citizens are part and parcel of the specific ideological project. Hence it is no accident that all modern nation-states deploy similar practices in education, mass media, military, police, courts, and other institutions to make their citizens into a loyal and nationally conscious members of their respective nations. This “nationalization of the masses” fosters a degree of ideological unity among enormously heterogenous population (Mosse 1991). Although the state has historically been at the helm of this process, ideological penetration of citizenry involves a variety of other social organizations from private businesses, religious institutions, and political parties to civil society groups and social movements. This mass scale and ongoing process of centrifugal ideologization through which specific ideological creeds became a second nature to most citizens has particularly intensified in modernity. With the rise of transport and communication networks together with the dramatically increased educational and informational spheres (including the compulsory schooling and dramatically raised literacy rates), modern social organizations have relied extensively on ideologization to justify their coercive organizational forms. The centrifugal ideologization has also contributed toward undercutting social divisions within societies as it relied on recognizable ideological tropes to generate a degree of ideological unity. Nevertheless, ideologization is not only a top-down process to be associated exclusively with the state apparatuses. Instead civil society organizations and social movements that challenge the state power have also increased their ideological penetration and have become capable of mobilizing large number of individuals.

The historical trajectory of organized brutality has been shaped by the ever-rising coercive organizational powers and the greater ideological

penetration of social organizations. However, these two structural processes could make a substantial impact on human behavior only when couched in the language and practices of everyday life. In other words, the macrostructural processes can gain most influence when framed as familiar and personalized micro-interactions. Human beings are emotional and meaning-oriented species that attain moral and emotional fulfilment through the networks of personalized bonds. The everyday social interactions are centered on pockets of micro-solidarity from which individuals gather their emotional attachments, moral support, and a degree of ontological security. The micro-solidarity involves protracted emotional commitment often farmed by direct, face-to-face, interaction. As social organizations are by definition large, distant, and bureaucratic entities, they lack this impersonal, emotional, and direct touch. Hence if social organizations aim to mold the behavior of large groups of individuals, it is crucial that they successfully emulate the discourse of this micro-universe. The decades of research on behavior of small groups, including the dynamics of battlefields, revolutionary cells, insurgencies, and terrorist networks, have shown that violent behavior is often motivated by a strong sense of attachment to one’s micro-groups. Most people join violent organizations and perform violent acts as members of kinship and friendship-based groups. The scholarship points out that emotional ties, a sense of responsibility toward significant others, and a feelings of ethical fulfilment play a decisive role in motivating individuals to take part in violence including the acts of self-sacrifice (Della Porta 2013; Malešević 2014, 2017; Sageman 2004). Hence to successfully tap into this micro-universe, social organizations tend to mimic the language and practices of micro-solidarity. It is no accident that nearly all ideological doctrines utilize the discourses of kinship and close friendship and depict their members as brothers, sisters, comrades, or family members. From “Muslim brotherhood” and “our communist comrades” to “feminist sisterhood” and “sons and daughters of our nation,” one can encounter numerous instances of how ideologies emulate the language of micro-level solidarity.

When successful this envelopment of micro-solidarity has contributed significantly toward making coercive social organizations resemble one's precious family members and close friends. By penetrating this world of micro-level interactions, social organizations blend the macro-organizational goals and the micro-interactional and deeply personal ambitions. Hence wars between nation-states are not depicted for what they are, the two or more bureaucratic entities attempting to destroy each other, but as merciless and cowardly enemy who senselessly attacks our brothers, sisters, mothers, and fathers. Through the envelopment of micro-solidarity, coercive and bureaucratic social organizations are transformed into "our motherlands" and "our sacred comradeships," and human relationships toward bureaucratic entities become naturalized and normalized. Since inception of the first large-scale polities 12,000 years ago, social organizations were looking for ways to tap into the microworld of families, friendships, and peer groups. Nevertheless, most premodern states and other social organizations did not possess enough organizational capacity and ideological know-how to fully penetrate the microcosm of everyday life. It is only with the intensified development of cumulative bureaucratization of coercion and centrifugal ideologization in the last two 200 years that the envelopment of micro-solidarity has become much more reachable goal for social organizations. By projecting the micro-solidarities onto the ideological canvas of large-scale social organizations, one attains powerful tools for popular mobilization and legitimization of violent social action.

Organized brutality is rooted in these three historical processes, and its long-term dynamics has been shaped by the cumulative rise of coercive organizational capacities, ideological penetration, and their embedment into the localized networks of micro-solidarities. Although the scale of organized violence has oscillated through time and space with some geographical locations and historical periods, experiencing more destruction and human casualties than other the long-term historical trajectory points toward the continuous rise of organizational, ideological, and micro-interactive potential for the large-scale violence.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Genocide](#)
- ▶ [Grounded Nationalism](#)
- ▶ [Identity and Political Violence](#)
- ▶ [Terrorism](#)
- ▶ [War](#)

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Pacifism and Peace

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Description

This chapter explores the relationship between pacifism and peace. It begins by noting how pacifism and peace are natural bedfellows, but how in practice pacifism and its commitment to anti-militarism and the construction of nonviolent politics has been subjugated and excluded from dominant conceptions of peace in international relations (IR), as well as the field of peace studies. It then examines some of the reasons and consequences of excluding pacifism from peace, before making a number of arguments for why pacifism ought to be considered central to peace.

Introduction

It would be reasonable to assume that pacifism, a philosophical and practical approach which aims to end war and militarism and replace it with nonviolent, peaceful ways of dealing with political conflict, is closely linked to dominant conceptions of peace. After all, they are both normatively oriented towards reducing violence and harm and creating the conditions for human dignity and flourishing. In fact, the two concepts have only rarely been discussed together, and most conceptions of peace over the past few centuries implicitly or explicitly reject the pacifist position, arguing instead that peace can only be won and guaranteed through the means of national defence, security, law and order, and the just use of limited force against aggression or crimes against humanity. Not infrequently, it is argued that pacifism can actually be the opposite of peace or pose a threat to peace because it entails passivity and nonaction in the face of violent aggression (Jackson 2019a).

The aim of this chapter is to outline some of the reasons why and how pacifism has been decoupled from dominant conceptions of peace, including concepts of peace employed in the field of peace studies, and some of the reasons for and consequences of this theoretical and practical estrangement. It will also outline some of the main arguments by pacifists for why peace theory and practice should embrace pacifism and take its ideas, ethics, and practices much more seriously.

Definitions

The term pacifism, derived from the Latin for “peacemaking,” is commonly understood to be an approach which expresses a negative opposition to war and violence, on the one hand, and a positive commitment to peacebuilding and the construction of peaceful alternatives to the use of violence within politics and society, on the other. As with other political or philosophical approaches, such as feminism, anarchism, environmentalism, and so on, there are many varieties of pacifism which rest on a continuum between forms of absolute pacifism at one end, and just-war pacifism or selective pacifism at the other (Cady 2010). The most common distinctions are between absolute pacifism which rejects all forms of violence and just-war pacifism which accepts that there may be restricted or exceptional circumstances or occasions when lethal force can be justifiably used; and between personal pacifism which opposes killing as a personal act and therefore refuses to participate in any violent activities (sometimes called conscientious objection), and political pacifism which opposes war as a social practice and works to dismantle the broader war system (Ryan 2015).

In recent years, the study and practice of non-violent resistance has grown tremendously (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011; Vinthagen 2015). In this context, pacifism and nonviolence are sometimes viewed as synonymous, if not as interchangeable terms, because both approaches oppose the use of organized violence in politics and seek to build more peaceful, nonviolent societies. However, it is more common to argue that pacifism is a type of principled nonviolence, due to its roots in religious or moral principles, while most of the nonviolent resistance movements we currently see around the world are rooted in what has been termed pragmatic nonviolence, which is a strategic orientation towards political struggle that does not require its participants to be morally opposed to violence *per se*.

The definition of peace is much more difficult to determine, as the term is employed in different ways and there is no consensus on its meaning. Within politics and international relations there is

no doubt that it is an example of “an essentially contested concept” or a “floating signifier,” which actors and approaches attach their own meanings to. In this respect, it is similar to other contested concepts such as democracy, freedom, security, terrorism, and the like. Additionally, different philosophical approaches – realism, liberalism, Marxism, feminism, and so on – will each conceptualize it differently. At the same time, it is also fair to say that IR has focused much more attention on war, power, competition, and state survival than on the question of peace, and peace remains an underdeveloped, as well as a contested, concept in the field (Richmond 2008). Notwithstanding this, peace is most often conceived of simply as the absence of war or large-scale political violence, and is associated with possessing strong national defence (peace through strength), hegemony (*Pax Romana*), deterrence and balance of power (the cold peace), military alliances (collective security), security communities, international organizations, international law, and the like. It has also variously come to be associated with notions of tranquillity, stability, security, law and order, freedom (the “liberal peace”), democracy (the “democratic peace”), and capitalism (the “capitalist peace”).

Within the field of peace studies, the most widely employed conception of peace is the dichotomy proposed by Galtung (1969) of “negative peace” and “positive peace.” Negative peace accords with the broader IR conception of peace as a condition marked by the absence of war or large-scale political violence. Positive peace, as its name suggests, entails more than the absence of violence but also the presence of social justice, equality, human dignity, and the like. Although peace normally remains undefined in the field, and is undertheorized, a number of different types of peace have been articulated, with varying degrees of conceptual detail and precision, including notions such as: “hybrid peace” (Mac Ginty 2010); “indigenous peace” (Mac Ginty 2008); “everyday peace” (Mac Ginty 2014); “agonistic peace” (Shinko 2008); “resilient peace” (Johansson 2015); “post-liberal peace” (Richmond 2011a); “quality peace” (Wallenstein 2015); and more rarely, “emancipatory peace”

(Richmond 2007), among others. Each of these concepts focuses on a different value, characteristic, or aspect of what the author thinks peace embodies or ought to embody. This illustrates the complexity of determining what peace is, as well as the continuing lack of consensus on the meaning of the term.

Recently, the notion of measuring states or levels of peace in a “peace continuum” from low levels of peacefulness to high levels of positive peace, as opposed to the more commonly used dichotomy of peace versus war, has been proposed (Davenport et al. 2018). This accords with the global peace index, a measure proposed each year by the Institute for Economics and Peace in which a large number of statistical measures are employed to rank states’ peacefulness. States with lower levels of violent conflict, violent crime, military spending, weapons proliferation, prison populations, displaced persons, political instability, terrorism, and so on are ranked higher on the scale of peacefulness. Importantly, this exercise remains primarily within the negative peace paradigm, as few positive measures related to social justice or human flourishing are included as measures of peacefulness.

The Absence of Pacifism in Peace

It is paradoxical that while pacifism and pacifists, as well as a great many nonviolent resistance movements, have played a significant role in shaping the nature and practices of states and the international system over the past one hundred years (Jackson forthcoming 2020a; Ryan 2013), as a philosophy and practice, pacifism remains subjugated and largely excluded from discussions about peace in IR (Jackson 2018a). Examples of the influence of pacifism and pacifists can be seen in, among others: the conscientious objector movement; past and current disarmament campaigns, including the Nobel Peace Prize winning antinuclear campaign; efforts to establish the League of Nations, later the United Nations, and to promote international cooperation through the development of international organizations; the drawing up of international humanitarian laws

and conventions, including international conventions related to human rights, disarmament, and civilian protection; and the establishment of peaceful mechanisms for resolving conflicts between states, such as the international Court of Justice in the Hague. Nonviolent resistance movements have also had a major impact through the political transformation of states and regions, including: anti-colonial struggles in India, Africa, and elsewhere; the civil rights movements in the USA, South Africa, Poland, the Philippines, and many other places; the anti-Soviet struggles across Eastern Europe and the fall of the iron curtain; the third wave of democracy in Africa and Asia in the 1990s; and more recently, the Color Revolutions in Europe (see Chenoweth and Stephen 2011; Roberts and Ash 2009; Schock 2011).

Nevertheless, despite its real-world influence, pacifism and nonviolence, particularly the anti-war variety, is noticeable by its absence from peace theory within IR and politics more generally (see Jackson 2018a, 2019a). Instead, it can be seen in a multitude of ways that virtually all of the most common notions of peace in IR assume the centrality, necessity, and normativity of military force. For example, it is a basic assumption within IR that because of human nature and the anarchic nature of the international system, peace within and between states requires a certain level of security which can only be guaranteed by the possession of significant military force by a sovereign power (Jespersen 2019). Consequently, today, only a handful of mostly small or micro states do not have a standing army. Similarly, accepted political theory assumes that states, the central actors of IR, are peaceful primarily because they have a monopoly on violence within their borders, and it is the loss of that monopoly on violence that leads to war and violence. This is why international peacebuilding efforts always involve programs to rebuild and professionalize the military – what is called Security Sector Reform (SSR). In other areas of IR, particularly from a realist or neorealist perspective, it is assumed that a balance of military power (conventional or nuclear), with or without alliances, is a helpful way of ensuring a more peaceful

international system. In other perspectives, such as liberal and neoliberal approaches, security cooperation, security regimes, and security communities, all of them based on a certain level of military force, are assumed to be important for creating and maintaining peace and stability.

More specifically, the use and maintenance of military force is central to the primary peace theory of the international community. Peace support operations, peacekeeping missions, and peacebuilding operations are all predicated upon employing military forces in the first instance, establishing law and order (through the use or threat of coercion) and then constructing strong state institutions, including the military forces who are then tasked with maintaining a monopoly on the use of violence and ensuring security and law and order (Jackson 2018b). Within this context, going to war for peace or fighting for peace is understood to be a perfectly consistent and reasonable position. In this respect, the military is viewed as an inherently positive force which can be employed for both security and humanitarian purposes such as genocide prevention, civilian protection, democracy promotion, and so on. In many respects, this is an extension of the broader dominance of just-war theory within IR (Jackson 2019b), which asserts, *contra* pacifism, that violence is sometimes justified and legitimate when properly regulated, and that maintaining a system of military force is ethically acceptable. A notable aspect here is that, among others, many just-war theorists in IR do not simply ignore pacifism in their discussions of war and peace, but actively denigrate and suppress it, viewing it as antithetical to peace and dangerous to the stability of the international system (Jackson 2019a).

Crucially, peace studies fares little better than IR in taking pacifism seriously or developing peace theories which challenge the state-centric and militaristic nature of the current status quo (Jackson 2018b; see also Gnoth 2020). Once again, a careful examination of peace theory within peace studies reveals that pacifism garners little or no attention at all, and remains marginalized or subjugated in discussions around what peace is and how it ought to be constructed. For example, as noted above, the most famous

conception of peace in the field is the dichotomy proposed by Galtung (1969) of “positive peace” and “negative peace.” This is important, because in contrast to the dominant IR conception, Galtung’s argument that peace ought to go beyond the mere absence of direct violence opens up the possibility of exploring how states and military violence contribute to the maintenance of negative peace, and how a pacifist peace logically ought to therefore be the ultimate aim of working towards positive peace. However, in practice, this has not really happened among peace scholars. Instead, it can be argued that although “scholars contemplating the subject of peace have argued that it is something more than the mere absence of interstate or civil war, yet they have treated peace precisely in this manner” (Davenport et al. 2018, p. 2; see also Campbell et al. 2017). An example of this is the concept of “quality peace” and its related notion of a “peace continuum” in which states of peace can be measured on a continuum (Davenport et al. 2018). The point is that on this continuum, the positive peace endpoint nevertheless still considers the state and its military as an essential and normal element of a condition of peace.

Similarly, it can be noted that the conception of the “liberal peace” which has been a key approach within post-conflict peacebuilding studies retains a central role for military force, usually described in terms of security or law and order. In this conception of peace, a centralized monopoly on violence by the institutions of the state provides the necessary framework for dealing with political and social difference, radical disagreement, or threats which might upset the tranquillity of the polis. In other words, similar to the peace theory of IR more broadly, the ontological and epistemological heart of the liberal peace is a Hobbesian view of human nature, community, and the international system, as well as a naïve instrumental notion of violence (Jackson 2018b). This conception therefore, in direct opposition to pacifist and nonviolent peace theories, retains a permanent place for the normative use of violence within politics (see also Jabri 1996).

Partly in response to criticisms of the liberal peace, particularly its top-down, state-centric

security foundations, the conception of the “hybrid peace” emerged as an alternative within peace studies. The hybrid peace, or what some called a “hybrid local-liberal peace,” (Richmond 2012) suggested that in the inevitable clash between the local and the international – the internal and the external – during peacebuilding operations or in peace interventions, unexpected, new, hybrid forms of peace which take on forms and expressions not necessarily prescribed or accepted by the dominant powers would be produced (Mac Ginty 2010). This is less a theoretically informed prescription for building peace than a post hoc description of the often unexpected and highly contingent forms of peace which sometimes emerge in specific historical formations. Most importantly, as a peace theory, the hybrid peace only contingently challenges the acceptance of violence inasmuch as local actors do so in the context of their struggles against the imposition of externally directed liberal peacebuilding (Jackson 2018b). There is no systematic critique or deconstruction of the inherent violence of the liberal peace, nor any systematic attempt to construct an alternative nonviolent or pacifist form of peace.

Another form of peace theory which also has little direct engagement with pacifism is the notion of peace formation, sometimes referred to as the “local peace” or “everyday peace” (Mac Ginty 2014). This is a bottom-up approach to constructing peaceful societies which builds on the kinds of small-scale, nonviolent “everyday peace” practices (Mac Ginty 2013) which exist in every society, including deeply divided societies. Frequently ignored in large-scale, externally imposed peacebuilding missions (Richmond 2011b; Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013), this conception of peace relies a great deal on local critical agency. Of critical importance here is an implicit acknowledgement that practice is constitutive of politics and political community. In other words, nonviolent everyday peace practices can help to (re)constitute the violent state or (violent) forms of liberal peacebuilding. However, despite its potential for developing a systematic approach to peace which builds on the constitutive effects of peaceful practices and incorporates pacifism and

nonviolence, in recent formulations at least, the local peace appears as a highly contingent, unsystematic form of peace which occurs in specific localities, but which often lacks institutional or ideological power or reach. More importantly, it does not entail any systematic critique of the violence inherent to contemporary political forms, or advocate for an explicitly pacifist, nonviolent, or demilitarized alternative.

In contrast to previous conceptions, the more recent notion of the “post-liberal peace” has genuine potential for developing a normative peace theory which recognizes and deals with the reality of the violent modern state and the constitutive nature of violence, and takes pacifism and nonviolence seriously. This is because it is not focused on the state as the organizing principle, but instead “highlights the importance of local voices and narratives (not just local elites), and enables self-government, self-determination, empathy, care, and an understanding of cultural dynamics within the everyday” (Richmond 2009, p. 570). Such a peace, it is argued, enhances the capacity of the local to resist violence, struggle for social justice, and promote empathy, solidarity, and respect for life (Jabri 2007). Crucially, Richmond argues that a more radical post-liberal peace “cannot develop while clinging to notions of territorially bounded, sovereign and state-centric international space,” but must instead go “beyond Westphalia” (2009, pp. 569–570). This recognition of the need to develop a kind of peace beyond the nation state and its mode of violent sovereign power (Bloom 2017), and to construct local forms of peace which resist violence, is very promising. Nevertheless, even here, recent conceptions of post-liberal peace continue to ignore the ethical and theoretical consideration of violence and militarism and the necessity of an explicitly nonviolent, pacifist politics.

Lastly, without going into detail, even more radical conceptions such as “agonistic peace” (Shinko 2008), “resilient peace” (Johansson 2015), and “emancipatory peace” (Richmond 2007) most often fail to engage with the question of the violent modern state and the assumed necessity for some kind of military force to maintain law and order, defend the political

community, or protect civilians from harms like genocide. That is, no current conception of peace in the peace studies or IR literature appears to give any kind of sustained or serious consideration to the question of whether peace must by necessity be nonviolent or pacifistic, or whether peace is compatible with the maintenance of a war system or the modern nation state. Instead, all of the main narratives and theories about peace retain a role for the military and the selective use of limited forms of collective violence, thus ignoring and subjugating pacifist theory.

The Reasons and Consequences of Excluding Pacifism from Peace

The puzzle of why pacifism has been subjugated in conceptions of peace can be explained in part by applying a critical theory approach (Jackson 2018a). That is, acknowledging that “all knowledge is *for* someone and *for* some purpose” (Cox 1981, p. 128; original emphasis), it is possible to deduce what and who the subjugation of pacifism works for in IR, and what the functional and ideological consequences of its exclusion from peace theory are. From this perspective, it can be broadly argued that subjugating pacifism functions to maintain the core identity and boundaries of IR as a discipline primarily concerned with states, war, military force, national security, coercion, alliances, strategy, and the like, and to maintain the dominance of IR theories and approaches such as neorealism, deterrence theory, just-war theory, and the like. Excluding pacifism from conceptions of peace leaves these power-knowledge structures, and the actors who directly benefit from them, in place and unchallenged.

Directly related to this, the war system which is in part sustained by the assumption that war and military force is required for peace has a great many powerful material interests directly tied to its continuation. Additionally, individuals, groups, institutions, and processes directly tied to the war system – the military and security services, the military-industrial-entertainment complex, war memorials and commemoration, defence intellectuals and security think tanks,

and the like – wield significant material and ideational power in society. With its opposition to war and the war system on which it is based, and its anti-militarism, pacifism poses a challenge to the influence and material interests of all of these groups and institutions. There is a direct material interest therefore in subjugating pacifism and ensuring that it does not influence dominant conceptions or practices of peace. In other words, “because pacifism – like other knowledges and forms of ethical reasoning such as feminism, anarchism, and environmentalism – threatens aspects of the existing political and epistemic order, there is a direct interest in subjugating it and treating it as a revolutionary, system-destabilising form of knowledge” (Jackson 2018a, p. 170).

More prosaically, it can be argued that is not in the interests of states (who have a monopoly on violence) to encourage the belief that military violence is ineffective or inferior to nonviolence, or that nonviolent political orders are possible and desirable, and nor do governments “want to support development of the capacity of their own citizenry to take direct action, as this would increase the possibility of challenges to the system of government” (Martin 2015). As a theory and practice of politics, pacifism, in other words, poses a direct challenge to the authority and dominatory form of sovereign power (Bloom 2017) of the state over its citizens. This explains, in part, its deliberate exclusion from politically accepted conceptions of peace.

At the broadest level, the consequences of excluding pacifism from dominant theories and practices of peace have been to reify and reinforce the state, militarism, and the war system, as well as the dominant security-oriented forms of knowledge-power about peace and politics within society. More specifically, the silencing and subjugation of pacifism in ongoing discussions about peace limits the basis on which discussions about the use of force (Jackson 2019b), peacebuilding (Jackson 2018b), state-building, democratization, social justice, and other political challenges take place. As such, it also limits our ethical imagination in thinking about how to respond to security threats, humanitarian response, civilian protection, and the like (Jackson 2019a), and thus

functions to prevent progressive change in the violence-producing, violence-maintaining epistemic and material structures which currently dominate the international system, thereby impeding progress towards a more peaceful world.

For peace studies, the silencing and exclusion of pacifism has resulted in a field that while oriented towards the resolution of violent conflict does not seriously challenge the violence and militarism of the state, but rather works with states and international organizations to reform and limit the harm caused by the war system. Thus, large parts of the field are focused on understanding and improving peacebuilding missions aimed at building strong liberal democratic states, improving peacekeeping operations, security sector reform, economic development, mediating disputes between and within states, improving diplomacy, and so on. In many ways following IR, this activity proceeds on the assumption that the modern state with its monopoly on violence, as well as broader international security structures, are an essential element in the creation of more peaceful societies. This can be characterized as a “peace as pacification” or system-maintenance orientation. Certainly, it is an example of problem-solving theory in the Coxian sense, aimed at reforming rather than transforming the current status quo and its power structures. Introducing pacifism into peace theory would radically transform both the aims and means of the field’s primary conception of peace.

Bringing Pacifism into Peace Theory

There are at least six compelling reasons why dominant conceptions of peace are deeply problematic, and why pacifism therefore needs to be brought into the heart of peace theory. First, the assumption that peace requires the continuing presence of states as guarantors of security and law and order, and that the establishment of states has created a more peaceful world order, is highly debatable. On the contrary, there is overwhelming evidence that the modern state is an inherently violent form of political organization, rather than a neutral actor which provides the security

necessary for peaceful forms of political life. At the very least, the state has violent historical origins; it is defined as a sovereign actor with a monopoly on the legitimate use of violence, and empirically states have an unrivalled historical record of employing mass violence against their own citizens. Among others, Rummel (1994) has demonstrated that modern states have been responsible for the deaths of 170–200 million people over the past century, not including the wars they have initiated which have killed similar numbers or the deaths and suffering caused by centuries of imperialism and colonialism. Beyond its record of employing direct physical violence as a mode of power and domination, the modern state also dominates and controls society through epistemically and culturally violent forms of biopower and governmental power.

In addition, assumptions about the naturalness and necessity of the state for the maintenance of peace fail to account for the state’s interdependence with capitalism and the violence and harms of structural violence, colonialism, and ecocide. As a state-maintained system, global capitalism generates numerous kinds of direct, cultural, ecological, and structural violence (see Roberts 2007; Leech 2012), including more than 100,000 preventable deaths each day from poverty-related causes. At the same time, the cultural and structural violence associated with capitalism can be linked to hundreds of thousands of deaths per year from unsafe work practices, pollution, domestic violence, suicide, crime, and the like. In the 1970s, a number of peace researchers controversially estimated that structural violence resulted in 18 million annual deaths (see Gleditsch, Nordkvelle and Strand 2014, p. 149). Regardless of the exactitude of this figure, there is little doubt that large regions of the world, as well as particular localities within so-called developed states, experience capitalism-related generational poverty which is implicated in a plethora of social ills and harms (Wilkinson and Pickett 2009), and at present, wealth inequality caused by neoliberal capitalism is at unprecedented levels and threatens to unleash deep economic crisis, mass instability, and violent intergroup conflict.

These foundational observations suggest that, to the extent that they assume a role for the

modern state, current conceptions of peace within both IR and peace studies are highly flawed and function primarily to obscure the extent to which the current global order remains extremely violent and harmful to human beings and their societies. Pacifist theory, with its commitment to opposing all forms of violence, especially the use of direct military violence as a form of political power, and its commitment to constructing nonviolent political communities, has the potential to develop and realize a more ethical conception of peace, and a form of peace more compatible with human well-being, human flourishing, and ecological balance.

Second, and directly related to the failure to properly assess the role of the state, dominant conceptions of peace do not appear to attend properly to the nature of violence itself. As a form of social action, violence is a brutal, incomprehensible, traumatic, world-shattering experience which is devoid of meaning in its material experience (see Wallace 2016; Scarry 1985). It most often leaves both its victims and its perpetrators with permanent physical and/or psychological injuries. Several theorists, including Clausewitz, also draw attention to the psychological dimensions of violence in terms of its inherent escalatory and mimetic processes – which is, in part, a consequence of its brute material horror.

It is also important to note that empirically, a reasonable evaluation would suggest that violence has proven to be a failure in creating either sustained negative or positive peace, or in promoting positive social values. Dustin Howes (2013, p. 433) concludes that the pacifist argument that violence rarely works to achieve its strategic and normative aims is backed up by “gathering evidence for the ineffectiveness of violence in a variety of empirical literatures.” In part, this empirical failure is because the proponents and practitioners of violence misunderstand the relationship between violence, coercion, and power (Jackson 2019a), assuming that the ability to wield violence directly corresponds to compliance and obedience, rather than resistance and defiance.

In a sense, these problems with the dominant ontology of violence within peace theory are also

related to the prevalent assumption that violence can be best viewed as an instrument or tool which has predictable outcomes and is normatively neutral in and of itself. This might be tenable in the short term, but more realistically, violence is a form of constitutive social action rather than an instrument or tool. In other words, while violence can always achieve immediate outcomes like dead bodies, pain, suffering, and material destruction, and will sometimes achieve certain short-term goals like the destruction of an enemy’s means to fight, its longer-term effects are by virtue of its constitutive and world-shattering nature, unpredictable (Wallace 2016). More importantly, the use of violence as a tool is virtually always ends destroying. It is more likely that in employing violence to enforce a peace agreement in the present, for example, the long-term effects will be to reinforce the discourses and psychological mechanisms that encourage future resorts to violence to resolve political conflict and the entrenchment of an ongoing cycle of violence which undermines the long-term establishment of peace. Hannah Arendt makes the pertinent observation that “[t]he practice of violence, like all action, changes the world, but the most probable change is to a more violent world” (1970, p. 80).

Another problem with including violence as part of peace is that violence is inherently anti-political; given that peace is an inherently political condition, or at least, has a political dimension, this makes current conceptions of peace somewhat contradictory. In other words, following an important strand of political theory, it can be argued that violence is the antithesis of politics; it is “politics’ constitutive outside. It sets the limits of politics” (Frazer and Hutchings 2007, p. 92). At the very least, no one would dispute that “violence is counterproductive to politics” (Howes 2013, p. 428). This is because, in part, violence is inherently dominatory and dogmatic, while politics is dialogic, relational, and open ended in terms of the search for truth.

Consequential to this, the fact that violence ends the otherness that is another human life (Wallace 2016, p. 73; see also May 2015)

radically abrogates our responsibility to that other, and prevents them from challenging the truth or justice of our political project or indeed, our characterization of them as oppressors, rebels, terrorists, or any label used to dehumanize them in order to permit lethal force. The use of violence therefore is incompatible with a political project rooted in the recognition of the other, of difference, of radical human interdependence, and of the impossibility of certainty or absolute truth. In short, the use or reliance on violence is incompatible with peace defined in political or normative terms. The point is that employing violence and maintaining the capacity for mass violence within conceptions of peace necessitates downplaying or obscuring these troubling aspects of a naïve instrumental view of violence. Bringing pacifist theory and practice into peace would avoid this misreading and lead to a conception of peace that is both more realistic and more ethically consistent.

A third problem with current conceptions of peace is that the centrality of violence to peace is rooted in large part in the acceptance of just-war theory. The problem is that as a basis for ethical reasoning about the use of military force and the conduct of war, just-war theory is highly problematic (see Jackson 2019b; Ryan 2013). Some of the main problems with it include, among others: its tendency towards decontextualization, abstraction, and the use of unrealistic analogy in its ethical reasoning; the problematic beliefs and assumptions that the theory rests on, such as its instrumental view of violence, its unrealistic short-term understand of what war is, and the contradictions this creates in the theory; the empirical and normative consequences of the theory in the real world of international politics, such as the reification of the war system, the continuing spread of weapons, and the failure to limit war and military violence; and finally, its refusal to take serious alternatives to war as a means of security and protection.

Directly related to this, a fourth problem with excluding pacifism from peace, and constructing peace on the foundations of military force, is the connection between militarism, war, and the

climate change emergency, and the urgent need for political and social alternatives which will mitigate rather than exacerbate the climate crisis. Military forces are responsible for a large portion of climate change emissions, and in their activities, they cause a great deal of environmental and ecological harm. Militarism is also tied in with capitalism and imperialism, which are also deeply implicated in the climate crisis. The point is that a realistic and nonviolent form of peace needs to be based on ecological nonviolence. The anti-militarism of pacifism, as well as its nonviolent ethos, makes it an ideal part of peace theory and practice from this perspective.

A fifth reason for bringing pacifism into peace is that, as pacifists and others rightfully note, the ontological distinction between means and ends which dominant conceptions of peace rest on – that is, the assumption that the means of achieving peace through military violence can be theoretically and ethically separated from the ends sought – is untenable (Jackson 2020b). In reality, and following pacifist theory, it is impossible to separate the means and ends of social action, including the use of military violence. And to attempt to do so – to insist that the means by which peace is achieved may sometimes have to be different to the ends being pursued – is to mistake a necessary heuristic practice with the nature of reality. In human activity, as in nature, events occur in a continuous stream and every end becomes the means or cause for what follows. What this means is that the outcomes of all political actions, including the use of military force, are already prefigured in, or an extension of, the means employed to achieve them, and “[h]owever hard we try to separate means and ends, the results we achieve are extensions of the policies we live” (Cady 2010, p. 56). Most importantly, ontologically speaking, “Means and ends are aspects of one and the same event” (Ibid.). From this perspective, it is logically implausible that peace can be built on the basis of violence and militarism.

Another perspective on this is to look at violence, especially war and military violence, as an embodied, repetitive kind of collective social

action. That is, structuration theory or constitutive theory draws our attention to the ways in which violence is constitutive of social structures, actors, identities, practices, and society at large. At the simplest level, we can note that mass-organized violence cannot occur without the prior construction of what can be seen as a socially and historically embedded “war system” which provides: institutional arrangements for the scientific development of weapons and military strategies; a political-economic system for the production and disbursement of weapons and war materials; a logistical system for the training and material support of military personnel; a medical care system for the physical and psychological well-being of the troops; a system of doctrines, laws, and norms governing the use of deadly violence; a violence-supporting culture; the memorialization of the war dead; and accepted public narratives which define identities of friend and enemy, worthy and unworthy victims, threats and dangers; and more. The construction of such material systems and social practices with their inherent values, norms, and expectations, as well as the repetition of organized violence over time, functions to create war and violence as a sedimented, self-perpetuating social structure. In this way, the repetitive practices of political violence reproduce, materialize, and reconstruct political violence as a social-material structure, thereby helping to constitute a society in which political violence against human bodies has become an accepted and normalized mode of practice and way of being. From this perspective, it is once again difficult to see how the material and social practice of violence could constitute its opposite – a peaceful, nonviolent society. Pacifist theory avoids this problem, in part through its insistence on maintaining means–ends consistency and giving primacy to prefiguration.

A sixth and final reason for bringing pacifism and peace together is simply the proven track record of nonviolence and alternatives to war. There is by now a large and ever-growing literature on the successes of nonviolent resistance movements, even against armed opponents, in achieving political change, protecting civilians in the midst of civil wars, providing security,

demilitarizing society, and so on (for summaries, see Jackson 2018a, 2019a). There is even evidence that unsuccessful nonviolent resistance movements nevertheless have a positive effect in creating stronger democracies and more human rights protection (Chenoweth and Stephen 2011). The main point is that following Cady (2010, p. 95), “[w]hen faced with the objection ‘it won’t work’, the pacifist response must be, simply, that nonviolent action does work and has a history to document the claim.” This empirical record of success provides compelling evidence and a compelling reason for arguing that pacifism should be central to conceptions of peace, and that such a position would be both practical and realistic.

Summary

The main task for peace theorists and interested scholars is to de-subjugate pacifism and nonviolence and begin to take it seriously as a part of IR and peace studies. The theory and practice of pacifism can help to interrogate dominant conceptions of peace, uncover the role of violence and domination in the current status quo, and explore how nonviolent forms of peace can be envisaged and built on the foundations of the current international system. The large and growing literatures on nonviolent resistance and revolutionary nonviolence, unarmed civilian peacekeeping, nonwarring communities, and civilian-based defence, among others (see Jackson et al. 2020; Chenoweth and Stephan 2011; Kaplan 2017; Burrowes 1996; Wallace 2016), provide an important foundation for such investigations.

Key analytical and ethical questions which will need to be addressed include, among others: Who is peace for? What exactly is peace, and how can it be identified? What is its ontological essence or characteristics? Is there only one ideal kind of peace, or are there many, contextual forms of peace? What are the core values of peace for different cultures and groups? How can peace be constructed in ways that maintain means–ends consistency and prefigure the kind of peace sought? What different forms of violence does

peace aim to address, and is a truly nonviolent peace possible? What are the central ethical concerns in conceptualizing peace?

Cross-References

- ▶ [Just War Theory Across Time and Culture](#)
- ▶ [Nonviolence and Civil Resistance](#)
- ▶ [Phenomenological Peace](#)

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Participatory Constitution-Making and Peacebuilding

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Definition

Constitutions create state institutions, provide a legal framework for the exercise of state power, and establish the relationship between people and their government. They also perform a foundational role by defining the political bond between citizens and embedding state institutions in society. While most constitutions are written, states do not necessarily need a written constitution in order to demonstrate constitutionalism, whereby limitations are imposed on the powers of government, the rule of law is observed, and fundamental human rights are protected. Indeed, some states, such as the United Kingdom, New Zealand, and Israel, do not have written constitutions. Constitution-making refers to the process of creating a constitution; this includes not just writing the document itself but also to activities such as electing constitution-makers, civic education programs, public consultations, and information campaigns. Therefore, constitution-making is not only a technical exercise conducted by constitutional lawyers but also as a significant political process. Constitution-making can play an

important role in peacebuilding in conflict-affected societies; it can contribute to negotiating compromises, building social solidarity, embedding locally legitimate modes of governance, reconciling grievances, addressing the underlying causes of conflict, and transforming society toward more sustainable, peaceful relationships. The more participatory the constitution-making process, the more likely it will play this role (Wallis 2014).

Constitution-Making

Several variables affect the nature of the constitution-making process. The first is its timeframe; there is usually merit in having a deadline, but it should be flexible and not overly rushed.

The second is the nature of the constitution-making body. There are four common types: constitutional conventions, which are elected solely to adopt the constitution; mandated constituent legislatures, which are elected to both adopt the constitution and act as an ordinary legislature; self-created constituent legislatures, which are elected as ordinary parliaments, but then turn themselves into constituent assemblies; and self-created legislating assemblies, which are elected as constitutional conventions but then assume legislative powers (Elster 2012). If the constitution is made or adopted by an elected body, the timing and conduct of elections can affect the process, with a transparent agreed-upon timetable and a proportional, rather than majoritarian, electoral system seen as preferable. In general, it is recommended that constitutions be drafted by specially convened and broadly representative conventions, which are less likely to be swayed by political interests and more likely to make compromises.

The third variable is how the constitution-making body makes decisions, with consensus decision-making, rather than majoritarian voting, seen as preferable for all but the most difficult decisions.

The fourth variable is the balance between publicity and secrecy. Publicity is seen as constraining partisanship and encouraging constitution-makers to provide reasons for their

decisions, while also posing the risk of encouraging grandstanding and the irreversibility of publicly stated positions. Secrecy may facilitate compromise and provide space for constitution-makers to think clearly.

The fifth variable is the degree of public participation, which is the focus of this chapter.

The final variable is the way the constitution is adopted, with the two most common options: ratifying the constitution by popular referendum or adopting after the vote of an elected legislature.

Participatory Constitution-Making

The liberal principle of “popular sovereignty” holds that the ultimate political authority resides in the general will or consent of the people. Liberal political theory often regards a constitution as the tangible manifestation of the “social contract” that records a population’s general will. In the late eighteenth century, this idea was relatively uncontroversial; it was thought possible to identify the hypothetical general will according to which the population would exercise their popular sovereignty, or “constituent power,” to make a constitution. The constitution then codified the institutionalization of that will in a government, converting the population’s sovereign power into “constituted power” (Preuss 1993). In fragmented and divided conflict-affected societies, identifying this general will can be more difficult. This has led to calls for a “process-based view of popular sovereignty” in which “people get to speak,” so that they may negotiate and agree their general will by participating in making their state’s constitution (Chambers 2004, p. 161).

Electing a constituent assembly to draft and/or ratify the constitution, or to ratify the constitution at a referendum, are examples of public participation. But the extensive participation involved in recent constitution-making processes has developed the idea beyond this. Participation now includes civic education, consultations with political parties and civil society groups, public debates and open meetings, written public submissions, and publicity in the media. Participatory constitution-making processes also have a

demonstration effect, whereby there is an emerging expectation that future processes will involve a degree of participation. Indeed, there is strong evidence that the public wants to participate; in South Africa over 2 million public submissions were made.

If a constitution-making process includes opportunities for public participation, timing is likely to affect what kind of public feedback is gathered; early consultations tend to focus on the process itself, later ones on drafts of the constitution. Whether public participation is legally mandated is also likely to affect its role in, and influence on, the process and resulting constitution, as is how it is collected and analyzed.

The literature on participatory constitution-making has its intellectual foundations in the literature relating to the benefits of political participation, which has its roots in the literature on deliberative democracy. Deliberative democrats argue that reflection upon – and consequently transformation of – preferences in a public forum is essential to political decision-making (Dryzek 1990). Guided by this literature, it is possible to identify several arguments about the positive role that participatory constitution-making can play in peacebuilding.

First, public participation can improve the accountability of constitution-makers if participants are given opportunities to challenge them, and can broaden their minds by exposing them to more information and ideas (Moehler 2008).

Second, public participation can motivate people in fragmented or divided conflict-affected societies to feel sufficient unity to develop the kind of long-term political solidarity that can create a political community capable of sharing a general will and exercising constituent power. A sense of social solidarity is particularly important for liberal democracies if people are to be sufficiently united and organized to select representatives, without descending into conflict and the mobilization of communal sentiments to attract votes. Public participation in constitution-making can play a role in building solidarity because deliberation requires individuals to provide reasons for their proposals and to negotiate about issues of mutual concern (Cohen 1998).

This may result in them agreeing to common societal values, aspirations, and shared symbols that can generate a sense of common identity, which may produce sufficient solidarity to unify a political community, particularly if these values, aspirations, and symbols resonate widely (Arato 2004). Constitutions can also recognize and organize the popular sovereignty of the people; establish binding, reciprocal relationships between them; and serve as an expression of their self-determination (Lerner 2011). In so doing, they often identify shared characteristics, symbols, and principles that build a sense of common identity (Hart and Stimson 1993). However, when there is insufficient participation, these efforts can entrench a potentially divisive, exclusionary, and destabilizing view of the state and its people's identity, as occurred in Iraq (Weiner 2011).

Third, public participation can encourage parties to a conflict to refine their aspirations, mediate their differences and make compromises, if it provides a forum to address grievances without resorting to violence (Tierney 2004). This may encourage reconciliation, particularly if constitution-making is accompanied by a combination of international or domestic criminal trials, truth commissions, reparations, rehabilitation, and indigenous peace initiatives. But constitution-making can prolong or restart a conflict if it perpetuates the political dynamics that gave rise to the conflict, or fails to achieve genuine consensus (Morrow 2010).

Fourth, public participation can play a role in "citizenization," whereby individuals become "citizens" who are educated about their rights and responsibilities, become interested in government, and seek future opportunities for political participation (Mansbridge 1995). Consequently, it can encourage people to have higher expectations of their government, greater awareness of existing democratic deficits and an ability to critically evaluate the performance of their government (Moehler 2008). Participatory constitution-making can also facilitate this by inspiring the emergence of an active public sphere in which the media and civil society empower citizens to engage in political participation. Citizenization can be particularly important in fragmented or

divided conflict-affected societies in which people may have had little experience of being treated as citizens of their state, or may have previously viewed their state as illegitimate or been in conflict with their state. Participatory constitution-making may also help to generate an “ethos of constitutionalism,” whereby the people see the constitution, and the state institutions and legal system that it creates, as legitimate (Hatchard et al. 2004). Indeed, a study of all constitutions made between 1789 and 2005 found that participation positively correlated with the endurance of the resulting constitution (Elkins et al. 2009). An ethos of constitutionalism can facilitate peacebuilding, by encouraging citizens to channel their grievances through state institutions, rather than resorting to open conflict.

Fifth, public participation can help the constitution to become “an autobiography of the nation” (Ndulo 1998–2000, p. 83) that is “built upon the culture, knowledge, and experiences of the people” (Gordon 1999, p. 582). The state institutions it creates may therefore represent the interests, practices, and institutions that are already viewed as legitimate and effective by the population. While there is room for scepticism concerning how many public submissions are incorporated into final constitutions, examples from the Asia-Pacific demonstrate that participation can result in constitutions that recognize local practices, institutions, and customary law, as people exercise their constituent power to create institutions that reflect their society (Hassall and Saunders 2002). There is also optimism that participation will see the constitution include more provisions to protect human rights (Samuels 2006), although scepticism has been expressed about this outcome (Widner 2007).

Scepticism About Participatory Constitution-Making

Although there are strong reasons to believe that participatory constitution-making can play a positive role in peacebuilding, there is also scepticism.

First, there are questions about the ability of people to participate in constitution-making.

There are concerns that ordinary people may become disillusioned or targets of manipulation, deception, and extremism, or induced to hold inaccurate, biased, or damaging beliefs, if they do not possess sufficient knowledge and expertise to judge what is in their collective interests (Fearon and Laitin 2000). In addition to implying a patronizing view of peoples’ capabilities, this argument overlooks that participation allows a public forum for challenging such problematic beliefs. More persuasive is the concern that material inequalities between participants may conceal existing power relations and disadvantage the inarticulate or those without access to sophisticated political vocabulary. In developing countries peoples’ daily lives are often occupied by more immediate concerns, with onerous expectations of participation giving rise to potential “tyranny” (Cooke and Kothari 2001). This suggests that civic education is vital, as is material support to help people participate, such as funding for transport to public consultation meetings, or for wages lost as a result of attending a meeting. Sceptics are also concerned that, even in ideal deliberative conditions, it may be difficult to find reasons for a political decision on which all agree (McCarthy 1998). Yet as these difficulties are likely to persist, particularly in conflict-affected societies, participation seems to offer a good way to address them and negotiate compromises, rather than imposing a constitution that may satisfy only those who made it.

Second, there is scepticism about why people participate in constitution-making. There are concerns that people are self-interested and participate only in order to access resources or power; if they do not succeed, they may become alienated (Bermeo 2003). This may exacerbate existing societal divisions, or even lead to new factions developing, thereby restarting or generating conflict, particularly if the institutions to mediate conflict are not yet in place. Therefore, there are concerns that it may be difficult to achieve the level of trust or mutual understanding required for deliberation. However, cases such as the Bougainville region of Papua New Guinea suggest that participation can provide a space for agonistic encounters between potentially hostile groups and

thereby foster reconciliation and achieve mutual understanding if it is depoliticized and provides a space for compromise. This can “help make a constitution more just and durable” (Brown 2008, p. 683).

Third, mindful of the frequent scarcity of resources in conflict-affected societies, sceptics are concerned about the resources and institutional capacity required to facilitate extensive participation in constitution-making (Bannon 2007). Sceptics caution that if the demand for participation overwhelms capacity, this may give rise to instability and disorder (Huntington 1968). A common solution is to appoint or elect representatives, although this raises the question of whether representatives should deliberate based on reasons that they find compelling or reasons that appeal to their constituents or – if elected as party representatives – their political party (Gutmann and Thompson 1996). Related to this, there is concern that participation is time-consuming and can prolong transitional rule, entrench the regime overseeing the process, and distract attention from other development issues (Riker 1995). This highlights why transparent timeframes are recommended for participatory constitution-making processes.

Fourth, there is scepticism about what “participation” means. If participation just means attending public meetings, particularly if literacy levels are low, the process is conducted in an unfamiliar language, or civil society is weak and unable to promote clear agendas, then it risks being superficial. Yet while participation is likely to be most beneficial when participants are well informed and their involvement is meaningful, particularly when civil society is robust and pluralistic, the Bougainville case illustrates that benefits can still be achieved in less ideal conditions. Alternatively, if the level of required participation is high, requiring meaningful expressions of views on a constitutional issue or, even more demandingly, for those views to be recorded and transmitted into the draft constitution, this could place unrealistic expectations on citizens (Scheuerman 2006). Yet active participation, including during constitution-making, can play a valuable role in achieving citizenization in conflict-affected societies. In

situations where the population has fought a long struggle for self-determination, it may be difficult to deny them the opportunity.

Even if participants make significant contributions to the constitutional debate, there is scepticism about how seriously constitution-drafters should deliberate on these contributions in order for participation to “serve plausible normative or instrumental purposes” (Miller 2010, p. 636). Related concerns are procedural, including how much weight should be accorded to submissions by individuals, as opposed to by civil society and interest groups (Gloppen 1997). Typically, public feedback is digested for constitution drafters, who then exercise their discretion. Feedback may also be statistically analyzed, with the majority view holding sway, as occurred in Bougainville, where the Bougainville Constitutional Commission was guided by a matrix of choices that quantified the feedback given during the public consultations. While sceptics question whether this results in more than “cosmetic changes” to the draft (Tushnet 2008), the Bougainville case highlights how public feedback can be used as the basis for the constitution. The contrary argument is that incorporating significant changes based on public feedback can generate an incoherent, cumbersome, and inconsistent constitution (Elster 1993). Again, although public feedback was considered during the Bougainville process, it has resulted in a coherent constitution.

Finally, sceptics point to numerous constitutions that have involved a high degree of participation, but have failed to achieve legitimacy (such as of Eritrea or Fiji), while other long-standing constitutions made without substantial public participation have acquired legitimacy (such as of Australia, Canada, and the United States), as have more recent constitutions in post-Communist Europe (Partlett 2012). This overlooks that most were made in states in which “state and nation emerged *pari passu*” (Smith 1994, p. 67). In fragmented and divided conflict-affected societies, the constitution has to do more than record a societal consensus among an existing political community – it has to constitute that consensus and that community.

Summary

Constitution-making can play a positive role in peacebuilding, although this will depend upon the level of public participation involved. Participation can be measured along a continuum. At one extreme, participation is minimal, and the constitution is made by local elites or imposed by an external force, or there are opportunities for participation, but the outcomes have little impact on the resulting constitution. In these circumstances, it is unlikely to play a positive role. At the other extreme, there is extensive public participation, in which there is widespread public consultation and genuine opportunities for their feedback to shape the future constitution. This is likely to play a positive role.

While acknowledging scepticism about the role of public participation, it can result in a constitution that creates state institutions which reflect the interests of the population, encourage citizenization, inculcate an ethos of constitutionalism, and inspire the emergence of a public sphere. Participation can also assist in building a sense of political community and social solidarity and can facilitate compromise, reconciliation, and the resolution of grievances.

However, context will be influential, and it may be that the institutions created by the constitution have more bearing on the future performance of the state. The nature of societal cleavages may also form a limitation on opportunities for public participation, particularly if they are stark and involve violence, as in Iraq or Bosnia.

Finally, this chapter is not ideologically neutral. It has explicitly been guided by liberal political theory. It is acknowledged that liberal principles do not always accurately describe the nature of a peaceful and prosperous social reality. The liberal ontological assumption of individual agency can clash with ontological assumptions based on local relatedness which resonate in many non-Western conflict-affected societies (Wallis and Richmond 2017). There is accordingly a substantial literature that is highly critical of liberal peacebuilding. Yet these critiques are primarily directed at what has essentially been neoliberal peacebuilding, which has emphasized

individual autonomy removed from the basic principles of justice. Neoliberal peacebuilding has strayed far from most understandings of liberalism, which recognize that individuals may have conflicting – as well as common – interests, and therefore need to be offered the protection of basic principles of justice (Rawls 1971). This suggests that liberalism, guided by the principle of popular sovereignty and its implication that people should consent to the manner in which their political unit is governed, including the extent to which it reflects individualism or relatedness, can play a role in peacebuilding. This suggests that existing political and legal pluralism should neither be rejected as uncivilized nor accepted uncritically, but instead brought into critical dialogues in discussions of how society will be organized. Therefore, liberal norms can be “renegotiated in context” (Richmond 2015, p. 56), with a participatory constitution-making process providing an opportunity for this negotiation to take place.

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Peace Agreement Implementation

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Peace Agreements

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Definitions

Types and Prevalence

In contemporary usage, the term peace agreement loosely describes any textual instrument produced in a process aimed at ending or preventing armed conflict between two or more parties. Such a typology stretches from protocols, principles, frameworks, and memorandums at one end, toward single and limited issue agreements and comprehensive accords at the other.

Here the most common types of peace agreements are presented by surveying the most widely used datasets and research projects on peace agreements. The Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) Peace Agreement Dataset at the University of Uppsala (Sweden) contains 217 peace agreements of various types signed between 1975 and 2011 (UCDP 2020). Of these 217 peace agreements, all but 20 were signed in

civil wars. Of the 20 agreements signed between nations, 12 were in one conflict (Iraq-Iran).

Limiting the present inquiry henceforth to only civil war agreements, 57 agreements are considered “Full Agreements.” These, according to UCDP criteria, are agreements that are intended to “settle the whole incompatibility” between the warring parties. Hence intentionality plays a key role in the way UCDP and other projects categorize peace agreements, and rightly so. Furthermore, there are 100 “Partial” agreements that are intended to “settle a part of the incompatibility.” Very often partial accords serve to consolidate negotiation gains on one or more issues toward the objective of reaching a complete agreement.

In addition to full and partial accords, UCDP recognizes 39 “Process” agreements, which “initiate a process that aims to settle the incompatibility.” In other words, a process agreement is one that sets a general course for future negotiations but does not necessarily reflect any mutual agreement on any issue.

Another research project that focuses on peace agreements is the Peace Accords Matrix (PAM) program at the University of Notre Dame (USA), where the emphasis lies on the degree of implementation of peace agreements considered to be “Comprehensive” in several respects (PAM 2020). Comprehensive peace agreements (CPA) result from a negotiation process that included both (a) the major parties to the conflict and (b) the substantive issues underlying the main dispute. A “major party” is a group that can alter the outcome of the peace process for better or worse (Darby and MacGinty 2003, p. 7). The “substantive” issues are those representing the main areas of contention between the warring parties. Generally speaking, CPAs are more inclusive and more substantive than other types of accords and represent the endpoint of a negotiation process. They usually incorporate or subsume previously negotiated partial agreements and initiate a multi-year implementation process whereby the reforms in the accord are put into practice. The PAM program currently identifies 41 CPAs reached after 1989 that meet these criteria (Some of the newer cases are not yet

uploaded to the database.). Incorporated or reaffirmed within these CPAs are approximately 280 previously negotiated accords.

Introduction

Key issues covered in this entry are the prevalence of contemporary peace agreements in civil wars versus interstate wars, the different types and functions of contemporary peace accords, their respective success rates in light of their form and function, the development of the research program on peace agreements, and current research trajectories, including recent debates. The first and subsequent waves of peace agreements research are surveyed, in which agreement type, quality, and the role of monitoring and verification of peace agreement implementation are underlined. Finally, the article suggests that new directions of research can improve negotiations and peace accord design by focusing on the most common challenges to implementation.

Historical Background

In a prominent study of civil wars that ended between 1940 and 1990, Barbara Walter (1997, p. 335) brought to the attention of many an intriguing and overlooked puzzle: “Unlike interstate wars, civil wars rarely end in negotiated settlements.” Walter found only eight successful negotiated settlements in civil wars during the period. Fundamental differences between civil wars and wars between nations, she argued, explained this long-term historical trend. The main ones being that after a peace accord is signed between nations, the two armies remain armed and able to provide for their own protection. The two armies also travel back to their respective states reducing security dilemmas. In civil wars, by contrast, the rebels must demobilize and disarm and have no way thereafter to protect themselves from the government army (who remains armed and mobilized) or enforce the future implementation of the peace accord. Thus, the twin

problems to be solved, argues Walter, are rebel insecurity and agreement enforcement. Her proposed solution to these problems were strong international third-party guarantees.

Fast forward roughly 30 years from the last year of data in Walter's study, the general pattern she described has been turned completely upside-down. In recent articles, international relations scholars are now trying to explain "the demise of peace treaties in interstate war" (Fazal 2013) and the great "rise of the peace agreement" in civil wars (Bell 2006, pp. 373–374). Brancati and Snyder (2013) calculate, for instance, that over 60% of civil war terminations after 1990 have ended in a peace agreement, compared to less than 20% during the Cold War.

According to the United Nations peace agreement database (UN Peacemaker 2020), the number of civil war peace agreements negotiated in the 1940s, 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s total 2, 1, 3, and 5 per decade, respectively. There were 36 civil war peace agreements negotiated in the 1980s. This number exploded to 265 agreements in the 1990's. The next decade (2000–2009) again saw a large increase in civil war agreements with the negotiation of 214 agreements. The trend since 2010 appears to remain one of high prevalence (123 agreements in the first half decade) although data from the last several years is lacking. To summarize these trends, more civil war agreements were signed in virtually any 5-year period between 1990 and 2017 than were signed in the 50 years preceding 1990.

What are the explanations for such a remarkable shift? Bell attributes the rise of peace accords after 1990 to increased "international attention devoted to such conflict." Items that deserve to be highlighted include increased "mediation" and "negotiation" efforts; increased acceptance of "standard settlement designs"; increased acceptance of negotiations and accords as "reform" and "constitution making" processes; and "the emergence of legal standards" domestically and internationally addressing peace agreements and their enforcement. To sum, Bell (2006, p. 374) emphasizes the progressively accepted view by domestic and international actors of "the peace agreement as a binding document." All these

points translate into greater verification and monitoring which means greater implementation.

Similarly, in Fazal's explanation of "the demise of peace treaties in interstate war," she argues that nation-states no longer want to sign formal peace treaties with other states due to "the emergence of a strong and growing canon" of international law regulating the conduct of actors involved in the termination of wars. This heightened focus on accountability that has developed over the last several decades, Fazal argues, creates "disincentives for states to conclude formal peace treaties" (696) because they know that they will be "obliged to pay the costs of compliance and to bear the consequences of noncompliance" (699). The main inference is that signing a peace agreement today reflects a much higher display of commitment by conflict actors than the same act did in the past.

Key Issues

Measuring Content

In addition to the shifts mentioned above, the overall share of content devoted to particular types of reforms has changed significantly in recent decades. Whereas the pages of civil war peace agreements were once dominated by military and security issues, in contemporary agreements a much larger content share is devoted to political-, social-, development-, and justice-related reforms and issues (See, for example, The Final Accord for the Termination of the Conflict and a Stable and Durable Peace, signed in 2016 between the Colombian government and the FARC-EP guerrillas (Kroc Institute 2020).).

As with the previous comparisons, we illustrate this trend using several databases and comparing five periods: 1940 to 1969, 1970 to 1989, 1990 to 1999, 2000 to 2009, and 2010 to the last year of available data.

Starting with reforms to the political system and using the UN database of agreements, there were five agreements between 1940 and 1969 that contained political reforms (Constitution-making; Reform of the Current Constitution; Holding of Elections; Electoral Reform; Development of

Political Parties; Election Timeline; Legislative, Executive, President/Prime Minister; Subnational Government; Representation in the Executive; Representation in the Legislature; Representation in the Judiciary; Representation in Local/Regional Authorities; Minority Participation and Minority Rights; Governance and Institutional Power-sharing). This number, however, does not tell us how much of the agreement dealt with political reforms. For this insight, we examine the number of paragraphs in an agreement with political reforms. Across these five agreements, there were a total of 62 paragraphs dealing with political reforms or roughly 12 paragraphs per accord. In the next period, 1970 to 1989, there were 24 agreements that outlined reforms to the political system, discussed in a total of 451 paragraphs. This results in an average of roughly 19 political-related paragraphs per accord for this period. From 1990 to 1999, 149 accords contained political reforms spread across 3705 paragraphs. This comes to an average of 25 paragraphs per agreement or a roughly 20% increase in content share discussing political reforms compared to the first period examined and a 25% increase compared to the second period. We see a further jump from 2000 to 2009 with 126 accords aimed at political reforms across 4071 paragraphs or 32 paragraphs per accord. From 2010 to 2017, the share of content devoted to political reforms remains high at 30 paragraphs per agreement.

Looking next at justice issues, there are one accord and four paragraphs devoted to justice issues between 1940 and 1969. Between 1970 and 1989, this number remained at the same level at 4 paragraphs per accord (18 accords, 80 paragraphs). In the 1990s, we find 114 accords covering various justice issues within 1281 paragraphs or 11 justice-related paragraphs per accord. This represents more than a doubling in justice-related content share from previous periods. In 2000 to 2009, the average peace agreement contained 16 paragraphs dealing with justice issues (110 accords and 1798 paragraphs). The most recent numbers after 2010 suggest a trend of approximately 12 paragraphs with justice content per agreement (Judicial System Reform; Independence of the Judiciary; Justice Reform; Accountability, Truth

Finding, Transitional Justice Bodies; Restitution for Victims; Immunity; Amnesty).

Switching now to content related to socioeconomic development issues, there is an average of four paragraphs devoted to development topics per agreement between 1940 and 1969. In the next examination period (1970–1989), the average number of paragraphs dealing with socioeconomic development issues rose to seven paragraphs per accord. In the 1990s, the content share dealing with development reforms approximately tripled to 20 paragraphs per agreement. Peace agreements signed between 2000 and 2009 contained 26 paragraphs on development issues on average, and agreements signed after 2010 averaged 27 development-related paragraphs per accord.

On the issue of human rights, there is virtually no content before 1970. From 1970 to 1989, the share of human rights-related content more than doubled to ten paragraphs per accord. As with other topics, a dramatic increase in the share of content dealing with human rights issues took place in the 1990s with 128 accords and 2278 paragraphs or 18 paragraphs per agreement. After 2000, human rights-related content remains high at 19 paragraphs per accord, with a slight decline to 15 paragraphs per accord after 2010 (Socio-economic Development; Natural Resources and Wealth Sharing; Water; Land Regulation; Other Property Issues; Infrastructure, Transport and Communications; Reconstruction and Development; Economic Activities; Social Services and Housing; Health Services; Tackling Poverty; Education and Science; Environment; Media Regulation).

Lastly, the data shows that the current diplomatic and international emphasis on implementation of peace agreements is a relatively recent development in world politics. No peace agreements from 1940 to 1969 called for implementation monitoring bodies or observers, dealt with procedures in case of violations, or specified implementation timelines (Implementation Monitoring Bodies/Commissions; Observers; Procedures in Case of Violations; Implementation Timeline). In the period 1970 to 1989, peace agreements contained an average of eight paragraphs dealing with these specific issues of

implementation planning and verification. From 1990 to 1999, the share of implementation-related content more than doubled to 19 and then almost tripled from 2000 to 2009 (23 paragraphs per agreement). After 2010, the amount of emphasis in peace agreements devoted to implementation planning, timelines, disputes, and verification has remained steady at 23 paragraphs per agreement on average.

Measuring Success

Two issues complicate efforts to evaluate the success or failure of peace agreements. First, success rates have changed over time with accords negotiated before 1990 having high failure rates and accords negotiated after 1990 having high success rates. Second, different types of agreements have different goals and success rates.

Beginning with the UCDP project (UCDP 2020), success rates by peace agreement type are examined using the most common metric of success in the empirical literature: Did the agreement end the conflict for at least 5 years?

For “process” accords, which are intended to start negotiations but not necessary end violence right away, 16 out of 39 agreements were followed by a cessation of violence. This translates into a 41% success rate.

For “partial” accords, which are likewise not generally intended to end the conflict, peace followed 59 out of 100 partial accords. This translates into a success rate of 59%.

For “full” agreements, of which there are 57 in total, the civil war ended in 43 agreements. This equals a success rate of 75%. Not only is this a remarkably high rate of success, but many of the 14 “failed” accords were only “temporary failures.” That is, residual violence continued in the post-accord period for 1 or more years but eventually subsided. In sum, full agreements, which were intended by the signatories to end the conflict, accomplished this objective in three out of four cases.

By comparison, Hartzell and Hoddie (2007, p. 78) report a 66% success rate on a sample of 38 agreements (1945–1999). Mattes and Savun (2010) have 51 cases (1945–2005) of which 67% succeeded in ending the conflict.

Moving to the success rates of comprehensive peace agreements tracked by the Peace Accords Matrix project (Joshi et al. 2015), the signatory rebel group and government returned to fighting in 30% of the cases (The threshold used here is very low at 25 battle-related deaths.). In other words, 70% of CPAs achieved peace between the signatories. Another study found 80% of the 31 countries that negotiated a comprehensive peace agreement between 1989 and 2012 were no longer fighting a civil war of any kind as of 2016 (Joshi and Wallenstein 2018).

Regarding the ten or so CPA “failures,” it’s important to note that most of these cases went on to be successes as low levels of residual violence subsided with 2 or 3 years of implementation.

This is a very important and overlooked facet in understanding peace agreements and their success rates. Relaxing the criteria that violence cease immediately changes the picture entirely. If residual violence is allowed to decline over a 36-month period, for example, several of the so-called failures flip over to the success column. This leaves only five failed cases and a revised success rate of 85%.

Research Trends and Debates

All of the above trends and changing dynamics play themselves out in complicated ways in academic research. For many research topics on peace agreements, the question is not whether a particular relationship holds true or not but *when* it held true and *how* has the relationship changed over time. Rapidly changing dynamics predictably fuel debates within any academic area.

For example, given the temporal trends already covered in previous sections concerning peace agreement type, prevalence, content, and success rate, it might be surprising to learn that the most often touted finding from the last two decades of research on civil war peace agreements is that “more than half of all peace agreements fail.”

One can find the exact phrase in the *BBC*, *The Guardian*, *New York Times*, *The Hill*, and in hundreds of speeches and addresses. Delivering the keynote address at the International Crises Group’s

“In Pursuit of Peace” dinner, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton stated that the academic research shows that “more than half of all peace agreements fail within 5 years” as “traditional peace-making methods are proving less effective.”

At this time of writing, a Google Scholar search (in quotes) of the phrase “half of all peace agreements fail” delivers almost 1,100 exact matches and the phrase “**more than** half of all peace agreements fail” returns over 450 exact matches.

As should be evident by our survey of peace agreement success rates in a previous section, the finding that half or more than half of all peace agreements fail has no foundation of empirical support. The explanation lies in the fact that the earliest studies on peace agreement efficacy were conducted on samples of civil wars that had an overrepresentation of pre-1990 agreements in the sample. As might be expected, these studies found high failure rates, and unfortunately the finding “stuck” to a quite large degree.

It should be noted that “first wave” studies generally represented the very first efforts to put together a sample of peace agreements for study. These studies, having been conducted before the establishment of major databases and the working out of accepted typologies, had small sample sizes and a heterogeneous mix of accord types. To give a concrete example, in Licklider’s (1995) pioneering article “The consequences of negotiated settlements in civil wars,” the failure rate is 50% for peace agreements, and the sample size is 15 agreements. Most of these were signed between 1945 and 1969, and there are no peace agreements in the list of cases signed after 1987.

In subsequent waves of peace agreement and civil war studies, most of the peace agreements were negotiated after 1990, and these studies focused more on differentiating peace accords based on content, that is, on the specific types of provisions negotiated by the parties. Peace agreement success, most of these studies found, was rooted in the overall quality of the agreement.

Generally speaking, research has shown that agreements are more likely to succeed when they contain political, economic, military, or territorial power-sharing (Hartzell and Hoddie 2003;

Bussmann and Ranft 2016), justice system reforms and transitional justice mechanisms (Druckman and Wagner 2019; Dancy 2018; Cox 2020; Steinert 2019), development and reconstruction provisions (Keels and Mason 2019), civil-military reforms (Berg 2020), and international verification and implementation monitoring (Mattes and Savun 2010; Doyle and Sambanis 2000; Quinn et al. 2007) just to cover a limited number of policy-issue areas. It remains unanswered which of these areas, if any, are necessary conditions for agreement success. Joshi and Quinn (2015) examined 51 types of provisions in 195 agreements negotiated between 1975 and 2011 and found that the total number of policy domains covered by an agreement may be the strongest predictor of overall success.

While still recognizing the critical importance of accord content and purpose, studies are increasingly focusing on agreement implementation. In general these studies find that the risk of civil war recurrence declines commensurate with the degree of accord implementation which also correlates with improvement along a number of quality of life indicators (Quinn et al. 2019; Joshi and Quinn 2017; Jarstad and Nilsson 2008). To sum, reform-minded agreements that address the social and political root causes of conflict, in addition to security, and which are implemented at higher levels, are associated with a more durable, longer-lasting peace and improvement along a good number of quality of life indicators.

Summary and Future Directions

Major international trends in peace agreement negotiations and signings suggest that since the 1990s, the use of agreed-upon documents to commit warring parties to cease hostilities and build peace is now extremely prevalent. The “popularity” of peace agreements to settle disputes is because they have shown to be highly effective in bringing internal wars to an end and as vehicles for achieving social, economic, and political reforms. International accompaniment and monitoring of peace agreement implementation is also a growing characteristic of peace agreements

which has contributed to higher implementation and a growing success rate.

Future directions for research and practice on civil war peace agreements will involve more detailed examinations of common points of contention and failure in post-agreement settings and efforts to reverse engineer potential solutions back into the negotiation phase. Key among these are not only objective matters but also problems related to partisan bias, media bias, and issues of subjectivity and perception. Although international monitoring helps to provide a neutral, non-partisan assessment, this can be overshadowed by the more dramatic and biased narratives pushed by conflict actors, activists, special interest groups, and the media.

New innovative frameworks for practice should seek to de-politicize the implementation bargaining space and extend the negotiations that led to the signing of the accord into the implementation period in a formal way. While it is acknowledged that pre-agreement negotiations between the major parties require trade-offs and flexibilities in demands and positions, as well as the accompaniment of guarantors and facilitators in order to maintain order and keep the parties moving forward, this too is needed during the implementation period to the same degree or higher. Also government's efforts to transform accord language into concrete policy targets and timelines are a major source of post-agreement contention that is in need of innovative solutions. Implementation would be less contentious if policy targets and timelines and full accord costing and financing were made an integral part of negotiations and accord design.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Colombian Peace Agreement 2016](#)
- ▶ [Ohrid Framework Agreement, The](#)

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Peace and Conflict in Brazil

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Definition

The Federative Republic of Brazil is a country located in South America, the largest in its subregion and the fifth in the world in terms of size. Its history is marked by colonization by Portugal between 1500 and 1822, a monarchic period from 1822 to 1889, followed by the Republican era lasting from 1889 to the present. Unlike the image of peace and joy that often permeates the country due to its low participation in international conflicts, Brazil has a background of numerous conflicts and intense violence, often related to struggles against inequality, discrimination, and minorities recognition. Currently, the main challenge is chronic social violence, mostly related to the clashes between organized crime and the state. Brazil ranks as one of the most violent countries in the world and its citizens,

even those not involved in illicit networks, experience the collateral effects of a society with high levels of violence (robbery, homicides, violence against women, etc.), especially those living in poor urban areas.

Colonialism, Conflict, and Violence in Brazil

If peace is the absence or significant reduction of violence in a society, it can be said that the history of Brazil is far from peaceful. On the contrary, behind the joy and cordiality perceived in the manifestations of the Brazilian culture – such as football and carnival – there are also brutal and cruel episodes of violence. Direct violence arising from rebellions, conflicts, and revolts is intertwined with structural and cultural violence rooted in a context of exploitation, inequality, and prejudice.

Before the Portuguese invaded Brazilian territory, it was estimated that two million natives lived there, divided into hundreds of ethnic groups. The arrival of Pedro Álvares Cabral's expedition in 1500 enabled a colonization that extracted raw materials, progressing firstly in the Northeast and Southeast of the territory and focusing mainly on the exploitation of sugarcane and brazilwood monoculture. This exploitation was based on extensive employment of slave labor from Africa and the perpetration of violence against the indigenous population, especially against the ethnic groups of the Tupi linguistic group that inhabited the coastal areas. When faced with the lethal superiority of the Portuguese armaments, indigenous people who were not enslaved were murdered. Many also perished due to diseases brought from Europe to the Americas. It is estimated that less than 10% of the native Brazilian population survived the Portuguese invasion 100 years after the arrival of the Cabral fleet (Churchill 2000).

The book *The Masters and the Slaves*, first published in 1933 by the sociologist Gilberto Freyre and seen as a classic in Brazilian historiography, provides an important theoretical contribution and explanation about the racial construction of Brazil. Freyre claimed that close relations between

masters and slaves prior to 1888, in addition to the allegedly benign character of Portuguese invasion, created a miscegenation between the three races (Natives, African slaves, and Europeans). This context created a “meta-race” or a “race beyond race (s),” setting up in Brazil a racial democracy (Freyre 1986).

This idea of racial democracy was later criticized by important social scientists. For Florestan Fernandes, this “racial democracy” was a myth, since miscegenation aimed to “increase the mass of the slave population and to differentiate the intermediate dependent strata,” not to promote racial equality (Fernandes 2007, p. 44). For Thomas Skidmore, the concept of racial democracy obscured the racial repression historically promoted by European white elites (Skidmore 1974). When the violence experienced in Brazil, now extensively examined by the Brazilian historiography, is analyzed, it becomes clear that structural violence in Brazil was born of this asymmetric power interaction between European settlers, African black slaves, and natives.

According to Ailton Krenak, historian and indigenous philosopher, “the invention of Brazil is born exactly from the invasion initially made by the Portuguese, then continued by the Dutch and then continued by the French in a motto where the invasions never ended” (Krenak cited by Bolognesi 2018a). In other words, the idea of Brazil was born from the violence of invasions that subjugated indigenous and Africans, perpetuating a direct, structural, and cultural violence that survives today. Thus, while important for understanding Brazil’s social construction, the racial democracy concept can hide the tensions and violence experienced by groups like Afro-Americans and native people. At the root of the conflicts that would arise in the centuries to come is a search for recognition by the populations silenced by the elites that historically controlled the Brazilian territory.

This is clear in a remarkable episode in Brazilian history: the Tamoyo Confederation (1556–1567). This was the first organized native movement against the land occupation by Portugal. The union of tribes in the Tamoyo Confederation fought for 2 years continuously to avoid the

ongoing settlement of Portuguese settlers and descendants in the Bay of Rio de Janeiro. Despite the establishment of a truce, the Portuguese were strengthened and continued to raid the villages to enslave and imprison natives. In 1567, the Portuguese military officer Estacio de Sá arrived in Rio de Janeiro and led the expulsion of the tamoyos and the French navy who had allied with them later during the conflict. After this episode, given the difficulty the Portuguese had in enslaving indigenous Brazilians, the importation of African slaves was intensified.

Soon the foundations of the colony’s defensive organization emerged to deal with the ambitions of the French, English, and Dutch governments. Among the first wars between colonial Brazil and a foreign country were the expulsion of the French army from Guanabara Bay (1566) – still in the context of the Tamoyos Confederation war – and the city of Sao Luis (1615). Moreover, during the process of territorial expansion in the seventeenth and early eighteenth century, the *bandeirantes* – Portuguese explorers and fortune hunters – and their followers led the defense of the newly conquered territory. As the *bandeirantes* searched for wealth and attempted to enslave the indigenous tribes, they had several clashes with natives in the provinces of Mato Grosso, Bahia, and Rio de Janeiro. In 1707, the *bandeirantes* revolted against Portuguese interests by claiming the gold they had just found in the interior of Brazil, initiating the Emboabas War.

Apart from these episodes, there were recurring battles against the Dutch invasions after 1624. In search of sugarcane market control and slaves supply, the Netherlands controlled the Northeast Brazil territories from 1637 to 1644. An insurrection conducted by Portugal started in 1644 and culminated in the Dutch capitulation in 1654. The conflict against the Netherlands fostered more military investments in Brazil, strengthening the Portuguese army there.

During the eighteenth century, colonial Brazil experienced various internal conflicts. The War of Muscates (1710–1711) put the landowning elites of the Olinda region and Portuguese traders at war. Subsequently, a similar war called The Revolt of Vila Rica (1720) pitted the Portuguese

against the population of the Ouro Preto region, who revolted against the unequal distribution of wealth from gold mining. Finally, in 1789, the country experienced the separatist movement known as the *Inconfidência Mineira*, inspired by the United States War of Independence and French liberal ideals. Led by the intellectual elite of the wealthy city of Ouro Preto – a financial center for Portuguese gold exploration – the revolt was severely repressed by Portugal. Its leader, José Joaquim da Silva Xavier, a.k.a. Tiradentes, was hanged in 1792 and had his body in parts exposed to deter any further attempt to question the power of the metropolis. The date of his execution, April 21, is today a Brazilian national holiday.

Consolidation of the Military and the Paraguayan War

After the invasion of Portugal by Napoleonic troops, the Portuguese court moved with all its officers and the royal family to Brazil, arriving in 1808. This episode facilitated the consolidation of the military in the country, with the formation in 1810 of the Royal Military Academy in Rio de Janeiro. In the following years, military hospitals, arsenals of war, and weapon industries were organized.

After the independence proclaimed by emperor Dom Pedro I in 1822, some important wars broke out in Brazil. Dissidents gathered in the Confederation of Ecuador (1824), which opposed the monarchy and sought to create an independent territory in northeastern Brazil, but was defeated by the imperial forces. Subsequently, the Cisplatine War (1825–1828) opposed Brazil and the United Provinces of the River Plate (currently Argentina and Uruguay). Defeated, Brazil ceded the territory that would allow the independence of the Republic of Uruguay.

As explained by Nelson W. Sodre, the colonial era would end symbolically on August 18, 1831 with the creation of the National Guard, which made the Brazilian military apparatus autonomous from Portugal's army doctrine (Sodre 1969). Separatists groups were defeated by the

National Guard in the following decades in several important conflicts. Some of those can be highlighted as more significant, especially because of the popular power of such movements.

Among the most important conflicts in Imperial Brazil was driven by the *Cabanagem*, a separatist movement conducted in Grão-Pará province in 1835–1840. The *Cabanagem* refers to the type of hut used by the poorest people living along the rivers of northern Brazil. The main location of the conflict was the city of Belem. The popular revolt against white elites linked to the Empire gathered slaves, Indians, and local elites and was one of the most important mass rebellions in Brazilian history. After repressive actions ordered by province governor Bernardo Lobo de Sousa in 1833 against any intent of separation of the Brazilian Empire, the tension remained strong for 2 years. In 1835, rebels – jointly with local landowners – killed Lobo de Sousa and fought against Portuguese forces for the separation of the province of Grão-Pará. After 5 years of intense struggles and decisive support from the British Navy, the Brazilian Empire defeated the rebels. In the 5 years of conflict, between 30% and 40% of the population of Belém died, totaling more than 40,000 deaths (Harris 2010).

In the same period, other important conflicts against the Empire emerged. As summarized by Harris (2010, p. 287),

Rio Grande do Sul's Farroupilha revolt and Maranhão's Balaiada continued in those regions' countryside. There would be other liberal eruptions in São Paulo (1842), Minas Gerais (1842), and Pernambuco (1848). The rural insurgency on the Alagoas and Pernambuco border, the Cabanada, had simmered for three years (1832-1835). Though not liberal in origin, it challenged the control of land by new landowners. The Muslim slave rebellion [Malê revolt] in the city of Salvador in January 1835 had threatened to overthrow the regional leaders, but the plot was discovered before it got under way. The Sabinada in that province had also been put down in March 1838, four months after it began. The challenge to the new nation and its leaders, popular exclusion from the political process, land confiscation, capitalist transformation, and slavery had been vigorous yet they were put down robustly. The reprisal allowed centralized authority to be reimposed on the regions. In [the Cabanagem in] Pará, this forced a reconfiguration

of local patron/client relations and the local ruling class to find common interest and become dependent on national rulers.

One hundred and seventy years later, the inequality in rural areas that engendered conflicts like Cabanagem and Sabinada continues to kill thousands of people annually in Brazil. Especially concentrated in the northern region, these conflicts killed nearly 1,500 people in 2018 in disputes between farmers (and its militias) and peasants. In states like Pará, Mato Grosso, and Tocantins, the low presence of police and public policies makes the peasants even more vulnerable to the political and paramilitary power of landowners (CPT 2018). In summary, it can be said that the inequality in rural areas that triggered the Cabanagem war was not solved by the conflict, leading to other struggles in search of social justice in the countryside.

One of the major wars in the history of Brazil happened 30 years after *Cabanagem*, the Paraguayan War (1864–1870). Regarded as the largest international armed conflict that has occurred in South America, the Paraguayan War was fought between Paraguay and the Triple Alliance (Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay). The conflict began with the invasion of the Brazilian province of Mato Grosso by the Paraguayan army under orders from President Francisco Solano López. Besides seeking a Paraguayan outlet to the sea, Solano López feared that the Brazilian Empire and the Republic of Argentina would dismantle and economically isolate the smaller Southern Cone countries.

After successive defeats in battles in the first years of conflict, the Brazilian army was reorganized by Marshal Duque de Caxias. He took control of the troops and empowered them to win the conflict in 1870. Key to winning the war was the recognition of slaves' descendants as citizens, allowing them to serve in the Brazilian army. The years of intense battles resulted in more than 350,000 dead, 80% of these being Paraguayans. Although they modernized their armies, Argentina and Brazil had huge debts at the end of the war that would affect their trade balance for more than a decade. Paraguay lost a significant part of its territory and 69% of its male population.

This result makes some historians like José Chiavenato call the war an “American Genocide” (Chiavenato 1979).

Challenges to Peace in the Republican Era: Revolutions and Revolts in the Building of a New Nation

In 1889 the monarchy was overthrown by a military coup d'état led by Marshal Deodoro da Fonseca. Behind the coup was a profound weakening of the monarchy for diverse reasons, such as the abolition of slavery in 1888 that dissatisfied landowners against the royal family, the succession of the throne being in the hands of Princess Isabel and a Frenchman – since she was married to Prince Gaston, Count of Eu – and the strengthening of republican ideas among the armed forces.

Despite the republican consolidation in the following decades of the twentieth century, the initial years were ones of intense revolts and disputes, many of which victimized thousands of Brazilians. Four years after the proclamation of the republic, in search of greater autonomy for the state of Rio Grande do Sul, the Federalist Riograndense Revolution (*Farroupilha*) decimated 10,000 people between 1893 and 1895. Shortly before, in 1891, the Armada Revolt – which had two moments of conflict – gathered Navy mutineers against the centralization of power by Deodoro da Fonseca and Floriano Peixoto. The first Armada Revolt led to the resignation of President Deodoro da Fonseca after the mutineers, who had control of several warships, threatened to bomb the city of Rio de Janeiro, which was then the capital of Brazil. In 1893, with Brazil already under the presidency of Floriano Peixoto, the conflict escalated. Bombings of army positions in the city of Rio de Janeiro led to the capital being shifted to Petrópolis until 1903. The revolt was contained in 1894 by the Republic with the support of the United States, which entered the conflict after the mutineers sunk its boats moored in Rio de Janeiro.

In the nineteenth century, the War of Canudos (1896–1897) was considered the most violent civil conflict in the Republic. In the city of

Canudos, state of Bahia, 25,000 inhabitants joined Messianic leader Antonio Conselheiro, who promised miracles in an area plagued by drought, poverty, and land control in the hands of few families. Landowners joined the Catholic Church to contain the movement, but the army only acted after the rumor spread that the movement wanted to re-establish the monarchy. The army's brutal response killed 25,000 people – 20,000 of them residents of Canudos – and the 5,000 Canudos' houses were set on fire. The Canudos' story was immortalized in the classic of Brazilian literature, *Os Sertões*, by Euclides da Cunha.

In its early years, the Republic was dominated by the oligarchy linked to coffee and livestock production in the states of Minas Gerais and São Paulo. Because of this dominance, the period called the First Republic (1899–1930) is also referred to as “coffee with milk politics.” The First Republic would be shaken in the 1920s by revolts by low-rank officers, especially in the city of São Paulo in 1924 and in the communist movement Coluna Prestes (1925–1927). In the first revolt, the city of São Paulo was taken for 23 days and bombed by the central government. Later, in 1929, the São Paulo elites broke the “coffee with milk politics,” elevating Julio Prestes as a presidency candidate. This context, added to the 1929 economic crisis, made the situation unsustainable, which led to the Brazilian Revolution in 1930.

The latter ousted the President Washington Luís in a movement conducted by the Minas Gerais, Rio Grande do Sul, and Paraíba states. While Julio Prestes won the election in March 1930, Getúlio Vargas – second place in the presidential elections – assumed the leadership in a coup d'état in October. Supported by the Brazilian army, especially low-rank officials, the Revolution meant more than just a political revolt. It was only able to occur due to a number of reasons. Among them was the change in the social structure of Brazil. In a country that had abolished slavery only 42 years earlier, there was a mass of Afro-descendants and their children who were without work and deprived of social protection. Still, immigrants from Europe and Japan had made society more diverse, especially in the South and Southeast

regions. In the economy, industry was growing, as was the power of cities and their populations. In the armed forces, there was dissatisfaction with the fraudulent elections and the precarious conditions of low-rank officials (see more in Bolognesi 2018b; Sodré 1969). These economic and social changes were key to the violent and radical change led by Getúlio Vargas.

Two years later, a group of military personnel from São Paulo, Mato Grosso, and Rio Grande do Sul united against the government demanding a new constitution. This is called the 1932 Constitutionalist Revolution. The revolt started after the death of four young people who were protesting against the dictatorship of Getúlio Vargas. In 87 days of fighting between the São Paulo state police and Brazilian armed forces, more than 2,000 people died. Although São Paulo's forces capitulated, the conflict led to the creation of the 1934 Constitution.

Later, in 1937, Getúlio Vargas assumed dictatorial powers, denouncing a communist plan to overthrow him – which subsequently proved to be a false accusation. This period is called the Estado Novo dictatorship, in which the Congress was closed and a new Constitution gave full power to the executive branch. Inspired by fascist movements in Europe, including the Nazis, Vargas' own words clearly define this moment in Brazilian history: “The Estado Novo does not recognize the rights of individuals against the collectivity. Individuals have no rights, they have duties! Rights belong to the collectivity! The State, overcoming the struggle of interests, guarantees the rights of the community and enforces its duties towards it” (Vargas 1938, p. 311). Vargas only left power in 1945, when military officials removed him to call elections. Eurico Gaspar Dutra became president, ending the dictatorship of the Estado Novo.

Beyond the domestic conflicts, Brazil was the only South American country directly involved in the two great wars. Brazil's late involvement in World War I allowed only a few dozen soldiers to be involved in preparatory missions with French troops. However, in World War II, the country became more involved. It declared war on the Axis in August 1942 after successive sinking of ships in the Brazilian coast. The next year, Brazil

supported the Allies in attacking Italian and German forces with its army and air force.

The Brazilian participation, comprising 22,000 men, allowed significant wins, such as the acquisition of Massarosa, Camaiole, and Monte Prano, in Italy. Then, in cooperation with North-American troops, Brazil took control of Monte Castelo and opened spaces for British forces to move ahead to Bologna. After losing almost 500 men, Brazilian forces finally arrived in Turin on May 2, 1945, in the city of Susa, where the country ended its participation, joining the French troops on the Franco-Italian border.

Brazil (Again) Under Dictatorship: The Military Regime (1964–1985)

From 1945 to 1964, Brazil experienced a short period of democracy. During this time, however, the political scenario was permeated by upheavals. Among them was the suicide of Getúlio Vargas in his second term (which started in 1951 and was interrupted in 1954), the strong presence of the military in political affairs, and a president who resigned after 8 months in office (Janio Quadros, in 1961). Finally, in 1964, there was a new military coup against then left-wing President João Goulart.

From 1960, Brazil began to study and develop its own military doctrine with US support, adapting the North American model to the national conditions and material and geographic attributes of Brazil. A strongly ideologized, Brazilian military took over the mission to combat communism through the so-called “National Security Doctrine” and also decided to move from sporadic interventions in national political life to the full control of the state.

This approach culminated in the overthrow of President Joao Goulart in March–April 1964. The new regime adopted a nationalist and developmental policy, opposing strictly leftist movements. The following year after the coup, Brazil sent troops to support US intervention in the Dominican Republic.

From the beginning, the military regime showed no compliance with democracy. While the initial promise was to call elections, the military period

lasted 21 years. In particular, the repression became stronger in 1968 with the so-called decree “Ato Institucional no. 5,” or AI-5, which suspended Constitution, gave the President dictatorial powers, closed Congress and state legislatures, and limited social and political liberties, censoring all of the country’s media and torturing and exiling dissidents.

The dictatorship context generated new conflicts in response to government limitations to liberty and political participation. Urban guerrillas sought to organize themselves to overthrow the regime and were strongly repressed. Although they proposed to create guerrillas in the rural area, leftist groups stand out in the urban area in movements such as the National Liberation Action (ALN), the National Liberation Command (COLINA), the October 8 Revolutionary Movement (MR-8), the Communist Party of Brazil (PCdoB), the Popular Revolutionary Vanguard (VPR), and the Palmares Revolutionary Armed Vanguard (VAR-Palmares). They all led urban guerrillas – labeled terrorism by the government – with actions like kidnapping ambassadors in exchange for political prisoners, bank robberies, attacks on government targets, and theft of army weapons.

In the rural area, the main conflict occurred in the north of the country with the establishment of the Araguaia Guerrilla. It was created by the Communist Party of Brazil with the aim of developing a socialist revolution. A group of 80 of the guerrillas was exterminated by the Brazilian government through counterinsurgency tactics during 1973–1974. Among the guerrillas, 22 disappeared and demanded the Brazilian government answer to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. The Court has attributed to the State responsibility “for the forced disappearance and, therefore, for the violation of the rights to the recognition of legal personality, life, personal integrity and personal freedom” (IACHR 2009).

According to Human Rights Watch, the military dictatorship in Brazil tortured 20,000 and killed 434 people (Human Rights Watch 2019). Moreover, the National Truth Commission, which examined the military dictatorship period, estimated that at least 8,350 indigenous people were killed, directly or indirectly, due to land depletion,

forced evictions from their territories, contagion by infectious diseases, prisons, torture, and mistreatment (CNV 2014).

Despite the lack of guarantee of individual freedoms, the dictatorship reached the peak of its popularity in the 1970s, with the “Brazilian miracle” – the economic boom in mid-1970s – which was grounded in huge infrastructure buildings through loans that generated significant debt for the national economy in the decades to come.

In the final years of the 1970s, Brazil’s dictatorship fell into decay due to the difficulties of stimulating the economy, the organization of social movements claiming democracy, and the rise in poverty due to the government’s economic project. In 1979 the government approved an Amnesty Law for political crimes committed during the military regime, which cleared the military of their human rights violations. In 1985, the civilian Jose Sarney became president, ending the series of military presidents and juntas.

Emergence of Criminal Violence and Police Repression Responses

According to Seguridad, Justicia y Paz, a Mexican NGO engaged in analysis of public security in Latin America, 21 out of 50 most violent cities in the world are located in Brazil, fluctuating between 30 to 60 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants (Seguridad, Justicia y Paz 2016: 1–4). The sociologist Jacobo Waiselfisz, coordinator of the yearbook *Mapa da Violência* (Map of Violence), adds more alarming data to this discussion: grounded in analysis data provided by Brazilian Ministry of Health, he shows that, between 1980 and 2014, at least 830,000 people have been assassinated in Brazil (Waiselfisz 2015, p. 16).

High levels of poverty, social inequality, and chaotic urbanization are important factors contributing to the growth in homicides rates in the region of Latin America – and Brazil is no exception (Ferreira 2017). Together, these three factors perpetuate structural violence, understood here as conceptualized by Johan Galtung (1969) as a form of violence that often goes unnoticed but that victimizes thousands of people daily through

unjust social structures. This structural violence spills over into an increase in anomic direct violence, making Brazil a setting in which the violence rate in some hotspots by far exceeds those of conventional battlefields (Perea 2019). In turn, this direct violence is currently strongly linked to organized crime, a phenomenon that first emerged in Brazil in the nineteenth century.

The movement known as *cangaço*, which rose to prominence in the northeastern hinterland at the end of the nineteenth and start of the twentieth century, was the forerunner among Brazilian organized crime groups (Oliveira Filho 2013, p. 13). Led by Virgulino Ferreira da Silva, Lampião (“The Captain”), the *cangaço* had hierarchical organization, division of functions and was involved in looting of villages, farms, and small towns. The *cangaço* was actually a response to another armed group, the *jagunços*, who were mercenaries paid by landowners to protect and expand the limits of their farms. In turn, the *cangaçeiros* had social support from the population because of some of their activities, such as free parties (“bailes”) and charity, which they provided in exchange for shelter and information about police forces (Singelmann 1975). Due to these characteristics, the *cangaço* are seen as “social bandits” that emerged and developed in adaptation to the existing inequality in the rural area of Northeast Brazil, as extensively analyzed by Hobsbawn (1981) in his classic book *Bandits*. Nevertheless, the cruel and harsh behavior of the *cangaceiros*’ towards their own class when their material interests were at risk cannot be neglected (Singelmann 1975, pp. 59–60). Moreover, “throughout history, violence has been an integral part of political processes in Brazil; the *cangaço* was one manifestation of this endemic violence, and it survived for so long precisely because of its political nature” (Singelmann 1975, p. 61).

Later in twentieth century, a kind of clandestine lottery called *Jogo do Bicho* (“the animal game”) was popularized in Rio de Janeiro. (James Green describes *Jogo do Bicho* as a “clandestine game of chance, in which sets of numbers are linked to twenty-five animals and the outcome of a bet follows the winning numbers of the official national lottery”. Moreover, “although

officials at all levels might have been involved in receiving betting kickbacks in exchange for protecting those organizing the underground game, many also actively participated in repressing this popular form of gambling entertainment. After all, an officer of the law could not expect to receive protection money if there were no threat that the police might arrest a lawbreaker” (Green 2012.) This activity, sponsored by organized groups, developed and persists today through corrupt police and politicians (Silva 2003, p. 9). Aside from being a key financier of Rio de Janeiro’s carnival throughout history, the *Jogo do Bicho* started using its structure for drug distribution there in the 1970s. Homicides and other forms of violence soon emerged and are still prevalent in wake of the cocaine trafficking in Rio de Janeiro and throughout Brazil.

By the end of the 1970s, the organization of criminals in Rio de Janeiro began to be better structured specifically to distribute and sell illicit drugs. The pioneer criminal organization with this kind of structuration was Comando Vermelho (Red Command), which was created in the 1970s in the Ilha Grande prison, in Angra dos Reis, state of Rio de Janeiro. The combination of common prisoners with political prisoners arrested during the repression in the period of military dictatorship in Brazil (1964–1985) allowed ordinary prisoners to gain knowledge regarding organization, hierarchical structure, protection actions, and confrontation against state security forces (Oliveira Filho 2013, p. 15).

Criminals realized that the city of Rio de Janeiro provided strategically useful locations for storing two of the main drugs consumed in Brazil and abroad: cocaine and marijuana. Soon drug dealers associated with the Comando Vermelho turned antagonism between favela residents and the police to their advantage, demanding that favela residents turn a blind eye to their business. Such developments were possible because of the dissemination of urban warfare tactics through interactions in prisons between criminals and former guerrilla members.

Other criminal organizations later emerged in search of profits from drug trafficking, such as Amigos dos Amigos (Friends of Friends) and the

Primeiro Comando da Capital (First Command of the Capital [PCC]), Família do Norte (Northern Family), and other small groups in urban areas. They have increased their presence and power in the border regions by eliminating intermediate groups, which increases violence (Muggah and Diniz 2014; Ferreira and Framento 2019).

The Brazilian war on drugs is now heavily based on a repressive approach that causes more deaths and damages than drug use itself. According to Amnesty International,

[t]he re-democratization of Brazil, which gave rise to the 1988 Constitution (. . .), failed to bring about changes in the structures of Brazil’s public security and police forces, resulting in corps that are out of line with the rule of law and the requirements of a plural and diverse democratic society. Public security policy in Brazil is dominated by repressive police operations, justified by the logic of the “war on drugs”, leading to a high number of deaths from police action. (Amnesty International 2015, p. 13)

Lea Rekow (2016, p. 82) sees this militarism as being part of a wider framework of “structural violence” that produces suffering – both directly through acts of violence, torture, and murder, and indirectly through an institutionalized political social pathology that results in dispossession, lack of social policies, and insecurity. Between 2009 and 2016, 741 police were killed in operations against crime, while 17,688 people died in police operations (FBSP 2016, pp. 6–7). By 2019, the toll of this militarism created a dire statistic: 1,810 people killed by police in Rio de Janeiro alone, with an average of five per day, the highest number since official records began in 1998 (BBC 2020).

Another element is toward whom the repression is directed. Although drug use also manifests in rich areas, repression is focused on less economic privileged areas. Consequently, the situation of insecurity and lack of peace in societies like Brazil is closely related to the criminalization of poverty and securitization of poor areas (Gledhill 2015). Such repressive policies cause high social costs by fostering the continuation of marginalization of poor areas, violating human rights, increasing the prison population in Brazil, and generating a new cycle of obstacles to the development of human capacities to dismantle structural violence (Carvalho and Pellegrino

2015, pp. 1–2). Moreover, the repressive policy is discriminatory, given it affects mainly black people and youth living in poor areas (FBSP 2016, p. 21).

These negative impacts of the state approach to combating organized crime paradoxically increase the profits of drug trafficking organizations. By generating more insecurity and reproducing a daunting scenario for the youth at the periphery by not promoting the reduction of structural violence, the state fosters the possibility of these young men turning against their own society and instead associating with organized crime. For the youth affected by structural violence, organized crime emerges as an outlet they are co-opted into to meet their basic needs (Blackwell and Duarte 2014). Consequently, this strengthens criminal groups, both symbolically and operationally, spreading more violence, intimidation, and corruption within the state, and preventing the full functioning of democratic institutions (GCD 2011, p. 14). Thus, the repressive policies can make the state less effective when organized crime finds an opportunity to recruit new youth for trafficking and corrupt state agents (Garzón-Vergara 2016, p. 16).

No Peace at Home, but Promoting Peace Abroad

Despite the chronic violence that Brazil experiences throughout its history, the country has actively participated in United Nations (UN) peacekeeping operations since its beginnings. Subsequent to the end of the Cold War, the use of armed forces was required to support the Brazilian foreign policy, and Brazil became a major player in several peacekeeping missions sponsored by the UN such as in Angola, Lebanon, Mozambique, and Timor-Leste, in addition to sending troops and military observers to the various conflict regions of the world. In 2004, the Brazilian Army took command of peacekeeping forces in Haiti and, after his leadership in the pacification of the Caribbean country, General Carlos Alberto dos Santos Cruz became the commander of the peacekeeping force in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (known by its acronym, MONUSCO) in 2013.

In addition to the robust Brazilian involvement in peacekeeping operations, in the 2010s, the Brazilian armed forces have been called to lead specific missions in favelas in Rio de Janeiro. Within the pacification program created by the Department of Security of Rio de Janeiro (Unidade de Polícia Pacificadora – UPPs), the military has assisted the police since 2010. The army's role has been to recover territories that had been occupied for decades by drug dealers and militiamen, such as the favelas Complexo do Alemão and Maré. However, just after the Olympic Summer Games and a pervasive economic crisis in Rio de Janeiro state, the UPPs were abandoned, and in December 2019, the army left the favelas.

Initially the pacification policy with the use of the armed forces was seen as valuable to residents, especially in relation to guaranteeing the predictability of their daily lives, reducing fear, and increasing a feeling of peace in the slums. However, in relation to social development and integration of the favela into the city, over the years, this public policy has proven to be unstable. In fact, the pacification process was directed to “creating areas of control that literally pacify local tensions without solving the economic, political and cultural sources of social conflict” (Rodrigues et al. 2018, p. 100), quite similar to other interventions of the state in the social sphere seen throughout Brazilian history. Another criticism is that the fight against crime is not a mission of the armed forces and can give rise to excessive use of force against the population, as demonstrated by several episodes in which the army victimized innocents in recent decades.

While it is difficult in such a challenging scenario to determine ways to build a peaceful society, one cannot neglect the role of subalterns for a different future. Social actors like NGOs, collectives, and social projects sponsored by public universities (the so-called *Projetos de Extensão*) are working to overcome or reduce cultural and structural violence in several social settings (see, for example, Kuhlmann et al. 2019). The Redes da Maré, Programa Universidade Ação, and several other actors are strongly dedicated to bringing to attention the notion that the alarming

violence in Brazil cannot be normalized and deserves more peaceful responses.

Summary

Brazil's history has manifested brutal and cruel episodes of violence since the beginnings of the Portuguese colonization. The exploitation of the country has generated numerous social revolts, from the Tamoyo Confederation to the struggle of NGOs in defense of people attacked by state and crime groups in favelas today. Despite political and social upheavals, the structural and cultural violence in one of the most unequal countries in the world has not significantly changed (Perea 2019; Schwarz 2019).

In the between the many conflicts, the nation's political history was also not peaceful; in fact, it has been quite opposite to a view of joy and happiness expressed in cultural manifestations like the nation's world-class football feats and carnival. Clashes in colonial period between Portugal and other European powers, revolutions, and coups experienced in 1889 and 1930, and resistance by left-wing movements against the military regime (1964–1985), mark the historical background of peace and conflict in Brazil.

Currently, the social violence is intimately connected with organized crime and state repressive responses. This phenomenon has generated thousands of deaths across Brazil since the 1980s, victimizing mostly the young, poor, and minorities. While the current picture is not peaceful, there are important initiatives from peace formers like NGOs, collectives, and social projects conducted by universities in Brazil. Together with a change in the scope of public policies, these initiatives have the potential to create a less violent Brazil in the decades to come.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Peacebuilding and Postcolonial Subject](#)
- ▶ [Search for Peace, the](#)
- ▶ [Social Capital and Peace](#)
- ▶ [Urban Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Violent Conflicts in South America](#)

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Peace and Conflict Studies

► Peace Journalism

Peace and Conflict Textiles

► Textile-Making as Research Method

Peace and Dialogue Structures

► Peace Infrastructures

Peace and Feminist Foreign Policy

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Synonyms

Feminist foreign policy; Gender justice; Empowerment; Peaceful transformation; Inclusion; Dialogue; Women; Sweden; Gender equality; Peace diplomacy; Ethics; Intersectional approach

Definition

In recent decades, there has been a global recognition of the co-constitutive relationship between gender justice and peaceful transformation of

previously war-torn societies. This chapter investigates how “women-friendly states” have located their foreign policies within notions of gender equality and empowerment. It focuses on how feminist foreign policy is to all intents and purposes ethical and conducive to the transformation of conflict and peace. The case of Sweden is used as an empirical illustration being the first country to launch a feminist foreign policy and to actively advocate for the inclusion of more women in peacemaking. By way of conclusion, three remarks are made. First, core principles of feminist foreign policy and peace diplomacy are to be inclusive and dialogical. Second, feminist foreign policy stipulates a requirement to problematize essentialist notions of masculinity, femininity, and structural inequalities as a way to challenge traditional foreign policy practices. Third, the conduct of feminist-oriented foreign policy and transformative peace diplomacy has to be attentive to the ways gender interacts with other intersectional categories, such as class, ethnicity, and sexuality.

Introduction

In recent decades, there has been a global recognition of the co-constitutive relationship between gender justice and peaceful transformation of previously war-torn societies. Hence, the concept of peace has several connotations. Negative peace refers to the absence of inter- or intrastate violence, while positive peace relates to a more expansive and positive understanding, including the ending of structural violence, societal injustices, and gendered oppression (Galtung 1964). Feminist interpretations of peace resonate more with a positive peace that emphasizes forward-looking solutions to gendered violence, subordination, and injustices. Feminist contributions to peace research stress the importance of gender equality and women’s empowerment in peace processes. Contemporary research shows how an increase of women in peace processes appear to result in a less conflictual world (UN Women 2019, 2018; Krause et al. 2018). For example, Caprioli’s (2000) research highlights the

significance of domestic gender equality and its pacifying and peaceful effects on state behavior. A growing number of gender-inclusive peace agreements also promote women’s empowerment and the emergence of gender-equal and peaceful societies (True and Riveros-Morales 2019). Women’s equal right to participate in formal and informal institutions as well as peacemaking is central to the realization of gender-just peace (Björkdahl 2012). This global recognition of the interplay between gender equality and peace has led some states, such as Australia, Canada, Norway, Sweden, France, Mexico, and South Africa, to adopt a feminist or a pro-gender foreign policy platform, which centers on advancing the peacebuilding logics emanating from the United Nations (UN) Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, Security (WPS) agenda (see also chapter by ▶ “Women, Peace and Security Agenda”).

This chapter focuses on “women-friendly states” that conduct foreign policies based on gender equality and empowerment, framing these policies as “smart diplomacy and economics” that are conducive to peace (Clinton 2010; Wallström 2016). Such foreign policy framing largely builds on the “women-peace hypothesis,” which assumes that women are somehow inherently peaceful in opposition to men. The latter part of the chapter specifically addresses feminist foreign policy in theory and practice. A key argument is that the adoption of a feminist foreign policy to all intents and purposes is ethical and, as such, central to the transformation of conflict and peace. The chapter empirically illustrates this argument through the case of Sweden, as the first country to launch a feminist foreign policy, and to actively advocate for the inclusion of more women in peacemaking. A key argument is that Sweden has achieved some results in its quest to include more women in peacemaking. However, this has not necessarily been coupled with a deeper and more thoroughgoing analysis of gendered structural violence and inequalities, which are fundamental barriers to peaceful change. By way of conclusion, three remarks are made. First, Sweden’s feminist foreign policy illustrates the necessity to pursue a peace diplomacy that is

inclusive and dialogical. Second, feminist foreign policy stipulates a requirement to problematize essentialist notions of masculinity, femininity, and structural inequalities as a way to challenge traditional foreign policy practices. Third, the conduct of feminist-oriented foreign policy and transformative peace diplomacy has to be attentive to the ways gender interplays with other intersectional categories, such as class, ethnicity, and sexuality.

Peace, Gender, and Foreign Policy

Historically, the “women-peace hypothesis” has been used as a strategic argument in the mobilization of women’s activism and political struggles for gender equality and peaceful change (see chapter by ► [“Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom \(WILPF\)”](#)). Women are assumed to possess empathetic, caring, and cooperative skills, while men frequently are assigned competitive and power-oriented characteristics expressed in the enactment of military masculinity (Maoz 2009). In addition, this gendered dichotomization of men and women provides an explanation for why women historically have been marginalized and excluded from formal politics and peace diplomacy, a tendency that remains intact in peace diplomacy. Hence, the hypothesis has evoked criticism because of the tendency to frame women as a monolithic inherently peaceful group, rather than as a diverse gender category, possessing different characteristics and skills (Aharoni 2016; Alison 2007; Sjoberg and Gentry 2007). The peacefulness is often assumed to emerge from women’s maternal experiences placing them well to engage in inclusive and dialogical peacebuilding processes (Reardon 1985; Ruddick 1989). While essentialism can be damaging by furthering stereotypical ideas about the abilities and characteristics of women and men, it is important to recognize that women have distinct experiences and abilities. In particular, women’s experiences of care and inclusive dialogue are conducive to successful peacemaking, which in turn can add new ideas and practices to peacebuilding. However, this requires treating

femininity and masculinity and other gender characteristics as social constructions rather than as static features, and therefore subject to change (Cockburn 2007). By definition, women’s peacefulness is a feature of their socially constructed gender roles rather than their inherent biological peaceful qualities. From this follows that women and men possess a variety of identity markers, skills, and qualities, and not all women are prone to peaceful dialogue, and not all men are competitive and wedded to militarism (Alison 2007). This insight is key to critical analyses of how masculinities and femininities are constructed in foreign policy, in relation to matters of peace and security. Central here is scholarship that investigates variations in the ways women and men conduct peace negotiation and mediation (see chapter by ► [“Women and Peace Negotiations in Cyprus”](#)). Such scholarship holds that the skills required for successful peacemaking are usually more compatible with feminine rather than masculine characteristics. In part, this has to do with typically masculine traits frequently being associated with a competitive transactional negotiation behavior, whereas feminine characteristics are linked to transformational problem-solving, dialogical ethics, and inclusive peacemaking (Florea et al. 2003; Robinson 2011). In short, there is reason to treat the underlying assumptions of the women-peace hypothesis with caution, while also recognizing its strategic merits.

Gender and Foreign Policy

As noted above, the women-peace hypothesis and the WPS-agenda are informing contemporary policy discourses and practices. By adopting an activist stance on the WPS-agenda, a growing number of states seek to realize peace through their pro-gender and feminist-informed foreign and security policies by increasing women’s participation in peacebuilding, national armed forces, and international peace support operations (Aggestam and Bergman-Rosamond 2019). As women tend to hold different perspectives than men on questions of war and peace, given their distinct experiences and socially constructed gender roles (Wibben et al. 2019), they may facilitate the achievement of a sustainable peace. Yet,

women continue to be marginalized and excluded from formal political and diplomatic decision-making on foreign policy, security, and peace (Aggestam and Towns 2018, 2019). Nonetheless, gender-just advocacy and coalition building between domestic and international actors take place globally, for example, the coalition “friends of WPS” within the UN Security Council, which shows willingness to coordinate global advocacy in this area.

While a number of studies have assessed the impact of UN SCR 1325 (Olsson and Gizelis 2015), there are surprisingly few that address gender and foreign policy overall (Aggestam and Bergman-Rosamond 2016; Aggestam and True 2020, 2021; Bilgic 2016; Hudson and Heidl 2015). In the study of diplomacy, there has recently been a “gender turn” (Aggestam and Towns 2019) with a growing number of studies that focus on descriptive representation and gendered institutions (Aggestam and Towns 2018). Yet, academic scholarship on gender and foreign policy remains scarce and the subfield of foreign policy analysis has overall been gender-blind (Hudson 2014). As Karen Smith (2019) argues, “the sex of the decision-maker and the gendered nature of the decision-making processes have generally been left out of the picture.”

This has spurred additional studies that probe the basic question, raised some decades ago, by Cynthia Enloe (2000): “where are the women” in foreign policy and peacemaking? Other studies examine the correlation between gender equality, empowerment, women’s participation in foreign policy, security, and peace. The results indicate that states with poor records on gender inequality are more likely to be involved in intrastate conflicts (Caprioli 2000; Melander 2005). These studies have also been useful for policymakers, practitioners, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in their quest to promote pro-gender norms in foreign policy, gender mainstreaming, and inclusion in peace diplomacy.

More recent work has explored the increase of women in foreign policy leadership. Sylvia Bashevkin (2018) has studied four US female Secretaries of State since 1980 and the gendered assumption that women leaders reflects the female

electorate in their foreign policy orientation and that they are doves on defense compared with male leaders. On the contrary, Bashevkin concludes that not all women foreign policy leaders have supported pro-gender norms in foreign policy. Genovese (1993) study also shows how women leaders tend to act more masculine in foreign policy as a way to overcome what is seen as feminine weakness.

Feminist Foreign Policy and Peacebuilding

In 2014, the Swedish Red-Green coalition government surprised the world by adopting an explicitly feminist foreign policy, a groundbreaking decision by all accounts. Other states have since moved in a similar direction by integrating pro-gender norms into their foreign policies (Aggestam and True 2020). Canada launched a feminist international development assistance policy in 2017 (Parisi 2020; Robinson 2021), while Mexico launched a feminist platform for all aspects of its foreign policy in 2020. Common to most of these countries is their commitment to the adoption of a rights-based, less elite-driven, and gender-just foreign policy. At the center of their foreign policy practice is their support for the objectives of the WPS-agenda (Aggestam and True 2020). This involves confronting patriarchal power relations, gendered hierarchies, and violence that undergird contemporary conflict and global politics. Adopting a feminist framework for foreign policy conduct is a transformative peace project, embedded in a strong commitment to women’s participation in all aspects of peace diplomacy. As noted previously, feminist foreign policy then is to all intents and purposes ethical and wedded to the peaceful and just transformation of global society (Aggestam et al. 2019; Bergman-Rosamond 2020; Robinson 2021; True 2016). However, feminist foreign policy is also located within policy pragmatism and compromise as well as the pursuit of national interests globally, which, at times, are inconsistent with the ethical and peaceful ideals of gender-just peace diplomacy (Aggestam and

Bergman-Rosamond 2016). For example, Sweden's track record as one of the world's largest exporters of arms, in proportion to its population, seemingly may contradict the ethically framed peace logic of the country's feminist foreign policy as well as demilitarizing aspects of the WPS-agenda (Aggestam and Bergman-Rosamond 2016; Agius and Edenberg 2019). It should be noted though that the transformation of the embedded patriarchal structures and gender biases that prevail in global politics is a long-term feminist endeavor, which is likely to give rise to long-term national and global resistance (Aggestam et al. 2019; Aggestam and True 2021).

Still, feminist foreign policy, signals a strong commitment to inclusive security and durable peace and, as such, is a "shift, from the openly declared pursuit of national interests in foreign policy to the growing emphasis on ethical or moral duties to protect the rights and interests of others" (Chandler 2003, p. 295). The focus of the next section is Sweden's feminist foreign policy with its commitment to pursue "women-friendly" peace diplomacy.

Feminist Foreign Policy and Peace Diplomacy

While Sweden's feminist foreign policy is path-breaking and new, it is also intimately linked to its longstanding solid support for the WPS-agenda (Aggestam and Bergman-Rosamond 2019). Moreover, it builds on the Swedish self-narrative as a peaceful and cosmopolitan-minded gender-just state (Bergman-Rosamond 2020), wedded to the institutions of the UN, its generous budget to international development assistance, and, most relevant here to the explicit protection of girls and women (and other marginalized groups) from harm and discrimination within and beyond borders (Bergman-Rosamond 2013).

Sweden's feminist foreign policy rests on the three "Rs": rights, representation, and resources, coupled with a fourth 'R,' that of realism, which entails staying attentive to the results of feminist foreign policy and ensuring that initiatives are implemented on the ground. More specifically, feminist foreign policy aims to "strengthen all women's and girls' Rights, Representation and

Resources, based on the Reality in which they live." (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2019, p. 11). While the four Rs are of equal significance and intimately linked the focus in this chapter is on women's representation in peace diplomacy, a domain where women's underrepresentation historically has been strikingly low (Aggestam and Towns 2019).

In 2019, women negotiators made up only of 13% and they amounted to 6% in all negotiation delegations (UN Women 2019). This poor record has led Sweden to take "action to increase women's representation and participation in the discussion, negotiation, drafting, interpretation and implementation of resolutions and key documents on disarmament and non-proliferation" (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2019b, p. 8). As noted above, representation is a key feature of UN SCR 1325, in particular the significance of promoting women's participation in the prevention, management, and resolution of global conflicts. The official Swedish line is that "gender equality contributes to peace" and "when women are involved in peace processes, the likelihood of lasting peace increases" (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2019a, p. 7).

While promoting all aspects of gender-just representation in peacemaking Sweden has singled out mediation as a key "weapon for peace" to ensure women's participation and empowerment in peacemaking (Wallström and Soini 2016). To this end, Sweden has sought to promote women's engagement in peace mediation processes (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2019) in Latin America, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. The booklet *Handbook – Sweden's Feminist Foreign Policy*, published by Sweden in 2018, presents the general methods and aims of feminist foreign policy and expresses Sweden's commitment to gender-just peacebuilding (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2018). By way of illustration, the establishment of the Swedish Women's Mediation Network in 2015 (Folke Bernadotte Academy 2017: n.d.) is flagged as a groundbreaking example of gender-just peace diplomacy in the Handbook (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2018). The network seeks to "promote peaceful conflict resolution and actively

support women's meaningful participation in peacebuilding initiative, before, during and after conflicts" (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2018, pp. 64–65; see also Aggestam and Svensson 2018). The mediation network is committed to ethically situate women's representation in peace processes within international law and human rights. What is more, it relies on the assumption that women's participation in peace processes will increase the chances of peace agreements being reached and sustained over time (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2018, p. 63). As of 2019, 15 female senior Swedish diplomats and members of civil society have taken active part in the network. Sweden is also part of the larger Nordic Women Mediation Network (NWMN) and Global Alliance, which coordinates a range of mediating activities, advocacy, and mentoring as a way of facilitating dialogue between regional women networks beyond the Nordic sphere, such as Arab Women Mediators, Femwise-Africa, Mediterranean Women Mediators, Women Mediators across the Commonwealth. In addition, the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs has launched the hashtag #MoreWomenMorePeace# to raise awareness of the significance of including more women in peacebuilding and peace negotiations (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2017, p. 54, see also Aggestam 2019).

In the publication "Sweden's feminist foreign policy – Examples from three years of implementation" (2019), Sweden's efforts have been highlighted to draw attention to the WPS-agenda and women's participation in peacemaking. In line with Sweden's commitment to a result-orientated feminist foreign policy (Bergman-Rosamond 2020), the document lists a range of "results" in terms of supporting women's participation in peace processes in Columbia, Mali, Syria, Afghanistan, Myanmar, and Somalia "through policy, technical and financial support" (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2019a, p. 10). One key example is "the incorporation of a clear gender perspective in Colombia's peace agreement, which can in turn serve as a model for others" (2019, p. 24). What is more, Sweden's support for the Women's

Advisory Committee (WAC) of the Syrian opposition, along with support for the UN-led peace talks in Geneva as well as the provision of mediation training of Afghan women through cooperation with the Swedish Embassy (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2019a, p. 10) are viewed as such achievements.

While the efforts briefly introduced above are consistent with the broad contours of the WPS agenda and the representation logic of FFP, such documents reveal less about peacemaking practices by the local women that Sweden seeks to assist. Nor do they say much about the gendered and intersectional injustices that undergird conflict, war, and peace, with the structural underpinnings of conflict and post-conflict situations being insufficiently explored. Moreover, Sweden's FFP, associated with the Red-Green coalition government that has been in power since 2014, is undergirded by an explicitly liberal feminist logic that tends to assume that "adding women" to peacemaking will automatically generate gender just positive peace. Thania Paffenholz et al.'s (2016) research is insightful here because it challenges that position, noting that more representation of women in negotiation processes and the settlement of peace agreements does not necessarily produce gender-just and sustainable peace. Paffenholz's study indicates that what matters more is whether women actually can influence the negotiations and the policy-making processes. In some ways, Sweden's gender-just peace diplomacy "mirrors broader depoliticized global strategies of simply "counting" women and "adding" them to peace negotiations, without questioning the militarized infrastructure and power dynamics that underpin such negotiations" (Aggestam and Bergman-Rosamond 2019, p. 41). Yet, feminist-informed foreign policy discourse and conduct that embrace gender-just inclusion can help to reframe peace diplomacy and its practices in a more inclusive and dialogical fashion (Aggestam and Bergman-Rosamond 2019). Nonetheless, for peace diplomacy to become more inclusive and dialogical essentialist understandings of masculinity and femininity and the gendered power relations that tend to define peacemaking as

well as orthodox foreign policy practices need to be profoundly challenged (Aggestam et al. 2019; see also chapter by ▶ “Masculinity and Conflict”). This involves being mindful of how gender intersects with other intersectional categories, such as class, ethnicity, and sexuality, and, how this in turn impacts the durability of transformative and sustainable peace.

Summary

Peace and gender equality are now important issues in global politics. With the adoption of UN Security Council resolution 1325 in 2000, the WPS-agenda has now become central to the foreign policies and practices of a growing number of states. Underlying some of these international normative frameworks is the “women-peace hypothesis,” which characterizes women as innately peaceful. Yet, gender is a social construction, which is fluid rather than static, and, thus, subject to transformative change. By implication, the qualities of men and women are products of social construction rather than inherent abilities. Yet, while conceding that the women-peace hypothesis is undergirded by essentialism and gendered assumptions, it is important to seriously consider the distinct contributions that women make to peacemaking, in particular by drawing upon their distinct experience of war and peace as well as their tendency to privilege inclusive and empathetic dialogue over competitive approaches to peacebuilding. This chapter has focused on peace in relation to feminist foreign policy. By way of conclusion, three remarks are made. First, the case of Sweden’s feminist foreign policy shows the necessity of pursuing gender just peace diplomacy that is inclusive and dialogical. Second, this stipulates a requirement to problematize essentialist notions of masculinity and femininity as well as structural inequalities, which traditional foreign policy practices build on. Third, the conduct of feminist-oriented foreign policy and transformative peace diplomacy has to be attentive to the ways gender intersects with other intersectional categories, such as class, ethnicity, and sexuality.

Cross-References

- ▶ [LGBTQ Perspectives in Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Masculinity and Conflict](#)
- ▶ [Peace in International Relations Theory](#)
- ▶ [Transitional Justice and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Women and Peace Negotiations in Cyprus](#)
- ▶ [Women’s Community Peacebuilding in the Occupied Palestinian Territories \(OPT\)](#)
- ▶ [Women’s Organizations in Post-conflict Contexts](#)
- ▶ [Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom \(WILPF\)](#)

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Peace and Political Unsettlement

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Description

The lens of formalized political unsettlement asks for pathways in conflict transitions where the radical disagreement at the heart of the conflict cannot be resolved. It questions the idea of conflict resolution on the assumption that power-sharing arrangements in peace agreements may indeed be able to stop violent conflict but, in turn, perpetuate the contestation between the conflict parties. In formalizing the existing political unsettlement, they cannot transform conflict into normal politics as it is often promised. They can, however, tame armed violence and so prepare the ground for creative modes of transitional engagement. Even though they may appear stuck and deadlocked, situations of formalized political unsettlement are fluid and constantly changing. Pathways for structural engagement – “hooks” – can open up and be fostered and utilized for transformational change. Conflict parties and other stakeholders also apply creative nonsolutions to avoid triggering a relapse into violence and keep the transition moving. Peace in formalized political unsettlement is, thus, not built but instead evolves out of a long-term transitional process.

Introduction

Forging “inclusive political settlements” has become a key vision for peacebuilding interventions in armed conflict from the year 2010 onward. For multilateral as well as bilateral actors, predominantly the United Kingdom and Australia, the notion of political settlements rose to prominence as the substitute for the

statebuilding agenda that has dominated international engagement in armed conflict since the 1990s. After the projection of formal state structures based on a model of Western liberal statehood to so-called fragile situations broadly failed, the political settlements approach promised a more contextualized pathway for war-to-peace transitions. Questions of how to make a political settlement as inclusive as possible in order to work, thus, developed into major questions for international peace process support. Allegedly, the right sequence of measures, the right composition of parties to a peace process, and the broadest possible representation of stakeholders and interests could trigger a process of formal *and* informal institutionalization that would enable a sustainable post-conflict framework.

Experiences from past peace processes contradict this assumption. The power-sharing frameworks often put in place by peace agreements rather enshrine the contestation of the conflict instead of resolving it. Transitional frameworks do not pave the way into normal politics but tend to stick, like the Dayton Accord for Bosnia and Herzegovina, as just one example, demonstrates. How is it possible to conceptualize the impact and the achievements of peace agreements while avoiding the sentiment of continuous failure? The Dayton framework may have failed to forge an inclusive political settlement and to provide a transformation into normal politics. It has, however, *formalized* the political unsettlement at the heart of the conflict in a way that ended the armed contestation by institutionalizing and thus preserving radical (ethno-)political disagreement (Ramsbotham 2017).

While perpetuating radical disagreement is certainly not the outcome many stakeholders are looking for, a transitional approach accepting and working with formalized political unsettlement may still provide a useful lens to conceptualize and engage with conflict transitions. It avoids the overburdening optimism of – and disappointment with – ideal-type notions such as peacebuilding, conflict resolution, or “inclusive political settlements.”

Political Settlements and Power-Sharing

Not the least driven by policy demands for substituting the rigid institution and statebuilding approach that was perceived as failing, political settlement thinking made its way into the mainstream development and peacebuilding debate in the late 2000s. Seminal for this school of thought are the works of Mushtaq Khan. Khan understands political settlements in a Marxist tradition. They would occur “when the distribution of benefits supported by its institutions is consistent with the distribution of power in society” over the longue durée (Khan 2010). Equally influential, especially in development policy circles, became works building on critical insights of new institutional economics (North et al. 2009), which highlight the contextualized and, often, informal character of political institutions (di John and Putzel 2009).

These two attributes of political institutions in transitional processes, contextuality and informality, indeed represent a decisive shift away from traditional statebuilding, which has for long been accused of transferring Western blueprints to transitional post-conflict situations. The political settlements approach offered a viable alternative perspective for structural engagement. In the peacebuilding mainstream, the new framework enabled to rethink the institutionalization aimed for by comprehensive peace agreements and the subsequent peace process. The rationale was not only to forge an elite pact but to place elite actors into a configuration that would enable the (re-)construction of a wider political settlement and, eventually, transit to normal politics (Cheng et al. 2018; Kelsall 2018).

Since political settlement institutionalization cannot rest on formal state institutions alone, contextualized forms of elite bargaining became acceptable for development policy and peacebuilders. However, the emancipatory social agenda related to international peacebuilding would not accept pure elite bargains. For guaranteeing a sustainable transition in the view of most peacebuilding practitioners, therefore, political settlements needed to generate a far-reaching public buy-in. Settlements had to

be “inclusive”: “our aim is to promote inclusive settlements that meet public expectations and address the underlying causes of conflict and fragility” (DFID 2010, p. 24; see also Hirblinger and Landau 2020).

Inclusion was and still is perceived by a relevant strand of the contemporary peacebuilding debate as a panacea for overcoming the limitations of peace deals resting on “handshake moments” that only involve a vastly limited number of (mostly male) actors. For turning limited elite peace settlements into sustainable political settlements, “horizontal inclusion” had to increase the number of armed groups and political actors involved in the negotiations, while “vertical inclusion” had to guarantee the active participation of society at large, in particular habitually neglected groups such as women, victims, the youth, or disabled persons.

Contrasting reservations of experienced mediators and diplomats that such an undertaking would make negotiations overcomplex and impossible to handle, creative ways of public participation were developed in the course of peace talks, ranging from regional consultations to online fora. The Colombian FARC negotiations from 2012 to 2016 emerged as the test case of crafting an inclusive political settlement by expanding public participation. Many suggestions and concerns of the population were structurally channeled into the Havana talks, which remained enclosed and limited to the two parties to keep the process efficient. As a result, the most extended comprehensive peace agreement produced so far was drafted by the negotiation teams. However, much to the shock of the negotiators and the international peacebuilding community, the peace agreement subsequently got rejected in a public referendum, bringing to the fore the severe limits of inclusivity.

Contrary to the idealist assumptions of many peacebuilding practitioners and academics, inclusive approaches do not automatically transcend conflicting interests or guarantee majority buy-in for a peace process. Not all political contestations provide an escape in the form of a mutually fertile middle ground. Political settlements, as well, remain tied to power and interests. Expanding

the stakeholder base does not make these interests and tensions go away.

Besides the convincing conceptual critique on inclusive peacebuilding (de Waal 2017), it appears predominantly the power dimension of peace talks that limits inclusion's effectiveness. In many instances, even comprehensive peace agreements that address a fair number of public concerns introduce wide-ranging power-sharing frameworks that shape the political institutionalization in conflict transitions. It would be misleading to think of power-sharing between elite actors as exclusive per se. Armed actors are often forced to demonstrate successes and hands-on outcomes in peace negotiations toward their constituencies in order to gain or at least retain legitimacy. In turn, increased public participation does not make the conflict fault lines go away. Depending on the context, increased stakeholder participation can mitigate radical disagreement (Bell 2018). At the same time, it can result in hardened political positions as well.

Introducing Formalized Political Unsettlement

Peace agreements have a limited chance in succeeding to transcend the radical contestation and, thereby, forge a new political settlement. Even if a transformation happens, it is likely because of contextually supportive factors and less because of the agreement itself. More often, the conflict's political contestation is enshrined by power-sharing arrangements that are part and parcel of many negotiated peace deals. The Dayton Accord for Bosnia and Herzegovina is a typical example of a multilevel power-sharing (territorial, political, military) that institutionalizes in the aftermath of the deal. In contrast to ambitions by mediators and peacebuilders, the transitional arrangement produced by the agreement did not trigger a transition to normalized politics. Decades after the accord was signed, Bosnia and Herzegovina's polity is still characterized by the same unsettled framework that in December 1995 has been agreed upon as being transitional.

Several other examples from peace processes across the globe show similar characteristics: multiple peace agreements in the Sudans have led to comparable outcomes, as well as peace processes in Lebanon, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, or the Philippines. While power-sharing arrangements in Northern Ireland and Nepal have been able to provide a path toward normal politics to some extent, the gains remain fragile and contested. Other attempts, such as in Yemen, Libya, Somalia, or CAR, fell apart.

The peacebuilding community and often the broader population living in these countries who must cope with the political, economic, and social consequences of power-sharing tend to perceive such mid- to long-term outcomes as failures. While perfectly reasonable, these sentiments still undervalue that power-sharing arrangements, in many instances, have succeeded in stopping the armed fighting. This is not a small achievement. When the limited traction of inclusivity and the political settlements approach in enabling sustainable conflict transitions threaten to turn into frustration again, a different, more realistic perspective on peace processes becomes necessary.

As it has been discussed, enshrining contestation is not a structural failure or a shortcoming of peace processes. Formalizing a given political unsettlement is often the only option at stake in situations when (re-)constructing a political settlement, especially by means of a unitary constitutional process, remains elusive. Radical disagreement is not just an unfortunate mistake, a temporary misperception, or even foolishness. Conflict parties usually fight for a reason. Such reasons are not necessarily approachable by the attempt to address the "root causes" of a conflict because they are essentially subjective. In a number of conflicts, root causes themselves, or the perception thereof, turn into a major factor in the radical disagreement at hand.

Understanding a peace process outcome not as a political settlement but as a formalized political unsettlement is not without precedence. Neil Walker (2014) has introduced the argument of the beneficial character of constitutional

unsettlement using the example of the United Kingdom. Any attempt of sorting this constitutional unsettlement by means of a written constitution, so he argues, would most likely not result in a more stable political settlement but would instead put the UK at risk of becoming torn apart between the divergent interests of its constituent entities. The unsettled but functional arrangement between the UK's main entities – England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales – requires political room of maneuver. Sorting and normalizing all differences in a fixed, once-and-for-all settled way would force the entities to fall back to radicalized default positions. Permanent renegotiation and informal arrangements in unsettlement may instead provide more flexible avenues to navigate divergent political interests.

Factors Contributing to Formalized Political Unsettlement

Several factors, external as well as internal ones, have aggravated the trend to unsettled conflict transitions in recent years. Apart from growing skepticism of peacebuilders and multilateral and bilateral donor agencies alike, who all started the endeavor of transforming armed conflict very optimistically after the end of the Cold War only to enter a stage of disillusionment (Bell 2015), three trends deserve particular attention:

1. Peace processes become increasingly entrenched in what Thomas Carothers and Oren Samet-Marram (2015) have called a “global marketplace of political change.” The traditional Western donors, peacebuilders, and mediators have lost the purchase of being the only game in town. An increasing range of actors, emergent as well as regional powers, get involved in supporting parties to armed conflicts and brokering peace deals. Consequently, the leverage the “international community” of liberal state actors could rely on in a short period in the 1990s has vanished. Armed conflicts and peace processes see an increasing internationalization, albeit, in most instances, not advanced by the global superpowers but
2. At the same time, armed conflicts themselves tend to regionalize and localize. While peace processes still focus on the national level, statehood in conflict contexts often appears only in fragments and incapable of implementing a peace deal. Power-sharing agreements, in most instances, rest on the premise of sharing a cake that does not (yet) exist. At the same time, oppressive regimes, such as the Assad regime in Syria, seem unwilling to compromise even on superficial arrangements. Instead, they prefer a regional “unsettlement,” also if it implies sacrificing parts of the national territory to opposing actors. Against this background, the perspective of forging national political settlements seems more and more unlikely.
3. Many conflicts experience a blurring into a continuous no-war/no-peace situation. Even comprehensive peace agreements cannot guarantee a transformation into a tenable form of transitional partnership. They must manage existing tensions and formalize an arrangement that, at the minimum, stops the worst armed fighting. Conflicts in DRC, Somalia, South Sudan, or Myanmar show a complex mesh of different conflicts in which clear fault lines and main actors are difficult to distinguish. These situations show remarkable resilience, a “stable instability” (Verweijen 2016; Perera 2017). Conflict only exists in a blurred plurality; it is open, undefined, and nonlocalized. In such contexts, unitary settlements are unlikely to occur. Even the formalization of political unsettlement is an incredibly challenging task and, in many instances, would be welcomed by most internal and external actors.

Characteristics of Formalized Political Unsettlement

The notion of “formalized political unsettlement” has not been developed as an analytical tool. It aims to provide a lens that offers a different perspective on the long-lasting, enduring transitions

from armed conflict. Nevertheless, situations of formalized political unsettlement share some overarching characteristics which will be discussed in the following (see also Bell and Pospisil 2017).

First, formalized political unsettlement contains rather than resolves conflict and its main fault lines. It essentially represents a non-resolution to a conflict. It is not an unconditional compromise but a managed pathway of non-compromising while, at the same time, preventing parties to revert to their default positions. Formalized political unsettlement establishes a dialectical situation of neither/nor: neither are the parties incentivized to overcome their confrontational positions nor are they forced to rely on them entirely. They need to compromise on imposing their default positions while upholding them politically. The tension between pragmatic politics and radical claims enables the managed and, ideally, formalized way of conflict transitions.

Second, deriving from the permanently managed character between radically disagreeing positions, situations of formalized political unsettlement are institutionally fluid and turbulent. At the same time, they are sticky and durable. Formalized political unsettlement represents a broader perspective on a situation Alex de Waal has fittingly described with an often-heard joke among international observers about Sudanese political life: “it changes from week to week, but if you come back after ten years it is exactly the same” (de Waal 2015, p. 17). What static or resolution-oriented approaches tend to neglect is that both sides need each other: the durability and stickiness of formalization and institutionalization cannot exist without the fluidity and turbulence caused by the political unsettlement and vice versa. Therefore, formalized political unsettlement is difficult to transform or to overcome.

Third, formalized political unsettlement contains a hybrid institutional space situated between and incorporating both substance and process. This hybridity derives from the highlighted dialectic relationship between fluidity and turbulence and institutional formalization and stickiness. Formalized political unsettlement attempts the irresolvable task of establishing a unitary polity

without the political agreement to do so. It is through this continuously rejected claim that the formalization evolves and progresses. The agreement between the conflict parties is precisely on their disagreement. Just as in conflict, disagreement appears as the predominant connecting factor. The formalized agreement on radical disagreement can only occur in a constantly managed process of which it becomes the primary substance.

Fourth, formalized political unsettlement is characterized by its specific nonlocal dimension. It is “glocalized,” incorporating international, regional, national, and local actors and their discourses. They all overlap and even appear interchangeably as one another depending on situation and context. Formalized political unsettlement is nonlocalizable. It occurs in peace processes happening at various peace process “levels,” relying on an assemblage of comprehensive national peace agreements, traditional methods of conflict management at the local level, and everything in between. It integrates all these “levels,” both building on and triggering them and yet, by doing so, renders stratification impossible.

Modes of Transitional Practice and Engagement

Considering these four characteristics, formalized political unsettlement appears as a complex constellation that cannot be grasped by sequencing and spatial hierarchization. Its characteristics explain why traditional types of peace- and statebuilding analyses and intervention often result in what is perceived as a failure. However, for supporting to bring about better modes of engagement in conflict transitions, the perception of failure needs to be further disaggregated. As already highlighted, misguided visions, aims, and expectations are often the primary reason for such sentiments. The main benefit of constellations of formalized political unsettlement is that, by relying on power-sharing arrangements or related types of constructions, armed conflict can indeed be stopped and transferred into less violent politics of radical disagreement. Although this might

resemble of what Michel Foucault (2003), in paraphrasing Clausewitz, has called “politics as the continuation of war with other means”, formalized political unsettlement still represents a significant change in the living conditions of a large part of the population. Few would think of formalized political unsettlement as peace, but it is certainly preferable to war.

Along with the required adjustment of aims, approaches and methods of transitional engagement can profit from taking the characteristics of formalized political unsettlement into account when designing interventions. Textbook-style peacebuilding interventions understanding peace processes as sequenced transitions that progress from ceasefires over comprehensive peace agreements toward constitutional processes and, eventually, normalized politics. Established peace process “package deals” such as disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR), security sector reform (SSR), or transitional justice are substantially limited in facilitating transitional progress. Instead, the outcomes in situations of formalized political unsettlement, in most instances, are contradictory, unforeseeable, and, considering the initial aims, unsatisfactory. Being an essential part of the formalized fundamental contestation between parties, these procedures will always turn into modalities of political power play.

Formalized political unsettlement invites to rethink the modalities of engagement and external intervention in conflict transitions in a way that questions the focus on solutions and their orientation on so-called best practices. However disappointing, the acceptance of the incomplete and procedural character of transitional processes is pivotal. Recent works (Pospisil 2019; de Waal et al. 2019) have explored several existing practices of usefully maneuvering formalized political unsettlement.

A critical assessment of interventions in formalized political unsettlement invites to accept a new perspective of what is implemented or supported. Contemporary peacebuilding rationalizes institutional setups that it implements based on success or failure. Does a certain stipulation work, has it been adequately implemented? Such reasoning is deeply entrenched in the linear logic

of sequencing. It neglects that conflict transitions do not simply progress.

In contrast to solution-based approaches, institutions, concrete structural setups, as well as legal or normative frameworks as foreseen in peace agreements may be interpreted as “hooks.” Such hooks may have a role to play, they may become critical in a transitional process, or they may not. It is impossible to know beforehand, at the time these measures are negotiated and inscribed in agreements, whether they will turn into real levers for change. The complexity of transitional processes in a conflict mesh entails the impossibility to accurately project the future role of particular measures and institutions. Therefore, measuring success only in terms of implementation and outcome, and not in potentialities, can result in short-sighted and limited assessments.

Other modes of navigating conflict transitions evolve out of the contextual surroundings and fundamentally contradict the Western action-oriented approaches. Some of these modalities creatively play with time and space. They intrinsically accept transitions as a long-term project. One practice that directly challenges the predominance of the implementation paradigm is the enduring postponement of contractual obligations that may take the form of “creative nonsolutions” (Pospisil 2019, pp. 127–164). Such nonsolutions can occur in relation to referenda foreseen in peace agreements: the postponement or even cancelation of referenda, habitually condemned and bemoaned by international stakeholders, is indeed common practice. Not even a fifth of the referenda stipulated in peace agreements are held (more or less) on time.

Resolution- and implementation-based logics interpret delays as structural problems. They might be the exact opposite. The Comprehensive Peace Agreement between Sudan and now independent South Sudan did foresee a referendum on the status of Abyei, a region that remained contested between both states ever since the beginning of the peace negotiations. This referendum should have been held at the day of the South Sudanese independence referendum but was postponed indefinitely since then. The postponement enabled both sides to uphold their claim on the territory and, by doing so, to satisfy the

expectations of their local constituencies. Would the referendum have been held, the losing side would have come under immediate pressure not to accept the result and act decisively against the opponents – or people in the region themselves would do so. In contrast to textbook peace process knowledge, the chances are that the implementation of the referendum would likely trigger a war between the two countries, whereas a permanent postponement enables a creative management of tensions that does not hamper the broader transitional process.

Alex de Waal and others (2019) have referred to the traditional Sudanese negotiation method of “tajility,” the strategic politics of delay. Instead of falling into the paradigm of acting, political negotiations in the Sudanese context often turn into a waiting game, usually to the frustration of external observers. Interpreting this waiting game as the unwillingness to settle or pure ignorance would be a severe misperception. In contrast, the ability to wait can be seen as a powerful action, whereby such power can only come to the fore in political configurations favorable to political non-closure, such as formalized political unsettling. Western peacebuilders tend to dismiss “tajility” as counterproductive to conflict resolution. But, as another saying in the Sudanese context goes, “you have the clock, and we have the time.” In a transitional perspective focused on the long term, this approach might have considerable advantages compared to the often short-sighted implementation paradigm.

Formalized political unsettling, as well, challenges the liberal relationism of contemporary peacebuilding: for peace to work, everybody and everything needs to be connected and included. Such a perspective neglects the opportunities embedded in disaggregation, disrelation, and, in the last instance, ignorance. Contemporary armed conflict rarely is an event unfolding between large standing armies, perhaps even after a formal declaration of warfare. It more resembles the weather. Armed fighting comes and goes; clouds develop locally, along with showers, hurricanes, and the occasional sunshine. In these conditions, it appears odd that peace processes predominantly focus on the national level. While it may be

possible to resolve armed conflict along major fault lines, the perspective of conflict disaggregation, the disintegration of the conflict system, and a disrelation of contesting actors seem an equally likely perspective.

While the formalization of the political contestation between major parties to an armed conflict is a structural component of formalized political unsettling, the lens still provides considerable space for non-understanding, ignorance, and disrelation. Despite going against the deep structure of liberal peace that fundamentally rests on agreement and understanding, these elements have an intrinsic peaceful quality that is ignored all too often. For example, it is worth thinking about separating the ideas of demos (the people), polis (the political community), and territory and the ways in which these elements can be disaggregated to provide creative ways to address radical disagreement in innovative constitutional frameworks. This may require understanding post-conflict polities to function as “disrelated communities” who navigate their coexistence, rather than unified polities working based on a unitary social contract.

Summary

Formalized political unsettling is a likely outcome of peace processes. It enshrines instead of resolves the radical disagreement between the conflict parties. Irrespective of how the concrete methods of transition support might look like, navigating formalized political unsettling requires overcoming the traditional conflict resolution paradigm. It favors a rationale that emphasizes process over outcomes and the acceptance of long-term transitions over resolution-based outcomes. It is an invitation to work with the grain of conflict transitions, in full acceptance of the challenging trade-offs such an approach implies.

The likelihood of failure and the unpredictability of success point toward pragmatic approaches in which the concrete goals of a transformative intervention emerge in the course of action. By no means, however, pragmatism translates into an “anything goes.” In contrast, a clear orientation based on a robust and transparent normative

framework can provide guidance for actors engaging in such contexts. These two aspects – pragmatically mitigating transitions based on a well-communicated normative framework – taken together form the foundational pillars of a “principled pragmatism” in conflict transitions. This approach must accept the risk – and even likelihood – that engagement falls short of expectations. Especially in these circumstances, a principled approach is vital. Norms are always instantiated locally and incrementally, and more importantly, they are given their content through practice, rather than encapsulating static commands to behave in a certain way.

Formalized political unsettlement is a configuration difficult to like, neither for peacebuilders nor for the people having to live in such surroundings. Yet, they are able to tame armed violence and are often the only tangible results of peace negotiations in situations of radical disagreement. In many cases, agreeing on a power-sharing arrangement that formalizes and institutionalizes political unsettlement instead of aiming to resolve the underlying political conflict is simply the only deal available at the negotiating table. Against this background, formalized political unsettlement offers a humble perspective that contrasts the optimistic and visionary assumptions of liberal peacebuilding, in particular an accountable and functional state based on the rule of law. Nevertheless, if functional statehood and the creation of a unitary polity are no feasible outcomes, alternative models of designing and evaluating transitional efforts are required. Not achieving the gold standard of liberal peacebuilding does not equal failure. What many critiques of liberal peacebuilding often tend to overlook, however, is that the alternative to the liberal ideal is not necessarily better. Often, it is the reality of hard and pragmatic choices and the need to take risks to make transitions work and to create openings and opportunities for sustainable change.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Civil Society Inclusion in Peace Mediation](#)
- ▶ [Consociationalism and Peace after Conflict](#)
- ▶ [Hybrid Political Orders and Hybrid Peace](#)

- ▶ [Insights from Complexity Theory for Peace and Conflict Studies](#)
- ▶ [Participatory Constitution-Making and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Peace Agreements](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding: Utopia and Reality](#)
- ▶ [Stabilization Operations and Their Relationship to Liberal Peacebuilding Missions](#)

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Peace Architecture

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Peace Formation

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Introduction

The concept of peace formation represents an endeavour to move the debate from conflict management, resolution, transformation, and peacebuilding onwards towards the perspective of peace at the local level of agency, frameworks such as hybridity, and scales such as the everyday (Mitrany 1944; Galtung 1969; Burton 1969; Lederach 1997; Paris 2004; Richmond 2005, 2011; Jabri 2007; Aggestam and Björkdahl 2012). This is a challenge to long-standing thinking about the nature of the state and international order (Huntington 1968) in that it implies that peaceful political communities are formed through internal but networked and relational processes of legitimation, rather than state-level or international process. Yet, simultaneously, state- and international-level processes block or circumvent such peace formation.

Drawing on critical interests particularly in local agency, resistance and hybridity in IR, and the more recent turns to local ownership, micro-politics, networks, and practice debates, as well as post-structuralist interests particularly in power formations and the positive potential and limits of ‘peace formation’, points towards concepts of social and global justice. It extends the arguments

often made by those working in the areas of conflict transformation or peacebuilding into a newer, interdisciplinary and more comparative, trans-scalar, and networked conceptual framework. It tends to be a bottom-up, intensely networked, and mobile phenomena. Peace formation lies parallel to, in opposition to, or alternatively formative of a different type of state and international. It connects this alternative theory of order formation with critical debates surrounding international relations (IR) theory, with implications for governance and the creation of stable and peaceful orders. It does so through an eirenist and critical approach (Richmond 2009), which is also salutary in that its conclusions point to the significant limits of such locally and everyday oriented approaches to the development of post-conflict frameworks for political community.

The Nature of Peace Formation

Peace formation operates in local contexts, cultural, social, economic, and political spaces, and increasingly influences the state and international institutions. These ‘local’ processes provide contextual and social legitimacy and cannot be imposed externally (Foucault 1980; Foucault et al. 2003). They seek to determine the terms of emancipation for the community, polis, and eventually for the state. This has also historically given rise, via hegemonic states, to both regional and international organisation and shaped international law and markets. Private transcripts inherent in peace formation are often networked and multiplied locally and transnationally, through civil society, customary governance, and conflict resolution processes. They may arise in family networks and in professional or social networks; they may be hidden or public. In some cases, they move into the terrain of the state, shaping and modifying institutional processes, governance, and law. They often become internationally connected, through INGOs, the UN system, donors, or family, social, cultural, or labour networks or other forms of association. These processes are often based upon pre-existing traditions, institutions, or norms that have often

been targeted in wartime but recover afterwards. They represent significant constituencies and a perspective that spans local, regional, and global historical, material, and social constraints and possibilities. Much of this operates within the older, analogue epistemologies of order, focusing on human interactions, thought organisations and institutions, law, and association.

Peace formation provides a complex positionality through which to understand the realities of the multiple, ongoing attempts to rebuild peaceful social orders. There are two sides to this development. On the one hand, and from a small base, peace formation can be seen in examples of ‘embedded, participatory, and communitarian’ spaces, in which local and international governance and assistance can converge sensitively; on the other hand, they may be seen as creating spaces of parallelism, self-help, and abandonment, where neither the state nor internationals care to tread (Luckham and Kirk 2013).

Thus, peace formation offers contextualised, networked agency in support of progressive forms of self-determination, political, social, economic, and cultural rights. It transcends the modern state framework, the norms of liberal peace, and the global political economy. It draws on already existing social capacity, but it is also creative and innovative. Autonomy and human security, networks and associations, and formal and informal are vital for any peace. The more of them there are, the better the mobilisation of local agency, and the more legitimate and the more stable the peace. In recent times, such agency has shifted into a ‘digital’ form, able to transcend the usual constraints of sovereignty (authority, territory, distance, power, and knowledge constraints) through networks, mobility, and access to enormous amounts of information upon which to make political calculations. Peace formation may indicate a capacity to bridge the old analogue international order with new digital forms of peace (also partly as a response to the ways in which new technologies have also become agents of violence).

These peace formation processes – an assemblage of local, state, transnational, international and transversal, formal and informal ‘peace’

processes with a heavy emphasis on the bottom-up perspective – constitute a widening pool of political subjects. They maintain a memory of historical peace practices and institutions related to custom, culture, identity, religion, or western norms of human rights and representation. They may seek to influence and hold government to account, seek international support to modernise and expand their practices, and set an example to wider society. They slowly insert contextual modes of politics into institution-building processes and legal and constitutional frameworks and influence donors and other international actors. This implies that a local-to-global coalition of actors is required so that a broader legitimacy can emerge. Yet, local reconciliation and sustainability appear more feasible, if legitimacy emanates from local agreements and processes (not only at the elite or national level). What is important is the way in which, in a minor register, peace formation agency tries to navigate, with varying degrees of success, around power and political deadlock and whether international processes engage with and support it. It indicates how power is relational and so can be rejected or modified even from a subaltern position. Peace formation thus endeavours to maintain everyday life where it can. Without it, internationals distribute material and epistemic resources as a *simulacra* of peace or the state operates in an authoritarian mode. With it, the political order may become more representative and also receive guidance for its policies, practices, and institutions. Peace formation offers limited material support and sometimes goes as far as establishing parallel institutions that provide public services. Sometimes they managed to insert themselves into the state formation process, becoming a form of peace infrastructure (OdenDaal 2013).

They have not only emerged from direct resistance but a result of quiet perseverance in view of entrenched and dangerous power structures, drawing on critical social practices. It does so carefully because such ‘peace work’ entails costs, risks, and sanctions aimed at those who take part. This is because peace often threatens local ethnonationalism, patriarchy, and economic and political practices which maintain conflict,

political authority, and forms of power. Every engagement peace formation dynamics and networks have with direct, structural, and governmental power inherent in conflict structures puts peace formation at risk of co-optation or complete negation.

Participatory and decentralised systems of democracy assume local agency should not be blocked (see, e.g. (Harvey 1988)). Peace formation agency is one of the several foundations of a legitimate and emancipatory peace (along with the representative state and the international system of law, norms, and institutions) that have emerged from history so far. It is aimed at mitigating direct, structural, and governmental power in favour of the complex subaltern, deemed the font of legitimate political authority. It offers the pragmatic point that subjects of violence and power relations can identify these relations best and probably spent a lot of time thinking about what to do about them.

The positionality of peace formation is complex, because it has to balance local legitimacy, identity, resource inequality, and historical positionality with modernisation and liberal theories backed by global institutions – expert knowledge in other words (Mitchell 2001). It is scalar, networked, and mobile rather than fixed in a territorial space. It is also pitted against the historical accumulation of power and always operates in reaction to violence, even though it remains permanently in the background working towards peace. Time and time again, peace actors and networks speak to these problems and have found ways of allowing such differences to coexist in transformative ways, entwining them together: ethnonationalism, pluralism, and liberalism in Cyprus, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), or Kosovo; custom and indigeneity, self-determination, and the modern state in Timor, Colombia, or Afghanistan; in all cases, religion, material needs, and the modern political economy; and yet more elements. Local agency sits agonistically between context and structure in a postcolonial world of hybridity. Thus, peace formation requires an ‘ethics of the local’: how conflict is caused, how it affects everyday life, how it may be dealt with in context in a positive manner, and

how this is related to state and international order, increasing not just in analogue form but also now networked, transversal and trans-scalar, and digital. This may also require an ethics associated with new digital dynamics. It points to broad questions of justice, resource distribution, and the need for empathy and localised as well as transnational legitimacy. Peace formation may be the basis for legitimacy of any polity aimed at an emancipatory and positive hybrid peace. It transcends power relations at the state-level and international frameworks for peace but is also closely connected to both (Nadarajah and Rampton 2015). It is the basis of concepts such as bottom-up peacebuilding, peace infrastructures, and local agency for peace, and it should be closely connected to external processes such as conflict resolution, transformation, peacebuilding, and state-building: indeed, it should guide them, as it often has in the production of hybrid forms of political order (Boege et al. 2009).

Within localised political, cultural, gender, identity, and socio-economic, stratifications, power structures are often based upon discrimination and inequality and their long-term maintenance. This means that any local peace is often negative and relatively unstable. This also means that peace formation groups are often working against the majority in their own contexts, as well as not being fully in line with the goals and preferences of international donors nor are able to move fully into the open because of security concerns. Both local and international actors, being increasingly aware of the hybridity of the peace framework that emerges from their mutual projects of peace, are also aware that this is a peace in negative hybrid form (Richmond 2015). Thus, in lieu of earlier theories of the social contract, legitimate authority, and state formation, peace formation foregrounds the question of what peace actors perceive as emancipatory, how they attempt to constitute an alternative order, as well the limitations on their capacity to do so. Peace formation is a rapidly evolving and very subtle phenomena, travelling along a path that might be familiar to scholars from post- or critical development studies (Escobar 2008), but also other, perhaps, more liberal thinkers such as Rawls, Habermas, and

Nussbaum might recognise it (Rawls 1993; Habermas, 2001; Nussbaum 2011).

Local Agents of Peace Formation

To understand the local agents of peace formation and their role, we have to comprehend subaltern power, the importance of the local scale in terms of knowledge and legitimacy, their transversal and transnational networks and mobility, and also the marginal nature of peace formers in relation to existing international and local power structures. So, local authorities, peace networks, and advocates of reform situated in the cultural and material context of a specific context provide crucial signals as to how peace and order can be reconstructed. Yet, quite often their messages challenge existing power structures, such as elites, the state, and internationals, and take a long time to percolate through. Peace formation arises nearly always after the event of war and, yet, is an intergenerational background phenomenon. Peace formation dynamics and actors offer a cultural and ethical site of knowledge about peace and order, which may be translated through tactical and critical agency into political reform. Local or 'organic' intellectuals; activists and advocates; some policymakers, politicians, and bureaucrats; some professionals; and social, cultural, religious, identity, labour, and leisure networks for everyday associations provide a three-dimensional vision of peace and order. Often this is deterritorialised, transnational, and transversal, aimed at an emancipatory and empathetic form of peace. Historically such networks, movements, and everyday forms of mobilisation drive towards this. Peace formation offers a historical and social positionality necessary for local-scale legitimacy. It increases in scale over time after violence stops – and as networks and institutions are built – but peace formers also want autonomy, introducing a dangerous contradiction into the equation between peace and power. Peace formation spans politics, economics, culture, and identity into emotional and creative areas, bridging difference, where power structures and social, political, economic, cultural, and territorial systems accentuate difference as a zero-sum process or at best an ugly hierarchy (or 'balance'). It is

connected to emerging non-Eurocentric thought on global justice (in environmental, security, gender, historical, and distributive forms, amongst others). Peace formation's new digital capacity expands the rights claims it can make, disguises it, speeds it up, and extends its reach, although it also now confronts the forms of violence new technologies produce.

Mitigating the Violence of Local State Formation

Conflict, war, and other forms of violence are mitigated by social, legal, and political institutions and mechanisms in society. However, peace formation is seriously disrupted by violence, and, though it works in the long term and in the background, it also requires time to reconstitute after violence. Furthermore, it is often aimed at combating the 'last war' rather than the next. However, it leads to the possibility that a networked polity, with internal power, exists in society before (or in spite of) the state, which is aimed at maintaining order and responds to expectations for progressive reform, albeit in limited ways [see, e.g. a similar argument about the EU in Beck and Grande (2007)]. This partly represents what may be called the 'undercommons' of peace formation (hidden away from the worst excesses of violence but also spanning a much longer time frame), aimed in part at dealing with local power structures, as well as the newer exclusions that are arising from the contemporary neoliberal global order (Haiven and Khasnabish 2014, pp. 12, 44). In this way peace formation has something in common with new social movement theories. Social actors negotiate their own peace, drawing on long-standing, quiet forms of legitimacy and legitimate authority, displaying some albeit limited agency, even over direct and structural power and certainly against governmental power. In most cases, such organisations use external concepts such as development, human rights, human security, and democracy upon which to pin their claims. Often less visible is their valorisation of mediated identity and their critiques of the inequities of the international system, both past (colonialism) and present (neoliberalism and Eurocentrism).

Indeed, peace formation is one of the multiple and entwined historical roots of the state, albeit rarely recognised by elites or internationals, who focus on power and its more negative foundations. Its role has been to balance the state's excesses of power and maintain an emancipatory project both through and despite the state (Chowdhury and Duvall 2014, p. 218). Peace formation's aim is to expand the possibilities for peaceful everyday life, requiring both transformation and cooperation, and a retreat from a methodological exclusion often embedded in practices of power and intervention. Context empowers such agency, even if it cannot countermand structural, direct, or governmental power.

Peace formers often work for themselves and their own, local but also often networked, transnational and/or transversal communities, in ways that they had defined, and are confident of a slow and hidden multiplier effect emanating from their efforts (personal communication, Balkan Sunflower 2014). They also form networks of their own, sometimes whilst also formally working for international organisation or NGOs.

Across large parts of the developing and conflict-affected world, it is a normal part of life for citizens to operate in different modes of politics, informal and formal institutions, law, and identity, simultaneously. What has also become clear is that locally sited systems of legitimate authority need to be mirrored by the state, if any peace system constructed around statehood is also to have internal and international legitimacy. This raises some obvious issues, already noted across the literature, including the self-defeating nature of territorialism, the prioritisation of elections (though democratisation is a demand emerging broadly from peace formation), and a need to invest in public services in a comprehensive fashion, particularly in education, health, and income support. Inequalities, often the basis of conflict, cannot be dealt with without an active state, supported by international donors, in such areas. Nevertheless, this means cutting across local power structures and having a strong international consensus, both of which are difficult and fleeting.

This means that peace formation is a slow process, which builds upon a number of different

and sometimes contradictory systems: the move towards regional integration and international law and global governance (i.e. the liberal international order) is certainly one key aspect, in a formative international community. The reform of the state away from its earlier clash of power and interests into a more social form is another key aspect. But there is also an underground dimension which signifies a different type of political community, which is both more autonomous and, yet, far more relational, across time and space, and may not be solely directed towards state reform or international links (especially in the newer digital format). Peace formation seems to be a slow and quiet process of reform, reconciliation, respect, and institutional development, rather than a revolutionary process of state or international restructuring. It also appears to be discordant with modern state and international processes, at least superficially, raising concerns that any engagement with peace formation will constitute neocolonialism. This is a paradox relating to the problem of how subaltern claims become politically salient in relation to existing power structures, without being co-opted. Both are inevitably mediated, but co-optation is unlikely, given these are peace formation rather than state formation forces (i.e. driven by principles rather than material aims). This process is far from a simple dynamic of domination and submission.

In this way, at times peace formation may be open to the criticism that it maintains or merely tweaks a painful and unjust status quo (as in BiH or Israel/Palestine) or is eventually co-opted into the formal power structures of the state without significantly changing them (as in the case of many peace infrastructures) or leads to isolation (as with the inter-communal groups in Cyprus) or a dangerous parallelism in political order, which threatens the stability of the state, if it does not reform to incorporate them (as in Timor Leste). At the same time, it is clear that in every one of these examples, the constituent actors and networks in the peace formation process resolve issues and make some political space for discussions about the nature of peace. In everyday terms, one might say that for as long as they survive, a successful peace process already exists.

Nevertheless, one major problem with peace formation is how easily extinguishable it is, or how easily it may drop from view. These dynamics – disappearing to escape sanction and being disrupted or ended by conflict actors – are where the praxis of intervention for humanitarians, development specialists, the various programmers of liberal peacebuilding, and, in some cases, peacekeeping forces might be reframed.

Peace formation may be stifled by clientelism and neopatrimonialism, which is not in favour of reform. In some cases, however, it appears that peace formation actors are able to mitigate such dynamics even with minimal resources. They may do so within the very same normative or social network that clientelism uses. Dependent upon a deep understanding of local politics, this highlights the need to let local actors take the lead in discursive terms, even if the power required to stop war and make space for diplomacy, mediation, negotiation, and reconciliation (intervention in other words) must come from outside of the conflict-affected areas.

Encounters with Local Actors

Justice at local and international levels in general terms is highlighted by a peace formation positionality. Yet, it also points to the limits of liberal global justice accounts (Shapcott 2018) and the insertion of alternative traditions. Neoliberalism is widely critiqued by peace formation actors, who argue that it creates significant tensions in a peace process, where political and human rights, and justice, are deemed to be key to addressing the roots of a conflict and to building viable and legitimate institutions. Furthermore, any peace process creates new demands for a wider social justice, because of the legitimacy of the agency of local actors, even if long latent.

The peace dividend is found in the recommencement and mutual negotiation of improvements in patterns of everyday life disrupted by the conflict. Whilst peace formation offers a progressive rethinking of peace, rights, class, gender, and resource distribution, the state often is controlled by elites who block progress, indirectly utilising the resources that internationals provide them with. From this arises resistance towards

pathway dependency, one-size-fits-all blueprints, standard operating procedures, and postcolonial and anti-colonial narratives about intervention. From here also arises the tendency of peace formation to adopt a parallel track, which challenges the state's claims to have become domesticated and oriented towards the interests, rights, and needs of citizens. Parallel track peace formation may also be forced underground in order to survive state or elite repression, to recuperate enough capacity and develop (analogue and digital) tactics aimed at reshaping the state through localised strategies or international alliances.

Peace formation implies a postcolonial version of peacebuilding and state-building, which means that its current economic and normative underpinnings need to be expanded, as does their conception of the relationship between society and legitimacy. Peace formation implies concern about inequality in material, gender, and identity terms, as well as with solidarity and empathy. The bottom-up drives the formation of legitimate authority, if it emerges from peace formation, which will be hybridised and relational, depending upon complex transversal and transnational networks. The subaltern power exercised by peace formation makes the replacement of the direct, structural, or governmental power of powerful elites or international actors unlikely. The dynamics of insurgency, critical agency and the subaltern, resistance, and alterity point to the doggedness of 'resistant subjectivities' and 'subjugated knowledges' and their focus on peace in everyday life. They all make emancipatory claims, but at best all the examples in existence – Timor Leste, Cyprus, Kosovo, Bosnia, Sierra Leone, Afghanistan, and others – point to the emergence of a negative, hybrid form of peace.

Hybrid political orders are a more significant sign of the capacity of peace formation processes and actors to nudge or reshape power structures, either at the elite level or those associated with liberal peacebuilding. What tends to arise is a blend of different forms of political authority, connecting peace formation to existing elite power structures, civil society, the state, the international peace architecture, as well as the global economy. A new struggle for dominance of

political order in these terms emerges and, in recent times, has been dominated by an alliance between capital and elite power, with peace formation operating from a parallel track, which nevertheless impinges upon the evolution of the state (as might be clearly seen in cases such as Timor Leste, Cambodia, or Kosovo in very different ways).

How Successful Have Peace Formation Strategies Been?

Four main possibilities emerge for peace formation dynamics.

- (i) They survive in the informal shadows, away from the risks of crossing powerful actors (as in Kosovo before 1999, where services and self-determination circulated away from the gaze of formal authorities), and avoid the risks of moving into public space.
- (ii) They move in the public space and take this risk (as in Cyprus, where the inter-communal movement stepped out of the shadows with international support in the early 2000s), but they also adopt the liberal peace/neoliberal state international architecture and accept their (lowly) place in the current international hierarchy and system but without any right or capacity to change it (as perhaps also in Kosovo, Bosnia, or Colombia).
- (iii) They may try to choose only the positive aspects of the liberal peace system and discard the rest (though there are no real examples of this).
- (iv) They may build a hybrid system, in which they have some greater stake in the whole, whilst also recognising power relations (as in Timor Leste, Somalia, Somaliland, and others).

These different dynamics indicate that peace formation plays a role in building order, different in every case. This is success of sorts.

Peace formation uncovers conflict-sustaining inequality and, at least in discursive terms, indicates the existence of a small but growing network of plural and micro-solidarities: it highlights relationality, bridging, and translation claims for

pluriversality, equaliberty, heterotopias, trans-scalarity, and transculturalism. It rescues such dynamics from the past or manufactures them for the future, focusing on their transnational, cultural, and social legitimacy. For many reasons, on paper a positive hybrid peace may thus be imagined.

Peace Formation Strategies

Contextual knowledge is of great tactical value in maintaining peace formation against local- and state-level conflict and against inappropriate international blueprints or involvement. It has little capacity against direct violence or war, but it provides pathways through insecurity. It also provides some defence against unrepresentative global governance, though it has little capacity against predatory aspects of global capitalism. Clearly, any legitimate peace and order is unsustainable without the support of subaltern or critical agency and society in general (other than through structural or, perhaps, governmental power). Peace formation provides a social form of governance, often without formal government. The peace and state that emerges from this process is likely to be contingent, fragmented, decentralised, and capable of supporting peaceful alterity (Axtmann 2004, p. 259) discursively, if not in practice. Though it cannot respond to direct, structural, or governmental forms of violence, it can work on their delegitimisation, digital methods appearing very effective here. It also connects with the emancipatory wing of liberal thought, hybrid notions of law and transitional justice, participatory democracy, human rights, context and dignity, poverty, lack of resources and facilities, and inequality. Concepts, such as local ownership, participation, responsibility to protect, sustainability, and ‘do no harm’, have emerged because of it, pointing to more critical, postcolonial, or anti-colonial dimensions. Hybrid approaches to decentralised governance and law, involving local leaders and processes, have also been recognised as important because of it. Expanding rights claims have cascaded from the local scale upwards as a result.

Peace formation and its informal critical agencies as well as its collective political mobilisation dynamics from within civil society may do little more than mitigate everyday life in material terms, but in the longer term it may be able to move into the open and begin to connect with and shape the state as well as influence donor strategy. It may develop informal governance without a state, following trans-scalar and transversal networks.

Four key strategies emerge from this analysis. This confluence may start with parallelism (as in Afghanistan and Palestine, where peace formation is forced to work under cover, and in parallel to existing and new power structures relating to the conflict and the state entities). It may involve bridging (as in Timor, where peace formation processes helped translate local forms of legitimate authority and make the state more legible to them). It might involve co-opting (as in Bosnia, where it seems that peace formation processes are partly controlled by state formation actors). It could lead to a takeover (as in Kosovo, where peace formation actors and state formation actors took control of the state to a large degree). It may influence civil society, the state, or donor strategies. It may be deemed successful, if the resultant state – or system of governance is more representative – allows for the expansion of rights and justice, donor strategies are more sensitised, and local ownership and autonomy has been upheld, along with democracy. Success may well depend on the way informal processes maintain and improve everyday life and, more ambitiously, form networks that begin to find support within the international community and more formally begin to reshape the state, social norms, as well as donor policy (OdenDaal 2013, p. 23). It may also point to the emergence of scale jumping, where positionalities are altered beyond the canon that can be easily recognised in formal liberal political philosophy (Agnew 1987).

Historically, political order has always been shaped by the paradox that the institutional mechanisms of war and militarism do not develop at the same pace as the mechanisms related to peace formation. The evidence tends to show that peace formation systems may collapse under acute direct and structural pressure from external

forces, but they always find ways of adapting and re-establishing themselves in order to counteract violence, digital shifts being a recent adaptation. This is a slow, long-term process, in which peace formers are vulnerable, but they establish private or public, informal, or governmental associations and networks. These slowly offer a platform for reform aimed at more progressive politics, drawing on traditional associations, networks, and history as well as international norms. Peace formation is vital in preventing state reform and any peace process from simply consolidating the political order created by conflict. Thus, peace formation may lead to a social convergence with governance and international norms at one end of the peacebuilding scale, as might be said in the cases of Timor, Kosovo, or Cyprus. At the other end of the scale, and inevitably where resistance to negative peace emerges from within society, peace formation produces the paradox of resistant and critical agency. In its opposition to the governmentality from previous exercises of direct or structural power that attempts to normalise injustice and oppression (as might be seen in Palestine or Colombia), subaltern agency, discursive critique, dissent, and resistance (whilst avoiding violence) produce ‘ungovernmentality’. That is, networks and groups oppose forms of quasi-peace associated with a naturalised consolidation of hierarchy and injustice, and which are discursively engaged in imagining a just form of peace.

Peace formation from below continues during the conflict and long afterwards. As in Cyprus and Colombia, whenever the formal, high-level peace process stumbles, or the state that comes into being proves unable to deal with the diverse claims that arise from society (e.g. when pluralism and nationalism are in tension; when rational-legal institutions are unable to provide security, law, or order; or when neoliberalism undermines solidarity), peace formation begins to fill the gap. It may reshape the state, or it may provide a basis for everyday life to continue despite state failure or injustice. Individuals and groups within society in many different locations around the world engaged with peace movements and processes often describe how they are slowly and

incrementally piecing together a new peace, often drawing on existing agency and previous social institutions or practices as well as international norms, combined with their own innovative thinking. Often, they are searching for a new and alternative vocabulary also.

This has often happened without much or any outside help and in the face of considerable structural and direct violence. The slow and painful piecing together of new services, institutions, and agreements on how to distribute resources or bridge identity difference, and offering assistance to those who need help, is a marked characteristic of every post-conflict society. In Cyprus people have organised inter-communal events and projects, despite massive resistance and suspicion from both sides of the buffer zone. In Colombia people attend civil society meetings to share their experiences, network, ask for advice, as well as state their principles, and assert their needs, even though their communities were often under fire and under curfew or they face historical systems of oppression (not least the impact of global or elite capital). In BiH, organisations continue to struggle onwards for human rights, to assist in peace education, and to lobby politicians and internationals, even forming plenums within which to publically debate and mobilise. In Somalia and Somaliland, customary governance compensates for a lack of viable state or international support. In Timor and others, hybrid forms of state and governance emerge to keep the peace, build a better future, and maintain the support of a range of local-to-global-scale parties (Richmond 2016). In all cases, such activity was despite (though very aware of) the risks of opposing mainstream politics, economic arrangements, or social customs. The agency that is displayed and the way the visions developed transcend conflict is impressive, creative, and astute but all too often blocked by elites focused on their interests and internationals focused on their own models.

Ungovernmentality, then, is a sign that innovation in the production of a peaceful political order is taking place, which identifies the dynamics of conflict, resists their perpetuation, refuses to deploy violence, forms trans-scalar and trans-temporal networks and associations, and subtly works

to displace naturalised orders that entail governmental, structural, or direct forms of violence with more progressive and legitimate forms of political order. Convergence between local, state, and international scales might be the result (as the cases of Kosovo or Cyprus may eventually illustrate), as with some versions of peace infrastructures, but it is also possible that difference requires mediated autonomy between these scales, as with Somaliland or Timor. ‘Grounded legitimacy’ is essential for the broader production of hybrid legitimacy (Boege et al. 2009) itself, a product of local, state, and international frameworks and the tensions within and between them (Boege 2009; Clements 2008).

In practice, this is a painful process, in which actors across society identify problems that are and have been causal factors in violence in historical, social, political, economic, and identity terms and begin to act. Their first act often takes place in a hidden manner, perhaps resisting or co-opting. When they are more assured, they begin to form networks, perhaps underground, normally informal, but often engaging with international donors and moving into local, national, and global public spaces if possible. They begin to informally network with local power elites, and perhaps even the state. Eventually they acquire a name, funding, and status and even begin to advise or occupy the state and international networks and roles. It is a slow process almost in ‘geological time’. It represents the slow reforming of solidarity in society, a realisation of agency, and a development of strategies to stop violence as well as to deal with the consequence of violence. Subaltern agency is wielded, and faint signals are offered about the nature of an emancipatory peace, how the state should be reformed, and how the international might assist or enable. The recent digital shift has strengthened these faint signals, however.

The subaltern has long been involved on transformative local- and transnational-scale projects, expressing an agency that confronted imperialism (and before it slavery, disenfranchisement, labour conditions, claimed a wide range of rights, opposed the arms trade, and campaigned on cultural and environmental matters), and continues to

push at the limits of progressive thought even today (Bill Ashcroft 1989; Ashcroft 2001, p. 2). Indeed, it is the localised aspect of peace formation, but particularly its social and emancipatory connections across history and geography, that gives hybridity its purchase and empirical falsifiability in everyday contexts, along with an impact on the changing state and international peace architecture. It illustrates its ‘contrapuntal’ nature, to draw on Edward Said’s (2004) work on hybridity. The reality is that analogue and digital ‘ungovernable-scapes’ – localised or failed systems that are not under close to northern authority or global governance – continue to be self-governing in their own way, developing modes of peace formation. Peace formation does not seek to erase the international or the state, as it is cognisant of its very limited capacity, but it does try to reform them through subaltern means whilst making a space for a reformed polity to emerge. Peace formation communities consciously and unconsciously exercise critical agency aimed at designing a sustainable and emancipatory peace, reflecting local conditions and constraints, patterns of violence, structural and direct, and the possibilities imminent in the local and the international.

Methodology and Peace Formation

Peace formation indicates that ‘expert knowledge’ is subjective and often hegemonic and not well suited to meeting claims made at the local level. Likewise, peace formation is limited in terms of scope and power by the very power structures it opposes and by its networked and mobile rather than concentrated nature. A multidimensional methodology and interdisciplinary approach is needed to understand these dynamics, blending social theory, philosophy, anthropology, geography, as well as IR and political science. This methodology may also be translated into law and economics at a later moment of consolidation. Peace formation requires a research methodology suited to engaging with local, informal knowledge and creating equal partnerships, decentralised power, and redistributed resources. To avoid

recreating trusteeship and native administration bureaucracies, it needs to be linked to political self-determination and autonomy and, through awareness of inequalities relating to postcolonial and gendered analyses, avoid the risk of inadvertently supporting unjust outcomes or processes. The subtleties of peace formation point to how deconstruction assists in the emergence of justice. Subjects have, over the last 25 years, uncovered the very power systems which drive conflict, as well as how they are perpetuated through intervention (often inadvertently), and now point to how reconstruction may attain justice (Derrida 1992, p. 15). As Foucault (Foucault et al. 2003, p. 179) argued, peace formation, self-formation, and local knowledges are in a constant struggle for survival against industrialised knowledge and disciplinary power states, the international architecture, and the global economy. Peace formation requires the recovery and assertion of subjugated knowledge. Furthermore, its digital shift to some degree undermines inside/outside, top-down/bottom-up frameworks: it collapses space, speeds up interaction, extends networks, supports the knowledge side of the power-knowledge equation, and offers camouflage in situations of danger. This reframes agency as far more relational than hitherto understood (Qin 2006), and this has significant impact on the micro construction of political order and legitimate authority, whether local, state, or global (Solomon and Steele 2017). New methods are required to engage with these dynamics.

Much of the empirical evidence on peace formation is anecdotal, or scattered and impressionistic, partly because of the well-known risks activists and social movements take in responding to entrenched power relations or practices. Any reconstruction of a historical political record, at whichever level, will probably be susceptible to such weaknesses, however. So far, a fragmented record and some affiliated theorisation have only just been brought into view. It might be said that in a range of literature spanning Marx to Foucault, the sense of political agency has been theorised more strongly than it has been practiced (or at least empirically researched). Nevertheless, subaltern agency is not much of a match for

governmental, structural, or direct power. Some peace processes only exist (in terms of reconciliation and emancipation) at this level, as the state, regional, or international levels have long been deadlocked (as in the Middle East, Bosnia, and Cyprus, as well as others). Peace formation's discursive signalling represents a positionality, from which local-to-global dimensions of a peace process and settlement can be viewed and tested. Nevertheless, this is a highly politicised process: it is predicated upon a struggle for rights and material needs often against entrenched power structures, vested interests, and received wisdom amongst outside experts.

Conclusion

Peace formation offers the possibility of transcending the inside/outside, bottom-up/top-down, us/other binaries that bedevil the praxes of peace, at least in discursive terms. However, power relations cannot be wished away: they have to be addressed legitimately. Furthermore, it exposes the strategy of 'practicing' reforms on the post-conflict subjects before then transferring them elsewhere as a way of reinforcing the liberal state system, and despite its internal contradictions. Peace formation is more focused on the positive agencies expressed for peacemaking, reflecting '...multiple degrees and sites of agency' and 'collective social assemblages' (Connolly 2011, p. 22). Peace formation draws on anthropological and sociological insights on how well-being is conceived of in terms of the international, the state, social relations, kin networks, and an individual's position in them. These often point to the need for or create 'moral economies' and redistributive networks in situations of overt and structural violence and poverty (Booth et al. 1999, pp. 10, 19). It overturns structures of oppression and often organises itself into hidden or public forms of resistance and mobilisation. It aims to redress inequality, to produce socio-historical legitimate institutions and practices, to learn from the international whilst reforming it, and to support positive hybrid forms of peace. Just as social movements and organisations

across the world over the last century have engaged in a constant struggle with power hierarchies, as global civil society develops beyond the liberal, normative framings offered by Rawls, Habermas, and Kaldor (Kaldor 2003), rights claims expand, and new networks and tools emerge. This points to a connection between the networked, mobile, and transversal qualities of peace formation, with new and perhaps ‘digital peace’ dynamics.

Peace formation highlights the structural violence inherent in governmental power. However, it is clearly only a partial response to the vexed question of how to build peaceful local and global orders. It partially contradicts Eurocentric liberal norms, rights, and self-determination. Peace formation reflects the transversal circulation of power but does not act as ‘native enablers’ of historical empires (Mishra 2012, p. 60), liberal norms, or global capital. It maintains a high degree of autonomy, in identity, ideology, norms, and objectives. Peace formation struggles with structural power and governmentality, but the agency it exercises is more than just that of bare life, protest, or compliance. Peoples, identities, cultures, needs, and rights have been recognised across the world because of it. Direct, structural power and governmentality has been exposed and called to account through it, though it finds its limits in vested powerful interests at local, state, and global levels and is only a partial response to the weak distribution of rights and material resources around the world.

Peace formation derives from those groups and communities who work for peace, actively and intellectually, in everyday and highly localised settings as well as within the institutions of the polity. They use history, identity, culture, religion, language, resources, boundaries, institutions, rights, and needs, not as a means of division but as a means through which bridges can be built by exercising subaltern power and critical agency and coaxing governmental and even direct or structural power to shift slightly in their favour. They understand the micro and meta-narratives of legitimacy, through which these relationships are rebuilt, and their historical sensitivities. They understand also how elites and political

entrepreneurs abuse them or manipulate society. They understand how to mitigate such stresses. They have a heightened awareness of the multi-dimensional basis for peace, across time, space, societies, and the international system. They work slowly and quietly with minimal capacity.

The relationship that has emerged between power and peace formation indicates some important lessons. First, most power lies within direct, structural, and governmental systems that normally exercise top-down power on the subject. Subaltern actors may respond, but their response is very limited. Often the vertical top-down exercise of power has negative if unintended consequences upon the subaltern. Thus, the idea that subaltern power can be harmonised in unison with structural, direct, and governmental power is probably a myth. It is likely that any peace framework that emerges from the interaction of peace formation with the state and international will be based upon managing difference and dealing with contradictions rather than building a unified system.

Foregrounding peace formation, engaging with its signals, and understanding how peace is a political project – one amongst many – is a crucial next step in the development of an international architecture, designed to improve international order rather than just to maintain it, especially in view of the need to reconsider the relationship between universalism and particularism that the tension between peace formation and the international peacebuilding architecture suggests. It is essential for substantive democratisation, human rights, understanding the role and nature of the state, as well as its legitimacy, and for the legitimacy of intervention to protect vulnerable subjects whilst also maintaining their political autonomy. Peace formation makes clearer the blockages to peace, who controls them, and how they operate (often with great subtlety).

Cross-References

- ▶ [Culture and Conflict Resolution](#)
- ▶ [Liberal Peace in Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Liberal Peace and Its Critiques](#)

- ▶ Liberal Peacebuilding in a Transitional International Order
- ▶ Peace and Political Unsettling
- ▶ Peace Infrastructures
- ▶ Peacebuilding and Postcolonial Subject
- ▶ Peacebuilding: Utopia and Reality
- ▶ Phenomenological Peace

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Peace Formation in Bougainville

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Definition

Peace formation on the Pacific island of Bougainville after a protracted internal violent conflict has been a remarkable success story. In this entry it will be argued that this success is due to constructive interactions between international and national formal institutions and actors on the one hand and local informal institutions and actors from the sphere of civil society and customary governance on the other. While the first pursue a conventional liberal agenda of peacebuilding, the latter introduce their indigenous ways of conflict transformation, peace formation, and forming political community into the process. Externally driven peacebuilding is thus only one aspect of much broader and deeper peace formation. In the course of local-liberal interaction, hybrid forms of peace emerge that differ considerably from Western concepts of peace but at the same time can become more efficient and legitimate in maintaining peace and order. After two decades of peace formation, Bougainville has recently entered a new stage of state formation, based on a successful independence referendum which was conducted between November 23 and December

7, 2019. The lessons learned during peace formation will inform future state formation.

Introduction

For almost 10 years (1989–1998), the South Pacific island of Bougainville in Papua New Guinea (PNG) was the theater of a large-scale violent conflict. Over the last two decades, Bougainville has undergone a comprehensive process of largely successful peace formation and (re-)construction of political order. A high-level political peace process commenced in 1997, and a formal Bougainville-wide cease-fire came into effect at the end of April 1998, paving the way for official peace negotiations, which finally culminated in the Bougainville Peace Agreement (BPA) of August 30, 2001. The BPA has two core political provisions: firstly, the establishment of the Autonomous Region of Bougainville (ARoB) as a special political entity within the state of PNG, with far-reaching autonomy and, secondly, a referendum on the future political status of Bougainville – either complete independence or remaining with PNG. The ARoB has its own constitution, adopted by the Bougainville Constituent Assembly on November 12, 2004. The first elections for a Bougainville House of Representatives (HoR) and a Bougainville President were held in June 2005, followed by two more elections in 2010 and 2015. Since 2005, Bougainvilleans are governed by their own Autonomous Bougainville Government (ABG).

The BPA stipulated that the referendum on the future political status of Bougainville had to be held 10–15 years after the establishment of an autonomous government for Bougainville. This opened the time window for a referendum between June 2015 and June 2020. In May 2016 the ABG and the government of PNG agreed upon June 15, 2019 as the target date for the referendum. Due to delays in preparation, the referendum had to be postponed twice. It was finally carried out between November 23 and December 7, 2019. In the referendum, Bougainvilleans were given the choice between greater autonomy (within

PNG) and independence. They overwhelmingly opted for independence. However, according to the BPA, the referendum is non-binding; both sides are obliged to “consult over the results of the referendum,” and “the outcome will be subject to ratification (final decision-making authority) of the National Parliament” of PNG (Bougainville Peace Agreement 2001, clause 312). It can be argued that only with the peaceful implementation of the referendum results will the Bougainville peace process have reached a satisfactory conclusion.

In the following this entry will not recount the history of the successive steps and stages of the political peacebuilding process in much detail; rather, it will focus on the local/customary – international/liberal interface in peace formation and on the specifics of this interface which made the process a success. It will be argued that the collusion of international liberal notions of peace (building) and local indigenous understandings of shaping peaceful and orderly community resulted in the emergence of a distinct Bougainvillean variety of “peace.” Although some international engagement was – and continues to be – important, the process was and is mainly steered by local agency.

The exploration of the international-local interface will be guided by a relational-cultural approach to understanding peace formation. In the Bougainville case, as in most other internationally supported peacebuilding endeavors, the actors come from fundamentally different socio-cultural backgrounds. On the one hand, there are the locals who had been embroiled in violent conflict and who now find themselves in a post-conflict situation, in need of building peace. On the other hand, there are the internationals who for one reason or the other entered the place to address the locals’ need for peacebuilding and who stay only temporarily, for the purpose of peacebuilding. The former are mostly places and people in the Global South, as this is the theater of most of today’s violent conflicts, and the latter are usually from Western liberal states and/or international organizations which are shaped according to and operate along the lines of Western liberal values, norms, and procedures. Peacebuilding

interventions hence are local-international interactions across cultural difference.

Of course, the international and the local are not hermetically separated from each other. Rather, in today’s globalized world, the local is more or less imbued with international (i.e., Western liberal) culture and linked to the international sphere through a plethora of connections, and the international has its own local from where it threads itself into other localities, in the process becoming more or less affected by local culture. Moreover, the local and the international are highly diverse in themselves, with all kinds of internal differences and frictions. Nevertheless, the local/international interface is of particular significance for peace formation, because actors position themselves as “local” or “international” and from this position see and engage with the “other.” Peace processes are imbued with behavior, actions, norms, and interests that stem from this positioning.

Both the local-international interface and culture have to be understood relationally. The local and the international are “relational concepts,” with the local and the international “co-constitutive of each other” (Mac Ginty 2016, p. 207), and changing due to their interaction. Culture is also a relational concept, “culture and cultural difference are formed relationally” (Brigg 2014, p. 17), and as such culture is “holding difference and sameness together in dynamic relation” (ibid., p. 16). The coexistence of difference and sameness makes cross-cultural exchange both necessary and possible (Brigg 2016). Internationally supported peacebuilding thus can be conceptualized as a relational exercise in working with and across cultural difference.

Such a relational approach, which foregrounds relations rather than entities, captures the fluidity and dynamism of peace formation and the emergence of peace as hybridized (Boege et al. 2009; Richmond 2011; Mac Ginty 2011; Richmond and Mitchell 2012; Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013, see also “► [Hybrid Political Orders and Hybrid Peace](#)”). The concept of hybridization takes note of fundamental cultural difference and at the same time allows us “to move away from the rigid categories and binaries that are commonly used

to explain peace and conflict, (encouraging) a concentration on fluidity and leaching of identities, institutions and ideas” (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2015, p. 224), and it allows us to capture the ambiguity of the international-local interface (McLeod 2015).

Cross-cultural interaction and hybridization play out in the context of the local; its site is the local(e), understood not as another (lower) level (beneath the national and international) of politics but as “. . . a sphere of activity that is constantly being made and remade, sometimes with replication and sometimes with change. It is made, remade and negotiated through the everyday actions of inhabitants, as well as those of exogenous and institutional actors” (Mac Ginty 2015, p. 851). The locale/the locality is co-created and shared by a variety of interacting local, national, regional, and international actors and institutions, and, accordingly, in the context of the locale, the boundaries of “the international” and “the local” become porous and blurred, with the local infused with the international and the international with the local (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013).

In the Bougainville context, local *kastom* (the culture of the locale) and *kastom* ways of dealing with conflict were decisive for the specific forms of hybrid peace and order which emerged in the course of peace formation. For local agency is grounded in *kastom* as everyday practice. (The term *kastom*, a Pidgin derivative of the English “custom,” is frequently used today in Melanesian countries, both by people in the villages and politicians, in order to stress their cultural heritage and the difference between their own ways and foreign ways of governance, economics, conflict resolution, peacebuilding, etc., often depicting *kastom* as rooted in ancient pre-colonial traditions, a set of rules developed by the ancestors (Keesing 1993). *Kastom* governance is thus presented as the other of, or even alternative to, introduced state-based governance. At the same time, *kastom* is different from the customs of the precontact and pre-colonial past. It has developed since the times of first contact and colonization due to interaction and exchange with various external influences, and it continues to change today. In other words, *kastom* is hybrid.) In their

exchanges with the external forces of liberal peacebuilding, the local actors found strength by reference to *kastom*. Before the specifics of Bougainville peace formation in the context of the local-international interface will be explored, a brief introduction to the locale, the people, and the violent conflict will provide the necessary background information for understanding the peculiarities of forming peace and order Bougainville style.

Violent Conflict on Bougainville

The island of Bougainville in the South Pacific, with an area of about 9000 km² (approximately the size of Cyprus or Jamaica) and 300,000 inhabitants, geographically belongs to the Solomon Islands archipelago. Politically, however, it is part of PNG. Bougainville society is characterized by a complex web of cultures, languages, and social systems that evolved in the course of thousands of years. Segmentary, highly egalitarian communities consist of social groups of different sizes and with different functions (clans, sub-clans, lineages), with descent being the organizing principle. Matrilineal descent is widespread. This provides an important social role for women; rights to land and other resources are mainly based on descent. Access to land depends on the membership in a kin-based group; the group and the land are closely interwoven. Land belongs to the whole group. Land is at the heart of life on Bougainville. Loss or scarcity of land does not only pose economic problems but has far-reaching effects on the social structure, the spiritual life, and the psychic conditions of the affected groups and their members (Regan and Griffin 2005).

Given the importance of land, it comes as no surprise that the key sources of the violent conflict which devastated Bougainville in the 1990s were related to a giant mining project and its negative social and environmental effects. (For an overview of the war on Bougainville, see Carl and Garasu 2002, Braithwaite et al. 2010, Regan 2010, and Wallis 2014.) In the 1970s and 1980s, the Panguna gold and copper mine in the

mountains of Central Bougainville was one of the largest open-pit mines in the world. For the British-Australian mining company (CRA – Conzinc Riotinto of Australia, today’s Rio Tinto) that ran the project, it brought enormous profits, and it brought considerable revenues for the central government of PNG. Over the years the mine caused immense environmental destruction, thus endangering the land-based way of life of the people. An influx of large numbers of workers from outside Bougainville added to the pressure on local communities. Local people blamed outsiders – workers, expatriate company management, and the agents of the central government – for not respecting indigenous culture and their special status and rights as the traditional owners of the land.

The people in the mine area demanded meaningful environmental protection measures, compensation for environmental damage, and a larger share of the revenues generated. Both the mining company and the PNG government rejected these demands, and as a consequence, members of local clans brought the mine to a standstill by acts of sabotage in late 1988 and established the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA). Fighting between the BRA and the security forces of the PNG government soon spread across the whole island, and Bougainville in the 1990s became the theater of the longest and bloodiest war in the South Pacific after the end of World War II. The BRA adopted a secessionist stance and called for independence for Bougainville. The Panguna mine was forced to shut down in 1990, and the BRA took over control of the mine site. The mine has remained closed ever since.

In its war against the BRA, the PNG military was supported by local Bougainvillean auxiliary units, the so-called Resistance Forces. Over time, it became the Resistance that bore the brunt of the fighting on the government side. Moreover, traditional local conflicts were also fought under the umbrella of the “great” war of secession. Parties entangled in local conflicts joined either the BRA or the Resistance, which both were made up of largely independent units. The war became more and more complex and the frontiers blurred. There were no two clear-cut sides fighting each other

over one single distinctive issue as in conventional wars. What took place on Bougainville was neither a war between states, nor was it an internal war between the central government and its security forces on the one side and a unitary armed opposition on the other. Rather, the Bougainville war is best understood as a hybrid, shaped by a patchwork of actors and interests both from the local social and the modern state and economic sphere. The overlap of these spheres with regard to the causes of conflict, the issues at stake, the perceptions, values, and motives of the conflict actors, as well as the forms of their (violent) behavior and activities gave the war its specific features.

The time of war was to a large extent a time of statelessness. “The state” and its institutions were forced to withdraw from Bougainville in an early stage of the war. Neither was the PNG government able to maintain a monopoly over the legitimate use of force, nor did the secessionist movement manage to establish one. This opened the space not only for at times largely uncontrolled and widespread violence but also for a resurgence of non-state local customary institutions. These institutions had been sidelined, but had not completely disappeared, during colonial times and during the phase of the formation of the independent state of PNG after 1975. The fact that customary institutions were able to take over control in many places in the stateless times of the war is actually an indication of their resilience. In many places traditional authorities such as elders and chiefs once more became responsible for regulating conflicts and organizing community life. In doing so, they referred to Bougainville *kastom*, according to most accounts to the satisfaction of the members of their communities (Regan 2000).

Elders and chiefs were also entrusted with an important role in dealing with violent conflicts in the local context. They were widely successful in achieving reconciliation at the intra- and inter-communal level, utilizing customary methods of conflict resolution. Localized “islands of peace” were established even at the height of the war. Local peace processes thus had already generated positive results well before a first round of “high-level” talks and negotiations took place in 1997

and a formal Bougainville-wide cease-fire was achieved in early 1998. From then on, a high-level political peacebuilding process ensued. Again, customary institutions and local non-state actors played a decisive role in this process.

Peace Formation at the Grassroots

Peace formation in Bougainville emerged in a societal environment characterized by hybrid structures of governance and political order, with relatively weak state institutions and relatively strong customary institutions coexisting and exerting influence on each other, with civil society and its institutions (women's organizations in particular) gradually gaining strength, and with limited external intervention. Under these conditions, peace formation was characterized by the combination of bottom-up and top-down approaches and the interaction of local, national, and international actors and institutions. This process let hybrid forms of peace and political order emerge. (This understanding of peace formation differs to a certain extent from Oliver Richmond's concept of peace formation (see Richmond 2016, 2019).)

The utilization of customary institutions and traditional ways of conflict resolution was of utmost importance for peace formation in the local context. As has been said, the violent conflict on Bougainville was not just a war of secession but a complex mixture of such a war and localized sub-wars between societal entities such as clans, lineages, or villages. Therefore, peacemaking had to address not only the "higher" political level but also the "lower" level of (inter-)communal conflicts. This (inter-)communal peace formation was largely based on local customary approaches. Elders and chiefs – as well as women leaders – were entrusted with an important role when violent conflicts had to be settled in the transition phase from war to peace. Thousands of customary peace processes have taken place at the local level between enemy villages and clans all over the island since the end of the war, with a new wave emerging only rather recently in 2018 and 2019, in preparation of the referendum on independence in November/December 2019.

The aim of customary peacemaking is the restoration of social harmony within and between communities and of amicable relationships between the conflicting parties. This is achieved by means of reconciliation, which is at the core of customary peacemaking (Boege and Garasu 2011). Reconciliation is based on the development of a common understanding of the causes and the history of the conflict, willingness to accept responsibility for wrongdoings and to apologize, and the negotiation of the – material and spiritual – conditions for the restoration of relationships. Perpetrators have to apologize to the ones they wronged and ask for forgiveness. Victims must develop a willingness to accept the apologies and forgive. Such kind of reconciliation is not a one-off event or a quick fix. It needs time. Slowness, breaks, and "time outs" are deliberately built into reconciliation processes to give parties time to calm down, assess the state of the process so far, reformulate their position, and prepare themselves spiritually and emotionally for a resolution.

Once solutions are found, they are ratified in highly ritual forms. Ceremonies mark the culminating points of the reconciliation process. Usually there is not one reconciliation ceremony but a series of ceremonies, according to the progress of reconciliation. The ceremonies vary from area to area, but generally they encompass rituals such as breaking spears and arrows, drinking and eating together from the same dish, singing and dancing together, or chewing betel nut together. (In some places, for instance, people bury large stones. "The significance of the stone is that it is heavy and it does not move and it gives a sign of strong and unchanging reconciliation between the people" (Howley 2002, p. 111). In other places the parties "would plant tangget plants on stone. This symbolized their promise to forget the past and remain as silent as stone. Anyone who violated this agreement would be cursed by the stone and any talebearer would be punished by its strength" (Tanis 2002, p. 59).) These symbolic activities are expressions of commitment and trust and are more powerful than mere spoken or written words. Finally, gifts are exchanged (pigs, shell money, food, cash, or a combination of all these items).

The whole community participates. Church services and prayers are usually an integral part of these activities, as most Bougainvilleans are devout Christians, and “Christian principles of reconciliation have conveniently found their place in the culture and have, indeed, added a great deal to the process, through the incorporation of prayers and public acknowledgements by priests and church ministers” (Tanis 2002, p. 60). Church leaders were and are particularly active in initiating and stabilizing reconciliation processes.

Reconciliation ceremonies are loaded with spiritual meaning. Ceremony is an important vehicle for cleansing and purification. Mental healing is an important aspect of reconciliation. Reconciliation is not only an issue of reason and the intellect. It is a deeply emotional and spiritual experience. It is about mending hearts. (See the title of Pat Howley’s (2002) highly informative and moving book: *Breaking spears and mending hearts*.) It is about repairing broken relationships and restoring harmony so that people can live in peace not only with each other but also with God and the spirits of the dead. God is present in reconciliation and so are the spirits of the dead. (Most Bougainvilleans are devout Christians, but this does not replace belief in the spirit world. Rather, this goes together; there is mixing and blending.) Social relations are guarded by the spirit world. Whenever social relations break down, the spirit world is affected. Conflicts also play out in the spirit world. This is why cleansing rituals that appease the spirits are linked to reconciliation. If such cleansing rituals are not performed, the spirits of the fallen will not rest but come back and haunt the living, and all kinds of misfortune will befall the communities – illness, accidents, madness, and death. Therefore, in the course of a reconciliation process, the spirits will be called on to remove any illness that has befallen the community because of the conflict and bring back healing. Peace formation thus is relational also with regard to the invisible world; in Bougainville, the visible and the invisible world are closely connected and affect each other. Relationships that emerge in the peace process (and let peace emerge) also comprise the actors of the invisible world. Peace (formation)

is thus not confined to the visible world. Internationals conceptualizing it in such a manner miss a decisive dimension. Peace processes are imbued with otherworldly aspects, hence engaging with the spiritual dimension is of utmost importance – even if this means to question one’s own secular enlightened convictions.

In this context, proper burials of the dead are highly important. In fact, one major problem for reconciliation after the war was and still is today that many people who were killed have not been buried in a culturally appropriate manner. Relatives do not know where the remains of their kin are, or there are graves with bones that have not been identified. In order to find peace and to reconcile, the dead have to be given a proper burial (UNDP 2014, p. 12, 32). The unburied dead have an influence on the lives of the living, both the perpetrators and the relatives of the victims. Therefore, finding and bringing home the bodies, burying them properly, and grieving at their graves are an indispensable dimension of reconciliation. This is why the topic of “missing persons” looms large in making peace on Bougainville.

While the peace process at the grassroots was grounded in and largely followed *kastom*, customary local peace processes were also modernized in various forms. Local peace committees or district reconciliation steering committees were formed, and local mini peace treaties were elaborated, put into writing, and signed. Local peacebuilders also took over foreign conflict resolution knowledge and adjusted it to their specific needs. For example, the NGO Peace Foundation Melanesia (PFM) conducted training of locals as mediators, facilitators, and negotiators in the transition phase from war to peace and the early stages of the peace process. PFM’s village-based, elicitive courses did not impose fixed Western-style concepts of conflict resolution but built on local approaches, in particular by referring to the concept of restorative justice, revitalizing customary ways, and adapting them to contemporary needs, e.g., by introducing more “modern” training techniques (Howley 2002). A similar approach was taken in later stages of the peace process by the Panguna Dialogue, Referendum

Dialogue, and Transition Dialogue projects that were conducted by the Peace and Conflict Studies Institute Australia (PaCSIA) in collaboration with a network of local facilitators and community-based organizations.

Finally, it has to be acknowledged that external factors contributed to the success of local reconciliations. Bougainvilleans say that the Peace Monitoring Group and the UN mission which came in to support the peace process (see below) initially provided the space for them to come together for reconciliations. Because of the presence of the internationals, they felt safe enough to meet their former enemies to commence reconciliation processes. The internationals often also provided the means to come together – transport, a neutral venue – or even facilitated the first steps of a reconciliation process. Bougainvilleans are thankful to internationals for enabling reconciliations; they think of this as a major contribution of the internationals to the peace process (Boege 2019). The peace process at the local level in Bougainville thus was a “local-liberal hybrid” (Richmond 2011, p. 18), with local customary ways (of reconciliation and restoration of relationships) being the predominant factor (Boege 2012).

High-Level Peacebuilding

High-level political peacebuilding was also hybridized, although the local customary aspects at this scale were less visible. At first sight it looks like these activities followed a typical international liberal template that is familiar from other post-conflict peacebuilding theaters – negotiations facilitated by an external third party (New Zealand), a cease-fire (1998), a peace agreement (2001), a constitution (2004), elections (2005, 2010, 2015), etc. At the same time, however, the high-level activities were also to a large extent imbued with local ways of operating (Boege 2012).

For example, the local actors imposed their pace of doing things on international actors and forced them to adjust pre-planned peacebuilding timetables to local needs and customs. The

Bougainville peace process was and is framed in a long-term perspective. This holds true for the process as a whole as well as for its single elements. Peace formation on Bougainville has already been going on for two decades, and it has not been completed yet. Dozens of rounds of talks and negotiations and a host of intermediate agreements, memoranda of understandings, protocols, and so forth were necessary to make progress – very slowly as it might seem from an outsider’s perspective.

During negotiations participants took their time too. The first rounds of talks between the parties in New Zealand in 1997 and 1998 took weeks. The New Zealand hosts were so prudent as not to dictate a timetable. Rather they provided for a lot of “free” time, so that there was enough time for the representatives of the parties to adjust, to spend time with each other without the duress of a tight schedule.

Furthermore, no time frame was given regarding demobilization and disarmament. At the beginning, there was only general agreement on a three-phased open-ended weapons disposal process. The real weapons disposal only started in December 2001, that was 4 years after cessation of armed conflict, and no dates were set as to when the single stages of the process had to be accomplished. Weapons disposal was not finalized officially until the year 2005; and another round of weapons disposal was conducted in 2018 and 2019 in preparation of the independence referendum of November 2019, this time also including those factions which had not taken part in the 2001–2005 disarmament exercise.

The focus on process and on long time frames is very much in line with local customary principles and methods of making peace. At the same time it poses a major challenge for the international actors whose mindset is determined by the notion of getting things done and getting things done as quick as possible. On Bougainville, as in other international peacebuilding interventions, the external actors tried to impose their (tight) time frames and their own temporal culture onto the locals. But at the end of the day, they had to adjust to Bougainville time. It can be expected that the transition phase toward independence

after the November 2019 referendum again will take years.

Another important aspect of high-level peacebuilding on Bougainville was its inclusiveness, which also reflects local ways of operating. Customary dispute settlement necessitates the participation and commitment of all members of the parties involved in conflict. Accordingly, a very broad process was organized, trying to include all stakeholders at all levels of society. High-level peace talks were each attended by dozens, if not hundreds of Bougainvilleans, not only by the political and military leadership. Truce and cease-fire agreements were signed not only by the leadership but also by the local commanders of the BRA and the Resistance Forces as well as by traditional authorities and by representatives of civil society, e.g., church leaders and women representatives. This made the agreements more binding and easier to implement. Given the matrilineal organization of most of the communities on Bougainville, the involvement of women was of particular importance (Havini and Sirivi 2004).

Local actors managed to impose their understanding of proper representation and participation in political negotiations, and this differs from conventional international practice. Accordingly, the forms of negotiations differed from what would be seen as “normal” through the international liberal lens. Extended times of prayer and singing together, for example, were integral parts of the negotiations – activities which from the liberal internationals’ point of view can easily be misjudged as folkloristic and tokenistic accessories to the “real” business of political negotiation.

To conclude, high-level peacebuilding on Bougainville was thus a liberal-local hybrid, following a liberal international template but infused with local patterns of appropriate behavior (Boege 2012). The local-liberal interface in the Bougainville peace process showed the following features: while at the top, it followed largely the international-liberal peacebuilding template, the processes at the bottom were dominated by local customary practices. The local customary approach, however, also permeated the top processes, and liberal approaches colored and

reformed processes at the bottom. What ensued was a liberal-local or a local-liberal hybrid of peace formation. And it was due to the permeation of liberal-international forms with local customary ways that the negotiations at the higher political level led to a comprehensive peace settlement, while the sustainability of this settlement depended on the maintenance of customary conflict resolution practice at the bottom. The combination of top-down (liberal-local) and bottom-up (local-liberal) processes made Bougainville a success story; and while in conventional Western academic and political thinking “the top-down story is the master narrative and the bottom-up reconciliations are subsidiary,” it can be argued that “in important ways the bottom-up micro narratives subsume and infuse the top-down peace” (Braithwaite 2011, p. 140).

Peacebuilding in the liberal understanding of the term was thus only one aspect of a much broader and deeper process of peace formation. Bougainville peacebuilding could only become a success as embedded in this broad and deep process, which goes well beyond the internationally dominant technical understanding of peacebuilding. While peacebuilding suggests a planned top-down, technical, linear, and predictable endeavor of social engineering, peace formation by contrast is a messy, contradictory, nonlinear, and complex long-term process which involves a wide and diverse range of actors and institutions, be they state, para-state, or non-state/customary/traditional and civil society, local, national, or international. Technocratic, externally supported, peacebuilding is and can only be part of such complex peace formation. What was successful in Bougainville was peace formation, not peacebuilding; and peacebuilding only succeeded as part of peace formation. Accordingly, international actors did play a role, but did not dominate the peace process.

The Internationals: Helpful, but Not in Control

Although the success of peace formation in Bougainville is rooted locally, external support

has to be acknowledged. Particularly in the first stages of the peace process, from 1997 to 2005, their presence was of major significance, although, compared to other endeavors, the international peacebuilding mission on Bougainville was a light intervention (Regan 2008, 2010). Mention has to be made of the activities of the New Zealand government, the United Nations observer mission, and the everyday routine operations of first an international Truce Monitoring Group (TMG) and later an international Peace Monitoring Group (PMG). In later stages of the peace process, after the stabilization of the security situation on the ground, a considerable number of foreign development agencies, international nongovernmental organizations, and United Nations programs and institutions became active on Bougainville. The international presence reached a new peak in the phase of the preparation for the independence referendum (2014–2019). In the late 1990s, New Zealand played a significant part initiating the peace process. All conflict parties trusted the New Zealanders. It was only because the New Zealand government acted as a facilitator and provided logistical assistance, hosted the initial rounds of talks and negotiations, and offered an open and warm atmosphere to participants that the peace process got off the ground.

The UN sent a small contingent, known successively as the UN Political Office in Bougainville (UNPOB), from August 1998 to 2004, and the UN Observer Mission in Bougainville (UNOMB), from 2004 to June 2005. Initially, the BRA had pressed for UN engagement (so as to internationalize the Bougainville issue), whereas the central government of PNG was skeptical, presenting the Bougainville conflict as an “internal affair” of PNG. Later in the process, all parties realized the importance of having the UN involved. Its symbolic value, demonstrating the international community’s interest in events on Bougainville, as well as its contribution to conceptualizing and implementing the weapons disposal process should not be underestimated. The UN personnel on the ground proved to be patient, culturally sensitive, and committed. The engagement was long term; it was only at the end

of June 2005, after the first ABG elections, that the observer mission came to an end. In the phase of referendum preparations, the UN again played an important role, in particular with its Bougainville Referendum Support Project, which was steered by UNDP and funded through the UN Peacebuilding Fund.

In the early stage of the peace process, neighboring countries provided the personnel for first the TMG and later the PMG, which were on the island from late 1997 to June 2003, followed by a small Bougainville Transitional Team until December 2003. New Zealand led the TMG, and Australia led the PMG, with Australia providing the bulk of personnel and resources (Adams 2001; Wehner and Denoon 2001). The TMG/PMG’s mandate was to support the peace process “through logistics, monitoring, verification, mediation and confidence building” (Australian Government 2012, p. 20). Over time, the TMG/PMG won the trust of all sides (Adams 2001; Wehner and Denoon 2001). Cooperation with the conflict parties ran smoothly, and in many places cordial relations with villagers, elders, and chiefs were established. Given the significance of personal relationships in a Melanesian cultural context, this relationship building was of utmost importance.

The makeup of the international TMG/PMG deserves special attention: in contrast to the mainstream tendency of having so-called robust peace-keeping mandates and interventions, the TMG/PMG was an unarmed unit, comprised of both military and civilian personnel, men and women, from Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, and Vanuatu. Of major importance was the participation of women. Bougainville women had female counterparts among the outsiders of the TMG/PMG. The participation of personnel from Fiji and Vanuatu was relevant because of the common Melanesian cultural background. Fijians and Ni-Vanuatu had obviously an advantage over other PMG members because of their cultural affinity to the Bougainvilleans (Boege 2019).

The Bougainvilleans managed to control the extent and content of the activities of the external actors at all times. This was mainly due to the fact

that the local actors were successful in their insistence on having an unarmed intervention. This arrangement was carried through by the locals against considerable initial concerns of the interveners, in particular the Australian military, who felt uneasy about being unarmed in a volatile post-conflict situation. It meant that the interveners were dependent on the locals for their security and protection and not capable of enforcing anything against the locals' wishes or interests (Breen 2016). Hence the power relations between the internationals and the locals were in the latter's favor (while in most other cases of internationally assisted peacebuilding the former have the upper hand). Moreover, the locals were extremely smart in utilizing the capacities provided by the internationals for their own purposes. For instance, transport by PMG helicopter was extensively used by chiefs to get them to and from local peace meetings, villagers made comprehensive use of the PMG medical facilities, and the men used the paper of all the leaflets, flyers, newsletters, etc. distributed by the TMG/PMG for rolling their bush tobacco in. So one may argue that it was not so much the TMG/PMG's "core business" prescribed by the liberal peacebuilding agenda (supervise the cease-fire, assist in weapons disposal) which made it really useful in everyday life but more the "collateral goods" that its presence provided for the locals.

The examples given above demonstrate that in the local-international interface both a recalibration of relationships between the actors and a renegotiation of the content, aims, and strategies of the peace intervention took place. The liberal peace agenda was rearticulated and reshaped. At the end of the day, "the way the intervention developed was not so much a matter of careful planning, but rather a product of complex interactions of numerous often distinct interests among both international and local actors" (Regan 2010, pp. 162–163). In the course of everyday interaction with the locals, the internationals' peacebuilding agenda had to change considerably. The intervention was hybridized due to the agency of the locals who transformed the liberal peace agenda according to their own norms, interests, and ways of doing and

understanding peace. The seemingly all-powerful liberal peace approach was rearticulated by its "recipients" on the ground, who turned out to be not simply grateful and abiding subjects of external agendas and strategies but powerful actors in their own right, maintaining autonomy and agency, neither merely adopting the liberal peace agenda nor resisting it totally. The all-too-often misused phrase of "local ownership" has real substance in the Bougainville case, with local ownership taken by the locals rather than granted and nurtured by the internationals (Krogstad 2014).

This also holds true for the most recent stage of the peace process. In the preparation phase of the independence referendum, and for the actual conduct of the referendum, international actors and institutions again played an important role, but the locals steered and controlled the process. Internationals provided substantial support to the ABG and the government of PNG. The abovementioned UN Bougainville Referendum Support Project gave assistance to the political dialogue between the ABG and GoPNG and between the parliaments of Bougainville and PNG, as well as to the weapons disposal process. It also supported the inclusion of women, youth, and persons with disabilities in preparations for the referendum.

Most importantly, the UN gave financial assistance to the Bougainville Referendum Commission (BRC), including for work on the voter roll, for the distribution of information material, and for a technical electoral assistance project. The BRC was established in 2017 as the independent administrative agency which, according to the BPA, was in charge of the referendum. The BRC had as its governing body a Board of Commissioners comprised of seven members, namely, the National and Bougainville Electoral Commissioners, two persons appointed by the GoPNG and two by the ABG, and a Chairperson appointed by the two governments. The understanding was that this Chairperson should be an eminent international elder statesman/stateswoman. Both governments agreed on the former Prime Minister of Ireland, Bertie Ahern, as the BRC Chairman. He was appointed in June 2018. The BRC Board was

supported by a BRC Secretariat under a Chief Referendum Officer (also an international).

Although the BRC was only able to commence its work in earnest in early 2019 due to funding problems, it managed to do its job to the full satisfaction of all sides. The referendum, which took place from November 23 to December 7, 2019, was assessed as free and fair and transparent. The overwhelming majority of the 206,000 eligible Bougainville voters opted for independence. The referendum was observed by international observers, and a regional police support mission – made up of personnel from New Zealand, Australia, Fiji, Vanuatu, and the Solomon Islands – assisted the Bougainville police in provision of security during the referendum.

While international support in the phase of referendum preparations was no doubt of importance, the main foundations of its success were again laid by the Bougainvilleans themselves at the grassroots level. The 3 years in the lead up to the referendum were characterized by enormous efforts of Bougainvilleans to get “referendum ready.” In September 2016 the ABG agreed upon a “Bougainville Referendum Ready Concept,” which tasked each of the 33 Constituencies in Bougainville to prepare for the referendum. Constituency Referendum Committees (CRC) were established in every constituency; they carried out referendum awareness at the local level, with the aim of making each and every hamlet, village, ward, and constituency “referendum ready.” Furthermore, a dense network of local facilitators, in cooperation with the ABG, NGOs, and community-based organizations, conducted hundreds of local Referendum Dialogues in order to inform about the referendum and discuss the questions, concerns, and expectations of the people. For achieving “referendum ready” status, communities had to participate in weapons disposal and to conduct and finalize reconciliations addressing cases left over from the war (so-called crisis-related cases). A host of such reconciliations, often in combination with weapons disposal, was carried out in all parts of Bougainville in 2017, 2018, and 2019. These included smaller reconciliations at the level of families, villages, wards, and clans and “mass”

reconciliations at district or constituency level. All constituencies were declared referendum ready before the actual conduct of the referendum, and Bougainvilleans indeed were ready when the time of the referendum came in November 2019.

The referendum was another high point of the Bougainville peace process, but it is not the end point. According to the BPA of August 2001, the referendum is non-binding. The BPA stipulates that both governments have to “consult” about its outcome, and the parliament of PNG has to ratify it. Therefore, Bougainville finds itself at the beginning of a transition process which most probably will take years. Only if this process can be managed peacefully, the success story of Bougainville peace formation will actually have a happy ending. At the same time, with the transition Bougainvilleans embark on a new journey: the journey of state-building or state formation. For in the eyes of the Bougainvilleans, the result of the referendum can only mean that the transition will be about implementation of independence. In the process of state formation, Bougainvilleans can build on the experiences of and the lessons learned in the period of peace formation. Bougainville will have to establish itself as a state so as to fulfill its obligations as a member of the international community of states; in the domestic realm, however, this polity does not have to be – and will not be – a proper Western-style Weberian state, but a home-grown variety imbued with the features of hybrid governance and security arrangements. Such a home-grown form of polity does not necessarily have to be seen as “second best” in comparison to the ideal type Weberian state but potentially can serve the needs of the people in effective and legitimate ways, not least in the domain of peace and security.

Conclusions

Bougainville has become a success story of peace formation based on positive mutual accommodation of local indigenous and introduced liberal institutions and procedures, thus bringing about

a unique Bougainvillean form of “post-liberal peace” (Richmond 2009a, b), and demonstrating that “alternative versions of peace to the liberal peace can have legitimacy” (Mac Ginty 2008, p. 159). As the Bougainville experience demonstrates, peace cannot be “built” by just implementing a pre-planned international agenda; rather, peace formation is a multifaceted and complex international-local exchange, hybridizing processes and outcomes (Richmond and Mac Ginty 2014).

International actors were engaged in the Bougainville peace process, but they were not able to impose their liberal agenda on the locals. Local agency drove the process. Based on customary institutions and ways of operating, local agency was maintained in the everyday interactions with external actors. Customary institutions have proven to be remarkably resilient and of major significance for the organization of the everyday life of local people, not least during the stateless times of the violent conflict and its immediate aftermath. Accordingly, *kastom* played an important role in post-conflict peace formation. *Kastom* as everyday practice was also the main resource that local actors were able to draw upon in their interactions with external (international and central government) actors. Based on *kastom*, they managed to maintain autonomy and agency; they were forced neither into outright adoption of the international liberal peace agenda nor into outright resistance. Rather, they were able to negotiate the local-liberal interface largely on their own terms. The seemingly all-powerful liberal peace approach was rearticulated by its “recipients” on the ground. The locals managed to “*kastomize*” the liberal peace. At the same time, *kastom* was also “liberalized.” The results of these processes of working with and working through cultural difference are very specific hybrid forms of peace.

Peace on Bougainville might not fit the model of liberal peace. But for the Bougainvilleans, their own way of doing “peace” opens avenues to create peaceful political community which is different from the off-the-shelf packages offered by the international peacebuilding and state-building industry.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Hybrid Political Orders and Hybrid Peace](#)
- ▶ [Liberal Peace](#)
- ▶ [Peace Formation](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding](#)

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Peace in International Relations Theory

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Definition/Description

This entry outlines and critically evaluates the different understandings, concepts, and approaches to peace that the different IR theories offer. It argues that though IR has had the study of peace at its heart

since its beginnings, it has tended to rely on a very limited amount of work on peace, focusing more on the relationship between war, violence, power, the international system, and the state. Each IR theory offers a preliminary framework for peace, however, whether a victor's peace, law, rights, and democracy (a liberal peace), equality and sustainability (pointing to economic, postcolonial, gender, and environmental questions of peace with justice), at domestic, state, and international levels. They provide the basis for a more substantial engagement, beyond the usual recourse to negative or positive concepts of peace. More critical thinking problematizes issues of universalism, inter-sectional issues of race and gender, inter-generational questions of justice and equity, sovereignty versus fluidity, representation, and points to everyday and hybrid peace, and perhaps ultimately to a concept of peace with global justice. This entry disaggregates the implications for peace that each theory and methodology engenders, in order to open further, more sophisticated understandings of peace in IR theory.

Introduction

Looking at the discipline of IR through the lens of a search for peace (one or many) underlines paucity of its historical engagement with peace as a complex concept. IR theory has failed to develop an account of peace, focusing instead on the dynamics of power, war, and the state, assuming the realist inherency of violence in human nature and international relations, or liberal supremacy. Utopian and dystopian views of peace, relating to contemporary and future threats calculated from the point of view of states and officials, often delineate the intellectual extremes of a linear typology of war and peace inherent in mainstream international thought. The peace inferred in this typology is concerned with a victor's peace, a balance of power between states or the liberal domestic and international exemplars gleaned from the development of democracy, law, and capitalism. Each of these approaches takes priority over the subtle texture of everyday life of the millions of people living in conflict-affected environments. Even the

ambitious peacebuilding efforts of the post-Cold War environment in places as diverse as Cambodia, DR Congo, the Balkans, East Timor, and Afghanistan, among many others, testify to this shortcoming. From an everyday perspective, the large-scale violent events of "war" maybe not be directly present in such contexts, but the structural, cultural, and environmental aspects of violence continue. As both Erasmus and Einstein famously pointed out in different centuries, peace was both separate and preferable to war. Peace and war should be held apart decisively and yet violence is an integral part of the lives of modern conflict-affected citizens in postwar arenas as well as in contexts where public security and urban violence is a concern (as in large parts of South America) but direct war does not exist (Ferreira 2017). After war, violence continues in direct, structural, cultural, and many other forms.

This raises the question of what the discipline of IR is for, if not for peace? For many, IR theory simply has not been ambitious enough in developing an "agenda for peace" in addition to investigating the causes of war. Axiomatically, Martin Wight once wrote that IR was subject to a poverty of "international theory." He also argued that its focus is the problem of survival (Wight 1966: 12–33). Such arguments are commonplace even in the context of more critical theoretical contributions to IR theory (Richmond 2002). Today, survival is not everybody's concern, especially those in the developed world. Such arguments usually support the position that liberal or neo-liberal polities, notably in the Western developed world, or closely related to its economy (such as China, or the Gulf states) are domestic oases of democratic and/or capitalist peace. They obscure the possibility that such polities are also likely to be engaged in a constant struggle for survival, or a war for "peace" on a systemic or ideological level. Thinking about peace opens up such difficult questions. Yet, many approaches to IR theory routinely ignore the question – or problem – of peace: How it is constituted and one peace or many? Even "successful" empires have developed an interest in an ideological and self-interested version peace (Salem 1997: 12), whether it was a Pax Romana, Britannia, Soviet,

American, religious, nationalist, liberal, or neoliberal peace.

Many scholars have hoped that science would, as Hobbes wrote, open the way for peace (Hobbes 1998 [1651]: Chapter V). Hobbes, writing in the aftermath of a bloody English civil war wrote *Leviathan* (often held up to be the epitome of tragic realism in IR) to illustrate that peace was plausible in spite of hatred, scarcity, and violence. Of course, he also developed the notion of the Leviathan as a way to moderate the “natural state” of war. IR has instead focused on the latter (war as a natural state) rather than the former (peace as a natural state), despite the fact that so much of the ground work has been done in peace and conflict studies, anthropology, sociology, law, philosophy, archaeology, in the arts, in branches of several other disciplines, such as economics or psychology, and via the more critical approaches to the discipline of IR. The supposed Freudian death instinct has seemed to resonate more powerfully through the discipline than notions of peace (Freud 1975 [1922]). Yet, as Fry has argued, a vast range of anthropological and ethnographic evidence shows that peace, conflict avoidance, and accommodation are the stronger impulses of human culture (Fry 2007: 7). War is a significant part of western culture as well as others, but not of all cultures (Fry 2007: 208). Indeed, it is notable that in Western settings war memorials are frequent, particularly for WWI and II, but peace is rarely represented in civic space unless as a memorial of sacrifice during war. Similarly in art, aspirations for peace are often represented through depictions of war and violence, such as in Picasso’s *Guernica* (1937) or Goya’s, *The Third of May, 1808: The Execution of the Defenders of Madrid*, (1814). Lorenzetti’s *The Allegory of Good Government* (1338–1340) and Rubens’ *Minerva Protects Pax from Mars* (1629–1630) are notable exceptions. Further afield, one could point to the Ottoman Topkapi Palace’s *Gate of Peace* in Istanbul, and the *Gate of Heavenly Peace* leading into the Imperial City in Beijing (though these were, of course, associated with both diplomacy and imperial wars).

Peace can be seen in more critical terms as both a process and a goal, but following multiple paths

simultaneously, always unfinished and unlikely to converge on a single outcome. Hybrid forms and processes fit best with the indicators developed by critical discussion of peace. This opens up a particular focus on the processes by which peace as a self-conscious and reflexive goal may be achieved. If peace is taken as a strategic goal, it would tend towards a focus on mutual preservation and never move beyond preliminary stages relating to security, but there are further, more inspiring, possibilities.

This is certainly not to dismiss the importance of mainstream IR, but to caution against its representation as a “complete” discipline, which it clearly is not. Indeed, there is a serious question as to whether aspects of orthodox approaches (by which I mean positivist debates derived from realism, liberalism, and Marxism) to IR are anti-peace, sometimes purposively, and sometimes carelessly. War, competition, trade, class, Eurocentricism, patriarchy, individualism, extraction, and imperialism are their main engines. The three main orthodox theories are often taken to offer determinist grand narratives: realism offers an elite and negative inter-state peace based on inherency; liberalism offers a one-size-fits-all progressive framework of mainly elite state and international governance with little recognition of difference; and Marxism offers grass-roots emancipation from determinist structures of the international political economy via violent state and global revolution.

In particular, peace in everyday terms requires an understanding of the hidden and long term workings of power in political, economic, and social terms. This requires engaging with the consequences of imperialism and colonialism, capitalism and extraction, patriarchy, state formation and state power, and class.

More than ever, research and policy informed by a contextual understanding of peace are needed, rather than merely a focus on fear reproduced by worst-case security scenarios stemming from a balance of power or terror derived from military, political, or economic analytical frameworks that assume violence and greed to be endemic. This contextual understanding needs to become a far better accommodation in what has now come to

be called the international peace architecture: that is the international framework of law, institutions, agencies (covering security, development, refugees, peacebuilding, peacekeeping, culture, and others), INGOs, NGOs, and all of their partners. Indeed, in the contemporary context, it is also clear that any discussion of peace also connect with research and policy on development, on global and local justice, and on environmental sustainability. These are the reasons why the liberal peace (comprising law and human rights, democratic institutions, trade, and a vibrant civil society) and its more recent neoliberal derivation (security, trade, and capital are its main priorities) – the main concepts of peace in circulation today – are in crisis.

Much of the debate about war that dominates IR is also indicative of very unambitious and sometimes insensitive assumptions about what peace is or should be. This ranges from the pragmatic sole focus on the removal of overt violence, an ethical peace centered on a certain “centricism,” an exclusive ideology, to a debate about a self-sustaining peace within a certain set of boundaries. Anatol Rapoport conceptualized “peace through strength”; “balance of power”; “collective security”; “peace through law”; “personal or religious pacifism”; and “revolutionary pacifism” (Rapoport 1992). Hedley Bull saw peace as the absence of war in an international society (Bull 1977; Bull and Watson 1984), though of course war was the key guarantee for individual state survival. State formation and survival are thus central to such thinking about peace. These views represent the mainstream approaches and indicate why the creation of an explicit debate about peace is both long overdue and vital in an international environment in which major foreign policy decisions seem to be taken in mono-ideational environment where ideas matter, but only certain, hegemonic ideas. To investigate the concept of peace more precisely, it needs to be thought in the context of these different theories, in the context of other disciplines, as well as from other positionalities or through other methodologies. The latter imply the possibility of a radical break from perspectives reliant on traditional or even critical IR theories.

With the exception of orthodox versions of realism and Marxism, approaches to IR theory offer a form of peace that many would recognize as personally acceptable. Realism fails to offer much for those interested in peace, unless peace is seen as Darwinian and an unreflexive, privileged concept only available to the powerful and a bounded commonwealth they may want to create. Most realist analysis expends its energy in reactive discussions based upon the inherency of violence in human nature, now discredited in other disciplines (Fry 2007: 184, 193), which are ultimately their own undoing. This is not to say that other approaches do not also suffer flaws, but the focus on individuals, society, justice, development, welfare, norms, transnationalism, institutionalism, or functionalism offers an opportunity for a form of peace that might be more sustainable because it is more broadly inclusive of actors and issues. In other words, parsimony, reductionism, and rationalism run counter to a peace that engages fully with the diversity of life on this planet, and its experiences.

Peace and Methodological Considerations

Any discussion of peace is susceptible to universalism, idealism, communitarianism, exceptionalism, and even rejectionism. A minority think that war is the engine of progress and peace encourages sloth, though this ignores the vast majority of evidence pointing the gigantic losses and costs of war. Yet, peace as a concept can easily collapse under the weight of its own ontological subjectivity. A genealogical approach can be used to challenge the common assumption of IR theorists that peace as a concept is ontologically stable, in terms of representing an objective truth (plausible or not), legitimating the exercise of power, and representing a universal ethic (Foucault 1980: 121). To rehearse this, a genealogical approach allows for an investigation of the subject without deference to a meta-narrative of power and knowledge in order to unsettle the depiction of a linear projection from “origin” to “truth.” The camouflaging of the subjective nature of peace

disguises ideology, hegemony, dividing practices, and marginalization. In addition, it is important to note the framework of negative or positive epistemology of peace, as developed by Rasmussen, which indicates an underlying ontological assumption within IR theory as to whether a broad or narrow version of peace is actually possible (Rasmussen 2003: 113).

The investigation of discourses indicates the problematic dynamics of positivist approaches (Foucault 1980: 30; 1972: 205) and allows for a deeper interrogation reaching beyond the state than a traditional positivist theoretical/empirical approach (Bleiker 2000). This enables an examination of competing concepts and discourses of peace derived from IR theory rather than accepting their orthodoxies. Peace, and in particular the liberal and realist foundations of the liberal peace, can be seen as a result of multiple hegemonies in IR (Hoare and Nowell-Smith 1971: 56–59). Deploying these approaches allows for an identification of the key flaws caused by the limited peace projects associated with peace in IR, and for a theoretical and pragmatic move to put some consideration of peace at the center of what has now become an “inter-discipline.”

For much of the existence of IR, the concept of peace has been in crisis, even though on the discipline’s founding after WW1 it was hoped it would help discover a postwar peace dividend. In this, it failed after WWI, which indicated yet again the limits of the victor’s peace, but it has been instrumental in developing a liberal discourse of peace after WWII, though this in itself has become much contested (as it certainly was during the Cold War). Even peace research has been criticized for having the potential to become “a council of imperialism” whereby telling the story of “power politics” means that researchers participate and reaffirm its tenets through disciplinary research methods and the continuing aspiration for a “Kantian University” (Ashley 2007). This effectively creates a “differend” underlining how institutions and frameworks may produce injustices even when operating in good faith (Lyotard 1988: xi). This requires the unpacking of the “muscular objectivism” (Appadurai 2001: 6) that has dominated IR in the western academy

and policy world, allowing an escape from what can be described as a liberal-realist methodology and ontology connected to positivist views of IR. The demand that all knowledge is narrowly replicable and should be confirmed and implemented by “re-search” in liberal institutions, organizations, agencies, and universities without need for a broader exploration is not adequate if IR is to contribute to peace. Thus, the notion of methodological pluralism has become a generally accepted objective for researchers across many disciplines who want to avoid parochial constraints on how research engages with significant dilemmas, and who accept the growing calls for more creative approaches to examining the “great questions” of IR (Shapiro 2004). To gain a multi-dimensional understanding of peace as one of these great questions, one needs to unsettle mimetic approaches to representation that do not recognize subjectivity, rather than trying to replicate an eternal truth or reality (Bleiker 2001: 527; Adorno 1997; Gadama 1999; Constantinou 2004). IR theory should fully engage with the differend – in which lies its often unproblematized claim to be able to interpret the other – that its orthodoxy may be guilty of producing, and open itself up to communication and learning across boundaries of knowledge in order to facilitate a “peace dividend” rather than a “peace differend.”

The critique developed here is an attempt to contribute to the ongoing repositioning of a discipline now increasingly concerned with IR’s connections with everyday life and agency. IR requires a research agenda for peace if its interdisciplinary contribution to knowledge – and speaking truth to power foregrounding the needs and rights of the subaltern (Spivak 1988), within the possibilities of capacity and the expanding terms of global justice – is to be developed. IR needs to engage broadly with interdisciplinary perspectives on peace if it is to contribute to the construction of a framework that allows for the breadth and depth required for peace to be accepted by all, from the local to the global, and therefore to be sustainable. Like social anthropology, IR needs to have an agenda for peace, not just to deal with war, violence, conflict, terrorism, and political order at the domestic and international

level within the confines of geopolitics and liberal internationalism, but also incorporating the interdisciplinary work that has been carried out in the areas of transnationalism and globalization, political economy, development, identity, culture and society, gender, children, and the environment, for example. Yet, where social anthropology, for example, has elucidated this agenda clearly, IR has been more reticent, despite the claims about peace made on the founding of the discipline (Gertz 2001). As with anthropology, IR should "... uncover counterhegemonic and silenced voices, and to explore the mechanisms of their silencing" (Bryant 2004: 8). Of course, this happens in the various areas, and especially in the subdisciplines of IR. Where there have been efforts to develop peace as a concept, this is by far counterbalanced by the efforts focused on war, terrorism, or conflict. Concepts of peace should be a cornerstone of IR interdisciplinary investigation of international politics and everyday life.

This is a perspective that can be described as "eirenist" (Richmond 2009, 2012), which stems from a subaltern positionality, when looking up at power structures and power relations, which helps to formulate new political claims for rights. In turn, these are connected to peace settlements and peacebuilding, shifting them from an association with the balance of power, social justice, or liberal peace, and towards newer conceptions of global justice.

Peace can thus be viewed from a number of perspectives. It can be a specific concept (one among many): it infers an ontological and epistemological position of being at peace, and knowing peace; it infers a methodological approach to accessing knowledge about peace and about constructing it; and it implies a theoretical approach, in which peace is a process and outcome defined by a specific theory.

The Concepts of Peace

What is peace? This would seem to be an obvious question deserving an obvious answer. Yet, the reluctance to open this debate could be merely an oversight, it could be because the answer is

too obvious to waste time upon it, or it could be because once opened up, the debate upon peace offers all kind of possibilities, liberal, illiberal, or radical, and possibly subversive. Two World Wars and the Cold War would seem to have settled this basic question of modernity in favor of the "liberal peace," made up of a victor's peace at its most basic level, an institutional peace to provide international governance and guarantees, a constitutional peace to ensure democracy and free trade, and a civil peace to ensure freedom and rights within society (Richmond 2005).

This in Anglo-American terms places the individual before the state, though in Continental varieties, it sees the individual as subordinate to the state (a little noted, but significant point) (Williams 2006: 6). Both variations rest upon a social contract between representatives and citizens. Yet, events since 1989 indicate that peace is not as it seems. There may be a liberal consensus on peace, but there are many technical, political, social, economic, and intellectual issues remaining, and the very universality of the post-Cold War liberal peace is still contested in terms of components, and the methods used to build it (from military intervention to the role of NGOs, international organizations, agencies, and international financial institutions).

One approach to thinking about peace that is commonly used is to look back at its historical, international, uses. These generally include the following: an Alexandrian peace, which depended upon a string of military conquests loosely linked together; a Pax Romana, which depended upon tight control of a territorial empire, and also included a "Carthaginian peace" in which the city of Carthage was raised to the ground and strewn with salt to make sure it would not re-emerge; an Augustine peace dependent upon the adoption and protection of a territorial version of Catholicism, and the notion of just war; the Westphalian peace, dependent upon the security of states, geopolitics, and the norms of territorial sovereignty; the Pax Britannia, dependent upon British domination of the seas, on trade and loose alliances with colonized peoples, or more broadly dependent on imperialism; the Paris Peace Treaty of 1919, dependent upon an

embryonic international organization, collective security, the self-determination of some populations into territorial entities, and democracy; the United Nations system, dependent upon collective security and international cooperation, a social peace entailing social justice, and the liberal peace, including upon democratization, free markets, human rights and the rule of law, development, and perhaps most of all, the support both normative and material, of the United States and its allies.

Finally, two new versions have appeared on the landscape: a neoliberal peace made up of states focused on security and trade; and a digital form of peace aimed at the tensions arising with the shift from analogue to digital processes and capacities and the radical changes this is engendering for society, the state, the global economy, and political life.

Though peace was supposed to be one of IR's key agendas when the discipline was founded in 1919, and certainly was explicitly part of the main institutional frameworks of the modern era, IR as a discipline has tended to deal with peace implicitly, through its theoretical readings in international order, of war, and history. It has done so in the light of assumptions about analogue forms of IR: face to face diplomacy and everyday life, moderated through human institutions at a certain speed, traditional forms of military, and the control of political discourse and law by key institutions such as certain states, or institutions of global governance, as well as fairly static forms of citizenship attached to a specific territory and state. The growth of global trade was connected with human development, understood as numerical indicator. This form of peace was slowly shifting away from its humanist components. Furthermore, the empirical events that mark IR tend to be associated with violence, rather than peace. As we move from the analogue to the digital, there is little reason to think matter will change. Even such an attempt as this study, ambitious though it might seem in its attempt to recast IR theory, is indicative of further and perhaps crucial weaknesses in both the discipline and its author's capacity to speak on behalf of anything other than the developed, Eurocentric, and enlightened

discourse of IR, increasingly shifting from governmentality to digital biopolitics. To attempt to speak on behalf of those from other cultures, religions, and so-called underdeveloped regions would assume the viability of sovereign man's discourse of the liberal peace, and its newer, neoliberal, and technological twists and turns, which are exactly what is thrown into doubt by a consideration of peace from a conflict-affected positionality.

The following dynamics are characteristic of the way in which peace is often thought of and deployed in IR:

- (i) Peace is always aspired to and provides an optimum, though idealistic, point of reference.
- (ii) It is viewed as an achievable global objective, based on universal liberal norms presented as an objective truth, associated with complete legitimacy (e.g., peacebuilding).
- (iii) It is viewed as a geographically bounded framework defined by geopolitics, territory, culture, identity, and national interests (a realist perspective).
- (iv) It is related to a certain ideology or political or economic framework (liberalism, neoliberalism, democracy, communism, socialism, etc.).
- (v) It is viewed as a limited temporal phase.
- (vi) It is based upon state (via statebuilding) or collective security (e.g., through NATO or the UN).
- (vii) It is based upon local, regional, or global forms of organization and governance, perhaps defined by a hegemonic actor or a regional and multilateral institution.
- (viii) It is viewed as a top-down institutional framework or a bottom-up civil society oriented framework.
- (ix) The environment, gender, identity, legitimacy, and justice are either ignored as being too complex or viewed to be essential.
- (x) Most thinking about peace in IR is predicated on reacting to conflict, and at best creating an externally supported peace, not on preventing or creating a self-sustaining peace.

- (xi) Once military security has been achieved, peace is built through trade and interdependence (the neoliberal view).
- (xii) Technology in a digital world opens up new questions about peace.

Even in the realms of peace and conflict studies, the focus has been on preventing violence rather than on a sustained attempt to develop a self-sustaining order. One has to draw on a range of different disciplines, where fragments of knowledge are available to help us understand this complex area. Where attempts have been made to reflect on a viable world order in a number of different quarters, the liberal peace often emerged as the main blueprint approach after the end of the Cold War and the collapse of socialism. Neoliberal versions of peace focused on limited state agency and maximum trade have most recently been foremost. What is most important about this treatment is that as an objective point of reference, it is possible for the diplomat, politician, official of international organizations, regional organizations, or international agencies and NGOs, to judge what is right and wrong in terms of aspirations, processes, institutions, and methods, in their particular areas of concern. The liberal peace briefly became the foil by which the world was after 1990 until attention in the 2000s turned to a model based upon security and prosperity rather than rights and democracy (pointing to a comparison say between Denmark or Singapore as possible versions).

Perspectives on Peace in IR Theory

Realism implies a peace found in the state centric balance of power, perhaps dominated by a hegemon. Peace is limited to a balance of power and power-sharing, if at all possible. Research is required to understand how this operates. Idealism and Utopianism claim a future possibility of a universal peace in which states and individuals are free, prosperous, and unthreatened mainly because they adopt the same norms and identities. Research is required to base this future system on. Pluralism, liberalism, internationalism, liberal

institutionalism, and neoliberalism see peace as existing in the institutionalization of liberal norms of economic, political, and social institutionalization of cooperation, regulation, and governance. Thus, research focuses on the conditions and processes of such governance. These approaches offer functional networks and organization, and transnationalism, between and beyond states, and the ensuing liberal peace is believed not to be hegemonic, but universal. The latter point allows the liberal peace to be constructed on behalf of conflict-affected societies by external actors. Structuralism and Marxist approaches see peace as lying in social justice, solidarity, and international cooperation along socialist lines, together with the absence of certain types of structural violence, often in structures which promote economic and class domination. Research is required to undercover power relations and their contradictions, stratification, and injustice, in order to perfect a response. Cosmopolitanism extends the liberal argument to include the development of a universal discourse between states, organizations, and actors for mutual accord. Constructivism combines these liberal and cosmopolitan understandings, allowing identities and ideas to modify state behavior but retaining the core of realism which sees states as underpinning order and peace as limited to institutional cooperation and a limited recognition of individual agency. Neoliberalism is also connected to these dynamics, shifting to the political benefits of market “authority” at the global, state, and social level, indicating that trade promotes cooperation at all levels (rather than extraction and exploitation). The neoliberal peace, meaning a light tough system of state and global governance focused on producing resilient and self-supporting populations, has become the most recent iteration of a global model for peace, for better or worse. Research focuses on these dynamics and their interactions.

Critical approaches also see peace as a consequence of a cosmopolitan, communicative transcendence of parochial understandings of global responsibility and action. Research needs to uncover its parameters to establish such global frameworks. More radically, poststructuralism

represents peace as resulting from the identification of the deep-rooted structures of dominance and their revolutionary replacement as a consequence of that identification by multiple and coexisting concepts of peace which respect the difference of others. It does not offer a notion of state of global governance, however, warning instead of the risks of centralized power. Research thus must uncover power-relations, but refrain from any form of prescriptive behavior hence forth. Postcolonialism offers a notion of peace in which the global north and south achieve material equality as states through self-determination and equalization, or in which the southern subaltern defines the nature of quality of peace – upon which research focuses.

These research agendas are also clearly connected to ideological understandings of human history and society (left and right): none can claim to be purely scientific because in many ways they involve political discussions about how power and resources are and should be distributed.

Further areas have also opened up as a result of more critical understandings of power and politics: gender approaches indicate the deep and historical power relations underlying patriarchy and the very subtle ways in which this connects to geopolitics, authoritarianism, antidemocratic practices, capitalism, and social patterns of power. It offers a more complex and sensitized approach to the nature of inter-generational human society, and the damage caused by war, pointing to far more complex understandings of peace. Environmental approaches also connect to this, in that the misuse of resources underpins power in geopolitical, geo-economic, authoritarian, and patriarchal frameworks, exhausting or ruining the biosphere in the process. Also following the same logic is the way geopolitics and geo-economics have now expanded into a digital and technological terrain, which however also raises new critical possibilities. This underlines a shift not just away from centralized forms of state or imperial power and radical thought, postcolonialism, and anarchism might have it, but also a shift away from the centrality of humans – and their states or institutions – in global politics (recently explored in so-called new-materialist literature).

This brings the debate to a crucial point. In the past, war and peace were thought of in what might be called “analogue” modes: determined by material factors, geography, distance, time, and so forth. New technologies, with their impact on knowledge, communication, mobilities, and the amplification of power – indeed, the very nature of power – give rise to a very changed environment and what might be called “digital” modes of war and peace. Old constraints for both, related to power, distance, geography, human interfaces (diplomacy, borders, boundaries, institutions, etc.), now no longer apply. This risks conventional modes of violence being made far more dangerous in the collusion between violence, the state, capital, and technology. It requires a digital peace in response.

Such an analysis, by the way, rests on a much longer perspective than social sciences traditionally permit. In geological time, archaeological, historical, philosophical, and anthropological literature suggests that the stimulants for political violence and war run far ahead of social, state, or international capacities for peacemaking, but in the very long term, and despite terrible disruption, peace reforms and re-emerges, drawing on social networks, transnational capacity, and underground movements that seek to dismantle and reform power and conflict practices. This literature on the collapse of complex societies among others points to the way in which war and crisis go hand in hand with peace and order building in the long term.

One common thread within many implicit debates about peace is its use as something close to the Platonic “ideal form.” In *The Republic*, Socrates argued that truth is found in an ideal form, associated with “goodness” rather than in subjective perceptions and interests. This type of thinking indicates that there could be an objective reality of peace, but because it is an ideal form, it is probably not fully attainable (Plato 1941). Yet, it is often assumed that history is driven by a linear, rational progression toward that ideal form. The notion of peace as an ideal form has different implications for different approaches to IR theory, spanning the implicit acceptance that peace is a guiding objective even though it cannot

be achieved to a belief that rational progress will lead to peace. Critical debates since the 1990s have attached this idea of the existence of an ideal form, and of linear progression, especially of the ends justifying the means to achieve it (which has become connected with fascism in particular). Recent counteractions have placed the state and the market at the center of peace and order, once again, replicating earlier debates between realists and liberals (or idealists) and seeming being condemned to repeat the past failure of nationalism and inequality.

Debates about peace thus span both classical and contemporary literatures, and a range of intellectual debates. These include what modern realists often described as the realism of Thucydides, Augustine, Hobbes, and Schmitt, in which peace was to be found in bounded and often tragic strategic thinking in which unitary actors delineate their own versions of peace within the framework provided by sovereign states. These approaches' tragedy lies in their unitary internal assumptions of a shared peace within political units based upon common interests and values, and the difficulties in maintaining peaceful relations with other external polities that have their own notions of peace. Peace in these terms is derived from territorial units, determined to protect their identities and interests, and is therefore extremely limited. For this reason, an international system comprised of states pursuing their interests is said to exist, which denotes few shared values beyond domestic politics, and rests upon the hierarchical ordering of international relations. This is based upon relative power and alliances derived from shared interests rather than shared values. Peace is conceptualized as very basic, or as a utopian ideal form, which is unobtainable.

A less harsh version of peace is to be found in the idealist, liberal, and liberal interventionist strands of international thought. These also focus on territorially bounded identity and interest units – mainly states – but see their interests defined in terms of cooperation and shared norms rather than power. Consequently, these approaches engender a concern with the nature of the domestic polity and the best way of creating domestic political harmony to ensure peaceful

relations between polities at the same time. This type of thinking has given rise to major projects to construct international regimes, laws, and norms to limit war and engineer peace between polities, including states and multilateral organizations. Here, questions of justice begin to emerge at a normative level in relation to peace between and within political units. Subsequent debates about justice revolve around the discovery and construction of legal frameworks based upon universal norms and so acceptable to the majority of states within an international society or community. This latter concept denotes the liberal belief that shared values at the international level indicate a community of states rather than merely system of states as realists would have it. For those interested in what happens inside states rather than between them, peace may rest upon the preservation of a socio-economic order, or the use of a particular type of constitution, or the construction of an equal and just society. Democratic peace theorists are able to extend this domestic peace to an international community. The liberal peace is the widely used term to describe this broad framework.

Lying behind such thinking is one of the core implicit debates in IR theory. Peace is seen to be something to aspire to though it is perhaps not achievable. This failure rests on human nature for realists, or the failure of institutions for liberal, and is reflected in the nature of states and organizations, which at best can attain a negative peace. This is the hallmark of conservative and realist thought, though for liberals, a positive peace is plausible through the adoption of certain domestic and international practices that are aimed at guaranteeing the rights and needs of individuals. For some, idealism could also be pragmatic and merely rest upon the discovery of the obstacles to peace, and then upon the deployment of the correct methods required to overcome these obstacles. The Westphalian international system represents a compromise upon both positions. This is indicative of Galtung's negative and positive peace framework, which is the most widely used conceptualization of peace (Galtung and Jacobson 2000). This can be extended, as Rasmussen has indicated, into a negative and positive

epistemology of peace, meaning that ontological assumptions are made about whether a negative or positive peace can exist (Rasmussen 2003: 113). The dominant mode of thought, however, which informs most IR theorists and policymaking today is that "... the logic of strategy pervades the upkeep of peace as much as the making of war..." (Luttwak 1987: xi). In other words, a negative epistemology of peace arises from strategic thinking, and even the application of force or threat. War can even therefore be seen as the "origin of peace" by exhausting opponents and their resources (Ibid: 57).

The Marxist-derived orthodoxy offers a concept of peace relating to the international political economy, the problem of economic exploitation of its weakest actors, and the subsequent need for radical reform. It posits that the international economic system defines the behavior of its key actors. From this perspective, peace can be seen in terms of development and the just division of resources. Social and economic justice provides the dominant focus of significance for peace within Marxist-influenced approaches in IR. This raises the issues of the emancipation of the individual, the provision of welfare, and the sharing of resources equitably across society without regard to political, economic, or social hierarchies. Beyond the state, Marxist-inspired approaches focus on the division of resources through an equitable international economy and the reform of neoliberal strategies of trade and development, as well as transnational approaches to global political and social communication designed to produce fairer communication, dialogue, and interaction.

For contemporary realists such as Waltz or Mearshimer, peace is very limited, delineated by a natural confluence of interests rather than a mechanistic reform or management of interests or resources. For contemporary and broadly liberal thinkers like Falk or Keohane, or pluralist thinkers like Burton, the latter provides the basis for a more humane peace guided by liberal norms and human needs. For English School thinkers, and for constructivists, peace is equated with the liberal nature of the state, which provides security and manages equitable and transparent

transnational mechanisms of exchange and communication. In terms of social constructivism, peace could be both pragmatic and ideational, and constructed by actors with the resources and broad consensus to provide both social legitimacy and material value. To some degree, critical theorists and certainly poststructuralists see more ambiguity in peace and war and recognized that peace would only be achieved in pluralist forms by uncovering the relationship between power and discourse, and the ways in which behavior is constrained and conditioned by the hidden exercise of hegemonic power. Peace is impeded by hegemony, "Orientalism," or by methodological, ontological barriers erected by the tradition of liberal-inspired post-Enlightenment rationalism and institutionalism. Critical theorists and post-structuralists are interested in identifying the structures of hegemony and domination, and the case of the former creating universal programs providing a cosmopolitan response. Newer critical debates push these intentions even further, identifying new and hidden power structures and dynamics, taking the autonomy of the subject ever further, pointing to environmental and research constraints, and questioning the nature of human society.

A major criticism of the "agenda for peace" in IR has been that it has been strongly influenced by idealism or utopianism, rather than reflecting a pragmatic engagement with the problems of IR, power, and structure, or the failings of human societies. However, the democratic peace project, and the broader forms of the liberal peace, illustrates that this is not the case. The concept of liberal peace has practical implications and can be conceptualized without necessarily entering into the realms of fantasy. Yet, this concept also is subject to significant problems. Because thinking about peace is dominated by a set of key assumptions, most theorists, policymakers, and practitioners assume that the concept of peace they deploy is ontologically stable. By extension, this means that peace can be engineered in environments where it may not yet be present. As a result, peace is constructed according to the preferences of those actors who are most involved in its construction. This confirms the pragmatism

inherent in an agenda for peace, but also the interests that may lurk behind it.

For a complex set of reasons, it has become the orthodoxy that attaining peace is a long-term process, which is probably not achievable but is worth working towards. As a result, intellectual energy tends to be focused upon problem-solving from the perspective of achieving a minimalist version of peace in the short term. This then provides the basis for a longer term refinement of the concept. In the short term, stopping violence and providing basic security are often the focus, with more sophisticated attempts to provide rights, resources, and democratic institutions seen as a longer term process. The hope is that the short-term peace will be superseded in the longer term by a self-sustaining peace according to a universally agreed formula. International theorists, political scientists, diplomats, officials, politicians, and citizens rarely question whether they understand these short-term and long-term concepts of peace, but instead take them as predetermined givens, which should simply be implemented when the opportunity arises. Certainly, among groups united by common interests, this appears to be a plausible position. What becomes clear when one examines the views of actors that are divided by interests, culture, conflict, ideology, religion, or other forms of identity, is that these assumptions of peace break down very easily. An assumption of peace tied up in the framework of a group's position on a particular piece of territory, or the superiority of one culture, identity, or religion over another, can easily become a source of conflict. One could make a strong argument that IR is actually about conflicting images of peace, as opposed to conflicting interests. Some of those images are based on hierarchical views, others on conceptions of justice and equality. Furthermore, it has recently become clear that realist, liberal, Marxist, and various critical concepts of peace have not been developed in view of the full set of dynamics peace needs to engage with. They are still very much preliminary theories.

War and peace are seen as separate concepts, which are the antithesis of each other, particularly for pluralists, liberals, constructivists, and critical theorists. Peace may masquerade as war for some

poststructuralists. For the new wave of radical thinkers, peace cannot be seen merely in political, economic, and social terms, however, but involves questions related to a much more holistic perspective of the global environment, nonhuman affairs, the Anthropocene, and the directions that new technologies take us in.

Yet, this separation has always been weak. For example, in the debate on peace-enforcement or humanitarian intervention, and on statebuilding, there has been much tension because their methods often rest on coercion and even violence. This is partly why the debates over state-building in Afghanistan and Iraq in the early 2000s have been so controversial. The lack of intervention aimed at peacebuilding or statebuilding has also been controversial, however, most notably in the case of Syria after 2011. This separation in part rests on the notion that sovereignty is the organizing system of the international system. A lack of separation, on the other hand, suggests the international system is not made up of sovereign states, but of constant interventions, whether multilateral, unilateral, or increasingly governmental or even automated, built into the very fabric of an interventionary rather than international system.

The contemporary concept of the liberal peace, which is expressed in different ways throughout much of IR theory, also makes this separation. The liberal peace provides the "good life" if its formulas are followed, for all, and without exception, and even if it rests on a coercive introduction through invasion or peace enforcement. But it is organized around states with some international coordination, rather at a global level and focused on the equalization of and between societies. This has mainly occurred within a western context, which immediately points to a major flaw in thinking about peace (and indeed in the capacity of this study), which is firmly rooted in a critique within this western, secular context. It suggested a hierarchy of states with the west leading the rest, rather than a system engaging with global equality as its eventual goal.

Furthermore, this version of peace rests upon a set of cultural, social, and political norms, often dressed up as being secular, though closely reflecting the nonsecular religious writings on

the issue. The Christian notion of crusades for peace, or the use of force to construct peace, is taken for granted in this context. Lawful self-defense and just war remain integral to the preservation of this “tranquil” order, once all peace efforts have failed. From this have sprung the great peace conferences that marked the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and which contributed to the emergence of the United Nations. Also visible have been the various social movements, charities, and NGOs campaigning for human rights, voting rights, the banning of certain weapons, and more recently, multiple forms of humanitarian assistance in conflict and disaster zones. Yet, where and when IR theorists do attempt to engage with peace as a concept, they often focus upon ending war, or preventing war, and in the context of units such as states, IOs, or even empires. The role and agency of individuals and societies in the creation of peace tends to be less valued, the focus instead being on grand-scale and top-down political, economic, military, social, and constitutional peace projects undertaken beyond the ken and capacity of the individual (Aron 2003 [1966]: 151).

The liberal peace is closely associated with the orthodoxy of IR theory and can be seen as an outcome of a hybridization of liberalism and realism. This can be described as *liberal-realism* in which force, controlled by states, underpins the democratic and liberal political, social, and economic institutions of a liberal polity. Liberal-realism explains both violence and order, and how they are related in the maintenances of domestic and international order. Structural thinking adds to this a concern with social justice and legitimacy, but this is mainly dealt with in a liberal-realist context by democratization rather than the promotion of social justice. So while the structuralist or Marxist agenda has been partially incorporated, it lacks the affinity of liberal-realism, where hierarchies, states, and groups accept certain levels of dominance and intrusive governance in order to also receive related, progressive freedoms. Equality or environmental sustainability is not a key issue, rather security and stability discursively construct international life.

A number of strategies for the conceptualization of peace can be identified in the literature on IR, and its subdisciplines. These can be summarized as follows:

- (i) Idealism depicts a future complete peace incorporating social, political, and economic harmony (of which there are no clear examples) represented by internationalism, world government, and federation. This type of peace is represented as desirable but effectively unobtainable. It is an “ideal form,” though for idealists, this does not mean that attempts to achieve it should be abandoned. Some idealists saw the League of Nations, and later the UN, attempts at disarmament, and the outlawing of war, as an attempt to attain this peace.
- (ii) Liberalism, liberal internationalism/institutionalism, neoliberalism, liberal-imperialism, and ultimately *liberal-realism* depict an achievable general peace derived from international institutions and organizations representing universal agreements and norms. This provides a basis for individualism, and social, political, and/or economic rights and responsibilities, based upon significant levels of justice and consent. It is generally acknowledged that this form of peace will probably be marred by injustice, terrorism, secessionism, or guerilla warfare perpetrated by marginalized actors which do not accept the norms and frameworks engendered in such universal agreements. Still, this represents a form of peace that is believed to be plausible, achievable, though often geographically limited by boundaries that exclude actors who do not conform to such a view of what is essentially an international society. Peace in this framework can be constructed by actors with the necessary knowledge and resources, probably resembling a Kantian Perpetual Peace. This is commonly referred to as the liberal peace, embodied in the UN system and a post-Cold War “international society.” In the early post-Cold War period, human rights and democracy were its most prominent features.

Post-2001, state security and openness to global trade have presented a different character – a neoliberal peace.

- (iii) Realism (and other power-/interest-focused theories) represents IR as relative anarchy managed by a powerful hegemon or an international system, which produces a basic international, though not necessarily domestic, order. This imposes a limited temporal and geographically bounded order, which attempts to manage or assuage border conflicts, territorial conflicts, ethnic, linguistic, and religious (and other identity conflicts). The resulting type of peace rests upon the balance of power, or domination, perceptions of threat, and the glorification of national interest in relation to military might. There have been many examples of this type of peace, from Alexander's conquest of the ancient world, the Pax Romana (and the destruction of Carthage), the Pax Britannia, and the Paris Peace Treaty of 1919. Neorealism extends this analysis into a discussion of unipolar, bipolar, and multipolar systems of power, but the focus is still on how geopolitics underpins the international system, and how war is part of that system, promoted by the structural conditions of international anarchy.
- (iv) Marxist-inspired structuralist insights into peace represent it as resting on social justice, equality, and an equitable system of international trade, where states and actors are not hierarchically organized according to socio-economic class indicators. Peace in these terms is achievable, but probably only after massive, and probably revolutionary, upheaval in the international economy, in traditional class and economic hierarchies, and in systems based upon imperialism. The goal is to reorder states and the international in a way which better represents the interests of workers and society, rather than wealthy elites.
- (v) Critical theory and poststructuralism, resting to some degree upon the intellectual legacy of (i), (ii), and (iv), depict an emancipatory peace, in multiple forms, in which

consideration of forms of justice, identity, and representation allows for marginalized actors (such as women, children, and minorities) and environmental factors can be considered. Critical theory seeks a universal basis to achieve such an outcome through ethical forms of communication, whereas poststructural approaches are wary of accepting its plausibility in the light of the dangers of universalism, the problem of relativism, and the genealogical scale of the obstacles to emancipation. Hypothetically, both approaches concur that marginalized actors and discourses should be recognized, and discourses and practices of domination should be removed through radical reform. Whether there can be a universal peace or multiple states of peace, reflecting pluralism/relativism and even anarchism, is heavily contested. However, there is still a strong sense that peace as an ideal form – or multiple ideal forms – could be achieved within critical theory. Poststructuralism certainly does not deny the possibility of peace but sees it reflecting difference, autonomy, everyday life, hybridity, and personal agency.

One Peace or Many Peaces?

One of the ways in which IR theory and international practices related to the ending of war can be evaluated is by opening up the conceptualization of peace by asking the question: one type of peace or many? Clearly, the liberal peace has been the dominant conceptualization deployed in these processes and has represented an amalgam of mainstream approaches to IR theory. The shift towards a neoliberal form of peace, connected closely to security and capital, to which the state is subservient, as opposed to rights, welfare, and democracy, has been strongly critiqued for decades. This makes it all the more surprising that the neoliberal peace became the next stage in the development of the concept. IR theory and associated debates also offer a powerful critique of both conceptualizations and offer a glimpse of alternatives (Mac Ginty 2007; Fry 2007; Kelly 2000).

These alternatives are as yet not comparable to the liberal/neoliberal peace in their intellectual conceptualization and have had little impact on the policy world. A debate about other forms of peace, and a negotiation between the different actors, levels of analysis, and many issues involved, is necessary. Indeed, for IR to contribute to its original promise (even if weak) of peace, it must become more fully involved in this process of theorization of peace and a negotiation between its possible concepts. By developing a clear idea of the type of peace that each theoretical perspective envisages, and also developing theoretical approaches in the light of this debate, this process of evaluation and development could begin, setting peace and its variants at the center of IR theory rather than as is currently the case, at its periphery. For this process to be meaningful, however, there also needs to be a debate about what basis such evaluation would rest on. Would it aspire to a cosmopolitan and universal set of basic norms? Would it aspire to a communitarian version of peace? Would it give rise to one peace or many peaces? If the latter, how would the *via media*, or process of negotiation and mediation, between them operate? Would peace be limited simply to the prevention of open violence, or would it aim to respond to structural violence, inequality, domination, and marginalization? What are the factors that create a sustainable peace in this case, how might such a peace be theorized, and then constructed? Or, perhaps, even more ambitiously, how can a self-sustaining peace be created?

A universal, single form of peace will inevitably be seen by some as hegemonic and oppressive, and though there may indeed be a dominant version or agenda for peace in IR theory and in practice (currently the liberal peace), this reflects the intellectual limitations of the orthodoxy of the discipline, its culture, ontology, and methods, rather than its achievements. It is clear that peace is essentially contested as concept. Inevitably, and following on from this, it is a subjective concept, depending on individual actors for definition, different methods and ontologies, and indeed different epistemological approaches. Its construction

is a result of the interplay of different actors' attempts to define peace and according to their relative interests, identities, power, and resources. For this reason, different approaches to IR theory produce different discourses about peace, some within the liberal peace framework, and some outside of it, both as rhetorical devices and as practices (Foucault 1980: 205; Hoare and Nowell-Smith 1971). In the context of such inter-subjective concepts, theory is inevitably intertwined with practice and cannot merely be read as representing an orthodoxy, hegemonic or otherwise. In practice, in different political, social, and economic environments around the world, there are rich variants of peace known to other disciplines or perhaps awaiting discovery. Yet, the liberal and later neoliberal peace have become hegemonic concepts. They are wedded to a contradictory mix of territorial sovereignty, the democratic state, global governance, rights, and economic trade and extraction. The shift into more complex and technological forms of politics (digital international relations) may advance rights and democracy, but it is perhaps more likely that it will facilitate the advance of neoliberalism over the liberal state.

To counter this, peace might instead be contextualized more subtly, geographically, and culturally, in terms of identity, and the evolution of the previous socio-economic polity. This means that one should be wary of a theoretical approach, or an empirical analysis, or a policy, which suggests that the institutions, norms, regimes, and constitutions associated with peace can be applied equally across the world. There needs to be a differentiation between international order and peace in a global context, as well as local order and peace in a local or indigenous context. This means that peace as a concept can be subjected to very specific interpretations, determined by politics, society, economy, demography, culture, religion, and language. It should not merely be a legitimating trope applied to bolster a specific theory, policy, or form or organization but conceptually and theoretically should represent a detailed engagement with the multiple dynamics of conflict, war, and disorder as well as the social, political, and

economic expectations, practices, and identities of its participants. Engaging with the multiple concepts of peace forms the heartland of IR's quest to contribute to an understanding of stability and order and the "good life" (and digital versions of the latter now on the horizon).

Cross-References

- ▶ [Assessment of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Conflict, Peace, and Ontological Security](#)
- ▶ [Consociationalism and Peace after Conflict](#)
- ▶ [Culture and Conflict Resolution](#)
- ▶ [Ethnographic Peace Research](#)
- ▶ [Feminist Peace Research](#)
- ▶ [Just War Theory Across Time and Culture](#)
- ▶ [Liberal Peacebuilding in a Transitional International Order](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding: Utopia and Reality](#)
- ▶ [Phenomenological Peace](#)
- ▶ [R2P and Prevention](#)

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Peace Infrastructures

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Synonyms

I4P; Infrastructures for conflict transformation; Infrastructures for peace; Peace and dialogue structures; Peace architecture

Definition

Peace infrastructures are persistent networks of institutions, organizations, and mechanisms that span various, potentially every level of a society, which contain expertise in conflict resolution or conflict transformation, and address ongoing or emerging conflicts within their respective areas of influence. Sometimes the individual components of such networks are also referred to as peace infrastructure. Usually, these peace infrastructures or their components are present in the context, in which case peacebuilding efforts aim at their strengthening, or they are created as part of a peacebuilding intervention.

No universally accepted definition of peace infrastructures exists in the literature or practice. The most widely referred to, but by no means exclusively accepted one, is that provided by UNDP's Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery, according to which an "infrastructure for peace is a network of interdependent systems, resources, values and skills held by government, civil society and community institutions that promote dialogue and consultation; prevent conflict and enable peaceful mediation when violence occurs in a society" (UNDP 2013).

Introduction

The concept "peace infrastructures" emerged in the peacebuilding literature of the 1990s along

with the shift of focus from conflict resolution to conflict transformation. The term itself was originally coined as "Infrastructures for Peace" by John Paul Lederach (1997, p. XVI), and this remains widely used both in the literature and in practice, along with its popular shorthand I4P. It emphasized the aspiration of transformatory approaches in peacebuilding to generate structural and cultural change beyond reaching a formal agreement between conflict parties (e.g., Notter and Diamond 1996).

Since its emergence, the concept has undergone changes and reinterpretations. The early formulations envisioned peace infrastructures as structures that concentrate, empower, and magnify the already existing capacities in conflict-affected societies to address ongoing and emerging conflicts as close to the source as possible while contributing to the dissemination of a culture of peace. Accordingly, they focused on civil society organizations, local governance structures, and religious and so-called traditional leaders and mechanisms of conflict resolution. Since the early 2010s institutional actors such as the United Nations and states have become more active in promoting the creation of peace infrastructures, which now increasingly reflect their priorities and assumptions.

Peace infrastructures can function as a general framework for conflict transformation or as an element of peacebuilding interventions. These differences have led to divergent trajectories in how the concept is used in practice.

Theory formation on peace infrastructures has primarily been driven by practice, especially locally driven efforts at violence mitigation and conflict resolution observed since the late 1980s and early 1990s. The experience accumulated from these influenced the emerging conflict transformation school from where the concept emerged. In the following the theoretical considerations will be explored, followed by practical ones. Some of the cases that inspired the theory will be discussed at the end of the entry, under Practice, along with cases that made use of the concept.

The Origins of Peace Infrastructures

Thinking about the structures necessary to sustain peace goes back to the earliest phase of theory construction in peacebuilding. Johan Galtung (1976) suggested that “structures must be found that remove causes of wars and offer alternatives to war in situations where wars might occur” (p. 298) in order to increase societies’ resilience to violent conflict. The end of the Cold War in the late 1980s opened up the space to address intrastate conflicts in ways that was not normally possible under the conditions of bipolarity, giving way to contemporary international peacebuilding. With the subsequent emergence of conflict transformation as an approach, the interest focused on those substate-level structures that held the potential to enhance the capacity of society to sustain peace:

I believe that the nature and characteristics of contemporary conflict suggest the need for a set of concepts and approaches that go beyond traditional statist diplomacy. Building peace in today’s conflicts calls for long-term commitment to establishing an infrastructure across the levels of society, an infrastructure that empowers the resources for reconciliation from within that society and maximizes the contribution from outside. (Lederach 1997, p. XVI)

Much of the more immediate impetus for theory construction came from praxis, the often grassroots-based localized peace initiatives (Mitchell and Nan 1997). These included various local peace committees and zones of peace created in regions as far apart as the Horn of Africa, Central America, and Southeast Asia (e.g., Garcia 1997; Hancock and Mitchell 2007; Lederach 1997; Lopez-Reyes 1997; Mouly 2013).

Accordingly, for the first decade of the concept’s existence, it was the primary domain of what Newman (2009) described as transformatory peacebuilding. It aimed at mobilizing the existing resources in society to create local peace and prevent local conflict, with a view of linking these initiatives with each other. To better understand what it meant, it is worth briefly dissecting the key points of Lederach’s original proposal from 1997: the need to go beyond statist diplomacy, long-term

commitment, reconciliation, and the middle-out approach (see: Kovács 2018, pp. 117–123).

Lederach, in particular, called for going beyond what he called “statist diplomacy,” which had characterized first-generation peace missions (Kenkel 2013), conflict management, and resolution. In intrastate conflicts, which came to dominate the post-Cold War landscape, state sovereignty could not be the basis of conflict settlement the way it is in “traditional” interstate conflict resolution. This was needed from a practical perspective as well, since intrastate conflicts are rooted in contradictions that cannot be resolved by the fiat of an agreement between high-level political leaders. Perhaps most importantly, however, Lederach’s proposal was part of a shift in the ethics of peacebuilding itself. Rather than systemic stability or state security, peacebuilding ought to prioritize the common people and create conditions in which they could thrive.

Since the time of Robert McNamara’s time at the helm of the World Bank (1968–1981), international development has been financed, and therefore planned and implemented, through the project approach (Ghani and Lockhart 2008, p. 95). Due to institutional reasons, peacebuilding inherited this. Lederach’s call for long-term commitment questions the project-based approach, pointing toward the high complexity of peacebuilding, the time needed for cultural change to take place, and the unpredictability that is implied in the work. Sustainable peace infrastructures can help overcome the shortcomings of the project time horizon and donor fatigue, which may set in much before the transformation from a conflict to a peaceful society happens.

Reconciliation for Lederach (1997) is a “point of encounter” (p. 27). This is understood metaphorically as the locus where paradoxes can be overcome and enemies can deal with the past and plot an interdependent course into the future (Lederach 1999, pp. 51–61) and, in the case of peace infrastructures, in the physical and institutional sense as well. Reconciliation is broader, however, than simply creating some kind of agreement between parties in conflict; it is a place where diverse social strata, insiders, and

outsiders, including domestic and international actors, come together. In this encounter the local is always primary to the international whose role it is to support the efforts of those seeking to build peace in the midst of conflict. Ultimately, only locally created, or at least accepted and embedded, peace infrastructures can be sustainable without continued supply of external resources.

Finally, the idea that the individual components of a peace infrastructure be connected across levels of society reflected Lederach's thinking at the time about the need for a middle-out approach. For him, leaders at the three main levels of society – elite, grassroots, and the middle – have particular opportunities and limitations in shaping a peace process. It is exactly the flow of information, coordination, and support across these levels that increase the possibility of success and sustainability. The creation of a persistent network – an infrastructure – makes this more likely to happen, while it also allows for better targeting of capacity development for key people and groups.

Divergent Definitions and Conceptual Core

The *logic* behind peace infrastructures was being used from the early 1990s by conflict transformation practitioners seeking both structural and cultural transformation in conflict-affected contexts, without them necessarily calling their approach to it “peace infrastructures.” From the mid-2000s, and in particular after 2010, however, the interest shifted to peace infrastructures as a discrete, circumscribed, and even deliberately designed kind of *intervention*, particularly in support of larger peacebuilding schemes. This can be traced to Kofi Annan's time as UN Secretary General, forcefully expressed in his progress report on the prevention of armed conflict to the General Assembly of the United Nations (2006), in which he encouraged states to develop their own infrastructures for peace along with pointers as to the possible forms in which it can be done.

Pursuant to this the UN took a proactive role in promoting the creation of peace infrastructures. In 2010, the United Nations Development

Programme (UNDP) convened a seminar in Naivasha, Kenya, where the participants drafted a definition: “dynamic network of interdependent structures, mechanisms, resources, values, and skills which, through dialogue and consultation, contribute to conflict prevention and peace-building in a society” (Kumar 2011, p. 385; Kumar and De la Haye 2012, p. 14). This evolved later into the UNDP definition at the beginning of the entry.

With the weight of the UN behind it, a period of intense attention and theorizing began. The *Journal of Peacebuilding and Development* dedicated a special issue (van Tongeren et al. 2012) to it, and the Berghof Foundation issued a Dialogue Series (Unger and Lundström 2013). The divergent definitions created since highlight the conceptual fluidity of peace infrastructures, the diverse experiences from which theories draw, and its double rootedness in the bottom-up tradition of conflict transformation and the top-down, state-centric approach of institutional peacebuilding. Ulrike Hopp-Nishanka (2013) defines it as follows:

Peace infrastructures consist of diverse domestic, inter-connected forms of engagement between conflict parties and other stakeholders. Their organisational elements can be established at all stages of peace and dialogue processes, at all levels of society, and with varying degrees of inclusion. The objective of peace infrastructure is to assist the parties (e.g. through capacity building or advice), the process (e.g. through mediation between the conflict parties or facilitation of public participation), or the implementation of process results (e.g. through monitoring and coordination of agreement implementation). (p. 4)

Hopp-Nishanka emphasizes the domestic character of peace infrastructures and by extension local ownership. At the same time, she is interested in creating tangible organizations/institutions, arguing that peace needs an “address.”

A very different definition is offered by Jeannine Suurmond and Prakash Mani Sharma (2013), who put what they call the “peace needs” of society at the center:

the structures, resources, and processes through which peace services are delivered at any level of a society. It is helpful to make a distinction between formal and informal infrastructures for peace. Formal infrastructures for peace have a physical

structure, a degree of organisation, stability, mandate, resources, training, and are recognised as such by their beneficiaries, or “users.” Examples include community mediation committees, local peace committees, peace radio stations, peace agreement monitoring mechanisms, religious institutions, and zones of peace. By contrast, informal infrastructures for peace are those that emerge on an ad hoc basis, do not require a physical structure, and operate without funds. Examples include the many traditional dispute resolution mechanisms [in Nepal]. Together, they make up the Infrastructure for Peace (I4P) of a society. (p. 3)

A definition as this allows for a freer, potentially more contextually appropriate and inclusive notion of peace to emerge and dictate the form – or absence of it – of peace infrastructures. The problem with such an approach is that it does not take into consideration the extent to which such needs can be shaped, created, or tailored by powerful elites or external interveners, leaving open space for manipulation.

The conceptual and practical heterogeneity shown by the four definitions – Lederach’s, UNDP’s, Hopp-Nishanka’s, and Suurmond and Sharma’s – discussed is an enduring character of peace infrastructures. While the UNDP definition dominates the field, many actors in the field pursue peacebuilding agenda that approximate alternative understandings.

Having said this, a conceptual core has emerged, which allows the identification of peace infrastructures as such, as well as the design of new ones. Accordingly, every such infrastructure has components that have the capacity – know-how, social embeddedness, authority, public trust, etc. – to resolve conflicts within their reach. These components can be very diverse, ranging from various peace committees (e.g., local, regional, national), traditional conflict resolution mechanisms (e.g., tribal leaders, religious authorities, village elders), peace museums, educational institutions, particularly those that deliberately decide to address conflicts in some way, zones of peace, local governments, ceasefire monitoring committees to the extent of their mandate, certain government agencies, various early-warning systems, and even the justice system of the state or non-state actors in some cases.

These components are networked in more-or-less persistent structures. This connectedness allows the components to support each other in resolving conflicts. Such support can be offered both horizontally and vertically. Horizontal support can take the form of providing advice, independent or disinterested counsel, and intervention. Vertically, it can facilitate information flows and provide expertise missing at other levels, such as contextual knowledge or technical know-how.

The inclusion of the “right” actors in a peace infrastructure is a central issue. This typically means the broadly understood civil society, including local nongovernmental organizations, community-based organizations, churches and religious leaders, traditional leaders, educational institutions, or the local structures of the state such as municipal governments (Odendaal 2010, pp. 19–22). More often than not, particularly in the cases where peace infrastructures emerge organically, these are their originators. Ultimately, long-term conflict transformation depends on civil society; it makes sense, therefore, to include its members in these efforts.

The strategic inclusion of key conflict actors in the infrastructures is necessary for reasons of legitimacy and viability (Odendaal 2012). This can mean the direct inclusion of both (all) or only one conflict party, or only their indirect inclusion. Odendaal and Olivier (2008, pp. 13–14) argue that both sides to a conflict need to be included, while Hopp-Nishanka (2013) suggests that at least one of the actors should be part of a peace infrastructure. There are numerous examples, however, where the inclusion of conflict actors was only indirect, such as in the case of local peace committees in Nicaragua (Mouly 2013) or peace zones in the Philippines (Avruch and Jose 2007), where the infrastructures themselves were purely civilian (civil society, the religious). In these cases the organizers engaged the armed groups and the state’s military, getting them to (explicitly) agree not to initiate hostilities or even to not enter armed within a defined area in order to reduce violence in their localities. Ultimately, which actors comprise a peace infrastructure is dependent on the capacities and

opportunities present in the context, though as they progress engaging, possibly integrating the conflict actors and the state – itself a conflict actor in most cases – is inevitable.

Contemporary Peace Infrastructures

At present, the term peace infrastructure covers a wide range of structures, initiatives, and networks. These include organically-emerged, grassroots initiatives, which are created by and among populations directly affected by armed conflict in a bid to reduce violence and/or to resolve conflicts within their purview locally; already existing mechanisms such as indigenous and other “traditional” forms of conflict resolution, especially when newly-networked either with similar entities or others to function as such; sometimes they are created, in a top-down fashion, by external interveners, such as the UN, or the state itself where the conflict takes place. This diversity in form is not only generated by the great variety of agents who create them but is also required by the need to be both viable and locally relevant and to be able – eventually – to connect to other components.

Examples of possible components include zones of peace; dialogue platforms; local, regional, and national peace committees; peace museums; religious institutions; educational institutions and academic programs; think tanks; art centers; early-warning mechanisms; and certain government units among others (e.g., Ryan 2012; Suurmond and Sharma 2013; van Tongeren 2011).

It is important to be aware that the heightened interest among international and/or institutional peacebuilding actors, particularly those working within a liberal peacebuilding framework, has come about in parallel with the so-called “local turn” peacebuilding (e.g., Leonardsson and Rudd 2015; Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013; Paffenholz 2015) and the emergence of hybridity as an important area of enquiry in the peace and conflict research agenda (e.g., Boege et al. 2008; Clements et al. 2007; Mac Ginty 2011; Millar 2014). While Lederach (1997) already put local peacebuilders at the center of his conflict transformation

framework, it was adopted about a decade later by the abovementioned institutional actors, often creating designed hybrid structures, trying to merge traditional, local systems and values with those of a modern Weberian state, globalized market economy, and electoral democracy.

Categorizing Peace Infrastructures: Formal and Informal, Top-down and Bottom-up

One way to categorize peace infrastructures and their components is distinguishing between formal or informal ones. There are two – mutually compatible – ways to think about formal peace infrastructures, either through their relationship with the state or through their persistence. Thus, those that are either part of the state apparatus, for example, a local dispute resolution body organized by a state agency or a local government, or a specialized unit within the apparatus such as a ministry or one of its deconcentrated organs are formal. Some are created by the state – or an intergovernmental organization – without being state institutions themselves. Think tanks, public foundations, or so-called government-organized nongovernmental organizations (GONGOs) belong to this group. Finally, there are organically grown, often originally grassroots or civil society organizations that are officially recognized by the state. These are also formal peace infrastructures.

Even without being a state institution or having been recognized by the state, one can also think of formal infrastructures as those that have a physical and/or institutional structure that remains in place for an extended period of time. These are often civil society organizations, civic associations, and so on that have some tangible physical presence such as an office, an internal structure that allows for division of labor, and/or mechanisms to secure their functioning even when the membership changes. Some indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms also belong to this type. They are present in communities for many generations, usually adapting in some way to changing circumstances, their membership and point of access is known in the community, and they have

long-established methods to settle disputes. Whether they are recognized by the state and in what form varies from country to country and from case to case.

Informal infrastructures are, in contrast, those that are not organized or recognized by the state, or which lack the kind of structure or long-term physical presence in an area described above. They are often transient, though some might persist for longer periods. Typical examples include local, grassroots, or civic initiatives or ad hoc dialogue platforms created by established entities such as NGOs, other civil society organizations, local governments, and so on. Some of these later become formalized either through co-optation by the state or through their own decision.

The recent literature almost uniformly argues in favor of creating formal peace infrastructures, even when they recognize the contributions of informal ones (e.g., Hopp-Nishanka 2013; Suurmond and Sharma 2013), or argue for their superiority in some aspects (Odendaal 2010). This fits the liberal peacebuilding paradigm, which to a significant extent – and increasingly – overlaps with statebuilding (e.g., Cubitt 2013; Kovács 2018). While it is possible, in theory, for institutional actors to stimulate the creation of informal peace infrastructures, this seldom if ever happens. Similarly, these actors can engage already existing ones, but the interaction between them pushes informal structures toward formalization.

It is also possible to distinguish between peace infrastructures that originated in a bottom-up or top-down process. This tends to overlap with the formal-informal division but not entirely. There are examples of formal peace infrastructures created close to the site of conflict by local governments, which were then scaled up by the national government to eventually span all levels of the administrative apparatus of the state as was seen in Ghana (Odendaal 2012). Examples also abound where bottom-up informal peace infrastructures assumed a more formal character over time, often linking up with state institutions in the process (e.g., Adan and Pkalya 2006; Mouly 2013).

Now that peace infrastructures have become a “peacebuilding tool” in domestic and international interventions, the aforementioned

localization and hybridity also reinforce the preference for creating formal infrastructures or formalizing informal ones. The “local” is often not readily accessible to institutional peacebuilding actors for a number of reasons including geographical distance or isolation, institutional distance, the absence of the state, and epistemological differences between modern, rational-bureaucratic institutions and organizations formed along different – often called “traditional” – principles. Thus, on the one hand, the experience of the first two decades of peacebuilding points to the necessity of engaging and eventually integrating “the local;” on the other hand, this “local” does not necessarily lend itself easily to this. Creating hybrid peace infrastructures is one way to bridge this gap. It creates a space where institutional peacebuilding actors – be they the state or international organizations – can insert their structures – and epistemology – to make the traditional accessible and legible while having direct access to it and benefiting from its legitimacy. At the same time, designed hybrid peace infrastructures may serve the needs of traditional, often indigenous, communities inasmuch as they can allow them to adapt to and survive in a changed environment, they can neither hold at bay nor transform.

Conceptually, therefore, it is useful to disaggregate these and treat them as distinct phenomena. A structure organically emerging from a conflict context as a way to improve the survival chances of a community is fundamentally different to a structure put in place from outside with the aim of stabilization or statebuilding. Genuinely local initiatives may or may not be “traditional;” in fact they are often nontraditional and novel, but they emerge from the context and as such can be seen as adaptation of a society to changing circumstances. In this sense, they are emancipatory. Formal peace infrastructures, especially the ones created in a top-down fashion, tend to serve the interests of the state and statebuilding, which can be at odds with the interests of communities affected by conflict. In other words, locally emerging peace infrastructures can be seen as the emergence of new socio-cultural traits within society, attempts at adapting to changed

circumstances, while top-down ones are often constraints put in place by the higher levels that local societies eventually need to adapt to.

It does not follow that formal peace infrastructures cannot, by definition, be emancipatory, or that they cannot serve the interests of these communities, but the priorities are clearly different, as are the actors in control of them. This can have practical implications for peacebuilding actors who seek to engage with these peace infrastructures whether they be complete outsiders such as international organizations (the UN or INGOs) or semi-outsiders like domestic NGOs from outside the area of the peace infrastructure in question.

The Importance of Peace Infrastructures

As Ulrike Hopp-Nishanka (2013) argued, the fundamental usefulness of having a peace infrastructure in place in a conflict or post-conflict situation is that it “gives peace an address.” Persistent structures such as these can generate trust within communities divided by violent conflict, as well as trust in that conflicts can be resolved nonviolently. When a group of people come together and create a peace infrastructure, it is partly a public expression of their belief in and commitment to creating a more peaceful community or to address underlying causes of conflict not talked about (e.g., Iyer 2004). While this may seem trivial, in highly polarized situations, talking about peace may be perceived as disloyalty, even betrayal. Thus, challenging cultures of violence and silence is a crucial step toward building peace.

When a peace infrastructure is in place, it allows for the accumulation of expertise in conflict resolution within a community. This is an invaluable resource well beyond addressing the armed conflict directly. Such knowledge and skills help resolve communal-level conflicts of various kinds from potentially violent marital issues to land disputes. Often, these are effective local drivers of armed conflict, but even when not, it is important for a community to have the capacity to address them nonviolently.

When properly functioning, a peace infrastructure can facilitate the flow of information needed

to prevent the outbreak of violence and direct peacebuilding resources to where they are needed (e.g., Brand-Jacobsen and van Tongeren 2012; Ryan 2012).

Finally, peace infrastructures can be a point of encounter between a conflict-affected community and external peacebuilders and, if properly handled, a site of empowerment. Sooner or later communities in peacebuilding contexts come into contact with outside peacebuilding actors, be they agents of the state, domestic or international NGOs, or international organizations. From the perspective of the outsiders, a compatible interlocutor is usually necessary to have access to a community, which is why much of international peace work is done through some form of partnership approach with local civil society or community-based organizations. Thus, if there is a peace infrastructure in place at any level in a society, it provides a much needed – and particularly well-suited – entry point for peacebuilding. Conversely, a peace infrastructure can attract the outside resources it needs to help its work. And while on the surface the relationship between well-endowed external (especially international) actors and local ones is highly asymmetrical, the contextual knowledge, embeddedness, and legitimacy of the local actors balance out the resource differential. Thus, when its members are conscious and prepared, a peace infrastructure can have quite broad space to set the parameters of its engagement with more powerful external actors, zones of peace being a case in point where they have been able to achieve this with armed factions. This is where mid-level domestic or international NGOs can play a pivotal role, developing the capacity of local actors to better manage these relationships.

Criticism

When revisiting the concept, John Paul Lederach (2012, pp. 11–12) warned in unambiguous terms of the risks of institutionalization, professionalization, and bureaucratization. According to him, the creation of permanent institutions, such as those promoted by institutional peacebuilding actors, means the creation of bureaucracies, with

their attendant rules and regulations, specialization and compartmentalization, and the resulting reduction of creativity and generative capacity, and finally an interest in self-perpetuation.

Professionalization is linked to bureaucratization, which increasingly needs staff trained and qualified in particular ways. This, Lederach argued, is supposed to increase the legitimacy of the institutions, but it also leads to channeling resources toward incidentals such as formalized tools, standardized tasks, and ultimately, again, further decrease in creativity. It also creates a distance between the communities peace infrastructures serve and the people who staff them. While it fits well with the ways of working of international peacebuilding organizations, it does not lead to improved peacebuilding outcomes (Lederach 2012, p. 12).

Elite takeover happens when a peace infrastructure is captured by local or national elites, setting its agenda in a way that it reflects the elite's notions of peace and their interests. No kind of peace infrastructure is immune to elite takeover. More often than not, it is members of the elite themselves who are key conveners of a peace infrastructure. They can be local leaders, elders, members of the clergy, tribal leaders, and so on, such as it happened in Nicaragua (see below). This in itself does not constitute elite takeover, given that they exercise their authority in the interests of their community, for example. Sometimes, local or domestic elites are not the creators of the peace infrastructures, but they are able to use their position to take control of and use them to their own ends.

Finally, a third line of criticism concerns the co-optation of peace infrastructures – individual entities as well as the approach itself – by, generally, the liberal peacebuilding project and, specifically, peacebuilding-as-statebuilding. Oliver Richmond (2013a), for example, pointed out the inherent tension between peace formation processes originating from and rooted in the conflict-affected society and the statebuilding, institutionalizing impulses of internationals, as well as the possibility of synthesis (Richmond 2013b). Peace infrastructures when used in the interest of statebuilding are easily

instrumentalized by elites, most especially domestic and local elites. They can use them to penetrate hitherto hard-to-reach segments of society and geographical areas to expand state power that serves the interest of the elites in control of the state (Kovács 2018). Such efforts involve co-optation and the remaking of local societies in the image of the modern state, simplifying and making it more legible to power. And while facilitating information flows is a possible key advantage of having a peace infrastructure, when mobilized toward the ends of building the state, this can easily mean channeling intelligence up and instructions down.

Peace Infrastructures in Practice

Their spontaneous emergence in communities and their interactions with the state and international peacebuilding actors or, vice versa, their creation by the latter to reach the local means the form of peace infrastructures and the trajectories they take are as diverse as the cases themselves. The three examples below highlight some of this diversity. Other examples not detailed here are also worth mentioning: in South Africa the dismantling of apartheid was accompanied by a peace infrastructure with an expiry date – it was meant to close with the transition (Ball and Spies 1998); in Nepal the state created a Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction as part of its – internationally guided – peace process, accompanied by a top-down state-organized network of peace infrastructures (Giessmann 2016; Suurmond and Sharma 2013); the Ghanaian state developed its own national peace infrastructure by appropriating local-level ideas, creating a pyramidal hierarchical structure mirroring the state's administrative structure, into which it co-opted civil society, religious, and so-called traditional leaders (Verzat 2014), a clear example of a state attempting to make a complex social reality simple and legible.

When developing the concept of infrastructures for peace, Lederach (1997) relied strongly on the experience of Nicaragua, making the various local peace initiatives there the first to be discussed as such. During the civil war of the

1980s, peace initiatives sprung up in various parts of the country, initiated and supported by local community and religious leaders of the Catholic and Protestant churches. Beyond them, the membership of these structures included so-called insider mediators (residents trusted by the conflict parties) and in some cases the representatives of the conflict parties themselves. They “supplemented existing networks of personal contacts, enabling information exchange and continual dialogue” (Odendaal 2010, pp. 29–30).

These came to be called peace commissions after the Esquipulas II peace agreement called for the creation of a National Reconciliation Commission, tasked by Daniel Ortega with creating “a more extensive internal structure that included region-specific commissions and an extensive network of local commissions” (Lederach 1997, p. 50). Thus, the peace infrastructure of Nicaragua simultaneously emerged from bottom-up and top-down, meeting as a result of a prospering peace process to end formal hostilities as well as contributing to its success. The individual peace infrastructures created during the 1980s were not uniformly successful, yet some have adapted to the post-conflict context and survived into the 2010s (Mouly 2013).

Much of the recent literature (e.g., Chuma and Ojielo 2012; Kumar and De la Haye 2012; Odendaal 2010; van Tongeren 2011) identifies the experience of the Wajir District Development Committee as a key inspiration for the approach. The first recorded peace infrastructure grew out from the initiative of a group of local women in the Wajir District of Kenya, on the Somali border, who sought to ameliorate the clan conflicts in the region. They did this by persuading clan leaders to engage in addressing the clan feuds. Later, seeing the success of the initiative led to its expansion into a civil society peace movement (Adan and Pkalya 2006), generating a code of conduct between the clan elders. Eventually, the civil society organizers approached the representatives of the state, pursuant to which the Wajir District Development Committee was created with the participation of “the heads of all government departments, representatives of various peace groups, religious leaders, NGO representatives,

village chiefs and security officers” (Odendaal 2010, p. 40).

The case of Wajir is interesting because its local success prompted the government, backed by the international donor community, to replicate the model and export it to other parts of the country. Likely this is why it became the go-to case study of peace infrastructures in the 2010s when international donors, particularly UNDP, adopted the approach. A great number of local peace committees were established by a variety of actors including the state, which eventually created the National Steering Committee on Peacebuilding and Conflict Management (NSC) to coordinate peacebuilding activities in Kenya, including the local peace committees (Odendaal 2010, pp. 40–41).

Kenya’s peace infrastructure was further expanded and diversified after the election-related violence of 2007–2008, during which the presence of local peace committees had a mitigating effect (Chuma and Ojielo 2012, pp. 27–28). This eventually led to the creation of the Uwiano Platform, an early-warning mechanism created for the 2010 constitutional referendum (Chuma and Ojielo 2012).

In a way, the example of the Philippines is an illustration of the shift from organically grown initiatives that provided the basis of the early thinking about peace infrastructures in the 1990s to a more international theory-driven top-down creation of peace infrastructures with an aim to bolster the state. Over the course of 60 years of conflict between the government and Moro and communist insurgents, the Philippines gave rise to a number of initiatives that fit the within the peace infrastructure approach, though they are not called so. These are found both ends of the top-down-bottom-up spectrum, predominantly grassroots initiatives as well as government-organized ones.

On the one hand, from the 1980s onward several peace zones have been created in all conflict areas of the country, in which civilian communities declared their villages as zones of peace (some used different terminology such as space of peace) (e.g., Avruch and Jose 2007; Garcia 1997; Iyer 2004; Macaspac 2018). The common thread among these is that they are local initiatives,

often though not always supported by external ranging from national and international NGOs to religious and academic institutions. Peace zones are created through an agreement between the community and the armed factions – typically the Armed Forces of the Philippines and a non-state armed group present in the area – in which certain rules of behavior are laid down to ensure armed violence does not take place within the designated zone. The communities also design mechanisms to deal with intra-communal conflict, to promote a culture of peace, and to facilitate development-oriented activities. Some of these have survived for decades, while many initiatives eventually failed. And while it is desirable that these zones contribute to the larger peace processes (GTZ *n.d.*), and many are supported by organizations with wide reach, they have not been organized into some kind of mutually supporting network.

On the other hand, the government initiated an ambitious program in 2010, the Payapa at Masaganang Pamayanan (PAMANA, Peaceful and Prosperous Community) to address what the government sees as the root causes of the conflict, such as the absence of government in remote areas and the lack of access to government services. The design itself is rooted in already existing economic development and conditional cash transfer programs of the government, which they tweaked to meet peacebuilding needs, in the idea and design of the World Bank-funded Kecamatan Development Program in Indonesia and in earlier counterinsurgency approaches of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, themselves based on the experience of the Thai military in the Deep South of Thailand (Kovács 2018, pp. 181–185).

Divided into three “pillars,” the program targets the macro, meso-, and local levels. At the macro level it seeks to create peace-promoting legislation and improve governance in the line agencies, regional, provincial, and municipal levels of government. The rest of the program is focused on development projects, primarily, though not exclusively physical infrastructure. These are large installations at the meso- (subregional, provincial, municipal) level and small-scale infrastructure projects at the village-level,

where they are decided on and often implemented through a community-based participatory process. The government uses these projects to address the abovementioned supposed causes of conflict, to instill conflict sensitivity in the decision-making, planning, and implementation processes of the government at all levels of public administration, and finally to demonstrate its commitment to constituencies of insurgent groups with which it has a peace agreement and to win the hearts and minds of the population in the areas of communist New People’s Army with which it is at open conflict (Kovács 2018).

Summary

Peace infrastructures are a broad concept, manifested in diverse organizational forms. Much of the theory construction, especially during the 1990s and 2000s, followed practice. A conceptual core has emerged since, which includes the existence of some persistent structures, networked with others, that have the capacity to address conflict at their level and location and possibly assist other members of the network to do the same. The relative openness of the concept, in combination with the great variety of actual peace infrastructures, allows for a creative yet guided approach to building peace in conflict-affected and post-conflict societies. While they can be important loci of communal self-empowerment, peace infrastructures are often drawn into the service of statebuilding, to consolidate systems of domination. In such cases it may be more appropriate to talk about infrastructures for pacification, rather than infrastructures for peace.

The networked nature of peace infrastructures can help integrating various levels of intervention, in particular “the local,” which is often hard to reach – though whether that integration serves to emancipate or to pacify depends to a significant extent on the circumstances and the agenda of the actors involved. It can also integrate diverse actors horizontally and thus help mobilize peacebuilding resources in ways other interventions may not be able to. As a practical approach, they can help reduce violence, rebuild trust, and consolidate

the gains of peace processes. When functioning well, peace infrastructures can serve their communities' needs well beyond the armed conflicts as a reaction to which they were created.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Civil Society Inclusion in Peace Mediation](#)
- ▶ [Decentralization and Conflict Prevention](#)
- ▶ [Hybrid Political Orders and Hybrid Peace](#)
- ▶ [Nonviolence and Civil Resistance](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding and Spatial Transformation](#)

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Peace Journalism

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Synonyms

Conflict resolution; Conflict sensitive journalism; Constructive journalism; News and conflict; Peace; Peace and conflict studies; War

Definition

Peace journalism refers to a particular practice of journalism that aims to contribute toward peace in various conflict situations. Peace journalism merges aspects from conflict studies and journalism studies to enable a constructive model of journalism. Peace journalism provides a

two-tiered approach: Peace journalism offers a framework to critique the shortfalls of traditional war journalism and it expounds a set of standards for practitioners to constructively report on conflict situations with a view toward achieving peace. Peace journalism could help to mitigate crises because it is based on constructive norms that enable journalists to report on the causes of societal problems and provide constructive strategies for social action and change. There are many actual examples of peace journalism especially in the alternative news media sphere.

Introduction

During the mid-1990s, peace journalism was established as a subfield in peace and conflict studies (Lynch and McGoldrick 2007, p. 248). The Norwegian peace researcher Johan Galtung initially introduced the concept in the 1970s to institutionalize “peace” as the major reference point for journalists (Hanitzsch 2007, p. 2). Peace journalism was further developed by journalists and scholars Jake Lynch and Annabel McGoldrick (2005, 2007) who systematically assessed how journalistic reporting practices can become more attentive to peace imperatives. Since then, many other works have advanced and refined the concept with an emphasis on either enhancing journalistic practices or critiquing the shortcomings of the professional mainstream news media (henceforth referred to as news media) (for an overview see Keeble et al. 2010). Peace journalism is set against the reporting practices and performances of the news media while it also goes beyond them in that it proposes new standards for journalism (Lynch and McGoldrick 2007, p. 248). But how does peace journalism differ from classic professional journalism? What are the defining features of peace journalism? And what needs to be done so that professional journalist can become more attentive to the peace journalism model? These questions will be answered in this entry. The next section will highlight the differences between war and peace journalism by way of offering a critical assessment of news reporting. The factors that explain

why the news media tend to support discourses of war and violence will be briefly unpacked based on actual examples of reporting. Afterward, the peace journalism model will be discussed in more detail and with reference to scholarship. Finally, it will be assessed how the peace journalism model could be implemented in contemporary news practices.

War and Peace Journalism

Galtung (2013 [1998], p. 96) argues that conflicts may be viewed either in terms of a “high road,” focusing “on the *conflict* and its *peaceful transformation*,” or a “low road,” focusing “on the meta-conflict that comes after the root conflict, created by *violence* and *war*, and the question of who wins [original emphasis].” The high road perspective looks deeper at the conflict and its causes (society, economy, culture, history, and internal and external parties) aiming toward transformation. In contrast, the low road view treats conflict like a “zero-sum” game, thereby evaluating its symptoms (goals, war, battles, negotiations, casualties, winners, and losers) with a view toward which side is winning (Galtung 2013 [1998], pp. 96–97).

Journalism and the news media more broadly, Galtung writes, largely follow the low road which can also be described as war journalism (2013 [1998], pp. 96, 99). According to Galtung, journalists tend to regard conflicts as a sports competition and often back one side (2013 [1998], pp. 96–97). Hence, peace journalism was developed with a critical view toward how journalists and news media treat conflict and contribute to rather than mitigate war and violence. As Galtung (2013 [1998], p. 99) further argues: “The war focus in war journalism will polarize and escalate, calling for hatred and more violence [. . .].”

It is, in fact, well established, that the news media has supported discourses of war and military intervention (Carruthers 2000; Zollmann 2017). Consider the NATO intervention in Libya in March 2011: as studies have demonstrated, the US, UK, and German news media supported a NATO-led intervention to stop alleged human

rights violations by the regime of former Libyan President Muammar al-Gaddafi against protestors in the city Benghazi (Zollmann 2017). This so-called “humanitarian intervention” turned out to be far more deadly than the violence that had preceded it and which was used as a pretext to intervene. According to one scholarly estimate by Alan J. Kuperman, “NATO intervention magnified the death toll in Libya by about seven to ten times” (2013, p. 123). In September 2016, the British Parliament’s House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee published the findings of their investigation into the war in Libya. According to the report, “the proposition that Muammar Gaddafi would have ordered the massacre of civilians in Benghazi was not supported by the available evidence” (Foreign Affairs Committee 2016). The “Gaddafi regime had retaken towns from the rebels without attacking civilians in early February 2011,” the report stated (Foreign Affairs Committee 2016). Hence, the news media had facilitated a partisan and misleading discourse about Libya that led to an escalation rather than mitigation of violence in the fashion of war journalism – with disastrous effects for Libya. A further example constituted the reporting of the 2003 Iraq War. Iraq’s alleged possession of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) served as a political discourse to legitimize a full-scale US-UK invasion of Iraq outside of the legal limits set by the UN Charter. During the buildup to war, the US and UK news media – including so-called “quality” news outlets like the New York Times and the BBC – consistently reported that Iraq had the capability to launch WMDs against other countries (Edwards and Cromwell 2006; Friel and Falk 2007; Lewis et al. 2006). Yet, well before the actual invasion in March 2003, evidence by the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) suggested that Iraq had already been disarmed by 1998 (United Nations 1999). But the news media had hardly reported the official UNSCOM evidence. As Susan D. Moeller (2004, p. 3) observes in a study of news media reporting of the Iraq War, “Most media outlets represented WMD as a monolithic menace” and “stenographically reported the incumbent administration’s perspective on WMD, giving too little critical

examination of the way officials framed the events, issues, threats, and policy options.” Iraq War reporting consequently shared the properties that Galtung identified as war journalism: During the initial invasion phase, news media rallied around the frames provided by the US-UK governments while downplaying the narratives emerging from the Iraqi side as well as from United Nations expert opinion. Furthermore, news media emphasized “battle” and “war” at the expense of contextualizing the underlying economic and geopolitical interests that drove the US-UK war effort. And finally, when the “victory” of the US-UK side was reported in May 2003, the news media hardly interrogated how US-UK military action had caused substantial civilian deaths and destruction of infrastructure in Iraq.

How can this media performance be explained? Contrary to notions of press freedom and independence, research suggest that the news media has insufficient distance from state, economic, and military power. Restrictions imposed on the news media by the military during times of war, ideological factors such as patriotic rally round the flag effects as well as sourcing connections between journalists and politicians explain the proximity between news media and the state during times of conflict (for an overview see Zollmann 2017).

Peace journalism, thus, attempts to counterbalance the many shortfalls associated with the news media including its convention to produce war journalism. For instance, an example of peace journalism constitutes the Iraq War reporting by the independent journalist Dahr Jamail who traveled to Iraq as a freelance writer in 2004 (see Zollmann 2010). Jamail decided to neither rely on the US-UK administrations nor on the Iraqi government for the sourcing of his news stories about the occupation of Iraq. In the fashion of an “eye-witness” reporter, Jamail embedded himself within the Iraqi population in various regions of Iraq. Jamail was consequently able to assess journalistically how the Iraqi population was affected by the policies adopted by all sides in the conflict. This approach went beyond a dichotomized treatment of the conflict parties (usually presented as

“us” and “them” in war journalism) by way of recognizing parties to the conflict in a more holistic way: Jamail identified the Iraqi government, the US-UK governments, the Iraqi population as well as different elements within the Iraqi society as potential parties to the conflict with different interests and needs. This approach enabled Jamail to highlight the external and internal dimensions of the conflict as well as how structural-cultural and -economic issues affected the population. Jamail’s reporting also stood out in that it carried critical voices who emphasized solutions. This peace journalism approach, then, highlighted structural causes of the conflict and provided avenues for peace. Significantly, and as this example demonstrates, peace journalism also entails a constructive journalistic component that goes beyond elastic reporting standards that emphasize notions like “objectivity,” “neutrality,” and “balance.”

The Features of Peace Journalism

There is no universally accepted conceptualization of peace journalism and different models are postulated in the literature (Hanitzsch 2007, p. 2). Galtung (2003, p. 179) provides the classic approach according to which peace journalism “tries to depolarize by showing the black and white of all sides, and to deescalate by highlighting peace and conflict resolution as much as violence.” Galtung (2003, p. 178) proposes the following categories for peace journalism:

Peace/Conflict Oriented

Peace journalism should explore the root causes of conflict in relation to diverging issues, parties, and goals (Galtung 2003, p. 178). These aspects, Galtung suggests, must be regarded as convergent and need to be accounted for by journalists in the sense of balancing the positions, interests, and needs of all sides in a conflict in a transparent fashion (Galtung refers to a “win-win” frame of journalism). Consequently, the voices of the different conflict parties should be featured in journalistic reporting with a focus on “empathy” and “understanding” leading to “[h]umanization of all sides”

(Galtung 2003, p. 178). Causes and impacts of conflict should be revealed in a holistic way and in relation to historical and cultural contexts (exploring conflict through space and time). Conflict and war should be regarded as a main problem: Peace journalism should, therefore, proactively aim to prevent further occurrences of violence and war. And finally, peace journalism should contextualize and highlight the effects of war and violence on society and culture (Galtung 2003, p. 178).

Truth Oriented

Peace journalism should debunk and reveal “untruths” or propaganda on “all sides” (Galtung 2003, p.178). This may entail investigations into the actors and organization who aim to benefit from war and violence as well as the actors and organizations who claim to facilitate “reconstruction, reconciliation and resolution” (Galtung 2003, p. 178).

People Oriented

The suffering of all parties and societies involved in a conflict should be prioritized and the reporting should focus on the effects of violence on civilians (Galtung 2003, p. 178). Such an approach should also provide significant space in the reporting about people affected by conflict whose voices tend to be marginalized. Additionally, the quotations by actors who engage as sincere “peacemakers” should be emphasized (Galtung 2003, p. 178). At the same time, peace journalism should name perpetrators of crimes on all sides of a conflict.

Solution Oriented

Peace journalism should crucially focus on reporting nonviolent societal initiatives of peace and conflict resolution to de-escalate and avert more violence. Rather than concentrating on “battle” and “war,” peace journalism should aim to highlight the consequences of conflict with a constructive as well as creative emphasis on “resolution,” “re-construction,” and “reconciliation” (Galtung 2003, p. 178).

Galtung suggests for journalists to implement the outlined components of peace journalism as part of their working routines.

Peace Journalism in Practice

Peace journalism seeks to update and transgress the classic journalistic reporting standards of “objectivity,” “neutrality,” and “balance” with a view toward disentangling the formations of conflict (Galtung 2003, p. 178; Lynch and McGoldrick 2005, p. 34, 2007, p. 256). Lynch and McGoldrick (2007, p. 255) suggest that peace journalism should draw from peace research and account for the “dynamics of conflict” as a means of further guaranteeing accurate reporting. According to Diana Francis, such dynamics relate to a conflict’s “history, recent causes and internal composition – the different parties, the nature of their involvement, their perspectives, positions and motivations, and the different relationships between them in terms of power, allegiance and interest” (cited in Lynch and McGoldrick 2007, p. 255). Lynch and McGoldrick (2007, p. 255) consequently argue that journalism which accounts for these factors will correspond more closely to the peace journalism model and will also be more accurate in its representation of events and issues. Additionally, Lynch and McGoldrick (2005, p. 34) emphasize an interventionist aspect of peace journalism: Journalists should consider the sourcing strategies, story angles, and effects of their work to capture how effective they may be in terms of advancing peace. In contrast, Hanitzsch (2007, p. 7) suggests that a significant amount of the peace journalism principles would actually be comparable with some of the major ideal qualities of classic journalism which include “to make conflicts appear transparent through background information, to give voice to the views of all rivaling parties, to expose lies, cover-up attempts and culprits on all sides and to report on the atrocities of war and the suffering of civilians.” Hanitzsch (2007, p. 7) writes that, like the ethical standards of “good” journalism, peace journalism practices cannot be implemented based on adjusting journalism norms on an individual, voluntary basis. Rather, the proponents of peace journalism should “address the structural constraints of news production” (Hanitzsch 2007, p. 7). These observations support studies

that demonstrate how the peace journalism model has been far more effectively realized by noncommercial, alternative news media organizations as opposed to traditional news media providers (see Keeble 2010). Additionally, studies have shown how “good” journalism can entail many of the components of peace journalism (Zollmann 2010). As already outlined, news production is determined by commercial and organizational factors that explain many of the biases associated with war journalism. Hence, peace journalism standards can only be realized by truly independent media and should, thus, be advocated as part of wider media reforms. For instance, in the UK, there is a distinct media reform movement that seeks progressive changes in the commercial and political structures of the news media as well as in the journalistic standards of the profession (for an overview see Fenton et al. 2020). In fact, as part of media reforms, journalistic standards could be extended to account for constructive norms that enable journalists to report on the causes of societal problems and provide constructive strategies for social action and change (Beiler and Krüger 2018). Hence, media reform could address the journalistic standards codified by industry bodies and news organizations and change them to include peace journalism components. Additionally, media reform could realize the potential for more “good” journalism in the classic news media. Overall, such changes would likely enable peace journalism principles to be more comprehensively implemented across various news media.

Summary

This essay aimed to capture the classic elements of peace journalism as firstly established by Galtung and then refined by Lynch and McGoldrick. Peace journalism fuses aspects from conflict studies and journalism studies to enable a constructive model of journalism. Peace journalism aims to de-escalate war and violence and foster conflict resolution. Peace journalism provides a two-tiered approach: Peace journalism

offers a framework to critique the shortfalls of traditional war journalism and it expounds a set of standards for practitioners to constructively report on conflict situations with a view toward achieving peace. There are many actual examples of peace journalism especially in the alternative news media sphere. In order that peace journalism can become a more widely established journalistic practice, significant reforms of the news media system are required.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Art and Reconciliation](#)
- ▶ [Conflict, Memory, and Memory Activism: Dealing with Difficult Pasts](#)
- ▶ [Culture and Conflict Resolution](#)
- ▶ [Indigenous Approaches to Peace](#)
- ▶ [International Organizations and Statehood Conflicts](#)
- ▶ [Liberal Peace and Its Critiques](#)
- ▶ [Peace Journalism](#)
- ▶ [Silence and Peacebuilding](#)

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Peace Measuring Approaches

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Synonyms

[Global Peace Index \[GPI\]](#); [Management of Sensitive Data](#); [Negative peace](#); [Positive peace](#)

Defining the Problem

Can our understanding of peace and policies that lead to it be improved by measurement, and if so, just what should be measured? Historically, peace has largely been studied qualitatively based on philosophies that vary across cultures and individuals. In contrast, measuring peace requires defining it operationally, devising logical, measurable, reliable, and valid variables, and then weighting and combining them into a coherent index of peacefulness. Properly collected, analyzed, interpreted, and publicized, such data can help correct misconceptions, increase awareness of threats, improve understanding of the changing causes and nature of conflict, and lead to the development of policies that reduce aggression, terrorism, and war (Rosling 2018).

Efforts at Solution

Unfortunately, multiple operational definitions are possible and different actors have different goals and choose different things to monitor and measure (Bush 1998; UN High-Level Political Forum 2017). Historical models tend to explain the past in terms of an explicit or implicit philosophy, often resulting in unresolvable debate over the causes of a particular war or war in general. Those in government departments such as foreign affairs or defense and scholars in the social sciences tend to develop models intended to predict the future or guide policy. To do so, they need not identify *every* causative factor involved in a phenomenon. If the goal is to predict or to guide policy, factors that cannot be changed are irrelevant distractions. Furthermore, given two models of equal efficiency in identifying the most important factors to change, the one with the fewest components is preferable based on the principle of parsimony proposed by Ockham in the fourteenth century. The test is not whether there are other relevant factors – there always are – but how well a model achieves its purpose or purposes at what costs and with what unintended consequences.

To further complicate matters, there is reason to doubt the universality and long-term efficacy of any model aimed at affecting human behavior. Once it is known that a model is guiding policy, there is little to prevent individuals searching for ways to circumvent, exploit, or undermine it. In an amusing example of human opportunism, the British colonial government of India, concerned with the number of deaths by poisonous snake bites, offered a reward for every one killed. Quickly decimating the snakes, the locals soon were breeding, killing, and turning dead snakes in to collect the reward – leading to the term “cobra effect” for an unwanted and unintended result of a policy. More relevant to our topic, the unintended consequences of peace missions have sometimes been corruption, economic distortions, and sexual exploitation (Aoi et al. 2007). This is particularly true given the ever-changing nature of war. Russia and China now appear to have Mach 5 hypersonic missiles that can overwhelm all current defenses (the USA pioneered their development but terminated research in 2005 (Eaglen 2019)). Iran appears to be integrating terrorism and drones into an innovative strategy short of war but potentially equivalent in its results. The Chinese have developed quantum satellites that purportedly are hack-proof, while US satellites are susceptible to data breaches and co-opting into sending false information. In response, the USA now is discussing creation of a Space Force, an entirely new branch and type of armed service which if implemented will be imitated by others, further militarizing space.

China appears to be trying to completely change the post-WWII international order with its Belt and Road Initiative and by offering to build but then to control naval bases and ports at strategic spots around the world so that it potentially could deny access and services to vessels of other countries (Pillsbury 2016), a strategy conceptually similar to that of the sixteenth-century Portuguese in the Indian Ocean modernized by an aggressive, imperialistic autocracy that also is developing space war capabilities, hacking foreign computer systems, building a blue-water navy, developing anti-ship missiles and undersea sensors, and claiming international waterways

such as the South China Sea as territorial waters based on its artificial islands. Singer and Cole (2016) have described one way a war combining such weapons might evolve. US President Trump's trade dispute is taking place in this larger strategic context that goes far beyond trade in importance but is seldom articulated or discussed.

Numerous studies have tried to identify characteristics that make a state prone to war. Collectively, the studies consider a vast number of possibilities. Shortly after WWI, Richardson (1960) studied the arms race that preceded and often is claimed to be a major cause of it. In fact, he concluded that the outcome of an arms race can range unpredictably from war through peaceful resolution to disarmament – not very helpful for policy making. Furthermore, his analysis was limited to WWI, with no study of other historical periods, cultures, or types of government. While it is true that massive arms expenditures preceded the war, nondefense spending increased even more, and nations such as Sweden also vastly increased arms spending but remained neutral. Finally, and decisively, subsequently obtained cabinet meeting minutes make clear that increased armaments did not determine but were required by German policies (Churchman 2013).

Unlike Richardson, instead of assuming a cause or studying a single war, Singer and Small (1993) collected all sorts of statistical data for wars from the fall of Napoleon through the mid-twentieth century and searched for independent variables correlated with the outbreak of war. That is, their study was a search for consistent empirical patterns rather than an argument for a particular one, inductive rather than deductive in approach. Similarly, Rummel (1968) correlated 235 cultural, demographic, economic, geographic, political, and sociological characteristics of nations with 13 measures of foreign conflict. None of the characteristics bore a statistically significant relationship between characteristics of states and war proneness. It does not seem a promising approach to understanding interstate war, although falsification makes a vital contribution to knowledge and theory development.

Therefore, researchers persist. Among organizations that currently collect data related to

peacefulness, each with its own distinct focus and methods, are the:

Armed Conflict Database [ACD]
 Carnegie Endowment for International Peace [CEIP]
 Economist Intelligence Unit [EIU]
 International Development Research Centre [IDRC]
 Institute for Economics and Peace [IEP]
 International Development Evaluation Association [IDEA]
 International Institute for Strategic Studies [IISS]
 International Peace Institute [IPI]
 Interpeace U.S.A
 Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, University of Notre Dame
 Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR]
 One Earth Future
 Oxfam
 Stockholm International Peace Research Institute [SIPRI]
 United Nations (several agencies within it, independently)
 World Peace Foundation

Numerous other individuals and teams of scholars in universities, think tanks, and government agencies also are conducting their own research and developing their own policy suggestions as well. For example, the New Rule Sets Project at the US Naval War College is focused on the implications for peace of countries that seem full participants in globalization and those that seem to be left out (Barnett 2004). (See also the section on Peace through Prosperity in the entry in this volume on “► [Search for Peace, the](#)”.)

Johan Galtung

Johan Galtung (2008), often considered the father of peace studies, distinguished negative peace, the absence of violence, from positive peace possessing characteristics that serve the needs of the whole population and exhibits constructive means for resolving conflict.

Researchers have operationally defined and attempted to measure negative peace by selecting and combining indicator variables into a single index. One such effort, the Global Peace Index [GPI] measures a country's level of Negative Peace using three domains. The first, Ongoing Domestic and International Conflict evaluates a country's involvement in both internal and external conflicts. The second assumes that that low crime rates, minimal terrorist activity and violent demonstrations, harmonious relations with neighboring countries, a stable political scene and a small proportion of refugees is related to peacefulness. The third domain measures militarization based on indicators such as military expenditure as a percentage of GDP, ratio of armed services officers to population, and financial contributions to UN peacekeeping missions.

Additional Important Variables

Firchow (2018) argues that the majority of attempts at measuring peace use indicators that focus primarily on violence reduction and miss elements required for conciliation and peacebuilding after war. She suggests that current international peacebuilding efforts are not always effective *because* disproportionate attention is paid to reconstruction, governance, and development with little attention paid to community ties and healing that others have given careful consideration (Maynard 2000) and suggests moving toward an index based on something like The Institute for Economics and Peace's (2018) eight Positive Pillars of Peace:

- Citizen access to reliable, valid information from a free and independent media that leads to greater openness and well-informed citizens
- Trusted high-quality public and civil services from an efficient and effective government that upholds the rule of law
- Equitable distribution of resources such as health and education that promotes useful knowledge, productivity, political participation, increased social capital, and builds resilience and adaptability

- Fairly enforced, formally published laws fairly that strengthen basic human rights and freedoms and informal social and cultural norms that encourage tolerance among ethnic, linguistic, religious, and socio-economic groups and advance gender equality and workers' rights
- Good relations with other countries that tend to increase internal political stability, decrease defense expenditure, benefit business, and increase foreign investment, tourism and human capital inflows
- Low levels of corruption that enhance confidence and trust in institutions and reduces inefficient resource allocation often resulting in lack of funding for essential services
- Skilled human capital to improve economic productivity and foster widespread well-informed political participation
- Soundness of the business environment including formal institutions that support the private sector with a regulatory system conducive to competitiveness and productivity

Over time, improvements in these interrelated areas have led in some, not all, countries to attitudes that make violence less acceptable, institutions that are more responsive to social needs and provide nonviolent means of resolving grievances and collectively underpin and sustain peaceful societies (Autessere 2014). That is, positive peace tends to precede and lead to negative peace, both of which are elements of a peaceful society.

Data Lapses

Researchers have recognized that relevant quantitative data is not available on all variables for all countries so that qualitative variables are required to fill in gaps related to peace. This has led to efforts such as the Economist Intelligence Unit's [EIU] country analysis that employs country experts and economists to score seven qualitative indicators. Each analyst concentrates on two or three countries and, in conjunction with some 650 local contributors, develops a deep knowledge of

a nation's political scene, the performance of its economy and the society in general.

Steven Pinker

Steven Pinker (2011) takes a broad approach to peace, presenting a massive amount of data that he argues proves violence of many types declined radically at five specific points and places in human history. Although many of his statistics are best guesses, most seem to be of the right magnitude. He attributes the reduction in violence to five major developments:

- The transition from tribal hunter-gathering societies to the agricultural civilizations with cities and governments that reduced chronic raiding and feuding (Keeley 1996).
- The rise of the nation-state that centralized authority, monopolized force, and developed infrastructure facilitating commerce that made foreigners more valuable alive than dead (Elias 1982).
- The Humanitarian Revolution during the Age of Reason and European Enlightenment providing wider education, empathy, and rational problem solving that resulted in organized efforts to abolish dueling, cruelty to animals, judicial torture, sadistic punishment, slavery, and superstitious killing (Hunt 2008).
- The ever-widening concept of human rights of the Rights Revolution from the 1950s to the present day.
- The Long Peace (1945–1989) following World War II in which the great powers and developed states stopped waging war on one another. The resulting rise of literacy, mobility, and global communications helped people to understand and become more sympathetic and tolerant of others unlike themselves (Gaddis 1989).

However, as suggested above with regard to historical models generating largely unresolvable and interminable debate, Pinker's work is not without both support and challenge. Scott (2018) writing in the tradition of the "noble savage" that dates at least to Tacitus

emphasizes downsides to the emergence of civilization such as unfree labor. The many different ways that states emerged in different places and at different times especially outside Europe (Tilly 1992) seldom address the frequency, extent, and consequences of the resulting wars. During the so-called Long Peace following WWII over 200 conflicts took place (Singer and Small 1993, Wikipedia accessed 16 December 2019) meeting Singer's (1979) operational definition of war as a "military conflict waged between national entities, at least one of which is a state, which resulted in at least 1000 battle-deaths of military personnel." The majority of those that meet that definition took place in Asia and Africa. Many took place in postcolonial countries with boundaries originally designed to control people through divide and conquer strategies. Britain, France, Russia, and USA sometimes intervened for geostrategic reasons such as access to strategic resources, proximity to choke points in trade routes, or the US policy dating from the Truman presidency to "contain" communism (while carefully avoiding direct great power conflict that might trigger global nuclear war).

The post-Cold War world (1990-present) seems to be evolving into a multipolar world with China, India, and the USA as global powers and Brazil, Germany, Iran, Russia, South Africa, and Turkey as regional ones. In the past, multipolar situations have seen rapid changes in alliances to obtain advantage and maintain a balance of power in often futile hope of minimizing the number and severity of wars. Optimists believe that the current international system characterized by widespread if not universal freedom, prosperity, and peace will not only survive, but thrive. Pessimists respond that the decline of the USA is shifting the balance of power to China, an aggressive, imperialistic, totalitarian state that is developing space war and computer hacking and technological capabilities, building a blue-water navy, developing antiship missiles and undersea sensors, claiming currently international waterways such as the South China Sea as territorial waters based on artificial islands, and making widespread geostrategic basing arrangements

with countries such as Myanmar, Pakistan, Somalia, and Greece. As in the 1930s, many democracies seem to lack the will to maintain international stability, the possible result being not peace and prosperity, but chaos and catastrophe.

Many causes of war in addition to polarity have been proposed, implying that no one set of policies will end war despite Pinker's optimism (Churchman 2013). Among those causes have been:

Arms races
 Balance of, preponderance of, and transition in power
 Cycles
 Distracting citizens from domestic discontents
 Ecological equilibrium
 Expected utility
 Form of government
 Ideology
 Insanity
 Jealousy
 Lack of peaceful means to resolve disputes
 Manifest destiny
 Nation-states
 Number of bordering states
 Personality of leader
 Preventive attack
 Pride
 Profiteering
 Race
 Relative deprivation
 Religion
 Reproductive success
 Resource shortages
 Season of the year
 Take or hold power
 Territorial imperative
 Trade or trade route chokepoints

Responsible Management of Sensitive Data

With respect to measuring peace, using data responsibility has two major dimensions: safeguarding individuals and making sensible policy decisions.

Oxfam taking into consideration numerous issues involved in individual data use by researchers and by states and implemented sought to ensure that data it collected would be done in a culturally and contextually appropriate manner, leading to its Responsible Data Policy in 2015 (<https://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/oxfam-responsible-program-data-policy-575950>). Under this policy, Oxfam limits disaggregation, includes representation of relevant groups, and tries to ensure the accuracy, timeliness, and relevance of data collected. Individuals are informed of and voluntarily consent or refuse participation based on the use to be made of their information and are free to withdraw at any point. Oxfam ensures participants' right to privacy in handling of their data and recognizes its responsibility to protect the identity of those providing such data, unless otherwise outlined and agreed to as part of informed consent. To mitigate risk to participants, especially members of vulnerable populations, Oxfam limits collection of personal data to that necessary for each particular study, stores it securely, limits access to identified data records, and anonymizes data shared openly. Extra care is taken with data collection in conflicted and fragile states. If the data process involves minors, both their consent and that of their parents or guardians is required. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and UNICEF have similar protections for minors that can be found at (http://www.unicef.org/adolescence/cypguide/index_ethics.html) and (<http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx>). The impact on the validity and reliability of resulting reports rarely is considered.

Responsible use of data for policy decisions is more problematic. Some policy- and decision-makers distort, falsify, or misuse data to provide justification for preferred decisions already made. Mistakes can occur because information is incomplete, false, or uncertain, and failure to act can also prove to be a mistake. Decisions often have unintended consequences, there are numerous other parties making potentially contradictory choices, and secrecy, and intelligence gathering have long been factors and deception have been around at least since the Trojan horse. Countless examples exist. The Japanese took the USA by

surprise at Pearl Harbor. Incredibly elaborate American and British efforts were successful in deceiving the Germans as to the timing and location of their landings in Sicily and Normandy (Brown 1975). Blinded by the assumption that the Germans in 1944 no longer were capable of mounting an offensive the Allies were taken completely by surprise in the Battle of the Bulge. The 1950 North Korean invasion of South Korea was a surprise (Fehrenbach 1963). Terrorists surprised the USA in 2001 when they weaponized commercial airliners. In all these cases, there were bits of intelligence that pointed toward a correct assessment but which were overlooked or discounted.

Ultimately, we all are dependent for ethical use of data on the intelligence and integrity of our leaders and bureaucrats, and thus on transparency and systems that make it possible to identify and replace those who fail.

Summary

Peace perhaps is perhaps best viewed as a quest requiring constant attention and imaginative adaptation of available methods to an everchanging economic, political, and technological environment. Different models may be needed for different types of government. Policies often have unintended consequences, some predictable, many not. Theoretical models intended to guide policy have limited life spans because people can and do find ways to manipulate them to advantage. There is no universal agreement as to what is ethical, and even if there were leaders can appear who will ignore the limits in hope of gaining either or both personal and national advantage.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Great Power Involvement in Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [NATO's Approach to Peace Operations and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Protection of Civilians](#)
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- ▶ [Search for Peace, the](#)
- ▶ [Unintended Consequences of Peace Operations/Sexual Abuse and Exploitation by Peacekeepers](#)
- ▶ [Use of Force in Peace Operations](#)

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Peace Mediation

- ▶ [UN Missions in Sudan and South Sudan](#)

Peace Negotiations

- ▶ [In Search of Justice, Peace, and Reconciliation in Northern Uganda](#)
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Peace Operations, Principles, and Doctrine

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Definition

Peace operations are a central conflict management tool of the post-World War II international order. They are generally defined by their multilateral character and association with the “holy trinity” of peacekeeping principles: impartiality, consent, and the non-use of force except in self-defense. These core elements of peacekeeping doctrine were conceived during the Cold War when lightly armed missions were the norm and when peacekeepers were usually tasked with observing cease-fires and monitoring the implementation of interstate peace agreements. Since the end of the Cold War, peacekeeping more commonly occurs within conflict-affected states and alongside activities like peacebuilding, peacemaking, and peace enforcement. Many scholars and practitioners use the term “peace operations” to describe the complex, multidimensional missions where these activities overlap. The expansive goals of multidimensional peace operations have given rise to tensions around doctrine and core principles. These tensions are most pronounced when missions are tasked with the protection of civilians, state-building, and stabilization. They are largely a product of ongoing disagreements among states about the scope, form, and purpose of peace operations. In short, they are a reflection of politics at the micro-level, in the field contexts where peace operations are deployed, and at the macro-level, where doctrine is developed and decisions are made about mandates, funding, and staffing.

Introduction

Peace operations are a central conflict management tool of the post-World War II international order. Since 1948, the United Nations (UN) has fielded over 70 peace operations. Today, roughly 100,000 uniformed personnel, drawn from 122 countries, serve in 14 missions overseen by the UN Department of Peace Operations (United Nations Department of Peace Operations n.d.). UN peacekeepers are the second-largest military force stationed abroad, after the US military. A range of regional organizations are also actively involved in peacekeeping activities, including the African Union (AU), European Union (EU), and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) (Williams 2017, pp. 124–125). What are the principles, norms, and doctrine that guide peace operations? How do they shape peacekeeping practice and how have they evolved over time? What doctrinal challenges do peacekeepers confront in contemporary peace operations? What is the relationship between peacekeeping doctrine and politics?

This chapter explores these questions with a primary focus on UN peace operations given the organization's outsized influence on the development of peacekeeping as a practice. The UN is widely credited with the "invention" of peacekeeping when it deployed the UN Emergency Force in response to the 1956 Suez Crisis (Bellamy et al. 2010, p. 85). From a symbolic point of view, blue helmets are the archetypal peacekeepers. They are deployed at the behest of UN member states, they hail from all over the globe, and they operate under a common flag. When regional organizations deploy troops, they often derive legitimacy from their association with UN peacekeepers (Karlsrud 2019, p. 9). What is more, the legitimacy and legality of many regional operations are dependent on Security Council authorization under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter (Williams 2017, p. 126). In practical and logistical terms, the UN Secretariat plays a lead role in the development of peacekeeping doctrine. Defined as "an approved set of principles and methods" (Holmes 2001, p. 262), doctrine is intended to provide new as

well as serving peacekeepers with a reference, a "set of guidelines" to inform practice and simplify decision-making amidst the confusion of war (United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations 2008, p. 3). The Secretariat is also instrumental in the identification of best practices as well as the development and dissemination of training materials. UN leadership in this area is particularly significant given that many regional organizations lack the capacity to develop their own standards for training and equipment for peace operations (Williams 2017, p. 128). In short, organizations like the AU, EU, and NATO put their own stamp on peace operations, but the degree to which such missions are accepted as "real" peace operations remains largely dependent on whether they respect the principles and precedents established by UN missions.

The chapter is divided into three main sections. The first section defines peacekeeping, traces its conceptual origins, and analyzes the evolving set of norms and principles that over time have determined what peacekeeping is and what it is not. The second section draws on empirical examples to highlight several key tensions within contemporary peacekeeping doctrine and practice. The third section broadens out the analysis to explore the relationship between principles and politics and to show how ambiguities in peacekeeping doctrine mirror ongoing disagreements about the scope, form, and purpose of peace operations. The chapter concludes with a look at lingering questions, overarching challenges, and directions for future research.

Defining Peacekeeping: Principles, Doctrine, and Practice

Unforeseen by the founders of the UN, the term "peacekeeping" does not appear in the organization's Charter. Instead, peacekeeping emerged from the interstices of the Charter. Famously conceptualized by Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld as "Chapter Six and a Half," peacekeeping balanced the pacific settlement of disputes provided for in Chapter VI and the use of force in cases of threats and breaches to peace in

Chapter VII. Indeed, the creation of “peacekeeping” was an *ad hoc* response to a practical and political problem. Paralyzed by the Cold War divide, the permanent members of the Security Council were largely unable to reach general agreement on matters of international peace and security. The onset of the Cold War impeded the implementation of those provisions of the Charter which envisaged an ambitious collective security scheme designed, as the Charter’s preamble stated, “to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war” (United Nations 1945). However, under the leadership of Secretary-General Hammarskjöld, the UN established a role for itself in preventing and containing conflict through the use of lightly armed and impartial international military personnel.

During the Cold War, the primary function of these deployments was to prevent a local conflict from escalating into a larger war and potentially an East-West nuclear confrontation. This function was, as Mats Berdal observes, given “added urgency in the 1950s and 1960s by the gathering pace of decolonization and the often abrupt retreat from empire by the major European powers” (Berdal 2010, p. 179). Broadly speaking, UN peacekeepers’ main activities during the Cold War included monitoring of cease-fires, supervision of force disengagement, and interposition between belligerents in what were largely *inter-state* conflicts (Koops et al. 2015, pp. 113–260).

The Evolution of the “Holy Trinity”

During the Cold War, three core principles – often referred to as the “holy trinity” – came to be accepted as the bedrock of peacekeeping: impartiality, consent, and non-use of force (except in self-defense). Peacekeepers were expected to be impartial when making decisions and taking action (Paddon Rhoads 2016, pp. 48–55). They were expected to put aside particular preferences or interests vis-à-vis the conflict. To prevent potential biases and ensure the international character of an operation, the composition of missions was given careful consideration. As the UN has no standing army or standing police force, each mission has to be formed from scratch. During the Cold War, states that might have a

particular interest in the conflict at hand, including former colonial powers and the permanent members of the Security Council, were disqualified from contributing personnel. Moreover, troop contributions by member states were voluntary and subject to host-state approval.

The principle of impartiality was closely linked to that of consent – that is, consent for the mission and Security Council mandate authorizing that mission. During the Cold War, Security Council resolutions reflected the peace or ceasefire agreement that parties to a conflict had reached prior to that mission’s deployment. By abiding by the terms explicitly agreed to by parties to a dispute, Hammarskjöld maintained that peacekeepers were unlikely to be “used to enforce any special political solution of pending problems or to influence the political balance decisive to such a solution” (Hammarskjöld 1958, para 166). Furthermore, peacekeepers were prohibited from “involvement in conflicts internal to sovereign states, as non-state actors were less likely to be reliable partners, and domestic disputes risked embroiling them in local politics” (Paddon Rhoads 2016, p.52).

Finally, peacekeepers were not to use force except in self-defense. This principle was based on the assumption that the conflict parties would comply with the agreement that provided the basis for a mission’s deployment, and thus the use of force was deemed unnecessary. Decisions to use force risked being perceived as partial, thereby undermining parties’ consent for a mission (Boulden 2005, p. 155). As a result, UN peacekeepers during this period were lightly armed and ill-equipped for combat. When Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim expanded the conditions under which force could be used to include “force in defence of the mandate,” the change had little impact on peacekeeping practice during the Cold War given that the tasks outlined in Security Council mandates were limited and had been agreed to by the parties (United Nations 1973).

During the Cold War, these principles came to define the majority of UN peacekeeping operations. There were a few notable exceptions such as the UN Operation in the Congo, 1960–1964

(Gibbs 2000; Doss 2014), but the norms of impartiality, consent, and non-use of force emerged out of practice and served as the normative foundation for most peacekeeping missions. It is worth noting, however, that they were not formally codified in doctrine. While the “holy trinity” enjoyed broad support, expressed through a series of policy documents, statements, and practices, member states resisted the adoption of formal doctrine.

The end of the Cold War ushered in a new era of UN peacekeeping as member states grappled with the proliferation of armed conflicts *within* states – what some scholars dubbed “new wars” (Kaldor 2006). The capacity of the Security Council to agree on action increased as the use of the veto lessened with the demise of superpower rivalry. The number of missions increased dramatically, with 20 new missions authorized between 1989 and 1994 alone (United Nations Department of Peace Operations n.d.). “Multidimensional” peacekeeping quickly burgeoned as the means by which the UN could address *intrastate* conflict (Doyle et al. 1997; Howard 2008). Compared to traditional peacekeeping operations, multidimensional missions took on a much wider range of tasks, including peacebuilding, conflict prevention, and the promotion of human rights. To capture this shift in scope and complexity, many scholars and practitioners embraced the term “peace operations” (Paris 2004, p. 18; Panel on United Nations Peace Operations 2000, p. iii).

Despite early optimism, the post-Cold War “surge” raised expectations for UN peacekeeping “beyond its capacity to deliver” (United Nations Department of Peace Operations n.d.). Blue helmets experienced a string of operational failures in the 1990s. In places like Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia, blue helmets confronted at best an unstable peace, at worst a brutal civil war and genocide. UN missions came under heavy criticism when peacekeepers failed to confront “spoilers” and prevent mass atrocities. According to the report of the Panel on UN Peace Operations, also known as the Brahimi Report, “no failure did more to damage the standing and credibility of UN peacekeeping in the 1990s than its reluctance

to distinguish victim from aggressor” (Panel on United Nations Peace Operations 2000, p. ix). These setbacks were largely products of disjunctures between the new post-Cold War operational environment and the conceptual blueprint guiding peacekeepers.

Protection of Civilians

By the early 2000s, the Secretariat had launched a series of panels, reviews, and lessons learned exercises to address gaps in existing doctrine (United Nations General Assembly 1999, 2000; United Nations Security Council 1999). This process involved a concerted effort to reconceptualize core principles, provide a common conceptual framework for UN peace operations, and make protection of civilians (PoC) a central pillar of peacekeeping doctrine. The Brahimi Report is an important milestone in this regard. The authors assert that the “holy trinity” should “remain the bedrock principles of peacekeeping,” but they also insist that peacekeepers who witness violence against civilians “should be presumed authorized to stop it” (Panel on United Nations Peace Operations 2000, pp. ix–x).

Building on the Brahimi Report, the *UN Peacekeeping Operations: Principles and Guidelines* (2008) – more commonly referred to as the “Capstone Doctrine” – develops this argument in more detail. Drafted by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and Department of Field Support (DFS), in consultation with member states, the Capstone Doctrine builds on lessons from the 1990s and aims to provide contemporary missions with “a clearer articulation of the doctrinal foundations of United Nations peacekeeping” (United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations 2008, p. 8). Like the Brahimi Report, it foregrounds PoC as a core goal for UN peace operations. In doing so, it provides a fundamental reinterpretation of the “holy trinity.” Specifically, both documents articulate an “assertive” conception of impartiality that regrounds peacekeepers’ authority in a more expansive set of norms and principles – a basis for decision-making that privileges the promotion and protection of human

rights (Paddon Rhoads 2016; United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations 2008, p. 33). Impartiality, no longer understood as passive, now prescribes that “UN forces should implement their mandates without favour or prejudice to any party” (United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations 2008, p. 33). Consent is also divided into two levels: strategic and tactical (2008, p. 19, 67). While the former remains a prerequisite for any peace operation, the latter is unnecessary in certain circumstances – forceful action should be taken against those who endanger civilians (Paddon Rhoads and Welsh 2019, p. 603). This reinterpretation of established principles was a way of maintaining continuity while incorporating PoC as a core element of peacekeeping. The increasing prominence of PoC in peacekeeping mandates over the last two decades also spawned the development of PoC-specific training materials, operational guidance, and policies (Mamiya 2016; Paddon Rhoads and Welsh 2019; United Nations 2015, 2017).

State-Building and “Stabilization”

The post-Cold War era has also brought a widespread conviction that peace operations can, and should, address the root causes of conflict – that they should “identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to prevent a relapse into conflict” (Boutros-Ghali 1992, p. 468). In practice, this has involved a strong focus on host-state institutions. Most UN peace operations are tasked with supporting, and sometimes building, a framework of state institutions that can maintain order, uphold the rule of law, and safeguard the rights of citizens (Paris 2004). Critics are quick to point out that building a strong state is not the same as building durable peace (Newman 2009, p. 30). Nevertheless, the authors of the Capstone Doctrine list “strengthening the State’s ability to provide security, with full respect for the rule of law and human rights” as one of the core functions for multidimensional peace operations, and they note that blue helmets may be asked to “support the restoration and extension of state authority” (United Nations Department of Peacekeeping

Operations 2008, p. 23, 26). These expectations coexist uneasily with other elements of peacekeeping doctrine. State-building, protection of civilians, and respect for the “holy trinity” may go hand in hand, but they are not compatible in every situation. Existing doctrine does not make clear, for example, whether being authorized to use force in defense of the mandate allows peacekeepers to use force to defend the states they are charged with supporting (Aoi et al. 2017, p. 14).

The advent of “stabilization” operations provides a *de facto* answer to this question. A relatively new term in UN circles, the concept “stabilization,” gained traction in the mid-2000s, and by 2014 it appeared in the name of four UN missions: MONUSCO, MINUSMA, MINUSCA, and MINUSTAH. Yet its meaning remains ambiguous (High-Level Independent Panel on UN Peace Operations 2015, p. 30; Gilder 2019, p. 47; Andersen 2018, p. 10). In practice, stabilization is a “state-building construct”; it involves working directly with “states in crisis” to “restore order and stability in the absence of a peace settlement, by using force and other means to help national and local authorities to contain aggressors. . . and protect civilians, in the context of a larger peace process” (Aoi et al. 2017, p. 5; Aoi and de Coning 2017, p. 299). This definition is a product of induction, though, and the UN has shied away from defining the term. The concept has evolved out of practice, not a specific decision-making process. Many scholars argue that the UN’s understanding of “stabilization” draws heavily – if not explicitly – on Western militaries’ experiences with counterterrorism and counterinsurgency operations in Afghanistan and Iraq (Karlsrud 2019, p. 12; Curran and Holtom 2015, p. 3; Andersen 2018, p. 9). Still, there is “no internal document within the UN that attempts to explain what the stabilization concept means in the context of UN peacekeeping doctrine” (de Coning 2018, p. 87). This doctrinal void raises a host of questions about the relationship between state-building and stabilization, protection of civilians, and the “holy trinity” of consent, impartiality, and the non-use of force.

Points of Conceptual Friction

At first glance, many of the doctrinal changes described above might seem reasonable and relatively straightforward. In practice, however, personnel on the ground are still obliged to juggle competing norms and principles. This section draws on empirical examples to highlight persistent points of conceptual friction.

Existing doctrine for peace operations seeks to reconcile protection of civilians with the long-standing norms of consent, impartiality, and the non-use of force except in self-defense. Evidence from contemporary peace operations shows that, in practice, this can be difficult (Holt and Taylor 2009; Autesserre 2019; United Nations General Assembly, 7 March 2014). Specifically, as Paddon Rhoads and Welsh (2019, p. 603) write, “[t]here is confusion over what actions are permissible to implement the protection imperative and whether force can be used against one party without the mission being regarded as partial.” The latter has potential legal implications, as the sustained or intensive engagement by peacekeepers in armed hostilities in furtherance of a PoC mandate may result in the loss of their protected status under international humanitarian law. In addition, although operations authorized under Chapter VII are permitted to carry out enforcement action and the Security Council has explicitly stated that a PoC mandate applies “irrespective of the source of the threat” (United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support 2016, p. 19), this conflicts with DPKO’s affirmation that strategic consent *is* a requirement (United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations 2008, pp. 31–33). Peacekeepers have grappled with this tension in Darfur (UNAMID), DR Congo (MONUC/MONUSCO), and South Sudan (UNMISS), mission contexts where host government forces have carried out atrocities or have been a major source of harm against civilians (Paddon Rhoads and Welsh 2019).

The UN’s state-building activities – especially its move toward stabilization operations – are also in tension with the norms of consent, impartiality, and the non-use of force except in self-defense.

According to Peter (2015, p. 353), there is a “doctrinal mismatch” between the “enforcement peacekeeping” of stabilization operations and the vision of peace operations outlined in the Brahimi report and the Capstone Doctrine. This discrepancy is most obvious around the use of force. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), for example, peacekeepers have worked with the Congolese military to conduct “targeted offensive operations” aimed at “neutralizing” specific adversaries in order to “make space for stabilization activities” (United Nations Security Council 2013). In doing so, critics argue that they are using force at the strategic/operational level (not just the tactical level), thereby overstepping the limits of robust peacekeeping outlined in the Capstone Doctrine (Kjeksrud and Vermeij 2017, p. 238). Siding with Congolese security forces to target specific armed groups also places considerable strain on the norm of impartiality, undermining peacekeepers’ capacity to serve as mediators and honest brokers for peace (Paddon Rhoads 2016, p. 189). Again, working with host governments to achieve the military defeat of certain armed groups goes beyond the UN’s stated commitment to penalizing “infractions” without “favour or prejudice to any party” (United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations 2008, p. 33). Finally, consent is always fluid, but targeted offensive operations are generally not conducted with the consent of the parties against whom they are directed. The *Mouvement du 23 mars* (M23), one of the armed groups targeted by blue helmets in the DRC, did not accept peacekeepers’ efforts to “neutralize” it (Cammaert 2013, pp. 7–9). Providing direct military support to host states creates a situation where peacekeepers must operate without the consent of all parties to a conflict. These points of friction lead many observers to conclude that stabilization operations mark a clear departure from the UN’s historical commitment to consent, impartiality, and the non-use of force except in self-defense (Aoi et al. 2017, p. 2; Hunt 2017, p. 124; Kjeksrud and Vermeij 2017, pp. 233–239; Peter 2015, pp. 358–360).

Tensions also exist between PoC and the UN’s commitment to state-building and stabilization. In theory, the two goals can go hand in hand.

Uncertainty remains, however, about the extent to which “stabilization” and the extension of state authority are “viewed as means toward civilian protection ends, or simply as ends in and of themselves” (Hunt 2017, p. 114). Much of the guidance on PoC assumes that non-state actors are primarily responsible for attacks on civilians. The Capstone Doctrine notes, for example, that peace operations are often deployed in settings “characterized by the presence of militias, criminal gangs, and other spoilers who may actively seek to undermine the peace process or pose a threat to the civilian populations” (United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations 2008, p. 34). Yet there is ample evidence showing that states themselves are often responsible for serious human rights violations. In Mali – a country where peacekeepers are charged with supporting the restoration of state authority – Malian security forces are accused of committing extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, torture, and arbitrary arrests (Human Rights Watch 2017). When blue helmets provide direct support to host-state security forces, they may be working closely with perpetrators of attacks on civilians. Using force to support host states can also put civilians at risk in a more immediate sense. If civilians are caught in the crossfire or subject to “revenge attacks” from armed groups as has occurred in the DRC, UN military action can “result in harm to the very people [it] is intended to protect” (Hunt 2017, pp. 115–116). In short, the UN’s commitment to state-building and stabilization sometimes operates at cross-purposes with its goal of protecting civilians from violence.

The final section explores the root causes of these tensions and contradictions within peacekeeping doctrine. It shows that they are linked to ongoing contestation among member states, UN officials, and other stakeholders.

Contestation and the Future of Peace Operations

The Capstone Doctrine begins from the observation that peacekeeping missions were historically

guided by “a largely unwritten body of principles” (United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations 2008, p. 8). During the Cold War, there was broad agreement on the “holy trinity” of consent, impartiality, and the non-use of force except in self-defense, but there was little formal guidance explaining how to integrate them into the planning and conduct of UN peace operations. The post-Cold War era brought concerted efforts to standardize peacekeeping as a practice by providing blue helmets with clear guidance. For example, the incorporation of PoC as a central pillar of peacekeeping doctrine has involved repeated attempts to clarify the responsibilities of UN personnel (Bode and Karlsrud 2019, p. 16). These efforts have not yielded consistent practices, however, because UN member states disagree fundamentally about a host of related issues, including the degree of risk peacekeepers themselves should assume to protect civilians from violence (Bode and Karlsrud 2019, pp. 17–18; Abiola et al. 2017, pp. 153–154). Guidance for peace operations always coexists with national doctrine, and in some cases, troop-contributing countries prefer to maintain a degree of doctrinal ambiguity because it gives them more freedom to make case-by-case decisions about how their troops should deal with particular situations (Bode and Karlsrud 2019, p. 21).

Tensions and ambiguities in peacekeeping doctrine also reflect more abstract, conceptual disagreements among member states and other stakeholders. For instance, concerns about host-state consent for peace operations are often linked to an overarching preoccupation with Westphalian norms of sovereign autonomy and nonintervention (Yin 2017, p. 117). Finally, as Andersen points out, the Secretariat itself is also conflicted about new trends in UN peace operations. Some actors within the UN bureaucracy are “pushing back” against the perceived militarization of UN missions, adding another layer to ongoing contestation about the purpose and scope of peace operations (Andersen 2018, pp. 2–3, 18).

Together, these conditions make it difficult to resolve tensions between older and newer elements of peacekeeping doctrine. Efforts to arrive at consensus and clarity are hampered by

the fact that vagueness and ambiguity frequently serve a political purpose (de Coning 2018, p. 88; Laurence 2019, p. 9, 18–19). To the extent that peace operations are a multilateral endeavor, they reflect the goals, preferences, and values of a diverse community. This means that principles and doctrine for peace operations are bound up with competing international norms and shifting global power dynamics (Paris 2014, p. 502). This was true historically, and it is still true today. Going forward, it will be important for scholars and practitioners alike to keep this in mind.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Collective Security and Collective Responsibility in International Interventions](#)
- ▶ [Conceptual Evolution of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Evolution of Practice in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations](#)
- ▶ [Great Power Involvement in Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Liberal Peace in Peace Operations](#)
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Peace Process

- [In Search of Justice, Peace, and Reconciliation in Northern Uganda](#)

Peace Talks

- ▶ [In Search of Justice, Peace, and Reconciliation in Northern Uganda](#)
- ▶ [Sierra Leone](#)

Peace Through Prosperity

- ▶ [Search for Peace, the](#)

Peace Through Strength

- ▶ [Search for Peace, the](#)

Peace Through Tourism

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Definition

The peace-through-tourism nexus refers to the notion of tourism as social force that can potentially lead to a more peaceful and fairer world. In this sense, the practice of tourism is seen as mean to promote intercultural dialogue, cross-cultural understanding, cultural diversity, as well as equality and human rights.

This notion was initially based on the “contact theory” (Allport 1979), whereby the travel-induced contact between tourists and resident population positively influences individuals’ perceptions of other groups, increasing mutual understanding. Over time this belief has been criticized as somewhat simplistic.

A more complex approach to the potential causal relationship between tourism and peace has gained ground, denoting an ongoing

ontological and epistemological maturation process of this subject. Nowadays, the theoretical extensions are indeed based on an integrated approach that goes beyond tourism, involving fields such as cultural studies, cultural heritage management, communication, geopolitics, international relations, and peace and conflict studies.

Introduction

Tourism is traditionally acknowledged as a social force for peace. In 1973 the Constituent Act and Statute of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) defined tourism as a vehicle of sustainable development and peace. Later on, on 1986 – International Year of Peace – was founded the International Institute for Peace Through Tourism (IIPT), with the aim to promote a vision of travel and tourism as the world’s first global peace industry and the belief that every traveler is potentially an “Ambassador for Peace.” In this sense, the association between peace and tourism has also been explored in the prism of international relations. In the scientific literature tourism is indeed indicated among the Track II diplomacy activities (Kim & Crompton 1990), and – more specifically – as a potential mean of cultural diplomacy (Carbone 2017).

Theoretically, peace through tourism refers to a body of analysis which suggests tourism may contribute to cross-cultural understanding, tolerance, and peace between community and nations (Blanchard & Higgins-Desbiolles 2013). The peace-through-tourism nexus summarizes the ideal of promoting human security through international citizenship. This discourse is mainly based on the assumption that traveling reduces cultural and psychological distances among people (Nyaupane et al. 2008) and as a result it positively influences international politics and fosters world peace (Edgell et al., 2008) by encouraging cooperation among nations (Askjellerud 2003; Causevic 2010). Nevertheless, this discourse does not define the causal relations underlying the process described. Indeed, objections have been raised about the chain of reasoning underlying this assumption of a sort of peace by

tourism-induced osmosis (see, e.g., Brown 1989; Carbone 2019).

Tourism and Peace in the Academic Debate: A Controversial Association

The tourism-peace nexus represents a fascinating and controversial topic within the scientific community (see, among others, Burnett 1990; Becken & Carmignani, 2016; Farmaki, 2017; Carbone 2021; Tavares da Silva et al. 2021). Despite the existence of a conspicuous literature, this subject still appears fuzzy, and different interpretation exists of the topic itself (Carbone 2021).

At the beginning, much tourism scholarship was pervaded by unsubstantial normative assumptions that tourism and travel-induced contact increases understanding and interaction among people, leading to peace. Traveling – according to this view – eases negative prejudices and reduces sociocultural stereotypes through the direct contact with a different culture. Nevertheless, this assumption has been challenged – totally or partially – by empirical evidence from studies on host-tourist social dynamics (see, among others, the work by Fan et al. 2017; Tasci & Severt 2017).

On the one side, evidence suggests that the residents' attitudes are positively affected by host-tourist interaction (Eusébio, et al. 2018), and intergroup social contact can nurture mutual understanding (Li & Wang 2020; Litvin 2003). Nevertheless, on the other side evidence has also shown that tourism can have the effect of reinforcing cultural stereotypes about the places visited, rather than dissipating them. The study carried out by Sirakaya-Turk, et al. (2014) shows that tourist experience can paradoxically reinforce visitor's prejudices and stereotyped representations of host communities, rather than promoting a more careful and respectful approach toward local cultures. In this sense, Yang (2011) proves that stereotypical conceptions of minority people are sometimes reinforced by representations in ethnic tourism.

The same controversy exists with relation to the assumption of the positive effect on tourism in

post-conflict areas or between antagonistic communities. The term “phoenix tourism” (Causevic & Lynch 2011) denotes the role of tourism normalizing relations and renewing a destination after conflict. However, it was demonstrated that studies demonstrate that also this assumption is – at least partially – unfounded. The research developed by authors such as Anastasopoulos (1992), Chen et al. (2016) and Farmaki et al. (2019) among others conclude that tourism cannot improve understanding between hostile communities, due to reasons such as: nationalistic sentiments, distrust and prejudice, political tensions, minimal government support, and competition over economic resources.

The state of the art of the debate on peace through tourism, and its development, was synthesized by Carbone (2021), who identifies three broad approaches through which scholars engage – and have engaged – with the tourism-peace nexus:

1. An abstract approach
2. A case-study-based approach
3. A complex approach

Today the scientific community urges on the necessity of a deeper look into the potential causal relation between tourism and peace. The latter, in turn, requires an interdisciplinary approach, particularly with the peace and conflict studies, in order to avoid simplifications and bias that would compromise the impact of any theoretical extension applicable to the real world (Carbone, 2021). Emphasis is given, for instance, to the potential contribution that tourism can make to the creation of a “peace culture” (Boulding, 2008: 1452) while responding to the urgent need to define ways of developing this potential in the context of peace education (Carbone, 2021).

This method of study of the possible causal relations between tourism and peace are leading to theoretical extension based on integrated approaches that include new elements making the bridge between tourism and peace. For instance, the study by Carbone (2021) advocates that the tourism sector is enabled to consider one of its main attractions, museums, as a center for

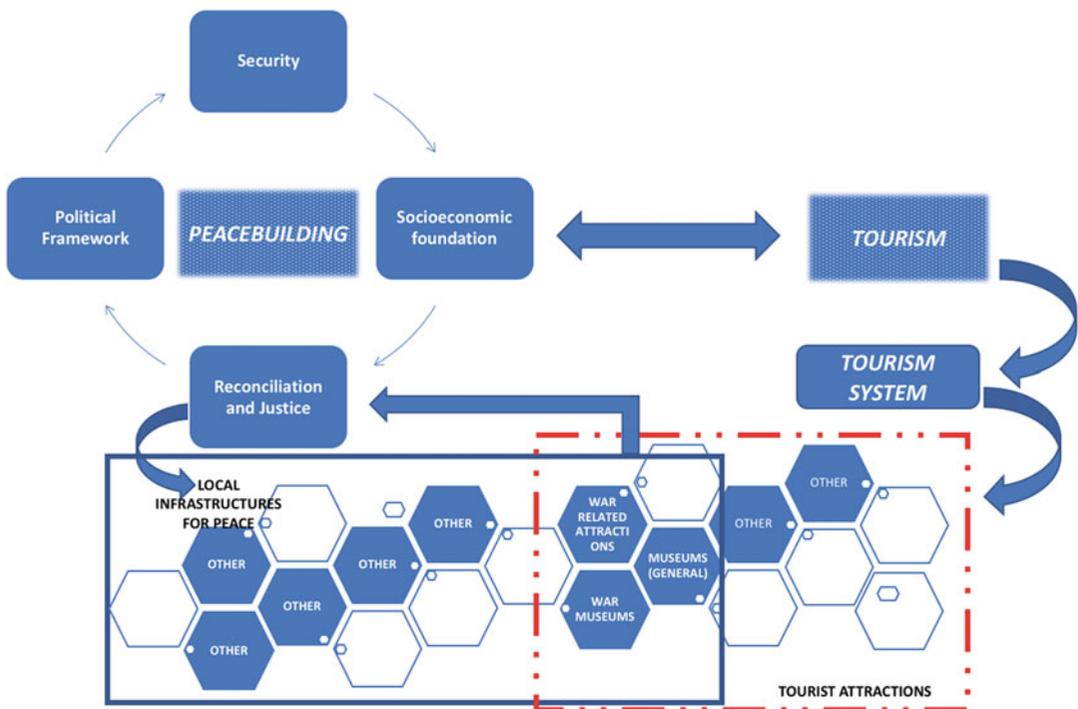
peace education, dialogue, and – where required – reconciliation. In this sense, museums have the potential to sustain and enrich society at times marked by insecurity and increasing conflict, by stimulating a curiosity that is vital to understanding (Thomas, 2016). By doing so, tourism systems would practically and effectively start to include what in the context of peace and conflict studies Richmond (2013, p. 271) calls “Local Infrastructures for Peace,” defined as those institutions, mechanisms, resources, and skills used so that different groups can constructively interact with one another to address potential causes of actual or potential tension (socioeconomic, political, religious, ethnic, or religious differences, for instance).

Figure 1 portrays the system-thinking-driven blueprint suggested in the study about the dynamics underlying the association between peacebuilding and post-conflict tourism. Building on the four dimensions of peacebuilding, the blueprint highlights that it is possible to link tourism – as an economic sector – not only to the process of

socioeconomic recovery in post-conflict societies, but also to the process of promotion of reconciliation and peace. This is made possible by the use of some components of the tourist system, namely tourist attractions such as museums, in general, and war-related attractions and war museums, in particular, as local infrastructures for peace. These would be spaces where both locals and tourists are explicitly encouraged to engage in relevant discussions for the active promotion of reconciliation and peace through curatorship solutions and specific activities. These components of the tourism system thus become the bridge between tourism activity and the peacebuilding process (the area in which the two rectangles overlap, in the figure).

“Tourism. Industry of Peace.” Is It?

As already mentioned, the UNWTO describes tourism as a mean to global peace, and the IIPT is committed since the 1986 to promote among the industry what D’Amore (1988) has designated as



Peace Through Tourism, Fig. 1 Dynamics underlying the association between tourism and peace through the use of museums as local infrastructure for peace. (Source: Carbone 2021)

the “higher purpose of tourism.” Nevertheless, there are inherent obstacles to the realization of this ideal. Not least the strong, widespread neoliberal perception of the tourist phenomenon. Particularly from the supply side, indeed, the approach to tourism development, management, and promotion revolves mainly around the economic value of the tourism practice, largely neglecting its sociological and anthropological aspect.

Nevertheless, although part of the academic community wants to persuade us of the ability of tourism to dissipate sociocultural stereotypes, on the other hand industry itself often capitalizes on the existence of stereotypes (Walle, 1993). What is conveyed about different cultures within tourism marketing is intentionally structured around those stereotypes, somehow feeding the Western discourse on the “exotic other” (Suvantola, 2018). Indeed, although some forms of tourism are unquestionably more responsible and respectful than others (Maoz 2006), Bruner (1991) criticizes the fact that developing countries’ cultural displays serve as a mirror for Western fantasies, performances reflecting what tourists desire and expect to find.

It is possible to notice, thus, that tourism development practices based on this archetype have

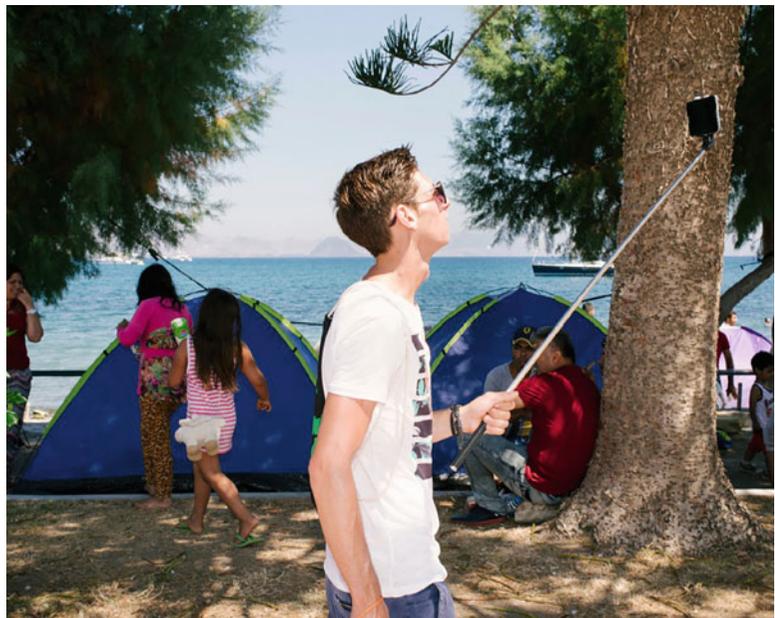
serious sociocultural and even economic negative implications, far distant from the ideal of peace through tourism. We need only to think of the overtourism, the uncontrolled growth of tourist presence that leads to open conflicts between tourists and resident population. The distance between the theoretical debate on the tourism-peace nexus and the *praxis* is even more evident in the commodification of human misery by tour operators worldwide: from the guided tours in the Brazilian *favelas* and Asian *slums* to those in the areas affected by natural disasters (e.g., the guided tours to the areas destroyed by the hurricane Katrina in New Orleans in 2005, and to the displaced community) and, recently, to the gathering areas of migrants and refugees and asylum seekers. These are the furthest things from the conceptual association between tourism and peace, aiming rather to meet the voyeuristic intents of the visitors (Fig. 2).

It is thus fair to indicate tourism as a potential mean to boost global understanding and a culture of peace. Though, it is important to be aware that such potential can only be realized in the presence of important preconditions which require also changes in the sociocultural perception of the phenomenon, both from the supply and demand side. First and foremost, it would be necessary to

Peace Through Tourism,

Fig. 2 German tourist walks with selfie stick along the beach promenade of Kos City where refugees camp until they get registered. (August 2015, Kos, Greece, Europe © Jörg Brüggemann / OSTKREUZ.

Retrieved from: <https://www.lensculture.com/articles/jorg-bruggemann-tourists-vs-refugees>)



loosen the yoke that dogmatically binds tourism to economism and neoliberal approaches.

It is important also to notice three emblematic aspects, in this sense:

1. University tourism courses are normally afferent to faculties/departments of business and economics.
2. To date, undergraduate and postgraduate tourism curricula in higher education do not contain modules related, for instance, to geopolitics, international relations, or any other subject that would widen the students' understanding of tourism toward the tourism and peace debate. It is uncommon to find a graduate in tourism who heard about tourism and peace during his/her learning experience at the university.
3. Despite the UNWTO uses to indicate tourism as a mean to peace, in the context of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) the official position of this special agency is as following:

Tourism has the potential to contribute, directly or indirectly to all of the goals. In particular, it has been included as targets in Goals 8, 12 and 14 on inclusive and sustainable economic growth, sustainable consumption and production (SCP) and the sustainable use of oceans and marine resources, respectively. (Source: <https://tourism4sdgs.org/tourism-for-sdgs/tourism-and-sdgs/>)

The official recognition of the role of tourism for the achievement of the SDG16 – Peace, justice, and strong institutions is thus lacking. Such a commitment would give a strong impulse to the debate and its *real* implications for the industry. With this in mind, it is worth to mention that – watching at this from the violence triangle by Galtung (1969) – it is not likely that tourism could contribute to the reduction of *direct violence*, but it certainly could make a valid contribution to the reduction of different forms of *cultural violence*, and indirectly even *structural violence*.

To this end, tourism should be associated to other areas such as education – formal, non-formal, and informal, heritage management, and intercultural dialogue, among others.

Summary

Tourism is traditionally understood as an activity *of* peace and *for* peace. It is assumed that conflicts (armed or not) are not beneficial to tourism, and likewise that tourism practice contributes to global mutual understanding and peace through the promotion of direct contact with different cultures. Nevertheless, a closer look at the subject disproves much of these assumptions.

An academic debate exists on the peace-tourism nexus, and the industry suggests through its top representatives – such as the UNWTO – the principle according to which tourism is a mean to peace. Nonetheless, strong limitations exist in both the industry and the academia's discourses.

To date, it is concluded that tourism represents only *potentially* a contribution to the creation of a culture of peace. There are preconditions for this potential to be realized. Theoretically, in order to make sense of the complex dynamics that the peace-through-tourism discourse underlies, it is necessary to link theories and practices from fields of research other than tourism – first and foremost peace and conflict studies. In practice, for tourism to effectively contribute to peace this knowledge should inform detailed guidelines to be shared internationally within the sector.

Furthermore, the industry should forge strong links with other sectors – from education to international relations, and from cultural heritage management to diplomacy, for instance. Finally, the economic approach and the neoliberal attitude toward tourism management and destinations development should leave room for more complex considerations regarding the role of tourism within the society and for the creation of a more peaceful and fairer world.

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Peace Within to Peace Without

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Peace Zones

► Unarmed Civilian Protection/Peacekeeping

Peacebuilding

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- ▶ [War and Peace in Somalia](#)
- ▶ [Women's Community Peacebuilding in the Occupied Palestinian Territories \(OPT\)](#)

Peacebuilding = Consolidating Peace, Constructing Peace

- ▶ [Peacebuilding–Development Nexus](#)

Peacebuilding and Korean Civil Society

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Synonyms

[Civic values](#); [Emancipatory peace](#); [Everyday peace](#); [Justpeace](#); [NGOs](#); [Reconciliation](#);

[Strategic peacebuilding](#); [The Korean peace process](#); [Track two diplomacy](#)

Definition/Description

The Korean peacebuilding case study has not been drawing substantial attention in peace and conflict studies scholarship. Given its extensive geopolitical dimensions, involving the Cold War legacy and nuclear weapons, it appears to be better suited for the field of international relations. However, there have been several South Korean civil society groups who built relationships with people in North Korea across the Demilitarized Zone, and promoted civic values for peace, in order to overcome the fragile armistice situation and build a sustainable peace on the Korean peninsula. Exploring the role of Korean civil society is expected to narrow the gaps in the Korean peace process, both in terms of knowledge and practice, and to add significant empirical substance to discussions in peace and conflict studies surrounding the potential of civil society for sustainable peacebuilding.

Introduction

Civil society has been regarded by many peace and conflict scholars as an intermediary between adversaries, and also between the elites and grassroots, to make breakthroughs in peace processes and to guarantee sustainability of peacebuilding (Lederach 1997). The realpolitik perspective appears to lower the expectation that top-level leadership would change their hardline position and pursue more than short-term political gains and elite interests, which are often disguised in the name of national security and national interest. The frequency of breakdowns in various peace processes seems to prove that high-level agreements lack sustainability. However, the bad record of high-level peace processes alone does not warrant civil society as the answer for sustainable peacebuilding. Despite the presence of civil society, most peace processes still appear unstable, and dominated by an elite agenda. Furthermore,

compared to research on states, the role of non-state actors, including civil society, in peace processes has been understudied, leaving them not observable enough to modify mainstream international relations theories (Richmond 2011). In order to enhance knowledge of the potential of civil society in sustainable peacebuilding, and to improve theoretical and conceptual frameworks for recognizing when this potential is realized, peace and conflict studies have been amassing empirical case studies (Pearce 2001).

The Korean case study has not been drawing substantial attention, so far, in peace and conflict studies scholarship. Given its extensive geopolitical dimensions, involving the Cold War legacy and nuclear weapons, it appears to be better suited for the field of international relations. The fact that the Korean War was suspended by the Armistice Agreement of 1953, and the ceasefire has been kept without major clashes between North and South Korea, seems to be in line with mainstream international relations theories, particularly realism (Hwang 2011). However, a series of high-level negotiations, attempting to move forward from the armistice to a more lasting peace, broke down. Considering the mistrust among the conflict parties, and the recurrent use of provocative rhetoric and military posturing, the possibility of a resumption of war still exists. In order to overcome the fragile armistice situation and build a sustainable peace on the Korean peninsula, several South Korean civil society groups initiated relationship building with people in North Korea across the conflict line, and promoted civic values for peace, responding to the state narratives of national security and national interest (Kim 2019b). Exploring the role of Korean civil society is expected to narrow the gaps in the Korean peace process, both in terms of knowledge and practice, and to add significant empirical substance to the discussions in peace and conflict studies surrounding the potential of civil society for sustainable peacebuilding.

Peacebuilding and Civil Society

Former UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali's 1992 report, "An Agenda for Peace," was

momentous for the international community in embracing the term "peacebuilding." In the report, Boutros-Ghali says: "Peacemaking and peacekeeping are required to halt conflicts and preserve peace once it is attained. If successful, they strengthen the opportunity for post-conflict peace-building, which can prevent the recurrence of violence among nations and peoples" (Boutros-Ghali 1992, p. 5). The background to the introduction of peacebuilding in Boutros-Ghali's report was the upsurge of various peace processes and their subsequent breakdowns in the early 1990s. However, the effectiveness and sustainability of international peacebuilding, since the 1992 report, have been questioned by several peace researchers. Their biggest concern has been the focus from the international community on liberal statebuilding, which appears to reduce peacebuilding to the top-down and external imposition of a political and economic structure, not a peace structure created by local populations (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013).

The concept of peacebuilding emerged in the 1970s during a process of critical reflection by peace and conflict scholars, Johan Galtung in particular, on international peace operations. According to Galtung, international peacemaking and peacekeeping efforts were relatively successful in achieving a cessation of physical violence, but not in achieving durable peace. In peacemaking, the sense of urgency to stop a war surpassed the need for reconciliation between people. Peacekeeping concentrated on maintaining the absence of physical violence, deferring discussions on how to address the root causes of conflict and animosity among conflict parties, leaving the possibility of regression to war. For this reason, rather than creating and maintaining a wall between conflict parties, building a structure for peace where people at multiple levels of societies are able to envisage alternative and positive relationships has been suggested for sustainable peace (Galtung 1976).

In light of the original proposal of the peacebuilding concept, the key criticism of mainstream international peacebuilding has been that building a structure for peace cannot be equivalent to copying and pasting standardized state

institutions. In order for local people in conflict-affected societies to envision peaceful changes, they should be part of creating the blueprint for their future. This does not mean that everything about peacebuilding should be local but local context and the needs of the local people should be considered more seriously, rather than just enforcing a certain type of statebuilding as a panacea. Many international conflicts emerged in the process of building and aspiring to build nation-states, and a universal statebuilding prescription cannot be the answer to all these conflicts (Mac Ginty 2011). External and top-down solutions can be especially counterproductive because of the perception that these solutions represent the interests of former colonial powers, who continue to benefit in an unjust neoliberal world order (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013). On top of that, too much focus on statebuilding tends to prioritize political agreements between elite groups, creating gaps between peace processes and the life of ordinary people in conflict-affected societies, paradoxically making the society not so liberal, and losing the sustainability of peace processes (Lederach 1997; Richmond 2008).

As a way of reducing the gaps in building peace, the middle-out approach of local civil society has been highlighted. The prospect of a peacebuilding role by civil society is related to the unique structure and position of civil society between top-down and bottom-up initiatives. Firstly, civil society is considered to be a sector on its own. This means that civil society peacebuilding could be relatively free from political standoffs in a high-level peace process. Due to their sectoral links, civil society would be able to build and maintain relationships with other conflict parties. Secondly, although civil society interacts with the economic sector, it does not appear to have an intention to make economic profit. Therefore, civil society could be an ideal actor in addressing the issues of peace dividends and social justice in peace processes. Finally, civil society is regarded as having different values from government; it does not have the ambition to run states. Civil society would be able to facilitate the engagement of people in peacebuilding, not by taking power to rule but by advocating

civic values for peace (Lederach 1997; Spurk 2009; Wagle 1999).

However, in many conflict-affected societies, civil society would be frail or absent, and local people-focused and value-oriented civil society activities would tend to be suppressed in the name of national security and national interest. International peacebuilding and development organizations have been providing assistance in the formation and empowerment of local civil societies, but they have been criticized for creating power relations between donors and recipients, and propagating the neoliberal values of developed countries (Carey 2012; Richmond 2008). Although the main purpose of civil society groups would not be economic gain, they do need resources to sustain their work and, therefore, would be subject to funders. This lack of independence due to political pressures and financial constraints could make civil society an agency to assure civil compliance in top-down peace processes based on statebuilding prescriptions (Barnes 2005). For this reason, peace and conflict scholars argue that the prospect of civil society for sustainable peacebuilding is not based merely on the existence of civil society but in realizing the potential for civil society as a critical agency in resisting top-down, state-oriented peace processes, by advocating continuing reconciliation between ordinary people across conflict lines, and by promoting civic values for peace, based on everyday local contexts (Richmond 2011).

The Korean Peace Process

The Korean peninsula was divided by the USSR and the USA in 1945, following the line of the 38th parallel north, at the end of Japanese colonization. In 1948, the Republic of Korea (South Korea) was launched south of the line and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) in the north. The incompatible statebuilding goals of North and South Korea, a unified Korean peninsula under a communist system and a unified peninsula under a capitalist system, became a root cause of the conflict, which escalated into war in 1950. The Armistice

Agreement of 1953 achieved a suspension, but not the end, of the war (Cumings 2005). The Korean case seems to correspond well with Galtung's criticism on the limits of traditional peacemaking and peacekeeping, which is preoccupied on the absence of physical violence (Galtung 1976). The 1953 agreement created the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) between the two Koreas, overseen by the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission and the Military Armistice Commission. The DMZ suspended the movement of not only militaries but also civilians. In the years following the establishment of the DMZ, South and North Korea considered themselves to be at the frontline of the Cold War, and maintained hostilities and military readiness toward each other (Hamm 1999).

During the Cold War period, the political leaders in both North and South Korea used the unfinished war to rationalize their militaristic, authoritarian rules, reinforcing the enemy identity toward Koreans on the other side of the DMZ. In the early 1970s, influenced by the Sino-American rapprochement and the American-Soviet détente, secret peace negotiations began between the North and South Korean governments. The negotiations produced the Joint Communiqué between South and North Korea, which was announced on July 4, 1972 (*The July 4 Joint Communiqué, 1972*). The July 4 Communiqué initiated an ad hoc peace process, establishing the North-South Coordinating Commission and facilitating Red Cross meetings, but the process soon broke down, with the North and South Korean leaderships expressing their distrust of each other, and strengthening their dictatorship through the revision of their respective constitutions (Ko 2005). The lack of sustainability of the Korean peace process in the 1970s seemed to support the arguments on the limitations of high-level peace processes, in which top-level leadership has a tendency to prioritize short-term, elite interests.

The Korean peace process saw another breakthrough in the early 1990s in the atmosphere of the ending of the Cold War. A series of high-level talks since the late 1980s produced the 1991 Basic Agreement on Reconciliation, Non-aggression, Exchanges and Cooperation between North and

South Korea, in which the two governments agreed to facilitate people's interaction and cooperation (*The 1991 Basic Agreement 1991*). However, the mistrust between the conflict parties, grown out of the recommencement of the US-South Korea military drill and the controversy surrounding the North Korean nuclear program, escalated tensions on the Korean peninsula once more (Kim 2006). The pledge by the North and South Korean governments on promoting interactions between people was finally realized following the first inter-Korean summit in 2000. For the first time since the division of the Korean peninsula, South Korean President Kim Dae-jung and North Korean Supreme Leader, Kim Jong-il, met in Pyongyang and issued a Joint Declaration on June 15, 2000 (*The June 15 Joint Declaration, 2000*). Since the June 15 Declaration, over two million Koreans have crossed the DMZ for various occasions, including humanitarian, development, and economic cooperation, sociocultural exchange, and tourism. Furthermore, approximately 16,000 separated family members were able to meet with their family (Burghart and Frank 2008).

However, when seemingly on course, the Korean peace process faced a series of impasses. The estranged relationship between the USA and North Korea, following the inclusion of North Korea in the list of "Axis of Evil" by US President, George W. Bush, in 2002, was exacerbated when North Korea made a statement that they had become a nuclear weapons state in 2005. The Six-Party Talks among the USA, China, Japan, Russia, and North and South Korea, to resolve the nuclear issues, made some progress, such as the September 19 Joint Statement in 2005, in which North Korea demonstrated willingness to give up their nuclear weapons program in return for energy assistance involving a provision of a light-water reactor (*The September 19 Joint Statement, 2005*). However, the lack of trust between the conflict parties, especially with regard to verification measures, suspended the Six-Party Talks indefinitely in the late 2000s (Pritchard 2007; Pardo 2014). Meanwhile, the inter-Korean relationship also deteriorated. In 2008, the newly elected South Korean President,

Lee Myung-bak, proclaimed that North Korean liberal reform, based on market economy and universal human rights, and denuclearization should be preconditions for the continuation of inter-Korean cooperation. Lee called his new policy, Vision 3000, in which he pledged to raise the average income level of North Korea to \$3,000 per capita, if North Korea implemented his institutional prescriptions (Kim 2008). North Korea immediately rejected Vision 3000. The Korean peace process became even more fragile after the sinking of a South Korean naval ship and the North Korean bombing of a South Korean island. The peace process finally broke down, with the introduction of the South Korean May 24 Measure, which suspended most South-North Korean exchange and cooperation projects, including cross-border civil society peacebuilding activities, in 2010 (Moon 2012).

Since the breakdown of the peace process, the tension on the Korean peninsula has surged to the extent that war seemed a possibility. The advancement of North Korean nuclear and missile technologies appeared to turn the Korean War into a potential nuclear war (Gause 2013). Although, in 2018 and in 2019, a series of the inter-Korean and the US-North Korea summits, between South Korean President Moon Jae-In and North Korean Chairman Kim Jong-Un, and between US President Donald Trump and Kim Jong-Un took a surprising turn of events and increased expectations for the resumption of the peace process, the inter-Korean exchange and cooperation projects remain on hold in 2020 (Choe 2020).

Peacebuilding Role of Korean Civil Society

Just like the concept of liberal peace, the concept of civil society could be seen as an imported or enforced perspective in the Korean local context. However, the formation of Korean civil society did not emerge through external intervention but in the process of resisting unjust state power (Duncan 2007). In 1919, millions of Koreans came out into the streets for nonviolent civil disobedience protests against Japanese colonial rule.

The organization of these protests gave birth to diverse social groups such as women's and labor movements (Masayuki 2007). The heritage of Korean people's movements under the Japanese state transformed into North and South Korean social groups, but with very different dispositions, reflecting the character of the divided states on the Korean peninsula. The North Korean government absorbed the spirit of people's resistance into the creation of a socialist dictatorship by claiming the public space for class struggles and retributive justice against the colonial legacy. On the other hand, the legitimacy of the South Korean dictatorship and unjust state power was continuously challenged by several social groups which formed South Korean civil society. Unceasing civil society action eventually achieved the democratization of South Korea in the late 1980s (Cumings 2007). Until the present time, there seems to have been no independent civic space between social sectors and the state in North Korea. However, South Korean civil society groups built, and are still trying to build, relationships with people in equivalent social sectors in North Korea, as well as promoting civic values for peace on the Korean peninsula.

Reconciliation Between People

Under the military dictatorship of Park Chung-hee (1961–1979), the prime concern of South Korean civil society was democratizing the South Korean state, rather than reconciling the two Koreas. Given that the justification of the dictatorship was based on the narrative of a national security threat from communist North Korea, civil society groups were very careful not to provide fodder to enable the authoritarian state to portray their movement as a communist-inspired activity. However, another military coup in 1979, and the military oppression and massacre of the May 18 Gwangju People's Uprising in 1980, brought an awareness to civil society that as long as the division of the Korean peninsula and armistice situation continued, the South Korean state could remain authoritarian under the ruse of national security (Weingartner 2003). This new awareness was conceptualized as the "division system" by scholars who were active members of civil society

actions against the dictatorship. For example, one of the academics, Paik Nak-chung, described the Korean conflict using the concept of the division system that the conflict was “not just a conflict between two different states or regimes, but also a conflict between those who obtain their interests from the division and those who suffer from it” (Paik 2006, p. 81). Building on this new awareness and conceptual framework, several civil society groups, including religious groups, students, academia, and women’s groups, reached out to people in equivalent social sectors in North Korea, to promote a reconciliation, which would neutralize the national security rhetoric of the dictatorship (Kim 2019b).

One of the earliest initiatives to build relationships between North and South Koreans came from the religious civil society, ecumenical Christian groups in particular. Christians in South Korea have been considered a strong anti-communist and anti-North Korea group because of the discrimination and oppression of Christians in the process of land and social reforms following the formation of the North Korean socialist state (Kim and Ryoo 2002). The ecumenical group, under the umbrella of the National Council of Churches in Korea (NCCCK), was an integral part of the South Korean democratization movement, but it also maintained an anti-communist character until the 1970s. However, following the reappearance of a military dictatorship and the brutal state violence in Gwangju in 1980, the NCCCK requested the world ecumenical organization, the World Council of Churches (WCC), to provide a platform for the NCCCK to meet with their North Korean counterparts, the Korean Christian Federation (KCF). In 1986, the WCC organized a meeting of South and North Korean Christians in Switzerland. It was the first nongovernmental meeting between the two Koreas since the Armistice Agreement in 1953 (Kim 2017). At the beginning of the meeting, both South and North Korean participants were suspicious of ulterior motives and the true identity of each other, especially when they saw people strongly advocating the positions of their respective governments. However, as the meeting progressed, they were able to build trust, and a

subsequent meeting in 1988 produced a joint statement on “Peace and Unification in the Korean Peninsula,” the first nongovernmental agreement between North and South Korea (Park 1998).

Before long, other civil society groups, such as the South Korean Women’s Associations United (KWAU), also initiated peace and unification movements and meetings with people in North Korea through their sectoral links. In 1991, representatives of the KWAU met with women representatives of the North Korean Supreme People’s Assembly (SPA) and the North Korean Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of Korea (CPRK) in Tokyo, Japan, in association with the New Japan Women’s Association (NJWA). The KWAU organized a subsequent meeting in Seoul, South Korea, in the same year, which was followed by a meeting in Pyongyang, North Korea, in 1992 and a meeting in Tokyo in 1993. As in the case of the meetings by the ecumenical Christian groups, the meeting by women’s groups also went through a period of building trust. Both North and South Korean women upheld the view of their respective governments regarding the issue of political unification. Their accounts about gender equality in their own society reflected the different relationships between these groups and their respective states: one recently became democratized; the other remained a dictatorship. However, they were able to find common ground on dealing with the issue of comfort women under the Japanese colonial rule, and advocated the women’s agenda being included in the peace process (Lee 1993; Kim 2009; Chung 2000). The ongoing relationship was helpful in organizing the 2002 South-North Korean Women’s Conference, which was to ensure that women would be able to participate in the peace process facilitated by the June 15 Declaration. More than 700 representatives from various women’s groups in North and South Korea attended the conference (Kim 2019a).

Meanwhile, North Korea went through a humanitarian crisis, beginning in the mid-1990s. The worsened economic situation following the collapse of the Soviet Bloc was aggravated by a series of natural disasters, causing a severe famine, which resulted in the deaths of approximately

5% of the entire population (Haggard and Noland 2005). When the North Korean famine became known to South Korean society, several civil society groups established humanitarian NGOs to provide aid to North Korea. The South Korean aid to North Korea had obvious security implications in the context of the Korean conflict, and the government strongly regulated NGO aid to vulnerable North Koreans. However, South Korean civil society groups advocated for aid to North Korea, not only as a humanitarian activity but also a peacebuilding practice to achieve reconciliation between the two Koreas (Kim 2016). South Korean NGO aid increased significantly, as the two Koreas entered a peace process following the inter-Korean summit in 2000. By 2007, more than 70 NGOs had registered with the government as having direct contact with their North Korean partners (Moon 2011). Before being suspended in 2010, the South Korean civil society humanitarian cooperation in North Korea had expanded and diversified into various sectors including food and agriculture, health and medical, and capacity building, leading to a dramatic growth in people-to-people contacts and relationship building across the DMZ (The Korea NGO Council for Cooperation with North Korea 2014).

Promoting Civic Values for Peace

While a growing number of civil society organizations initiated peacebuilding, the South Korean authoritarian state began the transition to a more democratic state in the late 1980s. The nationwide protest against the dictatorship in 1987, in which millions of people participated, facilitated this transition. The national referendum in 1987 for the revision of the constitution paved the way to the direct Presidential election. The democratization process at the time of the dismantlement of the Cold War appeared to show a weakening national security narrative of the divided states, and the transformed relationship between civil society and the state, from confrontation to counterbalance in diverse sectors of the society (Kim 2007).

However, much to the disappointment of South Korean civil society, despite the domestic political democratization, peacebuilding activities were

still under strong state control, legitimated by the National Security Law (NSL). The NSL was created to protect South Korean citizens from existing threats of war, following the Armistice Agreement of 1953, but was more than often abused by the dictatorships to ban any criticism of the state (Eckert et al. 1991). Since the democratization, the NSL became the legal grounds to control people's interactions across the DMZ. Civil society leaders, who visited North Korea, or made contact with North Koreans without the permission of the state, were jailed or fined for violating the NSL. In order to overcome state restrictions and to democratize peacebuilding, South Korean human rights NGOs drew attention to civic values, enshrined in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and advocated civil society peacebuilding from the perspective of human rights (Park 1993).

Other civil society groups promoted civic values based on humanity and mutual respect, in order to neutralize security narratives of the state and to safeguard the democratic participation of citizens in peacebuilding. For example, the 1988 NCKK Declaration on Peace and Unification pointed out that human rights violations had been excused by both North and South Korean states by invoking the identity of the enemy against fellow Koreans, and the declaration called for reidentifying common humanity between North and South Koreans, who are partners in peacebuilding, through a peaceful civic engagement (Lee 2010). As well, several South Korean humanitarian aid NGOs, such as the Korean Sharing Movement (KSM) and Okedongmu Children in Korea, initiated public campaigns to change the "enemy" image of North Koreans, appealing to a common humanity. In 1998, these NGOs jointly organized "The International Day of Fasting for People in North Korea" on 25 April. Pope John Paul II, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and former US President Jimmy Carter endorsed the campaign by also fasting on the day of the event. In due course, South Korean humanitarian NGOs also discovered that their activities had promoted humanity of South Koreans in North Korea (Kim 2019b). A South Korean NGO aid worker argues in an interview with a peace

researcher: “If we help people who are in need, without hurting their self-esteem, they get to feel that we all share humanity and care about each other. I witnessed their hearts changing” (Kim 2019b, p. 203).

In the meantime, while promoting civic values for peace, based on human rights, common humanity, and mutual respect, several civil society organizations began to perceive that most social justice issues in the South Korean society, including social discrimination, gender inequality, economic disparity, and environmental degradation, were interconnected with conflict-affected social norms and ideas shaped by militarism. As a response to these norms and ideas, in the late 1980s, women groups, in collaboration with civil society organizations working for human rights of persons with disabilities, challenged the convention of the military dictatorship era, which had rewarded men’s compulsory military service with advantages in employment, thereby instigating the discrimination in the labor market against women and persons with disabilities (Moon 2005). The women’s movement also initiated campaigns for reducing the national defense budget. South Korean defense spending was more than 20% of the government expenditure until the early 1990s, as opposed to approximately 0.4% of the budget allocated for women’s welfare (Chung 2000). In 1989, the Citizen’s Coalition for Economic Justice (CCEJ) was launched to address the legacy of militarized industrialization under the authoritarian state and to realize the democratization of socioeconomic sectors as well as political sectors. The Korea Federation for Environmental Movements (KFEM), established in 1993, highlighted the need to repair the environmental damage caused by militarized industrialization. These diverse movements in democratized South Korea reaffirmed that disabling the division system is not just about unifying the divided states but also about transforming social norms in conflict-affected and militarized societies (Moon 2005).

The peacebuilding role of civil society appeared to gain momentum with the breakthroughs in the Korean peace process, such as the 1991 Basic Agreement, and the June 15

Declaration in 2000. However, civil society peacebuilding soon faced significant challenges, reflecting the downturn of the peace process and creating conflict within South Korean society. From the perspective of conservative politicians, militaries, and civil society groups, the development of North Korean nuclear and missile technologies was clear evidence that North Korea was still a great security threat to South Korea, and raised concerns that the promotion of peaceful values by civil society would weaken national security. There was also a debate within South Korean society about whether civil society efforts to change the image of North Korea from that of the enemy would negate the civil and political rights violations by the North Korean state, or even normalize the brutal nature of the regime (Suh 2007). The Vision 3000 policy of the South Korean government, in 2008, further polarized public opinion. From the viewpoint of civil society peacebuilding groups, South Korean imposition of state reform on North Korea only increased tension on the Korean peninsula, worsening national security and North Korean human rights situations. Therefore, reconciliation between the two Koreas would be the best option to resolve security concerns, and to facilitate the transformation of North Korean social norms by the North Koreans themselves (Suh 2013). But, for those who supported Vision 3000, North Korea could not be trusted as a partner in building peace, and increasing pressure on the North Korean state, such as a show of force through US-South Korea joint military exercises or international sanctions, would be the only option to protect South Korean national security and national interest and to potentially liberalize North Korea (Kim 2016).

The debate about North Korea continued to escalate to the extent that it was called the “South-South conflict” in South Korean society. The relationship between the state and civil society fluctuated, shadowing the ups and downs of the high-level peace process. For example, while civil society groups who had been engaged in peacebuilding lost access to government funding and state permission to visit North Korea in 2010, the civil society groups who endorsed hard-line North Korea policies were

avored by the state (Moon 2014). The complete opposite situation occurred in 2018, when there was high hope for the resumption of the peace process following the US-North Korea summit and a series of inter-Korean summits. These recurring experiences raised an awareness in civil society about the need for reflection on the identity of civil society organizations, which were supposed to be independent from government and economic interests. Civil society also began to recognize the need to create a platform where diverse civil society groups with different opinions could discuss contesting values, norms, and ideas. There have been attempts by some civil society groups, such as the Korean Council for Reconciliation and Cooperation (KRCK), to build platforms for a “South-South Dialogue” on civic values in the Korean peace process. However, the affiliation of civil society groups with certain governments and political parties, especially regarding their position on North Korea, appeared to complicate the formation of this platform. The South Korean politicians continued to utilize the South-South conflict to win votes from those who supported their positions and thereby secure political power, while the North Korean state consolidated its nuclear and missile capability, as well as its authoritarian grip on its people, which keeps the division system strong, despite peacebuilding efforts by South Korean civil society (Kim 2019b).

Summary

The Korean conflict originated from incompatible political goals for nation statebuilding on the peninsula. The history of the Korean peace process demonstrates that top-down, state-oriented approaches to making, keeping, and building peace, where states dominate agendas at negotiation tables and control interactions between ordinary people, are unsustainable and that a peacebuilding approach based on the participation of people from multiple levels of society is required. Despite restrictions imposed by states and lack of limelight, diverse South Korean civil society groups have been engaging in

peacebuilding activities. These groups contributed to the growth of contacts and relationship building between people across the DMZ, and to the transformation of social norms affected by conflict and militarism, through promotion of civic values for peace. When the high-level peace process made breakthroughs following the end of the Cold War, and these civil society peacebuilding activities expanded significantly, the experience of the South Korean civil society seemed to become empirical evidence that civil society could move people in the direction toward a sustainable peace.

However, regardless of the role of civil society, the Korean peace process broke down in 2010, exposing the limitations of civil society peacebuilding in the state-dominated peace process. Despite democratization in the late 1980s, South Korean civil society peacebuilding is still under strong regulation by the state, in the name of national security and national interest, making the civil society activities highly vulnerable to changes in high-level peace process. The South-South conflict showed how contesting values within civil society groups can make them dependent on the state, which have power to support or suspend their activities, by controlling access and funding. On top of that, the absence of civil society in North Korea constantly begs the question whether civil society peacebuilding can be possible in the first place, given the nature of the North Korean state.

In this regard, the Korean case study does not yet appear to be an addition of a successful empirical case to the theoretical and conceptual discussion of civil society peacebuilding, but it can still contribute to sharpening the existing conceptual understanding. As peace and conflict studies scholar, Oliver Richmond (2011), argues, the prospect of civil society for sustainable peacebuilding is not based merely on the existence of civil society but on the potential for civil society to be a critical agency, which would not be constrained by *realpolitik*. South Korean civil society showed the potential to become this critical agency. However, the current impasse in the Korean peace process demonstrates that civil society peacebuilding needs a continuous effort to

achieve a more independent space from the state, and critical reflection on its distinctively normative identity. The bigger challenge would be the absence of civil society in North Korea. South Korean civil society peacebuilding efforts with people in equivalent social sectors in North Korea might be helpful in nurturing a civil society and promoting civic values in North Korea. However, as argued by critics of liberal peacebuilding and as in the case of the failure of Vision 3000, at the end of the day, North Korean citizens themselves should be the ones who initiate transformation of their social norms. A more autonomous and distinctively normative South Korean civil society could once again challenge the limitations of a top-down, state-oriented peace process. However, civil society peacebuilding would only reach its full potential as a critical agency in the Korean peace process, when people in North Korea are guaranteed mutual respect as peacebuilding partners in achieving reconciliation between the two Koreas and promoting civic values for peace in the Korean peninsula.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Human Geography and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Nonviolence and Civil Resistance](#)
- ▶ [Peace Infrastructures](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding: Utopia and Reality](#)
- ▶ [Security-Development Nexus in Peacebuilding](#)

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Peacebuilding and Postcolonial Subject

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Synonyms

Hybrid peace; Liberal peace; Peace operations;
Peacebuilding; Statebuilding

Description

The chapter presents postcolonial readings on peacebuilding operations, considering them reproducers of colonial dynamics and hierarchies in the contemporary international scene. Rather than presenting an unequivocal and fixed definition on “postcolonial subjects” in peacebuilding contexts, the chapter aims to highlight how these subjects are problematically produced and represented in international discourses and practices. Examples of peace operations in Haiti, Mozambique, and Somalia are briefly presented in order to illustrate the Eurocentric, colonial, and racist gazes that often-times inform peacebuilding imaginaries. Moreover, the chapter presents an introductory inquiring on the “local turn” and “hybrid peace” proposals, exploring some of their potentialities and limits. A new set of recommendations to scholars and practitioners working in peacebuilding emerges through the acknowledgment of (post)colonial inflections in peacebuilding processes.

Introduction

Traditionally, peacebuilding scholars and practitioners have deemed “postcolonial subjects” as

irrelevant or even as problems to be overcome in order to ensure the effectiveness of statebuilding processes. (For more on the relations between peacebuilding and statebuilding processes, see Bhuta (2008) and also C. Wallis ▶ “Participatory Constitution-Making and Peacebuilding” and F. Kühn’s ▶ “Statebuilding in Afghanistan: Inertia and Ambiguity” chapters in this volume.) The understanding of these subjects, sometimes as passive and dependent, and sometimes as dangerous and violent, reproduces colonial imaginaries that inform contemporary peacebuilding operations.

Before seeking to know the truth or the essence of “postcolonial subjects” and trying to localize and fix them, we should ask ourselves how these “postcolonial subjects” have been constructed throughout history by Western discourses and practices. How, for example, have these subjects been produced by international peacebuilders in the cases of peace operations in Somalia and Haiti? In which ways might these representations affect the effectiveness of peace operations, as they did, for example, in the case of Mozambique?

By navigating through this set of questions and examples, our intention is not to provide an accurate perspective on who are the “postcolonial subjects” and how should they be effectively “managed” in peacebuilding contexts. Rather, we seek to turn attention to a necessary constant questioning to the power relations that embed peacebuilding scholars and practitioners in their privileges and protagonism. (For more on a postcolonial critique to international “protagonismo” in a peacebuilding context, see Sabaratnam (2017).) A new set of recommendations to peacebuilders emerges through the acknowledgment of these power positions and their implications in peacebuilding operations.

Postcolonial Accounts on Peacebuilding: Eurocentrism and the Production of “Postcolonial Subjects” in Peacebuilding Contexts

Postcolonial perspectives share the idea that the hierarchies of race, gender, class, sex, and others which structure the relationship between colonizers and colonized have persisted beyond the

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limits of formal colonialism (Darby and Paolini 1994; Quijano 2005). Political independence processes, in societies that had been subjected to colonialism and imperialism, have actually enabled the continuity of a set of discourses and practices whereby the West continues to dominate the spaces and bodies it has once colonized. As argued by Stuart Hall (2019[2000], p. 99), “the ‘postcolonial’ does *not* signal a simple before/after chronological succession. The movement from colonization to postcolonial times does *not* imply that the problems of colonialism have been resolved or replaced by some conflict-free era.”

In this sense, the reproduction of colonial power relations and hierarchies in contemporary global governance processes, as seen in the development field or in the international peace and security agendas, have been theme of important discussions (see Inayatullah and Blaney 2004). It is generally argued that these practices operate in a logic of “modernization,” promoting Western political, social, and economic governance as universal standards to which non-Western societies must conform (Krishna 2009). Thus, from a post-colonial perspective, peacebuilding operations might be seen as reproducing a “modernization” logic, as they aim to reconstruct so-called “fragile” states through the projection of good governance models, thereby effectively imposing a set of Western liberal norms (Jahn 2007).

Seen from this angle, peacebuilding operations are informed by a preconceived peace model that is shared among the main actors and international institutions involved in peacebuilding processes: the “peacebuilding consensus” (Richmond 2004; see also Rossone ▶ “Liberal Peace in Peace Operations” and Newman’s ▶ “Liberal Peacebuilding in a Transitional International Order” chapters in this volume). According to this “consensus,” whose roots can be found in the modern political philosophy of the European Enlightenment (see Richmond 2005), a sustainable peace can only be achieved through the implementation of democratic governance institutions, the establishment of the rule of law, and a conducive environment for free market transactions. Considering this bias assumed by peacebuilding operations, post-colonial perspectives tend to conceive them as

international interventions aimed to reshaping postcolonial societies in accordance with Western political, social, and economic governance standards (Jabri 2016; Sabaratnam 2017).

It is in this sense that postcolonial lenses read contemporary peacebuilding operations as reverberating echoes of modernization theory and even of the civilizing missions that have shaped formal colonialism. In fact, the resemblance between the “new” UN operations and past colonial enterprises is acknowledged even by scholars who subscribe to the “liberal peace” framework. This is the case, for example, of Roland Paris (2002), who argues that UN peacebuilding operations carry similar operational logics to the *mission civilisatrice* of the colonial era. From the author’s perspective, even though the language of “civilized” versus “uncivilized/barbaric” peoples has been abandoned, international peacebuilding efforts still operate in the “belief that the European imperial powers had a duty to ‘civilise’ their overseas possession” (Paris 2002, p. 638). Still, a particular governance model – that is, free market-oriented liberal democracy – is deemed as superior to all others. Therefore, peacebuilding operations continue the colonial process of transferring rules of “acceptable” – or “civilized,” as it used to be labeled – behavior to the domestic arena of conflict-affected states in the Global South. It should be noted, however, that Paris does not call into question the liberal-democratic model which, according to him, has been globalized through peacebuilding operations. Instead, his critique is aimed at the ways such model has been transferred to ‘less developed’ countries (see Paris 2004). In his perspective, for a state reconstruction process to be successful, it must focus firstly on building solid institutions and, only afterwards, on fostering democratic political participation and economic liberalization (Paris 2004).

In order to understand how these processes are authorized, one must look at the discursive construction of subject representations (Jabri 2013). In general, peacebuilders are represented as protagonists, as subjects whose agency is foregrounded, while postcolonial subjects in intervened societies are portrayed as passive,

reactive, and marginally important to peacebuilding processes, if not as “threats” to these efforts (Chandler 2006; Sabaratnam 2017). As a consequence, postcolonial subjects continue to be entangled in power relations that constitute them as beings who are devoid of reason, intellectual capacity, morality, agency, and, ultimately, humanity. In the ongoing colonial imaginary, non-white and non-Western subjects once colonized by Europeans are still represented as inferior and backward in relation to Western white subjects. Such representation, in turn, provides the conditions of possibility for interventions aimed at converting these subjects to hegemonic international norms (see Jabri 2016; Gruffydd Jones 2015; Sabaratnam 2017).

Similar processes, through which the discursive construction of misrepresented non-Western subjects enable Western domination over them, are the central theme of the postcolonial analysis proposed by Palestinian literary critic Edward Said (1979). In his classic *Orientalism*, Said (1979) analyzes a set of academic and literary texts which, since the nineteenth century, have contributed to the construction of the “Oriental” subject as an irrational, depraved, and childish “Other,” as opposed to a Western “Self” portrayed as a rational, virtuous, mature, modern, and normal subject. “Orientalism,” in Said’s words (1979, p. 41), is “knowledge of the Orient that places things Oriental in class, court, prison, or manual for scrutiny, study, judgment, discipline, or governing.” However, such knowledge of the “Orient” does not stem from a direct access to facts about a region, but rather from an exercise of power whereby the “West” itself is shaped and builds its own authority over its “Other” (Said 1979).

This binary construction of antagonistic and essentialized identities, opposing the West/colonizer/developed to the “Rest”/colonized/underdeveloped, has privileged, since colonial times, the former as agents of civilization, progress, and modernization over the latter. From a postcolonial perspective, peacebuilding operations participate in this civilizing process and, in this sense, reproduce the hierarchical construction of subjectivities of the imperial past (Jabri 2010;

Sabaratnam 2011). Thus, UN peacebuilding operations are informed by a hierarchical conception of subjectivity, which places the European/Western liberal “Self” in a position of agency and ability to protect while constructing the mostly non-Western protected ones as devoid of agency. In this vain, notions such as “failed states,” “good governance,” and “responsibility to protect” emerge, informing international peacebuilding with representations that legitimize interventionism through racist imperial hierarchical categorizations similar to the ones which guided colonialism (Gruffydd Jones 2015; Hill 2005; Jabri 2010). As Jonathan Hill (2005) notes, the “failure” of the “failed states” is measured in relation to the allegedly “success” of the modern European statehood model, deemed as a universal framework to be reproduced (or rather, imposed) worldwide.

Noting these strands of power relations reproduced in peacebuilding interventions, Meera Sabaratnam (2017) argues that they operate in the logic of the structural relations of “colonial difference.” Departing from “decolonial thinking” (see Quijano 2005; Mignolo 2011) perspectives, the author argues that contemporary interventionist processes – including peacebuilding operations – are inscribed in a global “colonial matrix of power.” (The “colonial matrix of power” is the concept used by decolonial thinkers to metaphorically highlight a new global pattern of power relations inaugurated with the colonial encounter (and subsequent invasion) between Europeans and Amerindians in 1492. Its main characteristics are the hierarchical classification of humanity through racial categories, the establishment of a narrative of European superiority and exceptionalism, and the onset of a modern capitalist interstate system. “Coloniality,” then, is the reproduction of this colonial matrix of power’ logics even after the end of formal colonialism (see Mignolo 2011).) One of the structuring characteristics of this “matrix” is the hierarchical classification of humanity, whereby Europe is positioned as the geocultural center of the “West” and of “modernity” while the non-European world is relegated to a marginal position of inferiority. Thus, from the outset of

“modernity” – and its inevitable counterpart, “coloniality” – Eurocentrism has become the dominant lens for understanding and acting in the world. According to Sabaratnam (2017), since then, Eurocentrism has shaped predominant understandings on what and where politics is, on who produces legitimate knowledge about it, and on what types of responses are conceivable in that regard.

Morgan Brigg (2010) starts from a similar perception. In his critique of the “peacebuilding consensus,” the author argues that such practices are informed by a Eurocentric perspective according to which the main questions about political community and order are already resolved in favor of globalized liberalism. In Brigg’s words (2010, p. 339): “[t]o the extent that it does not critically reflect upon the cultural entailments of its heavily European heritage, peace and conflict studies implicitly privileges modern Europe as the moral, scientific, and political capital of the world, and risks serving as an agent of the liberal peace.” The fact that peacebuilding operations assume the centralized state model combined with liberal democratic ideals as a necessary and unquestionable goal limits our understanding of the possible (see Walker 1993) or our ability to imagine alternative and viable forms of political, social, and economic organization.

Along similar lines, Vivienne Jabri (2016, pp. 154–155) makes the important observation that: “when peacebuilders land in a zone of conflict, they do not emerge from a social vacuum, nor are their actions informed by the problems they confront afresh on the ground. Peacebuilders might be seen as the embodiment of global governance structures, the discourses and practices of which are mobilized towards the shaping of the future.” This observation indicates that peacebuilding practitioners often carry – consciously or not – Eurocentric understandings of what “peace” is and of how a political community should ideally function, in conformity with the Western liberal standards of statehood (Brigg 2010; Jabri 2016; Sabaratnam 2017).

Another expression of Eurocentrism in peacebuilding processes is found in the roles and associated expectations that are attributed to

practitioners and local populations. Usually, expectations converge around a dichotomy: on one side is the “international” – composed of peacebuilding practitioners and experts and often equated with the “West” – which would hold the authority and legitimacy to dictate peacebuilding models and “roadmaps.” On the opposite side, there is the “local,” to which one attributes the expectation of compliance with these models or, at worst, the assumption that its actors will spoil their implementation (Hirblinger and Simons 2015; Jabri 2013).

In fact, as Oliver Richmond (2010) shows us, approaches to peacebuilding tend to assume that international agency is positive while local agencies are problematic. According to the author, “the space of the local, the everyday, and its attendant actors are often seen as sites of violence, poverty, illiberalism, and resistance [. . .] rather than varied and dynamic sites of politics in their own right from which institutions may emerge” (Richmond 2010, p. 683). This derogatory reading of difference conditions us to focus on the allegedly traditional and violent nature of postcolonial societies, seen as mere obstacles to UN’s efforts to rebuild and modernize their states. Such reading, in turn, prevents targeted societies from being included as active co-participants in these reconstruction processes.

The materialization of the dynamics abovementioned might be seen, for example, in Meera Sabaratnam analysis of contemporary international interventions in Mozambique. In her account, the relations between interveners and the “target society” reproduce a series of Eurocentric and colonial logics. Firstly, Sabaratnam (2017) notes a desire for *protagonism* on the part of the interveners – a sort of “ego” of intervention – which results in the centralization of activities by peacebuilders, with little integration of local communities. Relatedly, there is a sense of *disposability* of target states and societies, as if the time, activities, and material resources invested by them were irrelevant and undesirable. The third element perceived by the author is what she calls a *politics of entitlement*: a kind of appropriation by interveners over the spaces where they operate, producing relationships of privilege and reward (as seen, for

instance, in the high salaries paid to international employees, with significant impacts on local markets). Finally, Sabaratnam points to the *dependence* that is often generated by large resource flows of international aid, rendering target states more permissive to donors' demands. Taken together, these elements undermine the effects generally promised by interventions: the establishment of strong state institutions, capacity-building, and local development (Sabaratnam 2017).

The same Eurocentric/colonial elements are identified by Haitian sociologist Franck Seguy regarding another peacebuilding operation: the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). According to the author, the peacebuilding interventions in Haiti have been so pervasive that, at a certain point, even Haitian public authorities were banned from entering certain territories, which had been ceded to transnational private enterprises as part of the "development" program proposed by the IMF and the World Bank within MINUSTAH's framework (Seguy 2014). The author also denounces the almost complete absence of Haitian entities in the meetings where MINUSTAH's reconstruction strategies were discussed. In fact, most of these meetings took place outside the country and, when on Haitian land, occurred in buildings with restricted access, being generally conducted in English, a language that is inaccessible to the majority of Haitian population (Seguy 2015). Moreover, Seguy (2015) highlights the dissonance between the luxury buildings occupied by peacebuilding organizations and the misery and precariousness experienced by most people in the country. The author also criticizes the fact that these organizations pay "blue-eyed foreign boys" salaries that are up to three times higher than those paid to Haitian officials for similar activities. The presence of thousands of high-wage international employees has led to rising prices in the housing market as well as for basic goods and services, further hindering the Haitian population's access to housing and food (Seguy 2015).

Actually, the reproduction of Eurocentric/colonial gazes on Haiti was already present before the deployment of MINUSTAH, in media editorials portraying racist and paternalistic narratives

on the "childishness" and "incivility" of the Haitian society (Pressley-Sanon 2014). The mistreatment and misrepresentation of the "postcolonial subjects" in Haiti were also evident in the early military activities of MINUSTAH, in the slums of *Bel Air* and *Cité Soleil*. In these episodes, Haitian armed dissident groups were targeted as criminals and chased as such, before serious attempts of negotiation or integration to the peace process (Lemay-Hébert 2014; Pressley-Sanon 2014). Several rebel leaders were summarily executed, civilian casualties were reported, and the accusations of human rights violation in the Mission reached the OAS' Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (Lemay-Hébert 2014; Seitenfus 2016). In our perspective, this is exemplary of the inability of peacebuilders to recognize postcolonial subjects (or "target societies") as actual political subjects, instead ignoring or criminalizing their actions, as Jabri (2010) and Sabaratnam (2017) had already pointed out.

Mullings et al. (2010) also point to another racist/colonial trace expressed by MINUSTAH, this time in the context of the earthquake that destroyed the Haitian capital in 2010, while the Mission was fully active in the country. According to the authors, immediately after the earthquake, news and memos portraying the country's population as "dangerous," "irrational," and "violent" circulated among international organizations and agencies operating in Haiti, spreading an atmosphere of fear which in turn contributed to the late arrival of humanitarian aid in the outermost regions of the city. In addition, the authors argue that the priority of MINUSTAH's troops and US reinforcements arriving in the country at that moment was to contain the population within the country's borders so as to prevent refugee flows, rather than the provision of humanitarian aid. Considering these elements, Franck Seguy (2014) calls MINUSTAH an attempt to "recolonize Haiti," arguing that "racism lies in the onto-epistemological genesis of Haitian policies" (Seguy 2014, pp. 523–524). Pressley-Sanon (2014) and Mullings et al. (2010) also converge in pointing out the racist and colonial features found in MINUSTAH's operation in the country (see also Guerra 2019).

A similar perspective on the “recolonization” traces of UN peace operations had already been voiced in the 1990s, during the UNOSOM II (United Nations Operation in Somalia II). In that occasion, the Mogadishu Radio accused the UN and the United States of America of trying to establish a tutelage regime over Somalia. The charge was not without foundation. In an Editorial dating from July 23 of 1992, *The New York Times* claimed: “[i]f the only alternative to anarchy is a UN trusteeship then the Security Council needs to ponder the case.” Such a declaration resonated colonial and racist imaginaries that pervaded Western leadership discourses at the time, representing Somalia as a land of “lacks” (Fernández y García 2017). The then UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for example, claimed that:

Somalia is today a country without central, regional or local administration, and without services: no electricity, no communications, no transport, no schools and no health services. Throughout the country, there are incredible scenes of hunger, disease and dying children. (...) The absence of food is both the cause and the result of lack of security. (S/24343, para. 24 in Boutros-Ghali 1996, p. 174)

Similarly, the American Ambassador in Kenya, Smith Hempstone, alerted the United States not to send troops to Somalia, seeking to prevent the death of American soldiers in the hands of “natural-born guerrillas” (Hempstone 1992, p. 30). By localizing the causes of the Somali conflict in the allegedly deviant nature of the country’s native inhabitants, Hempstone reproduced the racist tone of the nineteenth-century Italian colonial discourses on Somalia (Fernández y García 2017). In the words of the Ambassador: “The Somali is treacherous. The Somali is a killer. The Somali is as tough as his country, and just as unforgiving. [...] In the old days, the Somalis raided for camels, women and slaves. Today they raid for camels, women, slaves and food” (Hempstone 1992, p. 30).

Such perceptions are in line with Sabaratnam’s (2017) analysis of contemporary interventions as manifestations of the “colonial matrix of power” that assumes Eurocentrism as a superior reference. The non-white, non-Western, and non-European

subjects are relegated to positions of inferiority, whether as postcolonial subjects who are devoid of political subjectivity or as “abominations” and “threats” to Eurocentric “normality.”

Inquiring the “Local Turn” and Hybridization Processes in Peacebuilding: Postcolonial Contributions and Critiques

The aforementioned problematic marginalization of local actors (or “postcolonial subjects”) in peace operations under the “peacebuilding consensus” has already been critically scrutinized on different theoretical perspectives and case studies (Richmond 2010). Responsively, a new sensitivity on peacebuilding gradually emerged among scholars and practitioners, pushing for further attention to the need of including “target societies” as protagonists in peace processes. As a result, the political-institutional model embedded in peacebuilding operations has been subjected to critical evaluation, losing its unchallenged position of universal norm in relation to which all other forms of political, social, or economic organization are judged, punished, and/or adjusted (Richmond 2010). Consequently, the understanding of peacebuilding as a one-way process has also been challenged (Charbonneau 2009). More attention has been directed to the ways in which postcolonial subjects and international peacebuilders negotiate, resist, coopt, and transform peacebuilding contexts (see Jabri 2013; Mac Ginty 2010; Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013; Richmond 2010).

Along these lines, terms like “local turn” and “hybrid peace” (see Boege’s chapter in this volume ► “Hybrid Political Orders and Hybrid Peace”) gain prominence in contemporary peacebuilding debates (see Mac Ginty 2010; Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013; Richmond 2010). The central argument of this approach is that peacebuilding processes are not merely the imposition of “liberal peace” by external actors, but rather a relational dynamic involving agendas, understandings, and practices of international peacebuilders and of local community

organizations at various levels (Jabri 2013). In a sense, “postcolonial subjects” in peacebuilding contexts get to be recognized as politically relevant, both in their interactions with peacebuilders and in their everyday practices (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013). Fundamentally, it is understood that this new sensitivity tends to breed processes of peace “hybridization,” resulting in models that are neither entirely “traditional” nor entirely “liberal” but which emerge instead from the particularities of each context and society (Mac Ginty and Sanghera 2012).

In this regard, the contributions of postcolonial thinking also provide some interesting insights for reflection. In fact, discussions on “hybridism” have long been a central concern in postcolonial debates (see Bhabha 1997; Costa 2006). The contributions of Homi Bhabha (1997) are fundamental in these debates. Bhabha argues that the “conversion” of postcolonial subjects is continuously derailed by the fact that these subjects are not a “tabula rasa,” but rather a previously occupied terrain. Thus, any attempt at domination or colonization would always carry within it the possibility of subverting the original (Krishna 2009; Bhabha 1997). In Bhabha’s work, subversion is related to the sliding of the meaning of signs, and creative action is one that subverts, redefines the sign, from a locus of enunciation which is itself dislocated from closed representation systems. It is not an intervention informed by another existing system of representation, but rather one that emerges from the boundary, from a locus that is somehow outside totalizing systems of signification, and which is therefore able to introduce unease and to reveal the fragmentary and ambivalent character of any representation system (Costa 2006). With the concept of “hybridism,” then, the postcolonial critique aims to highlight the contingencies, heterogeneities, and complexities of postcolonial societies and subjects. No hegemonic project can succeed since, according to Bhabha (1997), such an enterprise is continuously fractured and subverted by its recipients.

Recognition of the hybrid character of postcolonial societies and subjects allows us to destabilize the dominant discourse in the realm of

peacebuilding operations, which continues to reproduce colonial binaries and essentialisms and to identify the “Other” as “violent,” “backward,” “primitive,” and “failed” (see Richmond 2010). As highlighted by Kenneth Menkhaus (2006), the case of Somaliland is exemplary in this regard. For the author, Somaliland, a former British colony located in northwestern Somalia, reminds us that external statebuilding efforts may not be a necessary condition for the reconstruction of successful governance mechanisms, as international organizations tend to assume. In Somaliland, the main statebuilding agents were not external; instead, as noted by Tobias Hagmann and Markus Hoehne (2007, p. 23): “This statebuilding process occurred through cooperation between traditional authorities such as elders and sheikhs, politicians, former guerrillas, intellectuals and ordinary people who decided to put their guns aside and solve problems peacefully, and with only marginal external support from international organisations.”

According to Boege et al. (2009), Somaliland is an example of an emerging state grounded in a hybrid political order with significant social legitimacy, in which elders play a crucial role in governance. Michael Walls (2009) agrees that many of the processes found across Somaliland are based on traditional conflict resolution institutions, hybridized throughout history. He also claims that such institutions should neither be dismissed because of their innate conservatism, emphasized by mainstream discourses, nor should they be romanticized. To overcome this limitation in dominant discourse, Boege et al. (2010) propose a reconceptualization of so-called failed states as “hybrid political orders.” For them, such a move:

allows for a more neutral and nuanced understanding of the complex domains of power and authority in these societies, by widening the frame of reference from the functions and capacities of state institutions to also include the operation of customary and other non-state institutions in providing sources of social peace, justice, political representation, and participation. (Boege et al. 2010, p. 101)

Despite the optimism often present in the approaches to these “local turn” and “peace

hybridization” initiatives, it should be noted that these processes are not free from limitations and criticism (Sabaratnam 2013). A first important element in this regard is the fact that there is no consensus on what or who should count as “local” in peacebuilding processes (McCandless et al. 2015). Thus, often the “local” ends up being defined by interveners, according to their own agendas and understandings of what an ideal peacebuilding process is and who should be included in it (Chandler 2013; Hirblinger and Simons 2015). Analyzing the cases of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and the United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB), Hirblinger and Simons (2015) identify an instrumentalization of local actors according to political interests of intervening forces.

A second important element concerns the risks of romanticization and essentialization of the “local” where peace hybridization processes can take place. If, on the one hand, a postcolonial critique denounces the propensity of the peacebuilding literature to associate the “local” with “tradition” and, consequently, with “backwardness,” “disorder,” and “violence,” it is also aware of the opposite risk of romanticizing and praising the “local” (Lidén 2009; Kaplan 2009; Richmond 2010; Mac Ginty 2010). Thus, as highlighted by Thania Paffenholz (2015), there is often a tendency to construct the “local” as an idyllic, supposedly more legitimate and authentic dimension, the locus of a “greater truth” on how peace processes should be conducted. As a result, one can lose sight of power relations and oppressions reproduced at the level of local communities.

Another strand of critiques to the “local turn” and “peace hybridization” calls into question the very binary opposition between the “global” and the “local.” In this perspective, the notion of “local turn” tends to reproduce a conception of the “international” as a monolithic entity, generally conceived as the domain of the “Global North” or “West,” a dynamic locus of agency in the design and implementation of peace processes (Nadarajah and Rampton 2015). The “local,” in turn, continues to be frequently reproduced as an atomized locus, fixed and taken for granted, to

which a depoliticized, passive, and strictly reactive role is attributed in relation to international agendas and practices (Jabri 2013; Nadarajah and Rampton 2015).

This kind of binary representation, often reproduced in approaches to a “hybrid peace,” echoes some problematic features noted by Arjun Appadurai (1988) in discourses opposing “natives” and “Westerners.” In these discourses, the “natives” are represented as authentic, pure, and fixed identities, while the “modern” Western societies are set apart from this possibility of authenticity, for their alleged complexity, dynamism, and diversity. In this sense, the “natives,” according to Appadurai (1988, p. 37): “are not only people who are from certain places, and belong to those places, but they are also those who are somehow incarcerated, or confined, in those places.” In contrast to these contained, incarcerated, and culturally isolated beings are the free-flowing Westerners. Taking up, over history, the roles of explorers, missionaries, anthropologists, administrators, and today, we might add, peacebuilding agents, Westerners have represented themselves as “the movers, the seers, the knowers,” in contrast to the natives immobilized by belonging to a “place” (Appadurai 1988, p. 37).

Having these problematic dichotomies in mind, there are approaches that defy the usual association between the “global” and domination, on one hand, and between the “local” and resistance, on the other, assuming a perspective which takes the “global” to reside within the framework of the “local,” as proposed by Phillip Darby (2004). In such a framework, there is the acknowledgment of the colonial involvement in the reconfiguration of local identities. The same might be said regarding the compliance of international peacebuilding agents in recent outbreaks of violence in postcolonial societies (see Lemay-Hébert 2014). In a similar logic, we may conceive that the “local” can also affect, negotiate, and modify “global” agendas and policies, constituting what Jabri (2013) calls the “postcolonial international.”

Finally, another critical strand of the “local turn” concerns the invisibility and silencing of

historical and structural power relations. In this sense, critique is directed to the absence of historical accounts on colonialism, imperialism, and neocolonialism in analyses and prescription under the label of the “local turn” (De Heredia 2018; Sabaratnam 2017). Similarly, power hierarchies and relations that are fundamental to the structuring of the “modern international” – such as racism, capitalism, and patriarchy – are often invisible in approaches to the “local turn” (Chandler 2013; De Heredia 2018; Nadarajah and Rampton 2015). As a consequence, despite labeling themselves as critical, these approaches still reproduce and rely on Eurocentric, state-centric, (neo)liberal worldviews, subjectivities, and political responses (De Heredia 2018; Jabri 2010; Sabaratnam 2013).

Final Remarks

As seen in the set of perspectives, debates, and problems presented throughout this chapter, we consider that the issue of an ethical-political engagement with “postcolonial subjects” is central to theoretical and practical debates on peacebuilding. In this sense, we follow Meera Sabaratnam (2017) as she argues that a serious consideration of the various local actors in peacebuilding contexts as relevant political subjects can lead to deep structural changes in the ways these peace processes are (or are not) conceived and executed. However, we also agree with the author as she claims that, prior to these larger structural changes, small steps can be taken by scholars and practitioners in order to avoid colonial biases in their approaches to peacebuilding.

An essential step consists in the construction of bottom-up approaches, which take the experiences and standpoints of target societies regarding peacebuilding processes as their starting point (Sabaratnam 2017). This might involve peacebuilding hybridization processes which place target societies as protagonists in the formulation and implementation of peacebuilding policies, instead of merely including certain “local” segments in ways that fit interveners’ agendas.

Another step requires interveners and peacebuilders to be aware that the activities they perform are fundamentally political, rather than strictly “technical.” In this regard, practitioners should be more sensitive to the history of colonial interventions in societies in which they operate and to the ways their own actions can be interpreted in relation to these contexts. This means “racializing the international,” understanding it as an environment where colonial power relations are reproduced. Beyond efforts to amplify the voices of postcolonial subjects in peace operations (a step that is surely fundamental), an effective decolonization of peacebuilding processes requires this revisionism and self-criticism by peacebuilders themselves, as they usually possess the knowledge that is considered legitimate and the resources needed to turn this knowledge into political practices.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Culture, Anthropology, and Ethnography in Peace Research](#)
- ▶ [Hybrid Political Orders and Hybrid Peace](#)
- ▶ [Islam and Peace](#)
- ▶ [Local Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Stabilization Operations and Their Relationship to Liberal Peacebuilding Missions](#)
- ▶ [Stalled Peacebuilding: Dealing with the Violence of Colonization and Its Legacy](#)

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Peacebuilding and Spatial Transformation

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Introduction

Where does peace take place? Almost all processes including war-making and peace-making take place in a specific local setting (Koopman 2011; Megoran 2011; Björkdahl and Kappler 2017; Björkdahl and Buckley-Zistel 2016). Post-conflict power relations in cities such as Sarajevo or Nicosia can be understood through “landscapes of power,” in which a variety of actors and stakeholders (re-)negotiate social relations. What is more, as material and emblematic assets, divided cities like Mostar or Belfast represent places in which identities are manifested, visualized, and compete spatially. An airbase such as the one in Dayton, Ohio, can be a place for peace

negotiations, thus giving its name to a peace accord. Conflicts manifest themselves in places, as does peace. Yet, while divisions are often clearly legible in space, the legacies of the conflict often obscure the visible and tangible materializations of peace. Contemporary peacebuilding missions profess to bring about “peace”, but what exactly constitutes peace is seldom apparent to the people on the ground and at times only results in partial changes in urban and rural landscapes of power.

This section examines the interconnectedness between peace and space and place in order to understand where peace “takes place.” It suggests space and place to be vehicles through which peace and agency can be explored in the aftermath of violent conflict. The aim is to provide new insights into the transformation from war into peace by grounding the analysis of peace and peacebuilding agency in time and space. To do so, as we propose in previous research (Björkdahl and Kappler 2017), we explore the extent to which spatial transformation has taken place in a post-conflict setting as a marker of peacebuilding agency.

As there has been no sustained inquiry into the relationship of peace with space and place, spatial perspectives have received scant attention in the study of the contentious politics of peace. Spatial theory provides analytical concepts which have not yet been fully exploited in analyzing peacebuilding and conflict dynamics. Yet, the organization of space is significant for the structures and functions of peace and war. Thus, this section investigates peace as it is manifested in spatial practices, that is, in material and symbolic representation. The spatialization of peace and conflict studies is advanced through the following questions:

- Where do peace and conflict take place?
- How can we understand peace and violent conflict in spatial terms?
- How can “warscapes” become “peacescapes,” i.e., how are spaces and places tainted by conflict transformed to represent and manifest peace?
- How can peacebuilding agents be captured through a spatial analysis?

Definitions

Space and place are useful concepts to theorize peacebuilding agency. Space and place serve as vehicles through which peace and conflict can be explored. Following this, the transformation of space and place through processes of “place-making” and “space-making” practices can be understood through a focus on spatial agency. In this, we understand “place” as a material, physically manifested location, whereas “space” denotes its symbolic, ideational counterpart (cf. Björkdahl and Kappler 2017). While the material and symbolic dimensions are inextricably linked, we suggest that the analytical distinction between “place” and “space” helps us understand the frictions between the ways in which places are built, as opposed to understood and used, and thus the role that human agency plays in translating one into the other (Table 1).

Spatial Agency in Peacebuilding

Agency can be expressed in various ways and is situated in diverse enabling or disabling spaces and places (cf. Giddens 1984; Gregory 1981: 16). Agency may be exercised for driving change, but also to uphold status quo, and thus reproduce continuity. The notion of spatial agency is careful not to foreclose the constantly changing and multilayered expressions of agency. To explain social and material transformation, then, is to understand the interplay between space and place through the agency of those working in them. Agency can thus be seen as situated in the tension between place and space, and such spatial agency can be found in the capacity to transform place into space (through the (re-)creation of its meanings and possibilities) on the one hand and in the capacity to transform space into place (by rendering ideas into material reality) on the other hand. Such processes of transformation reflect the extent to which power relations, and thus conflicts and peace(s), are located in spatial practice. By situating peacebuilding agency in spatial practice, we point to the fluidities of agency in its ability to move between practices of peacebuilding and

Peacebuilding and Spatial Transformation, Table 1 Key terms and definitions

| Key term | Definition | Empirical examples |
|---|---|--|
| Place | Geographical location Has “material” properties, i.e., physicality Expresses a sense of belonging and is seen to provide a locus of identity Is the locus of complex intersections and outcomes of power geometries that operate across spatial scales, from the body to the globe | The Old Bridge in Mostar, Bosnia-Herzegovina The “ghost town” of Varosha, Cyprus The peace walls of Belfast, UK The Youth Cultural Centre <i>Abrašević</i> , Mostar, Bosnia-Herzegovina The “Sarajevo Roses”; in Bosnia-Herzegovina Robben Island, South Africa Mother Teresa Boulevard, Kosovo/a The buffer zone in Cyprus The District Six Museum in Cape Town, South Africa |
| Space | Is the ideational extension of physical presence, i.e., place Is the realm which extends to meanings and interpretations of place The product of interrelations and constituted through interactions A platform on which social relations can form and develop | Peace Reconciliation Bi-communalism Anti-apartheid Inter-ethnic collaboration Conflict transformation Conflict prevention Memory |
| Spatial agency | Is situated at the intersection between place- and space-making Refers to the capacity to transform place into space (through the (re-)creation of its meanings and possibilities) Refers to the capacity to transform of space into place (by rendering ideas into material reality) | International and regional organizations restructuring urban landscapes of peace and conflict State elites restricting access to zones of protest NGOs rebranding places of conflict for communal use Community-based organizations engaging in urban protest Artists redesigning public spaces |
| Space-making – turning place into space | The process of making a physical place relevant and meaningful to societal and political discourses The enactment, use, and interpretation of a place by turning it into a space that is meaningful to its users and audiences | The Occupy Buffer Zone Movement in Cyprus, which aimed to overcome the existence of a buffer-zone dividing the North and the South of Nicosia and the Island of Cyprus The redrawing of the peace walls in Belfast to change the symbolic boundary lines into zones of contact and cooperation |
| Place-making – turning space into place | Refers to the processes of geographically anchoring an abstract idea in a material location Locating an abstract idea such as peace in a material place | The idea of reconciliation between Bosnian Croats and Bosniaks translated into a physical place by rebuilding the Old Bridge in Mostar Giving the idea of a Kosovo/a state physical presence at the Boulevard of Mother Teresa in Pristina through the erection of monuments Finding a mnemonic anchor for the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement at the Maze/Long Kesh Prison, Northern Ireland |

Table adapted from Björkdahl and Kappler (2017)

conflict-inducing dynamics. Places are never pre-determined as either conflictive or conciliatory, but always have the potential to host practices related to peace and conflict, even at the same time. In that sense, bridges can act as dividing spaces as much as walls can bring people together.

The bridge across the river Ibar in Mitrovica, Kosovo/a, for instance, has long served as a border in the divided town, whereas the militarized buffer zone in Nicosia, Cyprus, is increasingly seeing the presence of NGOs engaged in peace work. A spatial analysis of peacebuilding

scenarios thus points to the continuous ambiguity of agency in its ability to activate a variety of discourses and practices. Thus, the ability to transform space into place and vice versa is a clear marker of agency, particularly against the background that “space” does not necessarily equal “place.” However, the agency deployed “in-between” determines what kind of place is produced from imaginary spatial ideas, or, alternatively, what kinds of imaginary spaces emerge from a physical construction of a place. Such processes are always dependent on the kinds of agency that surround the contested landscapes of (post-)conflict zones and reflect the different interests at stake in negotiating the economic and sociopolitical structures of power at play.

Place-Making

Place, as a material phenomenon, expresses a sense of belonging and is seen to provide a locus of identity. Thus, it defines who is “in place” and who is “out of place” (Creswell 1996, 2004). Contemporary politics of peace are “held in place” by sites. Place may stabilize and give durability to social structures such as peace and rearrange post-conflict power relations. In a sense, place can sustain both imagined peace(s) and the materialized everyday peace by routinized daily practices, and by embodying the meanings ascribed to them. Place is thus where peace and conflict affect people in their everyday and it matters to people’s experience of conflict dynamics and peacebuilding. Place produces power, reflects and reinforces hierarchy, and hosts power-laden social relations. Thus, place is the locus of complex intersections and outcomes of power geometries that operate across many spatial scales, from the body to the globe.

Specifically, peace and peacebuilding are enplaced and constituted in part through location, material form, and their imaginings (cf. Appadurai 1995). Place-making refers to the processes of geographically anchoring an abstract idea in a material location. Places are made as people ascribe a physical venue to abstract social ideas and norms. Thus, it is possible to read

agency from the process during the course of which actors are able to give physical presence to an ideational space. The more relevant and visible a place can be made, the more powerful it will be in the transformation of people’s everyday lives. In a sense, a place is a space filled with people, things, practices, and representations. People ascribe attributes and qualities to places; ours or theirs; safe or dangerous; public or private; unfamiliar or known; accessible or inaccessible.

Space-Making

Space, in our definition, is the symbolic and ideational counterpart to place. It denotes the meanings and interpretations that accompany any spatial practice. In that, it is a product of social interactions and their associated understandings of a particular locale. Space-making, therefore, describes the complex ways in which materiality is given meaning in a specific context and from the perspective of the surrounding actors. Space-making is therefore a process that takes as its point of departure the physical and material place and, through meaning-making processes, transforms the former into an abstract, ideational social space. Space can be viewed as the imaginary counterpart to place. It is the ideational extension of physical presence, i.e., place. In the words of de Certeau (1984: 117), “space is a practiced place.” How the construction of a new set of monuments, for instance, is received locally, nationally, or globally, is indeed not a given, but a process of ambivalent outcomes through spatial negotiations. Understanding such negotiations as they take place in peacebuilding contexts can therefore be an important step in analyzing the competing agendas that meet in a given arena of peacebuilding.

Summary

Peace and conflict represent two sides of the same coin and often take place in parallel. In the midst of violent conflict there are islands of peace, and in times of peace there are outbreaks of violent

conflict. By applying a spatial perspective, this section is able to capture the mutual constitution of material place and symbolic space in our reading of sites where peacebuilding takes place. It becomes clear that the politics of transition from war to peace and the transformation of warscapes into peacescapes can be read spatially. Based on our earlier work on spatial transformation (Björkdahl and Kappler 2017), the section evidences that processes of peacebuilding unfold in place-specific forms and spatial combinations. The complexity of spatial practices as situated in a jigsaw of human agency thus blurs the distinction between “warscapes” and “peacescapes” and shows that the function and outcomes of spatial peacebuilding is always a result of the engagement of a variety of peacebuilding agents.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Divided Cities](#)
- ▶ [Everyday Peace](#)
- ▶ [Human Geography and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Street Art and Peace](#)
- ▶ [Urban Peacebuilding](#)

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Peacebuilding Consequences

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Keywords

Peacebuilding · Consequences · Intentionality · Responsibility

Synonyms

[Peacebuilding](#); [Consequences](#); [Intentionality](#); [Responsibility](#); [Liberal peace](#)

Definition

This chapter examines the consequences of peacebuilding interventions. It argues that contemporary peacebuilding interventions are not capable of reaching intended goals, anticipating and preventing the undesirable consequences of its actions, and taking responsibility for such consequences. Accordingly, the kind of peace that emerges in conflict-affected societies is not a product of what is intended but what both insider and outsider agents have failed to achieve. This not only has repercussions for the prospects of sustainable peace but also exposes fundamental flaws within the entire peacebuilding enterprise. It reveals the limits of power and knowledge and unearth the power of uncertainty, surprise, and uncontrollability. In probing the consequences of peacebuilding interventions, this chapter both offers a conceptual critique and provides empirical and illustrative insights to expose the problems and tensions underlining peacebuilding in contemporary politics.

Introduction

Over the past two decades, peacebuilding (along with state-building and development) has been one of the main tools used by the international community to mitigate insecurity and expand the frontiers of democracy and neoliberal economy (Doyle and Sambanis 2006). Rooted in Western interventionism, liberal peace currently dominates mainstream peacebuilding practices. Core assumptions of liberal peace hold that establishing peace and building a liberal state will produce a stable peace. However, the record of contemporary liberal peacebuilding praxis so far indicates a mixture of success and failure (Campbell et al. 2011; Jett 1999). In terms of success, liberal peacebuilding has contributed to initiating post-conflict political, economic, and social recovery processes, such as establishing new constitutional and institutional frameworks, developing electoral choice, and setting up basic public services (Diehl and Druckman 2010). However, since its inception, liberal peacebuilding has fallen short in establishing conditions for sustainable peace as most of the recipient societies continue to suffer from insecurity, weak democracy, fragile peace, and contested and fragmented sovereignty (Richmond 2010; David 1999). To this situation contributed also local peace and state capturing structures, which are primarily tuned to blocking peace consolidation (see Visoka 2020a). Arising from this self-fulfilling liberal prophecy, the external, long-term, and unintended impact and consequences have been ignored and overshadowed (Visoka 2016a). A broad spectrum of consequences and omissions, which could be of a negative nature with long-term consequences and collateral implications, often remain unexplored. This represents a significant concern for understanding the power of agency, the lineages of impact, and the capacity to govern social affairs.

Due to its inherent interventionist nature and desire for stability and control, peacebuilding interventions have to reengineer post-conflict societies with political and economic models that did not fit the local context and culture and

the democratic will of the people (Chandler 2010; Richmond 2011; Visoka 2017). Western approaches to peacebuilding have given priority to translating external needs into internal obligations while suppressing internal needs by imposing regimes of rights (see Doyle 2005). Liberal peace promotes compliance and subservient political culture in post-conflict societies. In certain instances, liberal peace works against pluralist, participatory, and deliberative democracy. This is primarily done to maintain overall stability and avoid public deliberations as a forum that could lead to violent confrontation between different ethnic groups and pose challenges to the unquestionable authority they exercise directly and indirectly over post-conflict societies (Visoka 2017). By its nature, liberal peace tends to remove political agency from local political institutions, weakening their capacity to develop and implement locally engrained policy, thereby creating a culture of dependency, domination, and inequality. Asymmetric power; the imposition of a political, economic, and social system; unaccountable practices; and the positionality of colonial exploitation, expressed by Western-dominated states, organisations, and NGOs, have left post-conflict societies exposed to multiple consequences, failures, and anomalies (Richmond 2014). By putting a primary emphasis on short-sighted immediate results and relying on externally positioned intentions, most of the peacebuilding organizations have ignored the possible negative and long-term consequences. Within this realm, local and alternative approaches to peacebuilding are underestimated and neither sufficiently promoted nor incorporated in the national peace processes.

The success of peacebuilding is often measured based on the universality and validity of liberal intentionality (Pushkina 2006). The very idea of appearing to contribute to global peace and security, democracy and development, and conflict prevention is perceived to be a sufficient basis for enacting and justifying the global legitimacy of leading international peacebuilding actors (Charlesworth and Coicaud 2010). Similarly, good performance is praised based on the immediate outputs that do not encounter

broader long-term impact and subsequent consequences, which can be produced directly and indirectly by peacebuilding endeavours. Ultimately this is the wrong approach (Fast and Neufeldt 2005). However, measuring peacebuilding success based only on good intentions risks disincentivizing efforts to reach intended effects. This does not mean though that, on the contrary, bad intentions might produce good consequences. The short-sightedness of using immediate impact and outcomes as the grounds for assessing and justifying liberal interventions is nothing less than a deceptive reading of social reality in conflict-affected societies. For these reasons, consequences should ontologically be given higher consideration, and consequences should certainly become the measure against which agency is legitimized and responsibility is assigned. In fact, noble intentions count for little when they cause more harm than good. So, the paramount agency of peacebuilding organizations should not only be limited to their good intentions, but their validity should also be based on their ability to achieve intended outcomes, to anticipate the potential harmful and negative consequences of their purposive actions, and to undertake preventive measures where and when possible. A new ontology of critical consequentialism is needed, which reverses the dominant discourses, reveals the discontent and discontinuity between intentions and consequences, and excavates the specificity and exteriority of consequences.

Within peace and conflict studies, both liberal and critical approaches to peacebuilding have not yet been able to address the consequences of peacebuilding due to ontological and epistemological differences (see Richmond 2019). Proponents of liberal peacebuilding have predominantly ignored peacebuilding consequences, as that would be seen as a self-defeating prophecy and an undesired refutation of their theoretical and policy propositions. This is exemplified by the fact that the spectrum of consequences that emerges from peacebuilding operations is often excluded from the measurement indicators. The mainstream indicators of peace that rely on technocratic and routine logics of performance and impact assessment are

unsuitable to measure sensitive and complex questions related to unintended consequences (Mac Ginty 2012). In particular, the contemporary politics of impact assessment dictated by the material dominance of donors and power holders, coupled with an inadequate assessment of peacebuilding consequences, have contributed to the ignorance of the different types of long-term consequences that peacebuilding interventions have produced in conflict-affected societies. The liberal peace research agenda is more prone to tackle questions related to the removal of obstacles and the creation of conditions for enforcing the liberal peace, rather than looking for alternative perspectives or critically engaging with the consequences of their prior wrongdoings. On the other hand, critical approaches to peacebuilding have focused on decoupling the shortcomings of liberal peace, setting a new expanded interdisciplinary peace research program, and undertaking an emancipatory perspective to empower local agency. The examination of unintended consequences by critical approaches is utilized as an empty signifier and as a safe way of criticizing while not antagonizing mainstream peacebuilding machinery, unintentionally thus neutralizing blame and responsibility for the consequences of the intentional actions of liberal peace (Visoka 2016a).

These analytical and policy inadequacies have left peacebuilding consequences under-researched and conceptually ambiguous. The paradigmatic contempt between liberal and critical approaches has affected the ontological positionality and has determined what counts as consequences and how to portray them in academic and policy discourse. This certainly illustrates why there is a lack of understanding of unintended consequences in peace, security, and development theory and praxis. But to overcome these epistemic and practical anomalies, there is a need for methodological and epistemological pluralism, the need for analytical flexibility to overcome the entrenched logic of research programs, and the need to pursue new frontiers of critique to capture the impact of peacebuilding actualities and its consequences.

The present chapter engages with the adverse impact of peacebuilding in conflict-affected

societies by critically examining the intentionality, consequences, and responsibility of current international interventions. The linkage between intentionality, consequences, and responsibility is crucial as it captures the metaphysics, politics, and normative validity of peacebuilding. The examination of consequences requires tracing back key triggering actions. Behind each action, there is a dose of intentionality, which represents the starting point of a cycle and is influenced by previous knowledge, experiences, and events. The identification of consequences enables the retrospective examination of the factors that led to its formation, especially the presence of intentionality, anticipation, and preventability. This helps to understand social actualities and to attribute specific and relational responsibility for the consequences to responsible agents (as individuals and collectives). The complex interaction of these aspects enables us to embrace and harness the complexity and discontent of contemporary peacebuilding actualities, where intentionality does not match with actions taken, the consequences remain unaccounted for, and the appropriate assignment of responsibility is almost inexistent.

Combining a conceptual discussion with empirical examples, this chapter offers insights on the extent to which existing approaches to peacebuilding are not capable of reaching intended goals, anticipating and preventing the undesirable consequences of their actions, and taking responsibility for such consequences. This not only has repercussions for the prospects of sustainable peace but also reveals peacebuilding as a camouflaging enterprise. This indeed constitutes the immorality of peacebuilding – a particular form of governing political affairs without care and self-constraint for the harm of their intentional conduct. Peacebuilding interventions risk delaying building of peace. Good intentions are not translated into good effects. The peacebuilder’s “will to peace” remains immanently incomplete. As such, peacebuilding can unintentionally take on the function of peace-wrecking. Seen from this perspective, the societal fabric in conflict-affected societies is not a product of what is

intended but what both insider and outsider agents have failed to achieve. To illustrate the consequences of peacebuilding intervention, the chapter explores the unintended consequences of police reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the unprevented consequences for building the rule of law in Kosovo, and the unanticipated consequences of security sector reform in Timor-Leste.

This chapter proceeds by first examining the question of intentionality, anticipation, and preventability in the context of peacebuilding. It then examines the spectrum of unintended, unanticipated, and unprevented consequences, illustrated by concrete examples from conflict-affected societies, as well as interrogates the key critical encounters that shape peacebuilding actualities in the field. The chapter then looks at the failure of peacebuilding organizations to take responsibility for their wrongdoings, highlighting the current practices and the ethical limitations of the UN and other regional actors involved in peacebuilding. The chapter concludes with a number of critical reflections on why current peacebuilding interventions are seen as impossible to building a sustainable and just peace.

Peacebuilding Purpose: Intentionality, Anticipation, and Prevention

As part of broader global security apparatus, peacebuilding operates on the premises of Western-rooted frameworks of governing security and social affairs through rationality, mechanisms of predictability, preemption, alertness, preparedness, and reaction. They represent complex mechanisms to govern complexity with the sole purpose of reaching intended goals and achieving intended consequences. These intended goals of protecting and promoting a liberal way of life enshrine power, norms, values, and material interests (see Finnemore 2004). So, at the heart of peacebuilding lucidity are intentionality, anticipation, and prevention. Intentions and intentionality have a central role in understanding social life (Searle 1983, pp. 79–80). Intentions are a key ingredient of a socially constructed

world. Individual and collective intentions are supposed to guide human conduct and reflect the articulation of agency. They are seen as the normative, intellectual, and principal feature of human ability to act in accordance with certain goals, ideas, desires, and objectives that guide action. In a correlative sense, intentions shape human subjectivity, they shape social actions, and they produce consequences, and they serve as the basis against which responsibility can be assigned. Declared intentions are created through a speech act and linguistic process which is conditioned in materiality. They are essential for guiding what Searle calls “word-to-world,” which are constituted in the first place by the reversed dialectic of forming intentions from experience (Searle 2010, p. 11). For instance, a social institutional reality is created by the linguistic representation of declared intentions.

Declared intentions outlined in peace agreements, UN documents, and other policy documents constitute the bedrock of liberal peacebuilding ideology and represent the reference point against which the construction of reality in post-conflict societies is investigated (see Paris 2004). Liberal intentionality is manufactured in the shape of liberal normativity. The normativity of liberal peacebuilding lies within the idea of building peace, by building democratic state institutions, addressing the root causes of conflict, establishing the rule of law and an impartial justice system, promoting human rights, and developing an open market-oriented economy. However, these liberal peace intentions reflect collective intentions, which implicitly contain self-interest as well as strategic, secret, and hidden intentions of different peacebuilding organizations, thereby creating a complex web of incompatibilities, contradictions, and chaos. Declared intentions do not operate in vacuum. They are connected with some other intentions and are also correlated with a set of abilities, capacities, dispositions, and ways of doing things and know-how that mediates the translation of intentions into practice (Searle 2010, p. 31).

As much as peacebuilding intentions represent a collective will and desire to contribute to

installing a liberal peace in a post-conflict society, they also represent the self-interest of outsider agents. The superficially consensual nature of peacebuilding intentions hides deeply rooted disagreement, which affects the political will, the adequacy of actions, and levels of concern for the consequences. Above all peacebuilding intentions are often euphemisms, stating something that is neither truly intended nor expected to be achieved. These declared intentions are often precisely in Orwellian sense, a “clear language of insincerity. . .when there is a gap between one’s real and one’s declared aims” (Orwell 1968, p. 137). Discourse on the rule of law, democratic policing, sustainable peace, and justice is often invoked broadly to leave space for maneuvering and modifying the measurement of progress and success. They are more reflections of what is ought to be said rather than what was truly intended. This creates confusion and hides the ingredients against which the social and political outcomes of actions are products of intended and anticipated actions.

A number of examples illustrate these paradoxical caveats of liberal intentionality. The liberal peace intentions in Bosnia outlined in the Dayton Peace Accords were more oriented towards ending the conflict than building peace. The inadequacy of this intentionality was later unraveled with the fact that this peace agreement became the key impediment to peacebuilding and overcoming the ethnic impasse in the Bosnia. Similarly, the intentionality of the EU Police Mission (EUPM) in Bosnia was not only focusing on building a democratic, unified, effective, and accountable police force but also showing the ability of the first joint European crisis management mission to deploy abroad. Success was determined with deployment ability, rather than the fulfilment of declared intentions and its subsequent impact on Bosnian society. While in Kosovo, the basis of the declared intentions was a UN Security Council Resolution (1244 (1999)), each state and organization involved in Kosovo tried to advance their national interests, either through funding conditionality or indirectly through their people that were part of UN structures. Found in this web of multiplicity of

intentionality, UN officials in Kosovo undertook actions based on instincts rather than determined along clear policy lines and intentions, because otherwise the process of making and agreeing upon collective intentions would paralyze the entire peacebuilding enterprise (Covey et al. 2005). In Timor-Leste, the UN formulated the declared intentions for Timor-Leste largely according to “template logic,” drawing on the structure of the UNMIK (UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo) and under internal tensions including short time for preparing the mission, a shortage of staff within the UN Secretariat, and disagreements between UN-DPKO and UN-DPA over the internal responsibilities within the UN. This decontextualization of supposedly universal liberal intentions was not helpful for Timor-Leste.

In the formation and application of intentions, anticipation plays a crucial role. The human agency of planning makes anticipation necessary to guide intentional action (Bratman 2007). Accordingly, anticipation is about the governmentality of the future – about securing, controlling, and disciplining the present and the future. Anticipation seeks to engage with the unknown and uncertain future with the justification of preempting, preparing for, and preventing threats to the present and/or desired state of being of individuals and collectivities (Anderson 2010, pp. 778–779). While the anticipation of intentions is complicated but predictable, the pattern of outcomes and consequences is even more complex as there are multiple complex factors to interact with each other in a nonlinear pattern that makes the anticipation of consequences very complex (Perrow 1986). For policymakers and realist security scholars, anticipation represents a necessary check to reduce the present and future unknowns. Countries such as the USA and the UK have developed sophisticated anticipatory practices, combining conventional contingency planning and scenario-building rooted in fragments of empiricism with more imaginary and intuitive attempts to anticipate the future. However, the ethical and practical consequences of anticipatory governance are the major concerns for critical security scholars, as anticipation practices

represent a form of reconstructing the present and imposing an inexistent future with devastating repercussions on human freedom, security, justice, and well-being (Aradau and Van Munster 2011).

In the context of peacebuilding, the UN is often troubled by a weak and ineffective anticipatory governance system. In the past, the absence of early warning and anticipatory mechanisms was considered one of the functional causes of the UN’s failure to prevent the genocide in Rwanda and Bosnia (UN High-Level Panel 2004, p. 34). Following the trends of global security governance in the past decade, the UN has tried to set in place early warning and anticipatory governance, which is much weaker compared to what is used by powerful states. There are many examples of UN peacebuilding operations, illustrating inadequate strategic planning and lack of local knowledge (CSDG 2003, p. 18). For instance, the UN has invoked extensively the discourse of anticipation as a process of learning from the past, adjusting to present and anticipating future requirements. The 2000 Report of the Panel on UN Peace Operations called explicitly for creativity and imagination when approaching future peacebuilding operations. In achieving this, the UN has looked for solutions to the material aspects of anticipation, such as equipment, cash, and information assets (UN 2000, p. 15). The UN has tried to build an institutional architecture evident with the Peacebuilding Commission with the sole purpose of engaging in “early warning through preventive action to post-conflict peacebuilding” (UN High-Level Panel 2004, p. 83). However, relying on remote and detached “expert” knowledge and on periodical inadequate public polls, the UN has performed badly in anticipating and preventing conflict recurrence. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon recently admitted that “despite years of investment, we are still far from having predictable and effective mechanisms for rapid deployment” (UN 2014). The complex bureaucracy and the remote hierarchies of decision-making have made knowledge-sharing and decision-making a slow and ineffective process. In the context of peacebuilding, anticipation takes place through external blueprints,

routine thinking, and mindsets, which are often remote from the local context, knowledge, and micro-dynamics and everyday societal relations (UN 2009, p. 8). This has limited the UN's ability to adjust its intentionality to actions compatible to local contexts based on a well-grounded understanding and anticipation of local dynamics.

The availability of early warning mechanisms is insufficient without analytical capacity to identify deviations from the course of the implementation of intentions and the emergence of a spectrum of consequences. Zartman (2001, p. 331) argues that an important step in preventive action is the cultivation of an early awareness rather than early warning, which combines looking for distant problems, the ability to identify available warning signals, and the capacity to engage in an analytical understanding of the possibilities for prevention. Conventional predictability can be a self-fulfilling prophecy, where a perceived threat can generate more threats, and fear can generate more fear, and resolving problems can generate more problems. Equally important, the nonlinearity of social processes poses a significant challenge to anticipation, which is more affiliated with linear systems, as there can be no direct or constant relationship between agents and structures (Mitchell 2009, p. 90; Chandler 2013). Of course, repeating the same action will not lead to the same outcome, as universal liberal intentionality will not produce the same effects in all post-conflict contexts to which it has been applied.

Critical approaches to peacebuilding have engaged indirectly with the question of predictability through exploring emancipating scenarios, where the positionality, interest, and embedded identity of external agents transcends to engage with other unknown, dislocated fields, and possible futures (see Visoka and Musliu 2019). In particular, critical scholars have identified the subordination of local context, knowledge, and interests as a source of failure to reach the intended goals (Chandler 2010). This is based on the conviction that outsider agents have largely ignored insiders' knowledge on the grounds that it is primitive and not useful for building peace in post-conflict situations, as it is rooted in distinct

cultures and ethnicity, which were the sources of conflict in first place (Fontan 2012). Reversing this discourse, critical scholars consider local knowledge an important aspect, which needs to be explored and considered as a precondition for social emancipation seen as key to promoting a sustainable peace, a stable polity, and the social contract in post-conflict societies.

However, local people often treat knowledge as a contingent form of knowing and learning that remains contextual, not replicable. Calls for decolonizing peace could lead to the further suppression of insider agents, as extracting knowledge will be an all-encompassing hegemonic activity of anticipation. The outsider agents, ranging from security advisers, peacebuilders, development workers, and business consultants to researchers and scholars, disembark in post-conflict places to extract the knowledge of the insider agents (Visoka 2018). Outsider agents extract insider's knowledge to inform policies, planning, evaluation, and reengagement of the outsider agents in post-conflict societies (UN 2010, p. 7). Knowledge extraction is used as a weapon of the powerful to dominate, rule, and control further the subjugated, suppressed, ignored, and exploited insider agents (Aradau and Van Munster 2012). This type of knowledge extraction could be considered unethical and produce harmful consequences for the insider agents, because insider's knowledge is often extracted to inform policies, planning, evaluation, and reengage outsider agents in post-conflict societies. So, the invocation of decolonized methodologies, such as participatory action research, sociological, ethnological, and anthropological approaches, and narrative analysis enable an all-encompassing hegemonic unweaving of the local from any sphere of autonomous, undiscovered, and secure form of enablement (Smith 2012; Visoka and Musliu 2019). Unintentionally, critical scholars result in revealing the most intimate, hidden, and complex forms of agency articulated by insiders in their everyday secure zone of survival and interaction. Consequently, the UN and other international organizations gradually are exploiting this decolonized knowledge to increase the chances of success during interventions in

conflict-affected places. This is evident with the increasing discourse on local ownership, participatory development, resilience, and local infrastructure for peace (Odendaal 2013; UN 2009).

In the context of peacebuilding, the core liberal intentions seek to prevent the recurrence of conflict by addressing its root causes. In this realm, anticipation is a mediating mechanism to conflict prevention. Prevention and preventability is one of the most important aspects of reflective agency. Prevention occurs when an action is invoked to prevent certain effects from occurring, or reversing the course of consequences (Zartman 2001, p. 4). Prevention presupposes that something is or can be prevented, which can be an observable development, an anticipated course of action, and foreseen consequences (Bratman 2000, pp. 35–61). To enact prevention, there should be an awareness and knowledge of the potential consequences of action and nonaction. The subject of prevention is often a harmful risk, which tends to occur based on anticipatory reasoning and deviate from the satisfaction of intentions and achievement of intended outcomes (Zartman 2001, p. 313). One of the most important and fruitful dimensions of prevention is its role to correct human intentionality and action. Ben Anderson (2010) argues that preemption, precaution, and preparedness are types of preventive action. While precaution is engaged during the middle of a reversible process, preemption takes place even before the event occurs. The value of precaution is, as Anderson (2010, p. 778) argues, “to care for a valued life by neutralising threats to that life.” Preparedness is the stage after the consequences have occurred and resiliency is built to respond to future recurrences. Beyond this, prevention seeks to engage in anticipating future possible consequences and to undertake actions before they become immanent. While this might sound reasonable, in the context of peacebuilding prevention operates on different properties.

Conflict prevention is widely acknowledged in peacebuilding practices. In peace and conflict situations, the awareness of preventative action is altered due to the errors of international decision-making in multiple past ethnic conflicts, as well as harmful effects and multiple failures of multitrack

diplomacy (Lund 2002, p. 159; Novosseloff 2000). It is also argued that “while there is much talk of ‘prevention,’ anticipating problems before they overwhelm us is not a strength of our species and even less so of the system of states” (Weiss 2012, p. 225). The UN has tried to utilize preventive diplomacy to prevent escalation of conflicts, but this has produced mixed results. Despite previous failures, preventive action remains unattractive to policymakers, as it does not represent an immediate threat and necessity, and is seen as a costly endeavor without immediate rewards. Different experiences show that moving from early warning to early action is difficult. For instance, the UNDP in Kosovo had advanced early warning system, but it was largely ignored by the UN and local government around the time when ethnic violence recurred in 2004. There is a high likelihood that previously gathered information was not taken seriously by decision makers and properly analyzed, a lack of coordination and separate systems of secrecy and intelligence impede early warning, and the presence of hidden intentions and conflicting political objectives obstructs the accumulation of sufficient political will for action (Rupesinghe and Anderlini 1998, pp. 79–81).

However, the question of prevention and preventive measures at later stages of peacebuilding remains unexplored, if not entirely ignored. It is presumed that prevention should take place only before the conflict escalates or ends. The prevention of consequences is possible but is conditional on a number of factors. Prevention to avoid and/or reduce harmful effects is contingent on the adequate timing of action, possession of authority, good judgement based on solid knowledge, empathy, and due diligence. According to Jervis (1997), the unintended effects can be reduced, if not eliminated, when people constrain each other, when there is an understanding of how the system works, and when multiple sequential and simultaneous actions are undertaken, operating with multiple layers of intentions. Within such a scenario, Jervis (1997, p. 591) maintains that “actors must do several things” to prevent certain outcomes from occurring. Although the responsibility for unintended consequences cannot be removed, this is morally and practically relativised when

“active measures are taken to prevent or minimise the negative side-effects” (Reichberg and Syse 2004, p. 43). Within the realm of containing and managing the emergent consequences, it is suggested to develop “system feedback through institutionalised monitoring and evaluating mechanisms, and constantly adjusting our planning and operations . . .” (Aoi et al. 2007, p. 275).

So far, peacebuilding actors have justified and legitimized their interventionism on the grounds of promoting good intentions of building sustainable peace, as well as trying to uphold its global governmentality by trying to utilize anticipatory governance to prevent and deescalate conflicts and influence outcomes in conflict-affected places. However, the normative impetus and praxis have not produced intended outcomes, thereby contributing directly and indirectly to a world of its unmaking, which is made of consequences that are shaped by both international and local agency around critical turning points, intentional events, and remote nonevents.

Peacebuilding Consequences as the Results of the Results of Results

Social actualities in post-conflict societies are mainly dominated by various consequences as emerging features of purposive interactions between insider and outsider agents operating in the institutional, public, and everyday realm of post-conflict habitus. So, attempts to build peace often do not manage to achieve the intended outcomes. Insider and outsider agents engaged in peacebuilding are repeatedly unable to control the outcome of peace processes. The social world is constructed in negation and collusion of individual and collective intentionality, through the interaction of agents with different discursive figurations, power ratios, and material strengths. In the context of conflict-affected societies, the state of peace represents the influence of everyone and nobody, whereby various consequences take the form of social unknowns, surprises, and the prevalence of errors and an incomplete trajectory from will to effect. For this reason, the disentanglement of peacebuilding consequences of

requires both conceptual clarity and empirical processual rigor. The emergence of consequences shows the complex figuration and hybridisation of peacebuilding processes (Visoka 2016a). The spectrum of consequences occurs in a cascading logic of emergent features. They follow a non-linear pattern between the intended impact and the consequences that emerge, often transcending the social field and affecting other fields of social interactions (see Hurley 2009). The processes are not only influenced and driven by the international actors, but also local actors and factors play an essential role in shaping the nature of processes. Peacebuilding organizations often witness the emergence of effects they don't want, they don't have the ability to know, and they cannot prevent their occurrence. What we encounter as consequences are nonlinearly assembled aspects of different fields. They are the result of the results of results.

While peacebuilding consequences might be shaped by the interaction of local and international agents and structures, they cannot be reduced to the properties of these units (see Anderson 1999). So, a differentiated account of peacebuilding consequences brings more conceptual clarity and empirical accuracy. Based on this, three types of consequences can be unpacked: unintended consequences, unanticipated consequences, and unprevented consequences. The three types of consequences are differentiated based on the criteria of the absence of their affirmative attribution – the unfulfillment of intention, anticipation, and prevention. This is the essence of their discursive formation. Ontologically, this form of social analysis could be referred to as “anti-agency analysis.” These different types of consequences are often negative consequences. Differentiation is essential for reconstructing theoretical and empirical knowledge on the spectrum of consequences and also for guiding pragmatically reality-adequate critique and practice (Buzan and Albert 2010, p. 2).

Unintended consequences can be defined as those consequences that have emerged as a result of the direct action of peacebuilding organizations, which are not goal-oriented and are not intended by the agents, and as such fall outside of the scope of intentionality and declared

intentions (see Schneckener 2010). Unanticipated consequences are defined here as those consequences that have emerged, which were neither anticipated nor foreseen, or predicted by peacebuilding organizations (see Merton 1936). Unprevented consequences refer to those consequences that have occurred as a result of inaction by the agents of peacebuilding either at the stage before the effect is created or during an early stage of development, when the consequence would have been preventable and avoidable. The unpreventability of consequences is measured and assessed within the agential realm and possibility of the agents, which includes the availability of authority, and the presence of alternative possibilities for action (Campbell et al. 2010, p. 2).

The disentanglement of peacebuilding practices in conflict-affected societies provides important empirical insights on the unintentional making of social and political fabric. To explore this, I have examined the local unintended consequences of police reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the unprevented consequences of the emergence of Serb parallel structures in Kosovo, and the unanticipated consequences of security sector reform in Timor-Leste. Police reform, as part of security sector reform, has been one of the main components of liberal peacebuilding praxis in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Chandler 2006, p. 338). Both UN and EU missions have been declared successful and were highly praised for their performance. However, the spectrum of consequences they produced has remained largely ignored and under-researched (Visoka 2016b). The UN Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) and International Police Task Force (IPTF) tried to build a democratic police, downsize the police forces, Westernize the local culture of policing, and build an independent and publically accountable police structure. The UN tried to reform local police forces without challenging the operation of multiple, overlapping, and fragmented police forces at the entity and cantonal level. However, this policy of legitimizing the existing mono-ethnic police structures led to multiple unintended consequences that later became the main obstacles to peacebuilding.

First, the formation of multiple police structures left room for nationalist political interference and control over the operation of police forces and the instrumentalization of police to impede the implementation of Dayton Peace Agreement. Second, the rushed process for completing the certification of police officers disregarded criminal records and illegal activity among police officers (Holbrooke 1999, p. 338). Third, ineffective screening and certification of local police facilitated the reluctance of local police to investigate criminal offences and human rights abuses committed against minority returnees. Fourth, new police forces served as the main impeders for the identification and prosecution of war crimes, while many suspects themselves hid within police structures (Human Rights Watch 2006). Numerous examples point out the failure of local police to execute court orders, apprehend, or arrest war crimes suspects (Amnesty International 2003, p. 21). Fifth, the prolonged and mismanaged police reform process has unintentionally nurtured widespread organized crime, corruption, and informal economic practices, whereby police forces, in cooperation with ethnic elites, have been involved in criminal activity (Brady 2012, p. 19). In 2003, it was estimated that almost 50% of the Bosnian economy was based on the black market (Brady 2012, p. 18). Finally, local police forces coordinated their activities with nationalist factions, which led to human rights abuses against the minority refugee returnees, impeded the formation of new mixed and secure communities, and delayed the provision of basic public order and safety essential for social peace, political freedom, gradual reconciliation, coexistence, and economic development.

So, by agreeing to preserve old policing structures, international peacebuilders unintentionally contributed to practices such as the following: allowing political interference into law enforcement structures; informal policing and cooperation with criminal groups; protecting war criminals and obstructing transitional justice; and spreading human insecurity, human rights abuses, and discrimination against IDPs, minorities, and women. The international community did not intend this spectrum of consequences, but it

came as a direct result of the mistakes made during the initial stages after the war. These consequences were further nurtured by insufficient international coordination and a lack of cooperation, resources, and knowledge to comprehend the harmful effects that the police reform would bring. These unintended consequences later became the main obstacle to the peace process and delayed Bosnia's EU integration dynamics.

In Kosovo, the peacebuilding and state building process was challenged at the outset by Serb local groups, which resisted international rule and contested Albanian dominance in post-conflict Kosovo (Visoka 2016a). These resistance groups supported by the Serbian government created their parallel security, justice, education, healthcare, and administrative services. While the UN and NATO had the knowledge, authority, and resources to prevent the emergence of these Serb parallel structures, they did not challenge them for the sake of stability. However, these structures produced multiple consequences, which were preventable but intentionally were not prevented from occurring. First, the failure to prevent the emergence and development of Serb parallel structures between 1999 and 2001 led to the creation of a frozen conflict in the north, where the UNMIK failed to extend its authority and the rule of law, and the KFOR was unable to maintain security and ensure the freedom of movement. Second, the emergence of Serb parallel structures led to the creation of institutional and legal parallelism, which created social confusion, social disobedience, disorder, and informality. Third, the activity of Serb parallel structures has undermined international and domestic efforts to build peace, consolidate state institutions, and find common ground for ethnic reconciliation in Kosovo after 1999. By preventing the return of forcefully displaced persons, these structures maintained divisive ethnic geographical boundaries and minimized contact and opportunities to tackle common problems and overcome past divisions (KIPRED 2012).

These consequences shaped significantly the political developments in Kosovo, whereby previous nonactions created a new chain of consequences, which multiplied, complicated, and

constrained further opportunities for building peace (Visoka 2017). Accordingly, unprevented consequences prevented peacebuilding in Kosovo. Such unprevented consequences have effectively prolonged the international presence in Kosovo and undermined their authority and legitimacy, delayed the establishment of effective and functional institutions, hindered the establishment of civic peace and ethnic reconciliation, and undermined socioeconomic development. The failure of the international community to take preventive measures illustrates how the lack of sensitivity for the consequences, despite the availability of authority, resources, and knowledge, created a mess and ultimately failed to achieve their declared intentions. The emergence of these consequences was unintentionally unprevented revealing the morale and seriousness of peacebuilding as well as the weak agency of the UN, NATO, and EU to remain loyal to the declared intentions and the obligations taken on behalf of the international community and the local population (see Visoka and Richmond 2017). It shows "the triumph of the lack of will" to take timely and appropriate measures to prevent negative consequences in their field of responsibility. While the UN might have chosen non-action to prevent any larger scale conflict, this has counter-intuitively prevented peace in the long run. In this case, post-conflict "conflict prevention" has become "peace prevention."

The examination of the unanticipated consequences of security sector reform in Timor-Leste also reveals the uncontrollable nature of the peacebuilding process. Driven by good intentions to bring stability and develop a solid security structure, six subsequent UN peace missions worked to establish from scratch and then strengthen the police and defense forces in Timor-Leste. However, the recruitment process for the police and defense forces, along with inappropriate capacity building for new security forces and the absence of clear institutional framework and democratic oversight of security forces, led to a number of unanticipated consequences. The first and most visible and influential unanticipated consequence that has emerged as a result of the security sector development was the violence in

April and May 2006, which resulted in 38 fatalities, the burning of 1,650 houses, and the internal displacement of around 150,000 people (Scambary 2011, p. 66). The events of April and May 2006 were unanticipated consequences of early anticipatable developments. An important point of reference here is the fact that the UNTAET (UN Transitional Administration in East Timor) suffered from inadequate strategic planning, prior to its establishment in Timor-Leste, and particularly lacked the necessary anticipatory context-driven understanding of how to handle security sector reform and how best to accommodate ex-combatants within Timor-Leste (CSDG 2003, p. 18). The lack of early communication between the UN and local leadership created mutual misunderstandings and reduced their ability to anticipate the outcomes of each action undertaken. The UNTAET's strategic direction for developing the security sector was flawed due to a lack of expertise regarding the local language, culture, context, and local power dynamics.

Second, failed security sector reform led to the development of an ineffective police service, which did not perform their intended primary tasks but engaged in controversial, abusive, and unaccountable practices (UN 2004, p. 9). Failure to institutionalize and establish civilian oversight systems for the police resulted in impunity and human rights abuses perpetrated by police officers on the civilian population (Visoka 2016a). Third, as a consequence of the exclusionary process of developing the defense and police forces, as well as the inappropriate provision of security and enforcement of the rule of law, a large number of spoiler groups emerged consisting of disaffected former FALINTIL fighters intermeshed with criminal and clandestine groups, which threatened everyday peace, undermined state institutions, and nurtured communal division and conflict (Rees 2002, p. 153).

In Timor-Leste, unanticipated consequences occurred as a result of the lack of early communication and mutual understanding between local and international stakeholders regarding their intentions and political positions (Visoka 2016a). These unanticipated consequences reduced the

ability of peacebuilding organizations to anticipate the course of consequences arising from their purposive actions. Lack of engagement with the local context, language, and culture reduced the UN's ability to capture local dynamics and orient strategically its actions towards the avenues that would produce intended results. Furthermore, the "permanent temporality" of the UN presence reduced the desire and ability of agents to foresee the consequences of their actions. The 2006 violence was not anticipated by the UN's contingency planning and exit strategy. Although most of the consequences were not anticipated, there was evidence that early acts of violence and confrontation between the police and defense forces, as well as the poor institutional and operative performance of the police, left room for acts of violence to be suspected. Ignoring these acts had a detrimental effect on the state of peace in Timor-Leste.

The spectrum of unintended, unanticipated, and unprevented consequences is often triggered by the interaction of complex incompatibility between an extensive mandate and a large list of declared intentions. This is further exacerbated by the typically short period of time to prepare the mission, limited advanced planning, the unavailability of resources, a lack of political willingness at various decision-making levels to implement the declared intentions, confusions between self-interest and objective normativity, and the prevalence of short-term approaches to processes and outcomes coupled with an ignorance of long-term effects. The examination of peacebuilding consequences in Bosnia, Kosovo, and Timor-Leste highlights a number of critical encounters that have contributed to the emergence of bad consequences (Visoka 2016a). First, timing plays a crucial role. The temporality of peacebuilding operations and the short-term involvement of agents do not provide space for the clarity and stability that are essential for predictability, planning, and cautious operations. The contingency and short time frame of operations in post-conflict societies gives insufficient attention to the spectrum of consequences and especially to anticipation and prevention among peacebuilding organizations. Against this background, short-term

consequences are more important than the long-term impact. This logic is based on the need to provide evidence for good performance, which can be measured with reference to short-term objectives and achievements. Consideration of long-term performance and quality assurance is compromised due to the need for results that can be measured immediately. Tomorrow's consequences are ignored. A preoccupation with entry strategies and the establishment and maintenance of peacebuilding missions arguably overshadow concerns with long-term consequences. However, ignoring the long-term impact and consequences of peacebuilding paves the way for the failure of peacebuilding efforts in post-conflict societies and delays the consolidation of peace at the expense of the local population.

Second, there is a dialectical relationship between the duration of peacebuilding and the spectrum of consequences. The duration of UN peacebuilding operations has an impact on the willingness of international actors to care about the consequences of their actions, the establishment of relations with local political factions, and how they approach the local context, culture, and needs. The collateral scope of the spectrum of consequences prolongs the efforts for peacebuilding and exhausts the constructive conflict resolution momentums. While the ambiguity and contingency of short missions produces certain consequences, a long-term presence creates consequences related to creating a culture of dependency, externally generated local political legitimacy, and the promotion of irresponsible politics. On the other hand, the spectrum of consequences examined in this essay has effectively prolonged the international presence, undermined their authority and legitimacy, delayed the establishment of effective and functional institutions, hindered the establishment of civic peace and ethnic reconciliation, and undermined socioeconomic development. The longer the problems dragged on in Bosnia, Kosovo, and Timor-Leste, the higher the costs became for the international presence in these countries. Equally, the prospects for overcoming state fragility and normalization became weaker, and it became harder to escape the cycles of

conflict to reach economic stability and social peace.

Third, peacebuilding organizations have largely ignored local knowledge arguing that it is primitive, illiberal, and not useful for building peace in post-conflict situations, as it is rooted in divided cultures and ethnicities that were the source of conflict in first place. When peacebuilding organizations are far removed from the local communities, they have weaker local knowledge, lower capacity, and less ability to anticipate, prevent, and reduce the harm of peacebuilding interventions. Furthermore, the dislocated loyalty, absence of empathy with local people, and their culture, as well as the primacy of materialism (concerns for professional career and high salaries), serve as distractions that undermine the potential of peacebuilding. Foreign workers frequently see post-conflict societies as an attractive career move, bringing high salaries, and diplomatic privileges and immunities. They often do not interact with insider agents in an empathetic manner but typically behave as privileged individuals who believe themselves superior to insider agents, thereby undermining local cultural practices and ignoring local knowledge. Foreign workers often create their own habitus in post-conflict societies, interact only among themselves, and avoid the everyday life and complex reality of post-conflict people. Diplomats and senior officials of peacebuilding organizations are among the most influential agents that shape political processes in post-conflict places (Visoka 2020b). They are primarily interested in advancing the interests and agenda of their respective institutions or seconding states, with little empathy for the legacies they leave behind in post-conflict societies. Under such conditions, consideration for the potentially harmful effects of peacebuilding decisions and actions is virtually nonexistent.

Fourth, the spectrum of consequences also emerges from short-sighted and historical routines of thinking and acting within the same repetitive dynamic for different types of situations and circumstances. The hierarchies of bureaucratic decision-making reduce the ability for engaging in heuristic thinking, exploring alternative

pathways, or anticipating the possible consequences of peacebuilding programmes. Uncertainty regarding peacebuilding consequences cannot be tackled by formality, because consequences are dislocated across a broad network of social fields, which are difficult to capture within routine and formalized procedures. The emergence of unanticipated consequences is facilitated by a number of factors, including the following: faulty assumptions, the “template” logic of problem-solving, the tendency for the universal application and decontextualization of policy tools and mechanisms, inaccurate information, and flawed situational and analytical knowledge. The processes of adaptation, learning, and change are often very slow and are often not part of peacebuilding practices. Consequences are also influenced by the common flawed assumption generally shared by international actors that liberal peacebuilding, which produced intended outcomes in the past, will have the same outcome in all post-conflict contexts. When transferred to a different post-conflict society, best practices and lessons learnt from other contexts might not work as intended and expected.

Last but not least, the spectrum of consequences also emerges as a result of the absence of coordination between different international peacebuilding organizations. Among different peacebuilding organizations, there are tendencies for domination, hierarchical supremacy, and diverse interests, which reduce honest knowledge-sharing regarding the consequences of peacebuilding (Ricigliano 2003). The battle for coordination and consent between field-based operations, their headquarters, and other international community stakeholders consumes a considerable portion of strategic thinking and planning time available to international peacebuilders. Such frictions reduce the ability of field-based peacebuilders to anticipate and prevent the consequences of their actions. The complex hierarchy of peacebuilding decision-making erodes the possibility for key decision makers to listen and act upon the early warning signs communicated by field-based peacebuilders. For example, in Bosnia, the IFOR/SFOR (Implementation Force/Stabilisation

Force) was unwilling to assist IPTF by providing security for the return of refugees, which resulted in the permanent entrapment of hundreds of thousands of refugees and IDPs outside their home communities. This also had a negative spillover effect onto the composition of electorates and community representation, leading to the dominance of nationalist parties and delayed reconciliation. Equally, in Kosovo, the KFOR (Kosovo Force) acted independently from UNMIK’s authority, as did the EU and OSCE in their semi-independent operation as UNMIK pillars. In Timor-Leste, the UNTAET was not in control of the INTERFET (International Force East Timor). Recently, the UN Secretary-General admitted that UN should “focus on better coherence and coordination, clarity on roles and responsibilities, coherent integrated strategies, stronger partnerships among key actors, and a move towards greater predictability and accountability” (UN 2009, p. 8).

The Carelessness of Peacebuilding and (UN)accountability

Current peacebuilding organizations reject taking responsibility for the spectrum of consequences, arising from their purposive actions, and show little concern for their wrongdoings and the mess they leave behind in post-conflict societies (Visoka and Doyle 2014). This is evident from the absence of appropriate mechanisms to address the responsibility for taking wrong decisions and actions, for failing to uphold their obligations, and for causing social harm. Nevertheless, the dislocated nature of consequences (in time, place, and scope of authority) complicates imputing the right proportion of responsibility to the responsible agent (see Erskine 2003).

Contemporary peacebuilding missions operate without appropriate responsibility safeguards. This is partially affected by the politics of unaccountable international governance evident from the diplomatic privileges and immunities, which protect actors from legal and political responsibility, and from the indirect political power they exercise over internal and external forces. This is

exacerbated by the ineffective system of national balance among the UN staff members in sending troops to peace operations and the prevalence of the clientelist politics of donor countries (Visoka and Doyle 2014). In the current reality, there is no adequate approach to allocate responsibility for the spectrum of consequences, whether intended or unintended, anticipated or unanticipated, avoided or unprevented. Internal disciplinary mechanisms, frequent changes of personnel in charge of political decisions, and the loosely defined and partially implemented codes of conduct render internal accountability in peacebuilding organizations a technocratic necessity rather than a genuine attempt to ensure the responsible behavior of agents. The absence of legal and institutional mechanisms to hold international actors responsible can be explained as arising from the desire of power-holders to avoid mirroring the ethos of democratic responsibility prevalent in their own home country and to preserve the political and practical supremacy over the local subjugated agents. This partially explains the international unwillingness and ineffectiveness when dealing with allegations of human rights violations by international civilian and military personnel in post-conflict settings. Above all, it shows the prevalence of the tendency to uphold authority while avoiding responsibility, which speaks for the moral maturity and agential character of international governance.

For example, the international presence in Bosnia was one of the most extreme examples of post-conflict international governance, which had an executive mandate without appropriate responsibility mechanisms (Caplan 2005, pp. 463–476). Despite its supreme and executive authority, the international community in Bosnia has not developed any political or legal mechanism for allocating responsibility for the outcomes and consequences of their decisions and actions. Contrary to the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, where the international community had extensive authority but no responsibility mechanism, in Kosovo there were two mechanisms, which were quasi-judicial attributability and answerability mechanisms (Visoka 2012). However, these mechanisms were ineffective serving power

rather than justice. Accordingly, international peacebuilding organizations in Kosovo have not taken responsibility for the unprevented consequences examined in this chapter, nor have they been held accountable by any institutionalized body at the local or international level (Visoka and Doyle 2014). Therefore, it is important to outline the responsibility of each organization for the consequences caused by their nonaction to prevent the emergence and development of Serb parallel structures in Kosovo, which breached local and international laws for over a decade. In Timor-Leste, six consecutive UN missions have avoided taking responsibility for the unanticipated consequences of their purposive actions while exercising absolute authority, alongside the unsupportive local culture of tolerating impunity at the institutional level and prioritizing forgiveness at the societal level. In Timor-Leste, the UN exercised authority without a clearly defined mandate and without taking responsibility for their actions and the related consequences.

These examples signify the nature of post-conflict governance, where democracy is preached but not practiced by the international community and authority is exercised without taking responsibility for the consequences. The responsible agents (collective and individual) are not held responsible for the consequences. Applying responsibility is almost impossible in this complex web of multiple actors, dislocated decision-making, organizations with high personnel turnovers, and the passage of time. While it is unrealistic to expect that international peacebuilding missions will retrospectively accept to be held accountable for the consequences of their actions, at the very least problematizing the issue of responsibility for consequences could serve to redirect the future conception of peacebuilding practices – moving from “authority-without-responsibility” to “authority-with-responsibility.” This suggests that there is a case to redefine the current nature and extent of responsibility, to reduce normative entitlements, and to reshape the legitimacy of international peacebuilders, as well as to critically review the extent to which such missions function in accordance with democratic standards. From the perspective of moral and

consequentialist logic, the legitimacy and authority of the UN should be conditional on their willingness to accept responsibility for the spectrum of consequences produced by their purposive decisions and actions. In particular, the failure to prevent consequences, despite possessing the necessary authority, capacity, resources, and knowledge, presents a strong case and moral imperative to allocate the responsibility.

Summary

Current peacebuilding practices are characterized by a mismatch between good intentions and bad consequences. What were intended as liberal solutions to conflict outcomes often gave rise to other problems and triggered new illiberal responses and dynamics. A discussion of intentionality, consequences, and responsibility as guiding conceptual devices for assessing the impact of peacebuilding shows the complexity, multiplicity, nonlinearity, contingency and limitations of human agency, rationality, and materiality. International peacebuilders try to avoid encountering the unintended and negative impacts of their actions. The ontological politics of ignoring the consequences of peacebuilding are related to the desire to preserve the undeserved moral legitimacy of peacebuilding organizations while suppressing true encounters of failure and the desire to exercise power, to maintain dominant hierarchies of order, and to achieve externally constructed intentions. This indeed constitutes the immorality and carelessness of peacebuilding. Ignoring the registration of peacebuilding consequences leaves social events poorly explored, excludes impunity from responsibility, and dismisses the meaningful and corrective reformation of individual and collective agency. Moreover, peacebuilding consequences call into question the utilitarian good that liberal peacebuilding brings to post-conflict societies, revealing the disproportionality of good intentions and harmful consequences. Peacebuilding risks becoming a camouflaging enterprise, where intended outcomes are not pursued sufficiently, the potential pitfalls are not anticipated, the known

irregularities are not prevented, and responsibility for the consequences is evaded. Current cultures and practices of peacebuilding are enshrined in Western ontologies and patronizing attitudes towards the local subjects, are driven by self-interest, are careless about the consequences of their actions, and shun responsibility for any harmful consequences.

The evidence presented above illustrates that liberal peacebuilding in the broader sense is neither capable of building a sustainable peace nor dealing with its consequences for a number of reasons including the following: peacebuilding's inherent pathologies related to normative and organizational inconsistencies; the linear and universalist repertoire of peacebuilding toolkits and rulebooks; undemocratic methods of operation; an orientation towards problem-solving; and a detachment from local needs, culture, and knowledge. Seen from the perspective of complex systems, current practices of building peace in post-conflict societies can be referred to as linear peacebuilding, whereby the desired outcomes are projected and predicted, and the implementation tends to follow logical frameworks and action plans, with evaluation being projected in a suitable fashion. In practice, liberal peacebuilding is projected prior to an intervention by agents who are detached from the place and context of engagement, thereby operating with insufficient knowledge regarding cultural sensitivity and local dynamics. Liberal peacebuilding disregards the contingent and contextual nature of events but rather applies technocratic considerations and anticipates practices based on comparison, embedded assumptions, the logic of "template thinking," and projecting expectation. Driven by the fallacy of efficiency and professionalism, adapting this projected linearity to local circumstances is seen as an organizational and competitive weakness. However, liberal peacebuilding does not leave space for preventive measures nor is it suitable in precautionary terms.

Peacebuilding should accept the persistence of uncertainty, the multiplicity of futures, the contingency of agency, the evaluative and incomplete nature of power, and the necessity for reflexive flexibility and the need to adjust policymaking

process and institutional arrangements. Greater attention should be paid to the cultural sensitivity and nonlinearity of peacebuilding programs, the contextual suitability of the methods applied, and the strategic thought process that is invoked. A culture of precautionary reasoning should be installed throughout the life cycle of peacebuilding programs. Consideration of the potential consequences and side effects should be incorporated before, during, and after a peacebuilding program is implemented. If the spectrum of consequences is only encountered during the stage of program evaluation, it could be too late. Peacebuilding consequences are deeply contextual, and standardizing the lessons learnt may not be an effective tool for sharing knowledge. An understanding of the complexities of the uncertain consequences produced by any peacebuilding actions can lead to improving ethical practices and can increase the likelihood of delivering on the declared intentions. However, accepting and legitimizing uncertainty provides a perennial escape route for decision makers to explain why their best intentions failed to deliver. Equally, considering the risk of producing unintended consequences could mobilize the ability of peacebuilding actors and organizations to anticipate, prevent, and, when necessary, change or reverse the course of actions to avoid producing unintended consequences arising from their purposive actions. Under the conditions of the perceived risk of consequences and liability, peacebuilding agents and organizations can incentivize evaluating the outcomes and reflexively engaging in their peacebuilding activities – while preserving the emancipatory potential, freedom, equality, plurality, and coexistence with difference.

A critical impact assessment of peacebuilding shows that good intentions do not flow seamlessly into good actions and even less seamlessly into good outcomes. The rocky road to sustainable peace is dark and full of bends, twists, and turns. A systematic critique on the subject of the intentionality, consequences, and responsibility related to peacebuilding can articulate a new local critical perspective on peacebuilding. Although this reveals negative impacts, it can also serve as a

cry to improve human agency, a call for change, and a call to be careful with peacebuilding, because it affects human lives and changes social structures. Surveying the mess created by past attempts to build peace, it is difficult to save liberal peacebuilding. New and less harmful alternative approaches to peacebuilding need to be developed to enshrine the right and responsibility to advance the cause of peace from a pluralist ontology and epistemology that accommodates difference and encounter complexity.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Assessment of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Decentralization and Conflict Prevention](#)
- ▶ [Liberal Peace in Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Liberal Peacebuilding in a Transitional International Order](#)
- ▶ [Measuring Peace](#)
- ▶ [Peace Measuring Approaches](#)
- ▶ [Phenomenological Peace](#)

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Peacebuilding in Africa: The African Union's Evolving Approach

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Synonyms

PCRD; Peacebuilding; Post-conflict reconstruction and development; Post-conflict recovery

Introduction

In recent decades, understandings of peacebuilding have been significantly influenced by former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali's 1992 report *An Agenda for Peace*. This conceptual framework attempted to chart the way forward on thinking within the United Nations and among member states that addressing conflict in the world should focus on three phases of engagement. First, the United Nations would prevent conflict, through preventive diplomacy or other means (conflict prevention). Second, where this failed or

was not possible, the organization would work to attain peace agreements and deploy missions to support the implementation of these agreements (peacemaking and peacekeeping). Third, where peace agreements were in place and hostilities had ceased, the United Nations would support the consolidation of peace and prevent a relapse into conflict (peacebuilding) (United Nations 1992).

Peacebuilding approaches in the United Nations and the African Union have to a degree both evolved from this basis, but they have also developed in distinct ways in the decades since. In the United Nations, peacebuilding is generally understood as efforts designed to assist countries and regions in their transitions from conflict and to reduce the risk of relapse into conflict, by strengthening national capacities for conflict management and laying the foundations for sustainable peace and development (United Nations 2019). A more structured approach to the organization's peacebuilding efforts has been developed from 2005 onward, following the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission, the Peacebuilding Fund, and the Peacebuilding Support Office. In the context of the African Union, the approach to peacebuilding, both conceptually and operationally, has evolved in a somewhat different direction, driven both by the organization's own evolution from the mid-2000s onward and by its initial experiences in addressing peace and security matters on the African continent.

The AU's Peacebuilding Policy Framework, Main Concepts, and Toolbox

The *Constitutive Act of the African Union*, which was adopted in July 2000, paved the way for the Organisation of African Unity to transition into the African Union, and laid the foundation for the future work of the organization at the continental level. The Constitutive Act outlined the objectives of the African Union, among which were the promotion of peace, security, and stability on the African continent (African Union 2000, p. 5). To give meaning to this particular objective, African states in 2002, the year in which the African

Union was officially established, adopted the *Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union* (PSC Protocol). The Protocol did two important things. First, it provided for the establishment of the Peace and Security Council, a 15-member body mandated to address threats to peace and security in Africa, with membership being both rotational and representative of the five agreed geographic regions of the continent. Second, the Protocol envisioned that the Council be supported in its work by the Chairperson of the AU Commission, a Panel of the Wise, a Continental Early Warning System, an African Standby Force, and a Special Fund (African Union 2002, p. 5). This has since evolved into what is now commonly called the African Peace and Security Architecture, which entails the tools and mechanisms through which the Assembly of the African Union or the Peace and Security Council can prevent, respond to, and manage crisis and conflict situations in Africa. The architecture consists of early warning (through the Continental Early Warning Mechanism and similar arrangements at regional levels), prevention (good offices by the Chairperson or the Panel of the Wise, or mediation efforts by appointed envoys), operational deployments (the deployment of peace support operations, security operations undertaken by coalitions of member states, or other forms of operational deployments), peacebuilding efforts (through the post-conflict reconstruction and development framework, and by deploying political and technical missions), and a dedicated financing mechanism to fund these peace and security initiatives, known as the Africa Peace Fund.

The Protocol took a specific view on how peacebuilding was to be understood in the African context, and in the work of the African Union, by outlining that the role of the Council in post-conflict situations was to assist in the restoration of the rule of law; the establishment and development of democratic institutions; and the preparation, organization, and supervision of elections. A differentiation was made however between situations where hostilities were still ongoing and situations where hostilities had ended. In contexts of ongoing hostilities, priority was to be given to

measures designed to reduce the impact of the conflict on the social and economic conditions of the affected populations. In contexts where hostilities had ended, priority was to be given to the implementation of peace agreements which had been negotiated; the political, social, and economic reconstruction of the society and government institutions; the implementation of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration programs; the resettlement and reintegration of refugees and internally displaced persons; and assistance to vulnerable persons, including children, the elderly, women, and groups specifically affected by the conflict (African Union 2002, p. 22).

In 2006, the African Union published its Policy on Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development, the first guidance on how peacebuilding efforts in the African context were to be undertaken. While using the provisions of the PSC Protocol as its foundation, the policy framework noted that it was important to go even further by making a distinct link between peacebuilding, post-conflict reconstruction and development, and long-term sustainable development (African Union 2006, p. 1). A shift was therefore made, whereby the AU understanding of peacebuilding as had been formulated in the PSC Protocol was now expanded to also include physical reconstruction and post-conflict economic recovery, in support of accelerating long-term development in a country emerging from conflict. Here, then, the AU explicitly linked its peace and security agenda with its development agenda, with the post-conflict reconstruction and development policy framework serving as a bridge connecting the two.

Accordingly, the organization defined its version of peacebuilding, subsequently known as post-conflict reconstruction and developments, as follows:

A comprehensive set of measures that seek to: address the needs of countries emerging from conflict, including the needs of affected populations; prevent escalation of disputes; avoid relapse into violence; address the root causes of conflict; and consolidate sustainable peace. PCRD is conceived within the African vision of renewal and sustainable development and while its activities are integrated, and many must be pursued simultaneously, they are

envisaged in the emergency (short-term), transition (medium-term) and development (long-term) phases. (African Union 2006, pp. 4–5)

The policy framework outlined five core principles for all post-conflict reconstruction and development work, these being (1) African leadership; (2) national and local ownership; (3) inclusiveness, equity, and nondiscrimination; (4) cooperation and cohesion; and (5) capacity-building for sustainability. The policy also envisioned six broad areas of engagement (security; humanitarian/emergency assistance; political governance and transition; socioeconomic reconstruction and development; human rights, justice, and reconciliation; and women and gender) and outlined the activities which the organization could undertake in each field when engaging in a conflict or post-conflict setting (African Union 2006, p. 5). The inclusion of humanitarian and emergency assistance in the PCRD policy was somewhat unusual, as traditionally the provision of humanitarian assistance had been a distinct area of engagement, not tied to political or development agendas. Nevertheless, the AU argued that delivering humanitarian assistance could provide key linkages to larger peacebuilding efforts and that “while focusing on urgent life-saving and life-sustaining assistance, humanitarian assistance must link with the subsequent phases of the post-conflict reconstruction and development process” (African Union 2006, p. 13).

In the years since the adoption of the PCRD policy, several steps have been taken by the AU Commission to be able to implement the policy, based on the direction of the Chairperson, the Peace and Security Council, or the Assembly. First, a Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development Unit was created within the Peace and Security Department of the Commission, to give dedicated attention and follow-up to the PCRD agenda politically and to plan and supervise PCRD implementation in conflict and post-conflict contexts. Second, the AU Commission undertook a series of multidisciplinary assessments to countries in conflict or emerging from conflict, to lay the foundations for the planning of structured engagements in each particular context. Third, funds were mobilized and allocated for the

implementation of Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) and Peace Strengthening Projects (PSPs), which would enable the delivery of rapid, tangible peace dividends to communities emerging from conflict while the longer-term peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction efforts got underway. Fourth, the African Solidarity Initiative was established, designed to mobilize technical cooperation and other forms of assistance among African countries in support of PCRDR activities, whereby African states with relevant experience and resources would help other African states emerging from conflict. Fifth, Liaison Offices were established in conflict and post-conflict countries, to enable the AU to have more sustained presence and engagement in priority countries. It should be noted that while the establishment of these offices was not purely for the purpose of PCRDR efforts, they were viewed as a key entry point for both conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts in priority countries. And finally, the AU has in recent years either mandated the establishment of small political missions to replace peace support operations that have drawn down in countries where the organization has determined that a sustained political presence to support PCRDR efforts was required or deployed technical support missions with explicit PCRDR mandates.

While a number of activities were undertaken since the adoption of the PCRDR policy, these were often found to lack sufficient strategic coherence, conceptual clarity, and operational guidance. Accordingly, in 2018 the AU Commission released a *Guidelines Note for the Implementation of the African Union Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development Policy*. The guidelines attempted to bring greater conceptual clarity to how the AU's peacebuilding efforts were to be understood and how these were to be implemented in practice. They also served to refine the contexts in which such efforts would be undertaken. Specifically, the AU's PCRDR efforts going forward were to be undertaken (1) when there was a settlement to a crisis, (2) when a peace agreement was in place, and (3) when an internationally recognized government, or a party that considered to be legitimately in control of an

affected territory, cooperates with the AU, a sub-regional organization, the United Nations, and/or another security initiative to promote stability (African Union 2018, p. 11). The guidelines also for the first time offered specific guidance on roles, responsibilities, and work processes for PCRDR efforts undertaken by the African Union, or for similar efforts at the level of subregional organizations, member states, and civil society organizations wishing to make use of, and operate within the context of, the AU PCRDR framework.

The AU has therefore over the years developed an increasingly complex set of tools and mechanisms to implement the peacebuilding provisions of the PSC Protocol and the PCRDR policy, enabling the Chairperson of the Commission, the Peace and Security Council, and the Assembly to actively follow-up and take timely decisions on peacebuilding issues in conflict and post-conflict countries. In practice, the AU's record of peacebuilding activities and interventions has only slowly been evolving in recent years and is continuously being refined. Key insights and lessons are being drawn from the organization's initial set of experiences, and what the organization takes from these will be crucial toward determining the way forward when it comes to peacebuilding in Africa.

Initial Peacebuilding/PCRDR Efforts and Lessons Learned

Even before the African Union's peacebuilding architecture started to take shape, the organization committed itself to supporting post-conflict reconstruction efforts in Sudan, by supporting the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement which was being negotiated for that country. In 2003, 2 years before the agreement was signed and 1 year after the African Union was formally launched, an African Union Ministerial Committee for PCRDR for Sudan was formed. It was mandated to assess, in consultation with the parties to the peace agreement, the scale and scope of requirements in post-conflict Sudan; to mobilize African support for post-conflict reconstruction and development needs; and to

sensitize all external stakeholders on the post-conflict and reconstruction needs of Sudan (African Union 2019a).

Following its initial focus on Sudan, the African Union undertook multidisciplinary assessment missions to other countries emerging from conflict, including to the Central African Republic (2006), Liberia (2009), Sierra Leone (2009), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (2010), Burundi (2010), Sudan (2011), and again the Central African Republic (2016) (African Union, 2019). Over the subsequent years, Liaison Offices were also established in Burundi, Chad, the Central African Republic, the Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Sudan, South Sudan, and the Western Sahara (African Union 2019b). Funding for QIPs was also mobilized for projects in Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, the Comoros, and South Sudan (African Union 2019a).

The African Union's focus on the political and local aspects of peacebuilding was in line with evolving thinking on sustaining peace in the long term and with moving away from programmatic and technical responses. However, as some observers have argued, in the first decade of implementation the organization's PCRD efforts suffered from a preoccupation with resource mobilization and PCRD projects and were not sufficiently focused on the core value it could have added, the focus on African solidarity, and mobilizing resources for the continent from within the continent (de Carvalho et al. 2016, pp. 5–6).

Steps toward reinforcing the African Union's political role in peacebuilding processes in fragile contexts were made in later years when the organization deployed political missions mandated to support the consolidation of peace following the handover of African Union peace support operations to the United Nations in Mali and the Central African Republic. In Mali, the AU Mission for Mali and the Sahel (MISAHEL) was established in 2013, and in the Central African Republic, the AU Mission for Central Africa and the CAR (MISAC) was established in 2014, after the African Union had handed over peacekeeping responsibilities to the United Nations in both countries.

A new innovation was also launched in 2018, when the African Union deployed the first so-called technical support mission in the Gambia (known as the AU Technical Support to the Gambia, AUTSTG), an operation specifically designed to undertake conflict prevention and peace-strengthening measures within the context of the organization's peacebuilding efforts.

The establishment of these missions was an important signal of the increasing importance which the organization was giving to its political role and leverage in support of sustained progress toward peace in countries where it had deployed and drawn down its own peace support operations, or where a specific type of operational deployment in support of PCRD objectives was required. These experiences continue to yield important lessons for peacebuilding and the implementation of the AU's PCRD policy. In the Central African Republic, for instance, one review drew five important lessons (de Carvalho and Lucey 2016). First, the impact of the African Union in its peacebuilding efforts could be seen most clearly in its convening capacity. Second, the African Union's mandate to engage on PCRD activities in the CAR was not sufficiently defined to maximize the organization's impact in this area. Third, despite growing interest in the role of the organization in the country, African Union-led initiatives were not sufficiently linked. Fourth, coordination between the African Union presence in the country and the Commission could have been stronger. And fifth, the African Union and other international actors, in particular the United Nations, could have enhanced their coordination to better support peacebuilding efforts in the CAR. Interesting lessons are also emerging from the organization's efforts in the Gambia. Instead of opening a liaison office or deploying a political mission, the African Union chose to deploy a small, technical support team staffed by personnel seconded from its member states, focused on supporting the Gambian authorities in the rule of law, democracy, transitional justice, and the transformation of the security sector. Whether the approach will be replicated in other settings going forward remains to be seen.

In recent years the cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations on peacebuilding has also been strengthened. In 2016 the UN Peacebuilding Fund for the first time financed the conduct of African Union activities, when it supported the deployment of African Union human rights observers to Burundi (African Union 2016a). Both organizations have subsequently been exploring modalities to deepen the working relationship between the two organizations with regard to peacebuilding and PCRDR efforts in numerous countries.

The Way Forward

The African Union has increasingly worked both to develop conceptual clarity and a policy framework guiding its approach to post-conflict reconstruction and development and has been accumulating an increasingly diverse set of experiences in the application of the PCRDR mechanisms and tools which have been developed in African countries in conflict or emerging from conflict. The lessons from these experiences will be key toward shaping the manner in which the organization's PCRDR efforts will evolve in the future. Several aspects may be revisited in the years to come.

First, greater conceptual clarity could be beneficial. The African Union's PCRDR work is not always well understood by member states, by outside actors, or by stakeholders involved in PCRDR efforts in priority countries. A clearer articulation of how the organization views peacebuilding, and how it sees its own role in this process, could be useful. Tied to this is a need for broader strategic linkages to the aims and objectives of the organization. The African Union is, for instance, working to Silence the Guns by 2020 and is targeting an ambitious development agenda through what is known as Agenda 2063. Linking PCRDR efforts more clearly to these agendas, and outlining the interlinkages between these various efforts, could be useful.

Second, clearly articulating and reinforcing those areas where the African Union has the greatest added value in peacebuilding processes could serve to strengthen the role and impact of

the organization in its efforts. This would allow the organization both to focus its resources and to leverage its impact. Investing in, and clearly demonstrating the value which the African Solidarity Initiative can bring, both politically and as a platform whereby African states provide technical assistance to other African states could prove an important added value to peacebuilding efforts in Africa going forward.

Third, the establishment of the mandated peacebuilding bodies in the African Union could prove an important debate going forward. Although a PCRDR subcommittee of the Peace and Security Council should have been established, this has to date not been made operational. The African Union Multi-Dimensional Standing Committee on PCRDR is also not yet in place (African Union 2016b, p. 3). Establishing these bodies could contribute toward greater political guidance and oversight of PCRDR activities and greater member states buy-in and support for specific initiatives. Such bodies could also prove useful counterparts for engagement with external stakeholders, such as the UN Peacebuilding Commission.

Fourth, ways of strengthening internal cohesion on peacebuilding issues may need to be explored. In 2016 a PCRDR Task Force was established to do this, and the impact has been positive so far. Nevertheless, strengthening coherence and coordination within the AU Commission, between the Commission and field presences and between the African Peace and Security Architecture and the African Governance Architecture on peacebuilding and PCRDR matters would enable the African Union to strengthen its impact overall.

Fifth, reinforcing cooperation and coordination between the African Union and the African sub-regional organizations (the so-called Regional Economic Communities [RECs] and Regional Mechanisms [RMs]) could prove useful. In 2008 a Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in peace and security was signed between these organizations, and specific mention of cooperation in the area of PCRDR was made. The implementation of these efforts has however not been consistent to date and may receive additional attention going forward.

And sixth, reinforcing cooperation and coordination with other stakeholders engaged in supporting peacebuilding efforts in Africa could prove beneficial. In particular, the United Nations, the European Union, the World Bank, and the African Development Bank have emerged as key peacebuilding actors in various African conflict and post-conflict countries. Developing the institutional modalities for working together on peacebuilding and PCRD efforts in the country would enable greater coherence and unity of effort and would also enable the African Union to leverage its own efforts in those countries where it is actively supporting peacebuilding processes.

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Peacebuilding: Utopia and Reality

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Introduction

Twenty years of international peacebuilding have demonstrated a shift from liberal internationalist hopes for new externally constructed post-conflict domestic orders to a more realist or pragmatic view of the powers of external interveners. Rather than separate case studies, this entry considers the changes in the understanding of the peacebuilding project itself: tracing the shift from the liberal internationalist assumptions of the late 1990s to the pragmatic realism of today. It does this through the lenses of EH Carr’s classic work *The Twenty Years’ Crisis*, UN policy thinking on the problematic assumptions of international peacebuilding, and the diagnoses in David Lake’s (2016) book *The Statebuilder’s Dilemma*, which sets out three pragmatic alternatives. The entry concludes that all three of these alternatives can be seen in practice today.

Twenty Year’s Crisis

The shift from “utopian” to “realist” or pragmatic approaches to peacebuilding cannot be grasped

without quickly describing the rise of peacebuilding in the decade of the 1990s. In this decade, the framework of international sovereignty and of nonintervention rapidly corroded, opening up a new international agenda based on the blurring of domestic and international realms. Peacebuilding was no longer a matter of international relations based on sovereign equality but one premised on the selective opening up of the domestic realm to international regulation and external conditionalities. While the UN Secretary-General's 1992 Agenda for Peace introduced the concept of "post-conflict peacebuilding" as an ad hoc extension of international peacekeeping (UN 1992), it was not until after the interventions in the wars of the breakup of the former Yugoslavia and the establishment of formalized international peacebuilding regimes that the UN was able to clarify the meaning of peacebuilding and the transformed nature of its relationship to international peacekeeping.

The September 2000 UN Millennium Assembly confirmed the need for a fundamental reform of UN peacekeeping operations. This reform was shaped by the "utopian" liberal internationalist discourse that had cohered throughout the 1990s, no longer strictly bound by traditional "realist" "state-centered" principles, such as nonintervention and state sovereignty. The UN Secretary-General's *Millennium Report*, "We the Peoples," started the formal process of revising the UN's approach to peace operations after criticism of UN peacekeeping failures in Rwanda, Bosnia, and Sierra Leone in the 1990s and NATO action over Kosovo which bypassed Security Council controls. As the *Millennium Report* noted in its introduction: "No shift in the way we think or act can be more critical than this: we must put people at the centre of everything we do" (UN 2000a, p. 7). The report noted that a "new understanding of the concept of security is evolving" (2000a, p. 43). International security during the Cold War was "synonymous with the defence of territory from external attack" and was bound up with the principle of state sovereignty and its corollary of nonintervention (UN 2000a, p. 43).

However, the post-Cold War conception of international security was to be different: "The

requirements of security today have come to embrace the protection of communities and individuals from internal violence," far from upholding sovereignty and the principle of nonintervention the demands of international security were deemed to necessitate a fundamental rethinking of the UN's strategy (2000a, p. 43). The Secretary-General described this new strategy as a "more human-centered approach to security" as distinct from the previous "state-centered" approach (ibid.). This Report was followed by the *Brahimi Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations*, detailing further proposals for reform, which was ratified at the UN Millennium Summit in New York in September 2000 (UN 2000b).

This entry analyzes the 20 years of international peacebuilding, since the highpoint of optimism with the international protectorates of Bosnia and Kosovo in the late 1990s. In doing so, it is useful to reflect upon EH Carr's classic work on international relations theory and interwar history, *The Twenty Years' Crisis 1919–1939: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations* (Carr [1939] 1981). Carr's book was originally intended to be titled *Utopia and Reality* (Cox 2001, p. xi) (which the publishers found to be too abstract) indicating that the 20 years' crisis of the title was not merely about a series of problems or an ongoing set of issues, but rather concerned a secular trend, a contestation between two approaches and a shift from one way of thinking to another: from an idealist, utopian, abstract, morality-based view of liberal universalism to a more strategic, pragmatic, and interest-based "science" of realism, starting from the world as it exists rather than how we would like it to be. The suggestion of the analysis here is that peacebuilding is now understood as having taken a similar trajectory, starting off as a liberal (today most commentators would also say idealist or utopian) project and ending up in a "realist" or pragmatist mode of resignation and disillusionment.

Carr himself had little at stake in this shift, apart from to highlight that it indicated the ideological nature of international relations itself as a discrete body of thought, which he saw as merely

a pseudo-discipline, aping other social sciences and designed to rationalize the exercise of power of dominant nations over weaker ones (Cox 2001, p. xiii). Likewise, there is little to celebrate in the end of liberal peacebuilding as an international framework of problem-solving: the shift from a “utopia” of externally engineered transformation to a “reality” of pragmatism and monitoring from EU agencies keen to keep both Bosnia and Kosovo at arm’s length (Kosovo is still excluded from visa liberalization and both are a long way from formal EU integration). The shift in fortunes of international peacebuilding in Kosovo – from the exaggerated, even hubristic, demands for transformation to an idealized liberal model under direct management of the UN and NATO to today’s arm’s-length management and mediated and indirect regulation through a host of often ad hoc international agencies – reflects broader trends of international intervention, where agencies often retreat to aerial drones and crowdsourced monitoring from afar (Lynch 2016; Pugliese 2016; Duffield 2019).

Carr’s study started with the triumphalism of the US entry into international politics at the Versailles peace conference following the First World War, and he clearly had little sympathy for the moral crusading liberal idealism in the cause of US interests, personified by US President Woodrow Wilson. The interwar period of *The Twenty Years’ Crisis* was the story of the collapse of liberal international idealism, which was dealt a major blow by the world economic collapse of 1929 that rekindled open inter-imperialist rivalries, leading rapidly to the resumption of World War. The 20 years’ crisis of international peacebuilding does not have the drama on the world scale of the interwar period but holds some similarities to Carr’s story of disappointment and disillusionment in liberal internationalism driven by a “voluntarist” moral idealism in the service of power politics. The repeat of a new internationalist moral moment with the end of the Cold War was also short-lived and contested, and the new “realism,” that is, the upshot of failures of the grand schemes of international intervention, can equally be seen as a sterile deterministic “codification of the status quo.”

However, there are, of course, major differences. Carr’s *The Twenty Years’ Crisis* was driven by the breakdown of the fragile international order established with the League of Nations, damaged by US isolationism and the exclusion of major powers Germany and the Soviet Union. The auspices for success for international peacebuilding, under a US, UN, and NATO guided international order in the 1990s, seemed much more promising. Ironically, it was not international rivalries that undermined liberal interventionist dreams of international peacebuilding as much as a grand retreat from the international sphere itself. This retreat can be articulated in the words of Carr as “consistent realism,” a realism that “fails to provide any ground for purpose or meaningful action” (Carr 1981, p. 86). The idealism of the 1990s may have evaporated but no positive vision has taken its place.

The End of Statebuilding

In 2000, at the height of the United Nation’s confidence in the transformation of the international agenda, in the *Brahimi Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations*, presented by the United Nation’s Secretary-General, Section A, “Defining the elements of peace operations,” defined the new concept of peacebuilding in these terms, as:

...activities undertaken on the far side of conflict to reassemble the foundations of peace and provide the tools for building on those foundations something that is more than just the absence of war. Thus, peacebuilding includes but is not limited to reintegrating former combatants into civilian society, strengthening the rule of law (for example, through training and restructuring of local police, and judicial and penal reform); improving respect for human rights through the monitoring, education and investigation of past and existing abuses; providing technical assistance for democratic development (including electoral assistance and support for free media); and promoting conflict resolution and reconciliation techniques. (UN 2000b, p. 3)

The definition was kept open with a non-inclusive list of examples of international peacebuilding responsibilities listed, covering a wide range of institutional capacity-building

measures covering everything from the legal and political system to education and health and welfare.

In 2019, peacebuilding is no longer a term on the international agenda. Even the United Nations has shifted away from the use of this terminology. The UN's shift away from peacebuilding to much more flexible and pragmatic approaches stems from a rejection of the interventionist approaches developed and popularized in the 1990s and now seen to be based on "supply-driven templates and an overly technocratic focus on capitals and elites" and counterproductively increasing "the risk of unintentionally exacerbating divisions" (UN 2015a, p. 12). In fact, the UN report of the advisory group of experts for the 2015 review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture went as far as to state that mistakes had resulted from no less than "a generalized misunderstanding of the nature of peacebuilding" itself (UN 2015b, p. 7). Instead, pragmatism has increasingly become the order of the day with the call for "more realistic and contextualized political strategies" (UN 2015a, p. 13).

Peacebuilding has been eased off the policy agenda on the grounds that there is no longer the assumption of clarity in terms of problems or solutions, as the UN's High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations review stated "there is no linear path to peace" (UN 2015a, p. 18); "complex linkages" and interconnections between actors and intervening agencies mean that the UN needs less focus on "template mandates and missions" and instead more emphasis upon fluid and flexible "situation-specific" strategies (ibid, p. 23). The idea that external actors can either develop solutions or implement them on their ground has been undermined by the reality that "conflicts have become more complex, increasingly fragmented and intractable" (UN 2015b, p. 7).

The UN no longer wants to set itself up as the external expert and manager of processes of transitional "peacebuilding" but rather seeks to increasingly situate itself as part of domestic processes of support and facilitation. This pragmatic approach, working with and through local processes:

...demands that United Nations personnel in the field engage with and relate to the people and communities they are asked to support. The legacy of the "white-SUV culture" must give way to a more human face that prioritizes closer interaction with local people to better understand their concerns, needs and aspirations. (UN 2015a, p. 30)

The UN has thus moved to distance itself from "peacebuilding" and toward stressing peace as sustainability and local legitimacy rather than as an externally led transformation conforming to preconceived goals and attained through externally managed social and political engineering:

Peacebuilding is not State-building... Countries emerging from conflict are not blank pages and their people are not "projects". They are the main agents of peace. However, the international approach is often based on generic models that ignore national realities... Efforts to sustain peace must build upon [local] institutions and the resilience and reconciliation processes of local communities, and not undermine them... When countries set out their priorities and they enjoy strong national support, they must be respected. Too often they are not. (UN 2015a, p. 48)

Peacebuilding has been rejected by the UN because it has been understood to be too linear and too reductionist. Today it may be alleged that "peacebuilding" is not "statebuilding" but this has not always been the case and the two concepts seem to be intimately connected and are often used interchangeably, largely because the UN itself conceptualized peacebuilding as the building or rebuilding of states. "Statebuilding as peacebuilding" made a lot of easy assumptions that something that was broken could be easily fixed, returning societies to the status quo or establishing a new one on the basis of the liberal institutions of democracy, the rule of law, and market efficiency. The focus upon liberal institutional frameworks was the cornerstone of peacebuilding conceived as a liberal internationalist project. This project is now over.

Today, the UN argues that the focus on building liberal institutions was mistaken for two key reasons (UN 2015b, p. 17). First, that rather than peacebuilding occurring after conflict, problems have to be engaged with along an "arc" or continuum, from prevention to reconstruction: sustaining peace is a complex process not a set of discrete

linear stages, calling for different institutional operations and sets of expertise. Second, and relatedly, peacebuilding had implied that peace could be built according to some universal set of policies to be implemented, rather than through engaging in complex, interrelated, and crosscutting policy concerns which are always going to be case specific, involving going beyond policy and expertise “silos” in order to “unite the peace and security, human rights and development ‘pillars’ of the UN” (UN 2015b, p. 8). In short, the policy space of what was called “peacebuilding” no longer exists as a distinct set of goals, techniques, practices, and expertise, separate to UN activities put in a more holistic policy context of the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (UN 2015b, p. 57). The “crisis” of peacebuilding seems to have been resolved through the development of a new pragmatist consensus.

The “Hubris” of Liberal Peacebuilding

From the position of looking back from 2019, the initial assumptions of international peacebuilding seem to have been the product of accident, of hubris, and of a fundamental misunderstanding of the nature of peace, of politics, and of the unintended consequences of external policy interventions. This did not seem to be the case in the late 1990s when the policy discourse of peacebuilding was central to what was seen to be a new liberal international order, with the end of the Cold War division. In the closing years of the Cold War and into the early 1990s, the UN began to extend post-conflict missions and peacekeeping mandates of ceasefire monitoring in ways which began to be openly political, interfering directly in civilian matters including constitutional, judicial, and electoral reforms, for example, in the UN-led missions deployed in Namibia, Angola, El Salvador, Cambodia, and Mozambique (see Doyle and Sambanis 2006).

With the end of the Cold War, there was a new sense of optimism regarding the international liberal order, and the idea of peacebuilding began to formalize with the UN Secretary-General’s *Agenda for Peace* report of 1992. Paragraph 17 of the report argued that while the state was

the central institution, “The time of absolute and exclusive sovereignty, however, has passed; its theory was never matched by reality” (UN 1992). Paragraph 59 claimed, under the rubric of the new concept of “peacebuilding,” that the UN could have the authority to directly intervene in the political process providing “support for the transformation of deficient national structures and capabilities, and for the strengthening of new democratic institutions.”

The rise and fall of peacebuilding was premised on the blurring of the key binary boundaries of international society: the boundaries between peace and war and between sovereignty and intervention. Peace was no longer primarily a matter of the international, an issue concerning interstate relations, but migrated to being a problem of domestic politics. At the same time, the domestic matter of peace became internationalized as the boundaries between sovereignty and intervention blurred. This double blurring of the boundaries of international politics constituted the 20 years’ crisis of peacebuilding played out in Bosnia, Kosovo, and beyond.

The extension of international authority to intervene in the management of post-conflict peacebuilding was reinforced in the Secretary-General’s follow-up position paper, the *Supplement to the Agenda for Peace*, in 1995. Here it was argued that international intervention must extend “beyond military and humanitarian tasks and must include the promotion of national reconciliation and the re-establishment of effective government” (UN 1995, Para 13). In the position paper, under the section headed “Post-Conflict Peace-Building,” for the first time, the UN Secretary-General envisaged the possibility of new forms of UN temporary protectorates with the goal of peacebuilding:

In a country ruined by war, resumption of such activities may initially have to be entrusted to, or at least coordinated by, a multifunctional peacekeeping operation, but as that operation succeeds in restoring normal conditions, the programmes, funds, offices and agencies can re-establish themselves and gradually take over responsibility from the peace-keepers, with the resident coordinator in due course assuming the coordination functions temporarily entrusted to the special representative of the Secretary-General. (UN 1995, Para 53)

The stage was set for the 20 years of crisis the moment the Secretary-General's conception of peacebuilding with the goal of liberal institution-building was fully implemented for the first time, following the post-war elections in Bosnia-Herzegovina, when the temporary international mandates were extended and civilian control over the peacebuilding process taken over by international appointees in February 1997. The hubris of the late 1990s reached its highpoint when the UN gave its formal imprint to the international protectorate in Kosovo in 1999. The Western Balkans were the crucible through which peacebuilding was developed, tested, and renegotiated and the confidence of the late 1990s quickly waned with the over extension of the belief in external responsibility for overseeing post-conflict political processes of reconstruction with the lack of a coherent "exit strategy" in the Balkans and then the debacles of Afghanistan and Iraq.

Today, there is an emergent consensus over what has gone wrong with peacebuilding over the last 20 years. In both policy-making and academia, there has been a reappraisal of the peacebuilding paradigm: one which has sought to rationalize and to a certain extent excuse and legitimate the policy errors. It appears that the lesson being learned is the lesson of pragmatism, that peace cannot be exported as a set of policies, institutions, and practices. That to do so, in the words of leading US scholar David Lake, is "criminally stupid" (2016, p. ix) or "astounding in its audacity" (2016, p. 197). Lake's monograph *The Statebuilder's Dilemma: On the Limits of Foreign Intervention* (published in late 2016) is a clear and representative example of the current acceptance of pragmatist approaches and serves here as a basis for discussing their implications.

Pragmatism could be understood as a "realist" response to the liberal idealism of international peacebuilding. According to Lake, the problematic is simple – peacebuilding only came into existence as a liberal project with the end of the Cold War in 1990. Prior to then, the USA and the Soviets were keen to support loyal regimes, and there was no conception of peacebuilding as the external promotion of liberal institutional frameworks. "Liberal statebuilding, beginning with the

end of the Cold War, elevated the goal of building legitimate states and premised strategy on the belief that democracy and free markets would be sufficient to legitimate a government in the eyes of its people" (Lake 2016, p. 6). It is worth quoting Lake's formulation of the problem:

The liberal model of statebuilding so widely applied in the post-Cold War period was not selected because it was a tried and true method. Rather, it was an ideology that fit an emerging academic paradigm on the positive role of limited political institutions that, in turn, reflected the euphoria of the "end of history" moment. Contrary to the prevailing wisdom, however, legitimacy is not inherent in institutions in general nor only in institutions with representative qualities. Institutions are not "strong" or accepted by society simply because they are institutions. This puts the proverbial cart before the horse. . . . This is the mistake of nearly all statebuilders in recent decades, and of all institutionalist scholars, who have placed inordinate faith in the legitimating power of democratic institutions. . . .

The arrogance behind this particular theory of politics, however, grew out of our own time. Given the world in 1991, as history was just ending, how could democracy, free markets, and limited but effective states not be "good things" – and why should all good things not go together? In the end, the model said more about the statebuilders than about statebuilding. (2016, p. 198)

We can see a simple inversion of liberal peacebuilding understandings: exporting institutions and legal frameworks makes no sense and ignores the social basis of governing legitimacy – establishing hybrid orders where the state has no de facto purchase on society or further destabilizing society by offering enrichment opportunities to elites, etc.

Here, Lake sets up the liberal peacebuilding framework as an accident of the historical moment and liberal overconfidence in the 1990s. A policy mis-step that was always destined to fail as it was based more on our naïve idealism than any understanding of the world. In the terminology of popular French sociologist Bruno Latour, it now appears that really "We Were Never Liberal Peacebuilders" (see Latour 1993). Peacebuilding it seems was just an unfortunate and accidental mistake. This is both a problematic and apologetic or self-serving interpretation of the end of the peacebuilding paradigm as will be considered below.

The Pragmatic Apologia

Pragmatism, as a critique of peacebuilding, problematizes the idea of institution-building both from the “top-down” and from the “bottom-up.” Pragmatic positions are critical both of the idea that international experts could develop institutional solutions that could just be exported or imposed by external actors and also of the idea that deeper social, economic, or political external “engineering” might enable liberal institutional frameworks to work without frictions. These “liberal” framings assume that external actors can shape social and political processes and outcomes on the basis that power works in a linear or cause-and-effect manner (i.e., that certain policy interventions will lead to certain desirable results or outcomes). Pragmatist positions tend to resist the idea that there are preset or prepackaged “off-the-peg” solutions to universal or generalizable “problems”; instead problems should be grasped in their concrete and relational context. From a pragmatic perspective, Western interests in creating liberal democracies or ideological desires to spread liberal values therefore need to be tempered by a much greater appreciation of “realism.”

This “realist turn” inverts the international peacebuilding paradigm, starting from the problem rather than from the Western or international provision of “solutions” or external goals. This inversion is powerfully expressed through the view that there is a paradox or contradiction at the heart of the peacebuilding program. The more there is an attempt to shape outcomes based on external interests or values, the less likely it is to succeed: “. . .the greater the interests of the statebuilder in the target country, the less likely statebuilding is to succeed in building a legitimate state that can survive on its own into the indefinite future” (Lake 2016, p. 2). The pragmatic paradox is interesting in that it is not just a critique of the limits and difficulties of exporting liberal institutions; it also suggests that to do so is inherently problematic, making the situation worse. Lake argues that “current practice reveals great faith in externally led social engineering” (2016, p. 1):

The existing literature emphasizes getting national political institutions “right.” This emphasis recurs both at the deep level of politics, where observers and practitioners identify predatory institutions as the root evil, and at the surface, where analysts debate the proper strategy and tactics of statebuilding. This concentration on institutions implicitly accepts and is premised on a particular theory of state legitimation, one grounded in liberalism. Institutions are, no doubt, important. But in this focus the underlying social cleavages that undermine institutions and ultimately bring down states are ignored. (2016, p. 11)

In this, now consensual, critique, Lake echoes the current perspective of the UN, cited at the opening of this article, against the idea that external preferences or blueprints could be exported or imposed. The UN describes this externally led or “top-down” approach as a “template” culture or “the so-called ‘Christmas tree mandate’ dilemma, where template language for many tasks routinely appears in mission mandates” (UN 2015a, p. 60). The pragmatic paradox appears to be that the more “enthusiastic” reformers are to transform other societies, the more they risk unintentional consequences, which could be counterproductive. The pragmatic lesson is that “less can sometimes be more” and that peace cannot in fact be built by good intentions of external do-gooders but needs to be understood in more “local” and “organic” ways. This shift toward the “pragmatic” or the “organic” is also prefigured in more critical policy and academic work which suggests that peacebuilding is a complex organic process of self-organizing adaptation and resilience. For example, Cedric de Coning, a leading policy analyst, concludes that:

...when international peace interventions try to engineer specific outcomes, they produce the opposite effect of that which sustaining peace aims to achieve; they generate on-going instability, dependence and fragility, because such interventions undermine self-organisation and thus resilience. A complexity-informed approach to self-sustainable peace suggests that peacebuilders limit their efforts to safeguarding, stimulating, facilitating and creating the space for societies to develop resilient capacities for self-organisation. (de Coning 2016, p. 167)

Thus, the pragmatic alternative seeks to move away from external or universal goals and looks for more “organic” metrics that could serve as a

guide instead, such as local “legitimacy,” starting with the existing social and political order rather than “universal” views of desirable liberal institutional frameworks. It is important to focus on how the actually existing society works, rather than Western ideals. Pragmatism works with what there is rather than imposing liberal goals and aspirations. As Lake states:

My approach differs from the prevailing institutionalist view. . . institutionalists are fundamentally liberals, in the classic sense of this term, who believe the legitimacy of the state follows from democracy and free markets. . . [T]his liberal model of statebuilding is itself deeply flawed and has repeatedly failed to provide the legitimacy necessary for successful statebuilding. . . legitimacy follows from social order, not the other way around as in the prevailing model. (2016, p. 17)

For this doyen of US policy-making academia, the pragmatist framing thus neatly inverts the “top-down” and “liberal” paradigm of international peacebuilding. In what is now the established consensus on the death of the peacebuilding moment, it is suggested that intervention guided by liberal universalist understandings could only make conflict situations worse (see, e.g., Etzione 2016).

Despite the fact that existing conditions are far from ideal, the new consensus seems to be that, no matter how bad things are, international peacebuilding interventions will fail to make a positive difference. Both policy-makers and radical critics increasingly agree that accepting the status quo can often be better than attempts at any positive transformation. Thus disillusionment with international intervention has been given coherence and even a positive spin by pragmatic and “organic” approaches, which have strongly reinforced the potentially dangerous and self-satisfying understanding that “they” are not ready for liberalism. Thus even radical critiques of Western hubris and liberal certitude have been played out against the backdrop of “their” unsuitability for modern liberal frameworks of governance.

The error of Western policy-makers then becomes merely that of naïvety and overconfidence in “their” capacities and abilities to be like “us.” This definitely softens the “critical” blow and enables pragmatic approaches to salve

Western policy consciences. Today it appears that the real “crime” of international peacebuilders is that of caring too much. As Lake put it: “The limits of external statebuilding are reached precisely when the statebuilder cares the most about the future policies of the failed state” (2016, p. 16). “Caring too much” implies that peacebuilders want to go too far and too quickly, in essence, attempting to short-cut the “organic” process of building sustainable peace.

The Return of Realism

The pragmatist critique of international peacebuilding goals leaves three general policy options. Lake sets up the first option as that advocated by Stephen Krasner, of “good enough governance,” where the international community enforces a minimal set of rights standards and key international security threats are dealt with and stability was seen as more important than democracy (2016, p. 201). This perspective could be seen as pragmatism in its everyday usage and as a return to Cold War clientelist regimes:

This is the direction in which US policy, at least since Iraq, has been trending under President Obama: target individual terrorists and organizations but avoid large-scale interventions, even into such clearly failed states as Libya, and tolerate authoritarian leaders who promise stability, as with the military in Egypt after the coup against President Mohamed Morsi. (Lake 2016, p. 202)

The second option is that of a “neutral” peacebuilding intervention (2016, p. 203) where concern is focused on building up organic processes of social formation. Interestingly, Lake suggests that this is a highly unlikely possibility as, even if there could be any “objective” or “neutral” ideal solution, a multilateral framework would still rely on “interested” states, which would pervert any process to their own ends or would attract little international support (2016, p. 204). The “organic” option, of working with the resources and capacities available rather than seeking to direct and shape policy processes, similarly takes peacebuilding off the policy agenda,

making peacebuilding a marginal preoccupation of nongovernmental agencies, concerned with community development and social welfare.

Lake's preference is for the third option, which involves little direct international intervention, instead focusing on providing indirect institutional incentives while enabling a discursive framing of self-government and decision-making autonomy for the target state:

... focus instead on creating an international environment conducive to indigenous state formation. Through the use of carrots and sticks, states might shape incentives for fragile states by making access to the security and economic benefits of the Pax Americana, in general, or the European Union, in particular, contingent on domestic groups settling their differences, agreeing on a social order, and governing themselves effectively. (2016, p. 21)

It is noticeable that the only option of the three with the goal of supporting liberal peacebuilding goals, formally the sine qua non of the peacebuilding project, is one that does not involve any direct policy intervention in the states and societies concerned but rather governance from a distance. The two options that could be seen to be involved in domestic political processes only operated at the margins, either with a concern with international security threats and instability or with building community capacities: neither of these approaches aims at supporting liberal institutional frameworks of markets, democracy, rights, and the rule of law.

Conclusion

Perhaps in considering the shifting nature of peacebuilding over the last 20 years in Bosnia and Kosovo, all three of these pragmatic options can be seen to be in effect. Clientelist security concerns are evident: NATO maintains a military headquarters in Sarajevo still supporting the domestic authorities with transition and the European Union Force; in Kosovo, NATO's KFOR presence includes around 4000 troops in 2 regional bases – Camp Bondsteel and Camp Villaggio Italia – headquartered in in Camp Film City, Pristina. NGO-led social or “neutral” capacity-building takes place via international

donor funding across the social sector, often coordinated between the European Union Offices in Sarajevo and Pristina with major development agencies, while the key pragmatic mechanism is the arm's-length program of “indigenous state formation” through the “carrots and sticks” of the long and complex provisions and processes of the European Union Stabilization and Association Agreements. In the turn to realist and pragmatist understandings, peacebuilding as a major paradigm of international policy-making is doubly erased: firstly, in being reinterpreted as a momentary accident or misunderstanding and, secondly, in discussions of alternatives that betray little of the legacy of previous doctrines.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Conceptual Evolution of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Stabilization Operations and their Relationship to Liberal Peacebuilding Missions](#)

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Peacebuilding–Development Nexus

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Keywords

Peacebuilding · Development · Paradigms ·
Nexus · Security and development

Synonyms

Development = economic growth; Peacebuilding
= consolidating peace, constructing peace

Definition

Peacebuilding and development intersections in scholarship and practice span disciplines, time

and space, worldviews, and policy agendas and practice areas. This reflection examines the “nexus” through various paradigms of peacebuilding and development that have dominated scholarly thinking and international policy and practice, exploring the ways that they intersect with one another. Unsurprisingly, it reveals that the nature of the nexus is profoundly shaped by the orientation of each peacebuilding, or development, paradigm in focus. Specific paradigms depicting the nexus and orienting policy and practice are then discussed that frame actual and emergent areas of consensus and action in international politics.

Introduction

There are many ways to frame a discussion about the peacebuilding–development nexus. At the most basic level, one can look at how peacebuilding intersects with or impacts development, and alternatively, how development intersects with or impacts peacebuilding. Paradigmatic perspectives inform how these intersections are understood and resultingly, guide action.

Peacebuilding and development have, since the 1990s, been explicitly aligned in scholarship and practice. This alignment has been referred to as an evolving disciplinary field, drawing upon two interdisciplinary scholarly fields (McCandless and Abu-Nimer 2012) and as a sub-discipline of peace studies (McCandless 2007, p. 59). There is also a strong movement by development practitioners to examine the nexus in practice, as the work of Oxfam, Cordaid, Overseas Development Institute, and many other international development and aid organizations and government agencies reveal. In practice, the well-known quote by Boutros Boutros-Ghali, former United Nations (UN) secretary general in the 1992 *Agenda for Peace*, “[t]here can be no peace without economic and social development, just as development is not possible in the absence of peace” provided early recognition of this nexus. However, operationalizing these linkages has proven more difficult (McCandless and Abu-Nimer 2012). This undoubtedly has much to do

with the paradigmatic assumptions and debates underpinning both fields, challenging agreement around the core meaning and orientation of the nexus.

Acknowledging that there are many conceptualizations of both peacebuilding and development, the following concepts are offered, drawing on considerable scholarly and policy consensus, with a critical orientation. Peacebuilding can be understood as a process aimed at facilitating the sustaining of peace and the prevention of the recurrence of violence and conflict by addressing root causes and effects of conflict, through reconciliation, political and economic transformation, and the forging of a common vision of society that takes all segments of the population into account. This conceptualization draws upon the 2016 UN Security Council and General Assembly resolutions on preventing violent conflict and sustaining peace (A/RES/70/262 and S/RES/2282). It is worth highlighting that after decades of circling and debate on meaning, in particular around whether or not addressing root causes is involved (McCandless 2020b), policy consensus is settling in a more holistic notion that does recognize this imperative as part of sustaining peace.

Equally acknowledging the many rich conceptualizing efforts of development, the notion that “Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs,” as expressed in *Our Common Future* (Brundtland Commission 1992) gets at the heart of the challenge. The Agenda for Sustainable Development (Agenda 2030) – adopted by all UN member states sets out a universal agreement and agenda to “create conditions for sustainable, inclusive growth” and shared prosperity, to end poverty in all its dimensions, combat inequality within and among countries, and to build peaceful, just, and inclusive societies. It reinforces (as did the Agenda for Development 1997) the interlocking nature of economic, social, and environmental dimensions and the need for critical awareness around the “conscious choices in terms of the trade-offs, synergies, and spin offs” created by any intervention (2015, p. 1).

The evolution and orientations of these concepts reveal their drive to ever-greater holism where each is moving to further encompass the other. While on the one hand, this suggests their synergy, and the very basis and need for the study and practice of the nexus; on the other hand, it potentially undermines the ability to maintain critical thinking and engagement about the relationship between, and impacts each agenda has on the other.

Paradigmatic Approaches to Peacebuilding and Development

This section explores the nexus through the framing of paradigms in both peacebuilding and development – how they have been theoretically conceptualized and how they have played out in policy and practice. First, peacebuilding paradigms are discussed, and their relationship to development explored. Then, development paradigms are discussed, and their relationship to peacebuilding explored. The sections consider both dominant paradigms, and the emergent, resistant ones.

Peacebuilding Paradigms and the Development Nexus

Key paradigms that have framed peacebuilding thought and practice come from structural and liberal traditions. This section starts by considering these two paradigms, and their intersections with development. It then turns to discuss innovations emerging over the last decade. Resistance to liberal peacebuilding in particular has fueled innovation, pushing the paradigmatic boundaries in new and important directions. (This section builds upon the framework developed by McCandless and Donais (2020) that lays out “generations of thought” in peacebuilding policy and practice.) It also draws from a review of peacebuilding and economic recovery linkages McCandless (2009).

Structural and Liberal Peacebuilding

According to McCandless (2020b), structural perspectives on peacebuilding have focused over the

decades on understanding and framing conflict as rooted in asymmetrical power relations and uneven processes of development, and peacebuilding as a process of transforming systems and structures accordingly. (Others have used the term structural peacebuilding not as a body of thought, but nonetheless in consistent ways – to describe, i.e., as a transformative process “of changing structures of violence to structures of peace.” (Montiel 2001, p. 1), generally engaging Galtung’s work on structural violence, the absence of which is structural peace (Galtung 1969).) A stream of thinkers shaping peace studies in the twentieth century – including Johan Galtung, Elise Boulding, Adam Curle, and Ed Azar – broadly sought to frame peace in this way, with concerted attention to issues of equitable development and distributive justice as deeply relevant for transforming conflict at its roots. Global South scholars have tended to support this line of thought. Hansen (1988) argued that dominant conceptions rooted in minimalist concerns such as the absence of physical violence did not serve Africa. For most scholars he suggested, the peace and development problematic are deeply intertwined; peace involves transforming national and international social systems to address the structural legacies and ongoing policies driven by Northern institutions driving inequalities between the North–South relations (See chapter “► Socioeconomic Justice and Peacebuilding”).

The 1990s saw a resurgence of structuralist-oriented theories through literatures on the political economy of conflict, and war economies. These engaged issues of motives in war, i.e., greed or grievance (Collier and Hoeffler 2004), criminality and profiting from peace, power asymmetries within and across societies, and the natural resource dimensions of war (Pugh 2005; Ballentine and Nitzschke 2005; Duffield 1998; Keen 1997).

Liberal peacebuilding proffers a much different perspective on its relationship with development. This agenda, from its origins in liberalism itself, assumes that broadening and deepening of liberalization of the economy (i.e., through rapid marketization) and politics (elections) provides a consummate pathway to peace. With roots in classical philosophy, liberal peacebuilding arose with

and through liberal triumphalism that accompanied the fall of the Soviet Union. At the same time, it was shaped by wider neoliberal trends dominating international financial institution policy interventions, resulting in lack of attention to the state and its institutions and an undermining of fragile local economies (Brückner and Ciccone 2010; Castillejo 2014). This was eventually acknowledged: countries emerging from conflict and fragility require robust institutions to drive and achieve development (Paris 2004). More widely, as observed by critical scholars, liberal peacebuilding did not achieve intended results of forging a pathway to sustaining peace and inclusive development. This was due to its framing around Western models and assumptions about what development and recovery should look like, which did not take root naturally in fragile post-conflict settings and did not foster a nationally owned vision (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013; Pugh 2005; Paris 2004).

Innovations in Peacebuilding Paradigms

There are other paradigmatic perspectives, or “generations of thought” (McCandless 2020b) emerging in the peacebuilding discipline that engage with development less directly, yet they potentially offer transformative directions for the peacebuilding–development nexus. The “local turn” in peacebuilding that has arisen in the wake of disillusionment with liberal peacebuilding and its outcomes orients attention towards local people, dynamics, contexts, and narratives (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013) (See chapters “► Local Peacebuilding” and “► Everyday Peace”). This “turn” is important for achieving a more context-relevant, demand-driven peace that serves development, and conversely, development that serves peace. Hybridity as a paradigmatic lens through which to orient peacebuilding efforts has also gained traction, addressing weaknesses in liberal peacebuilding by its focus on understanding how the heterogeneity within society manifests through competing claims to authority, legitimacy, and power (See chapter “► Hybrid Political Orders and Hybrid Peace”). A hybridity lens in peacebuilding offers means to explore development in ways that organically and

endogenously arise and exist within particular settings, and the multidirectional means for such interaction (Mac Ginty and Sanghera 2012).

Despite a host of critiques oriented towards liberal peacebuilding, this agenda still forms the core of a dominant policy approach – though one combining liberalism with more concerted attention to addressing its uneven impacts on people and the environment. This is reflected perhaps most clearly in the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Development Paradigms and the Peacebuilding Nexus

Development paradigms similarly generate and illustrate great debate. There is a tendency to conflate economic growth with development, arguably due to uncritical assumptions driving policy and thought – that the former will simply result in the latter. As Amartya Sen (1988, p. 13) suggests, “there are many other variables that also influence the living conditions, and the concept of development cannot ignore the role of these other variables.”

Liberalism and Marxism

Development paradigms and related policy agendas over time, as with the peacebuilding terrain, have broadly revealed a Marxist/liberal divide, with paradigms reflecting one, the other, or an effort to chart a middle path. On the liberal side, global development agendas came into practice through post-World War II reconstruction, which sought to ensure macroeconomist stability, though with a Marshall Plan which cushioned adverse effects on vulnerable populations and helped to support the building of needed infrastructure to catalyze development. Modernization in the 1950s–60s followed, steeped in uncritical assumptions about the supremacy of Western capitalism, suggesting that traditionalism impeded economic investment and growth. “Growth with Equity” in the 1970s recognized the structural marginalization of large population segments around the world, sought to balance modernization with benefit – and technology – sharing, promoting decentralization, and participation.

This did not last long; in the 1980s–1990s a more conservative strand of economic liberalism – neoliberalism – came fully to fruition. A “Washington Consensus” informed ideology drove a change in international financial institution (IFI) policy and practice. The new structural adjustments programs (SAPS) sought full liberalization of market and finance in the spirit of unbridled capitalism. Assuming this policy approach would ensure wealth, would “trickle down” and correct social service–related deficiencies in the long run, the outcomes proved opposite. Not only did the policies, implemented widely across Africa and Latin America in particular, increase poverty and inequality across settings, they did not even achieve their main policy goal: economic growth (See chapter “► Conflict and Hunger”). These policies and their impacts also undermined civil and political liberties and national ownership of development, fueling social discontent, violence, and conflict (McCandless and Karbo 2011; Cheru 2002; Walton and Seddon 1994).

Marxism and Marxist-inspired critical theories grew in parallel to their liberal counterparts over the twentieth century to inform development paradigms in the Soviet Union and China, followed by Cuba, North Korea, Laos, and Vietnam, among others. Originating from mid nineteenth century work of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, Marxists view the development problem as following from the exploitative class relations arising from the contradictions at the point of production within capitalism, which tend to result in extreme inequality and uneven geographical development. In this framework, social conflict is structurally embedded within the divergent ownership of the means of production and the social relations of production and reproduction.

The solution is class struggle and other forms of anti-capitalist activism (i.e., women’s rights, radical ecology, anti-racism, anti-imperialism) to achieve socialism – the social ownership of the means of production and erosion of profit as a core logic. This struggle, once successful, would generate what was often referred to as “socialist harmony.” For Marxists, underlying economic conditions – usually divided into the process of

capital accumulation and the class structure – “determine the quality and the life of ideology, philosophy, culture, and psychology” or what is known as the superstructures (Lumumba-Kasongo 2017, p. 39). Marxism as an umbrella theory of all radical leftist theories has an ideology of organizing a new society (a just society according to the exploited, oppressed, and dominated people’s and ecologies). To get there, a the “progressive methodology” (Lumumba-Kasongo 2017, p. 39) for attaining peace would encompass unifying anti-capitalist struggles from below linking up, led by the working class, but unifying with other fractions.

While Marxism was employed as a political and developmental paradigm in various countries and regions in the twentieth century, a critical variant – dependency theory – grew among third-world intellectuals in the 1960s–80s, especially in Latin America, and as a critique of modernization theory. Proponents saw conflict and crisis in Marxist terms around the contradictions in capitalism and exploitative class relations occurring globally and underdevelopment occurring as a result (De Santo et al. 1990). The development problem for dependency theorists lies in the underdevelopment of developing countries (Rodney 1972) – a result of resources flowing from the periphery of poor states or regions to wealthier ones. This a critical development paradigm, and informed development planning in Brazil, for example, under Lula, while import substitution policies (ISIs), at the heart of theories prescriptions, were pursued in countries around the world. These theories are consistent with Global South peace scholars of the structural peacebuilding tradition, i.e., Hansen above, who insist that achieving peace necessitates addressing the structural legacies and ongoing policies driven in and through global institutions dominated by select Northern governments.

Human Development, Sustainable Development, and Other Innovations

Efforts at innovation or finding new paradigmatic pathways have flourished in recent decades, often veering towards development placing humans

(human development) or the environment (sustainable development) at the core – and invariably drawing on liberal and Marxist/critical paradigms to chart a middle path.

Human development as conceived by its founder Mahbub ul Haq (2003) is the idea of enlarging all human choices, be they social, cultural, economic, or political. This paradigm emerged in the 1980s, offering an alternative to the dominant (neo)liberal economic growth paradigm. With roots in the teachings of Aristotle, Immanuel Kant, Adam Smith, and Karl Marx, it is a holistic and integrated paradigm expanding the notion and measure of well-being. It seeks to combine economic concerns of growth with those of distribution, access to livelihoods, and equality on the one hand, with political concerns, including personal freedoms and rights, and democratic governance, peace, and security on the other (UNDP 2006).

Human development was promoted by others including Amartya Sen and Paul Streeten and was adopted by UNDP in the 1990s to inform its development strategy and programming. The human development index (HDI) was created to enlarge the way well-being is measured, challenging the dominant growth-focused measure of well-being, the World Bank’s gross domestic product (GDP). The paradigm can be seen informing various UN development agendas that followed, including the Agenda for Development in 1994, and even the current Agenda for Sustainable Development. Within these development frameworks the links to peace and peacebuilding have become increasingly evident, while the holistic conception itself shares much with structural approaches to peacebuilding, and the conception of positive peace.

While human development did not attain wider appeal per se, the rising awareness of the failure of SAPS instigated some movements within the IFIs towards more human-centered capitalism, while simultaneously movements were growing within and outside these institutions for greater attention to the environment. Pro-poor development (Battaglia et al. 2011) and associated IFI Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) took over from SAPS – the preparation of which served as

a new form of aid conditionality. They did not, however, address the macroeconomic framework in play, which critics have viewed as the obstacle to transformation (Cheru 2002).

Similar concerns have been shared about the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – adopted by all United Nations member states in 2015 (McCandless 2016). While there are critics aplenty of the SDGs – especially coming from critical schools of thought and practice in relation to each substantive goal area, this framework undoubtedly goes farther than any globally agreed framework before to address issues at the heart of societal and global transformation. Drawing from other environmentally oriented development paradigms, it endeavors to bridge the divide between human and sustainable development approaches. This 2030 Agenda also places peace as a key priority area cutting across the framework identified in the preamble, while also featuring SDG 16 – a goal to foster peaceful, just, and inclusive societies. Goal 16 is also broadly viewed as an enabler of all the other goals.

Other innovations and approaches that may constitute emerging or past paradigms of development on the one hand and peacebuilding on the other undoubtedly exist, suggesting the complexity and breadth of the nexus in theory and in practice. Presently, for example, we are seeing rising discussion around the role of rising powers, including the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa), in peacebuilding (Call and de Coning 2016). The approaches of these countries in general, like Global South scholars as discussed above, tend to view peacebuilding as much more part and parcel of development, effectively assuming that inclusive development will foster peace.

The Nexus in Practice

In an opening issue of a journal devoted to exploring this nexus, the journal of *Peacebuilding and Development*, Peter Uvin (2002) outlined seven “paradigmatic shifts” in the relationship of the two enterprises. Representing a scale of status quo to more radical efforts, these were identified as:

development (in the form of economic growth) axiomatically reduces conflict; conditionality; post-conflict assistance; do no harm; conflict prevention; human security; and global system reform. Uvin argued, fitting with the period, that the development industry was primarily operating from the paradigms of post-conflict assistance and do no harm. This was consistent with the expansion of peacekeeping operations at the time, where United Nations multidimensional missions were taking on a wealth of responsibilities across security, political, rule of law, human rights, protection of civilians, and other areas, becoming cognizant that achieving intended results was far more difficult than anticipated. Some more progressive agencies, he argued, were moving into conflict prevention and human security, while global system reform was generally limited in the development sector – with the exception of concerted attention to the Kimberly process. A key conclusion, he found, was that attempts to put the nexus into practice were limited by the weak knowledge base and ethical foundations upon which the work rests.

Coming on two decades later, this nexus analysis retains considerable cogency, although there are adaptations within each, and arguably new emergent paradigms defining this nexus. It is also the case that they all vary in value depending on the actor concerned. With the rising acceptance of the changed face of conflict and its links with fragility and violence (United Nations – World Bank 2018; OECD 2016; McCandless 2020a), there is more policy consensus on the need to reprioritize conflict prevention. The push for this has gained traction on the basis of awareness within the multilateral system that fighting endless and intractable wars is too costly (United Nations – World Bank 2018). While there is an acknowledgment that addressing exclusion – a key driver of violence and conflict – is paramount – finding consensus among member states to act on issues at the core of conflict prevention will remain profoundly challenging (McCandless 2020b) (See chapter “► R2P and Prevention”). Global system reform remains strong, focused increasingly on climate change, while issues of food sovereignty, debt cancellation, natural

resource justice, and generally reforming the global trade and finance architecture that drives uneven development hold continuing prominence. Over this period, there have also been the momentous nonviolent revolutions brought by social movements through the “Arab Spring.” These movements were driven by a people rising up against oppressive regimes and failing development. While it is clear that concerted attention is required to economic issues of global system reform to ensure these transitions to democracy are sustainable, international attention remains squarely on supporting a move to political liberalism within these countries.

Other paradigms engaging this nexus that have arisen include peacebuilding in development policy frameworks (illustrated by Agenda 2030, and numerous prior efforts within the UN and bi- or multilateral efforts), inclusion, as an increasingly adopted norm in peacebuilding, development, and vis-à-vis the nexus, statebuilding, a policy approach oriented towards building the capacity of the state, which grew in part as a counterbalance to liberal peacebuilding (McCandless 2014), and fourthly the humanitarian-development-peace nexus (HDP). This last paradigm, while not new, is gaining concerted traction with the global COVID-19 pandemic. It arises out of the awareness that responding to the nature and scale of crises today requires an ever-deeper commitment to understanding and addressing these linkages (See chapter “► Conflicts and Natural Disasters”).

Summary

The peacebuilding–development nexus constitutes a profoundly rich area of thought and varied practices. While the importance of this nexus has been acknowledged at the highest policy levels, there remain significant challenges in forging coherence around agreed meaning of this nexus, given the dynamic, contested terrains between paradigms in peacebuilding, development, and the nexus. Peacebuilding and development are ultimately constructivist endeavors (Donais and McCandless 2017); they need to

respond to the historical circumstances and needs of particular populations in space and time.

While there are no one-size-fits-all formulas for understanding and supporting this nexus, structural engagement and intervention is needed to address root causes of conflict and fragility across societies. These more often than not stem not only from internal causes but from structural legacies, i.e., colonialism and slavery, and ongoing marginalizing tendencies of globalization, war, climate change, and disaster, among others, which do not observe borders and tend to hit the most vulnerable the hardest. As such, peacebuilding scholars can and should continue to shape this nexus in ways that raise evidence-based awareness about the interconnections, and that provide insight into approaches that hold greater promise for inclusive peace and development outcomes.

Cross-References

- Conflict and Hunger
- Conflicts and Natural Disasters
- Everyday Peace
- Hybrid Political Orders and Hybrid Peace
- Local Peacebuilding
- R2P and Prevention
- Socioeconomic Justice and Peacebuilding

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Peaceful Transformation

► Peace and Feminist Foreign Policy

Peacekeeping

- ▶ Assessment of Peace Operations
- ▶ Conceptual Evolution of Peace Operations
- ▶ Masculinity and Conflict
- ▶ Search for Peace, the
- ▶ UN Missions in Sudan and South Sudan
- ▶ Unintended Consequences of Peace Operations/
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Peacekeeping – Conflict Stabilisation

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- ▶ Evolution of Practice in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations

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Peacekeeping Inputs – Assessing Approaches

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Peacemaking and Peace Agreements on Kosovo

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Introduction

Following the signing of the Dayton Agreement that ended the Bosnian War on December 14, 1995, many in the international community thought that their troubles with the Balkans were coming to an end. Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic was hailed as a peacemaker for having signed the agreement. However, throughout this process, the issue of Kosovo was largely ignored. In March of 1989, Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic, through a campaign of terror, had stripped Kosovo of its status as an autonomous province of Serbia which included comprehensive self-government rights, as well as voting rights in the rotating federal presidency of Yugoslavia. This led to massive protests by Albanians. Tim Judah (2008, p. 67) notes that “During the unrest thousands of police poured in from outside the province, and widespread repression, arrests, and imprisonments followed, coupled with hundreds of new laws and regulations that needed to be passed to integrate Kosovo back into Serbia.” This started a chain of events that would escalate into a full-blown war by 1997/1998.

The report by the Independent International Commission on Kosovo (2000, p. I) holds that “[t]he revocation of Kosovo’s autonomy in 1989 was followed by a Belgrade policy aimed at changing the ethnic composition of Kosovo and creating an apartheid-like society.” Howard Clark (2000) provides a comprehensive account of how this apartheid-like system actually functioned in

practice. Ethnic Albanians in Kosovo responded to repressive measures of Milosevic regime in a series of non-violent actions to assert their rights. Initially former members of the Kosovo Assembly that were removed after 1989 approved a statement on July 2, 1990, that declared Kosovo a Republic in Yugoslavia (Archive 1990), and 2 months later, on September 7, they met in secret in the town of Kaçanik and adopted the Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo (Kushtetuta e Kaçanikut 1990). Both documents were considered illegal by Serbia and not recognized. Members of Kosovo’s academia formed a political movement called the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) to pursue a political non-violent path toward independence of Kosovo and organized a parallel system of governance and service structures for citizens, including education and healthcare. The independence referendum of September 1991 showed overwhelming popular support with 99% voting in favor. In 1992, Kosovo elected former chairman of the Writers’ Union of Kosovo, Dr. Ibrahim Rugova, as the president of the country – that had been recognized only by Albania – in an election considered illegal by Serbia. These efforts formed the so-called peace track to achieve independence of Kosovo. However, hopes for the success of the peaceful efforts started to fade by the mid-1990s. By 1995, a growing frustration with the lack of reactions to continued oppression and violation of human rights against ethnic Albanians in Kosovo (see the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA)) appears with sporadic attacks against Serbian police. The response of the Yugoslavian and Serbian security apparatus was brutal, and in this context, we can trace three events that led to the internationalization of the Kosovo War and the subsequent involvement of international community to find a peaceful solution to the Kosovo issue.

The first was the “Prekaz massacre” on March 5, 1998, where more than 50 members of the family of the KLA leader Adem Jashari were killed in a campaign of shelling by the Serbian forces, which provoked the reaction of the international community, and the UN adopted Resolution 1160 on March 31, 1998, condemning the use of force and adding economic sanctions against

Yugoslavia (UN Security Council 1998a, b). The second was the Abri e Eperme/Gornje Obrinje massacre of September 26, 1998, with 21 members of a same family brutally killed, including women and children. Human Rights Watch (n.d.-a, b, para. 2) report states that “More than two hundred villages were destroyed and at least 300,000 people were internally displaced. Most of the estimated 2,000 people killed through September were civilians.” This time, the response of the international community was harsher, and the UN adopted Resolution 1203 on October 24, 1998, that established the Kosovo Verification Mission (KVM) to verify the compliance of Yugoslavia and Serbia with the previous UN resolutions (UN Security Council 1998a, b). The resolution was a follow-up by what can be called as the first agreement between the Yugoslav/Serbian authorities, and the international community on Kosovo reached on October 16, 1998, the so-called Milosevic-Holbrooke agreement (Gow 1998). The third was the Reçak massacre of January 15, 1999, where 45 ethnic Albanian civilians were brutally executed. This massacre was verified by the KVM personnel who visited the village on January 16 and stated that the dead were unarmed civilians, which was later confirmed by a team of pathologists from Finland (Bellamy 2002). Human Rights Watch (1999) directly blamed the Serbian special police forces and the Yugoslav army for the massacre. The next section examines how international community approached the situation in an effort to find a peaceful resolution of the war.

The Rambouillet Peace Conference

The Raçak massacre dramatically shifted the approach of the international community toward the war in Kosovo. Albanians and Serbs were invited to participate in a peace conference in Paris, France, in order to find a peaceful resolution to the war. The geography of the peace conference for Kosovo had a purpose of its own. The war in Bosnia and Herzegovina was ended by a peace agreement signed in the USA, so having the peacemaking efforts to end the Kosovo War take

place in France was meant to show that the Europeans were ready to take a responsibility and leadership in solving the crisis in their own front yard (Weller 1999).

The proximity talks were held in the Castle of Rambouillet in southwest of Paris from February 6 until February 23, 1999, co-chaired at the macro-level by French and UK ministers of foreign affairs, while the actual process of negotiations was facilitated by three negotiators appointed by the Contact Group (Contact Group was a format of meeting between key states on the issue of the crisis in the Balkans and usually included the USA, the UK, France, Germany, Italy, and Russia): Christopher Hill on behalf of the USA, Wolfgang Petritsch on behalf of the EU, and Boris Mayorski on behalf of the Russian Federation. In addition to this, there was a group of legal experts who did much of the practical and day-to-day work to negotiate the proposals for settlement between the parties (Weller 1999). Delegations were accommodated in the Castle of Rambouillet and had dedicated and separated space to work, and they were not allowed to leave the grounds of the castle (*ibid.*).

The talks in the Rambouillet were largely based on the so-called Hill Plan proposed in early 1998 by then US envoy for the Balkans Christopher Hill, which would have restored the pre-1989 status of Kosovo as an autonomous province while postponing a decision on the final status for 3 years. Parties were also presented by the Contact Group with a set of nonnegotiable principles to guide the settlement which included immediate end of violence, the settlement would be temporary, and final status would be solved after 3 years, release of political prisoners, creating self-government in Kosovo, organization of elections by the OSCE in Kosovo, cooperation with the international community, etc. Delegations were offered written proposals on particular aspects of the settlement, and they could comment on the respective documents, but such comments could not contradict the nonnegotiable principles (Weller 1999).

By February 23, 1999, the text of the agreement had been finalized. What was termed as

Interim Agreement for Peace and Self-Government in Kosovo – Rambouillet Accords – offered substantial autonomy to Kosovo, a Constitution which regulated self-government with rights on a wide range of issues, including education and healthcare, and an Assembly, President, Government, and Constitutional and Supreme Court (UN Security Council 1999a, b). With respect to security, it would be provided by NATO through an international military force called KFOR, while the Yugoslav and Serbian security elements would be obliged to leave Kosovo, with the exception of Border Guard Forces, which would have limited authority, equipment, and personnel (1500 members). Kosovo Liberation Army would be demobilized and disarmed. Local police institution would be established. Kosovo would guarantee representation and special rights, and protections to minority communities in Kosovo, especially the Serbs. An international mission would be established to oversee implementation of these arrangements, while after 3 years, an international conference would take place to determine the future status of Kosovo.

The proposed agreement was unacceptable to both delegations, so they were offered additional time for consultations back home, and March 15 was set as a new date for reconvening in Paris to sign the agreement. For the Albanian delegation, the agreement did not ensure independence of Kosovo. The Yugoslav/Serbian delegation rejected the majority of the document, but a particular provision that would allow NATO troops in Kosovo and enable them free movement throughout Yugoslavia is widely argued to be the justification why the delegation refused the agreement. However, according to Tim Judah (2008), Milosevic never tried to negotiate this provision out of the agreement, and had he done so, he would have succeeded. According to Bellamy (2002, p. 145), this opportunity was offered to Milosevic on March 8, 1999, by senior European leaders, including German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer who met with Milosevic directly in Belgrade to offer “the opportunity to renegotiate the implementation aspects of the agreement,” but this was also refused.

When the delegations returned in Paris on March 15, this time meeting at the Centre Kléber, Kosovo-Albanian delegation confirmed their readiness to sign the proposed accords, convinced by a provision in the agreement that roughly stated that the future status of Kosovo would be decided after 3 years on the basis of the “will of the people” which it was interpreted to mean a referendum would be organized. The Yugoslav/Serbian delegation offered an entirely new counterproposal to what was already negotiated, and, moreover, the proposal was against the non-negotiable principles set forth at the start of the talks back in February. On March 18, the Kosovo-Albanian delegation officially signed the Rambouillet Accords, in a ceremony witnessed by the US and European leaders, but not by the Russian representative Boris Mayorski. The Yugoslav/Serbian delegation officially refused the accords.

International community through the Contact Group had threatened the use of force should the peaceful efforts to resolve the conflict fail. However, this was meant as a threat to back up diplomatic efforts, and at the time, no one believed it would come to the need to actually deliver on this threat. Diplomatic efforts in order to convince Milosevic to sign the deal continued, and new concessions were offered, but without any results. The last such effort was made on March 22, when the US envoy for the Balkans Richard Holbrooke met with Milosevic in Belgrade to give him directly the message that if he will leave Belgrade without an agreement, that would lead to a bombing campaign from NATO (Holbrooke 1998; PBS n.d.-a, b).

Fearing the potential for another Srebrenica massacre, and considering the situation in Kosovo a threat to international peace and security, on March 24, 1999, NATO forces initiated an air campaign against Yugoslav and Serbian targets code-named “Operation Allied Force,” which ended after 78 days and resulted in the capitulation of Yugoslavia/Serbia and withdrawal of the military and paramilitary forces from Kosovo. According to the Human Rights Watch (n.d.-a, b, para. 19), “as few as 489 and as many as 528 Yugoslav civilians were killed in the ninety

separate incidents in Operation Allied Force,” while Serbian government estimates say that “at least 2,500 people died and 12,500 were injured” (Nikolic 2016, para. 10). Adam Robert (1999) analyzes the debates over legality and legitimacy of NATO’s first war.

The Vienna Talks on the Future Status of Kosovo

Following the Military Technical Agreement between the International Security Force (“KFOR”) and the Governments of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Republic of Serbia that ended NATO bombing and the Kosovo War (NATO 1999), the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1244 on June 10, 1999, largely imposing the Rambouillet Accords, giving NATO authority over the security in Kosovo while establishing the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) to implement a comprehensive peacebuilding project and administer the area until the final status would be decided (UN Security Council 1999a, b). By 2003, the interim period of 3 years mentioned in the Rambouillet Accords to start the status talks passed. But given the context in the international community at the time, the UN was not ready to deal with this issue. Therefore, in December 2003, the UN introduced the “standards before status” policy, which basically conditioned the beginning of the process of deciding the final status of Kosovo on the fulfillment of eight standards, each containing specific requirements: functioning democratic institutions, rule of law, freedom of movement, sustainable returns and the rights of communities and their members, economy, property rights, dialogue, and Kosovo protection corps (UN Security Council 2003). These conditions formed the building blocks of the overall efforts of the UN and other Western agencies of promotion of liberal democracy as a panacea for conflict resolution and sustainable peace. However, in March 2004, riots erupted, and the Serbian community and their cultural heritage in Kosovo were attacked by organized groups belonging to ethnic Albanian population

(UN 2004). Lack of clarity over the future of the country was seen as one of the triggers of the violence. Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General, Ambassador Kai Eide, argued that the standards were very ambitious objectives for Kosovo, and there was a need for a proper process that would resolve the status issue in order to achieve further progress (UN Security Council 2004). In his subsequent report in 2005, Ambassador Eide submitted a second report to the UN Security Council on the question of ripeness of the situation to begin status talks for Kosovo, and he argued that status talks should start, despite the challenges (UN Security Council 2005).

Following a Presidential Statement from the UN Security Council, endorsing the status talks (UN 2005), the UN Secretary-General on November 1, 2005, appointed former Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari as Special Envoy to lead the negotiations, tasked to reach a political settlement on the future status of Kosovo. The choice of President Ahtisaari as a mediator was logical, since he was the only negotiator to have a positive record in dealing with Milosevic as explained in previous paragraphs. The negotiations started in Vienna, Austria, on February 20, 2006, and unlike the proximity talks at the Rambouillet Conference, these were direct talks and marked the first time the two sides (Albanians and Serbs) met since the war. However, from the start of the talks, it became clear that because both parties entered the negotiations with diametrically opposed positions, achieving a mutually acceptable solution to Kosovo’s future status would be impossible. Kosovo-Albanians wanted nothing short of independence, which was a red line for the Serbian delegation, who offered substantial autonomy for Kosovo within Serbia. The main argument of the Serbian side was based on the principle of sovereignty and territorial integrity (Weller, *The Vienna Negotiations on the Final Status for Kosovo* 2008). However, for the Kosovo-Albanians, returning under Serbian rule was unimaginable and tantamount to war.

After intensive negotiations for over a year, in March 2007, President Ahtisaari submitted his report to the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, where he states that “Reintegration

[of Kosovo] into Serbia is not a viable option' and 'Continued international administration is not sustainable,' and therefore he concludes "that the only viable option for Kosovo is independence, to be supervised for an initial period by the international community" (UN Security Council 2007a, b). The report included a "Comprehensive Proposal for the Kosovo Status Settlement" commonly known as the "Ahtisaari Plan," which encompassed all aspects of organization of the future state of Kosovo, practically prescribing the future Constitution of Kosovo. The Ahtisaari Plan defines Kosovo as a multiethnic state and provides extensive rights and strong protection for non-majority (Albanian) communities (UN Security Council 2007a, b). These rights included representation in all 3 branches of the government, including 20 guaranteed seats in a 120-strong Kosovo Assembly, as well as the so-called double majority principles on adopting laws and changes to laws that are important for non-majority communities, such as the law on language use, law on cultural heritage, law on local elections, etc. With respect to representation in the government and judiciary, which are specified in the Kosovo Constitution, which is based on the Ahtisaari Plan, at least two government ministers need to come from the non-majority communities, while at least 15% of the judges in the Supreme Court and appeal courts need to come from non-majority communities (Constitution of Kosovo 2008). The Ahtisaari Plan also provides protective zones for the cultural and religious sites of the Serbian community.

However, because the Plan proposed that the future status of Kosovo should be independence, it was vehemently rejected by Serbians and Russians who threatened to veto the Plan if it was presented before the UN Security Council for a vote. Following this, Contact Group countries (France, Germany, Italy, Russia, the UK, the USA) agreed to establish a new diplomatic initiative, called Troika, as a last effort to try and convince Kosovo and Serbia to reach a deal. Members of "Troika" were Wolfgang Ischinger, a German who represented the EU, Frank Wisner who represented the USA, and Alexander Botsan-

Kharchenko who represented Russia. Troika had a time frame of 120 days for additional negotiations for a deal, and the new rounds of talks started in August of 2007, but at the end of the process, Troika reached the same conclusion as President Ahtisaari did that both parties had diametrically opposed positions on the issue of status and conclude that "[n]either side was willing to yield on the basic question of sovereignty" (UN Security Council 2007a, b, p. 4). Russia reflected the position of Serbia, and although they were part of the Troika process, they still refused to accept the Ahtisaari Plan, because of Serbia. In the absence of a deal, and in close coordination with the US and key EU Member States, Kosovo declared its independence on February 17, 2008. From Serbia's point of view, this was a unilateral step on the side of Kosovo. Recognition of the independence of Kosovo by the US and EU Member States was conditioned with the implementation of the Ahtisaari Plan, which was clear in the recognition letters.

However, although the independence of Kosovo – according to the country's Ministry of Foreign Affairs – has been recognized by 116 states (MFA n.d.), the lack of a deal, or a divorce agreement, with Serbia, has produced two major consequences for Kosovo: first, it has affected consolidation and integration of Kosovo in international society as a fully pledged sovereign state, because Russia would block any attempts of Kosovo for membership in the UN, and, second, there are five EU Member States (Cyprus, Greece, Slovakia, Spain, and Romania) that do not recognize Kosovo's independence, and this has become a key obstacle for European integration process of Kosovo, which is a national priority for all countries of the Western Balkans. While all these five states have justified their position of nonrecognition on the basis of implications for their internal politics, they also have signaled that if a deal will be reached between Kosovo and Serbia on the issue of the status, they would change their position. This situation placed the European Union at the best position to lead the third attempt for reaching a negotiated agreement between Kosovo and Serbia.

Dialogue for Normalization of Relations Between Kosovo and Serbia

Following the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) that Kosovo's declaration of independence did not violate international law (ICJ 2010), the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution that acknowledges the opinion of the ICJ and "welcomes the readiness of the European Union to facilitate a process of dialogue between the parties" (UN 2010). The dialogue for normalization of relations between Belgrade and Prishtina or as it is commonly referred the "Brussels Dialogue" started in 2011, with the purpose "to promote cooperation between the two sides, help them achieve progress on the path to Europe and improve the lives of the people" (EEAS 2016, para. 1).

The initial phase of the dialogue started in March 2011 until March 2012, between senior officials from Kosovo and Serbia, and was mediated by EEAS Councilor Robert Cooper. This phase is commonly referred to as the technical dialogue and focused on tackling practical issues between the two countries, and a number of agreements were reached such as agreement to exchange of liaison officers, whose offices are located in the EU buildings in Prishtina and Belgrade; agreement on custom stamps which enabled trade between Serbia and Kosovo; agreement on cadastral records; agreement on integrated border management; and agreement on recognition of university diplomas (Gashi and Novakovic 2017). The approach of the EU in this phase was to try and get the parties to agree on issues that were of mutual interest for their citizens to address and by doing so shaping a culture of compromise and agreement-making between the parties that would come in aid when dealing with more complex political issues between Kosovo and Serbia. Agreements reached in the Brussels Dialogue are officially called conclusions, and there are tripartite implementation working groups with members from Kosovo, Serbia, and the EU.

The high-level dialogue, or the "political dialogue" as it is commonly referred, started in October 2012 and has continued since, and it is

facilitated directly by the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, and it involved the political leaders from both countries, initially at the level of the Prime Ministers of Serbia and Kosovo. This phase of the dialogue managed to produce the first ever agreement to be accepted by both parties called "First Agreement of Principles Governing the Normalisation of Relations" which initiated on April 19, 2013, by the Prime Ministers of Kosovo and Serbia (Government of Kosovo 2013). Major section of the agreement is dedicated to the establishment of the association/community of the Serb Majority Municipalities, but the other significant point of this agreement is the commitment of Serbia and Kosovo not to block each other in their process of integration in the EU (point 14).

However, despite the agreement being held as historic, it has failed to produce meaningful results in the ground, and its major section about the establishment of an association/community of Serb municipalities has not been implemented. Overall, concerning the EU-facilitated dialogue, Gezim Visoka argues that "... the dialogue produced domestic political resistance, hesitation, and uncertainty in Kosovo and Serbia. Both sides have questioned the viability and the potential risks that such a process would bring to their national interests" (Visoka 2017, p. 189).

Summary

In summary, each peacemaking process on Kosovo produced a new situation that moved toward conflict resolution, but two decades later, the conflict between Kosovo and Serbia is not yet fully resolved, and the UN continues to be present in Kosovo, albeit without meaningful authority and in very small numbers. With respect to the UN post-conflict peacebuilding approaches, Kosovo case seems to suggest that while the UN can be effective, notwithstanding criticism, in institution building, developing the necessary infrastructure for restoring normality, organizing elections and the democratic process, and promoting civil society, when it comes to addressing more complex political issues which are often at

the heart of most conflicts, the UN is itself not a decisive actor, but permanent Member States of the Security Council dictate the outcome (Cronin 2002). The failure of the UN Security Council to approve the recommendation and the report on the status of Kosovo, although authored by UN's own Special Envoy President Ahtisaari, has created the conditions for frozen conflict in Kosovo and perpetuated uncertainty about the future among Kosovo citizens.

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challenges researchers to try and understand conflict and violence not only from the less contentious perspectives of the victims or the analytically less entangled perspective of bystanders or outsiders but also from the viewpoint of those who planned and enacted the violence. Recent research on perpetrators has shifted its focus down the hierarchy to increasingly studying low-level perpetrators, engaging with these men and women across various different cases in order to try to understand their motivations for perpetration. Furthermore, perpetrator research focuses on perpetrators in post-violence societies, studying how they reintegrate into society, how transitional justice mechanisms deal with them, as well as how their actions are remembered societally and constructed in cultural representations of them. As such, perpetrator research attempts to untangle the various actions that these men and women are involved in and reconstruct the meaning that they have at the time and in retrospect both for the perpetrators themselves and for the societies in which they acted.

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Perpetrator Research

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Definition

Perpetrator research has become an important sub-discipline of peace and conflict studies. It

Perpetrator Research: An Evolving Agenda

While for a long time victims' perspectives on violence were privileged, there is an increasing consensus that engaging with perpetrators' perspectives is also fundamental for our understanding of violence dynamics and their aftermath. While perpetrator perspectives can be morally more problematic, analytically they are vital for a fuller comprehension of how violence unfolds and what it means for post-violence societies. As such, some of the key questions that perpetrator research grapples with include:

- *Why do otherwise ordinary men and women participate in atrocities?*
- *How do post-violence societies deal with the perpetrators in judicial, political, cultural, or other terms?*
- *How do societies reintegrate the people who committed atrocities?*
- *How are the acts of perpetration remembered and represented?*

This emerging research agenda finds its antecedents in the biographical research on high-level perpetrators in the Holocaust that was conducted from the 1950s onward. In the 1990s research opened up to an interest in the low-level perpetrators, the men and women who actually implemented the violence and sustained the system that allowed the Holocaust to occur. In the early 2000s, perpetrator research became more diversified in various ways. First, it turned its focus beyond the Nazi regime to also study perpetrators in the genocides in Rwanda, Cambodia, and Bosnia as well as perpetrators of atrocities in civil wars and authoritarian regimes around the world. Second, it began to more systematically not just study perpetrators during the violence itself but engage with their post-violence journeys, particularly in interaction with transitional justice processes and different forms of societal dealing with the past. Third, representations of perpetrators and their significance for cultural heritage came into view. Fourth, feminist approaches to studying perpetrators have become more pronounced, drawing attention to how gendered differences exist throughout all the topics of perpetrator research. This increasing establishment of perpetrator research in the academic community manifests itself visibly in the increasing numbers of special issues and edited volumes dedicated to the study of perpetrators (see, e.g., Jessee 2015; Smeulers et al. 2019; Williams and Buckley-Zistel 2018), as well as in the foundation of a Perpetrator Studies Network which has organized several conferences and in 2017 launched the *Journal of Perpetrator Research*.

While perpetrator research does engage with perpetrators of various crimes, there is a preponderance on the study of perpetrators of genocide. This is, on the one hand, understandable as genocide is purportedly the “crime of crimes” and the most violent of crimes; however, at the same time many of the individual acts that these perpetrators engage in are no different to the acts that perpetrators in other crimes engage in. For example, the killing of civilians in genocide bears significant similarities to massacres in the context of civil war, or the killing of political opponents under repressive, authoritarian regimes. While there are

also studies of perpetrators in other types of violence, these studies are seldom positioned explicitly in the realm of perpetrator research, and much less often are they comparative in nature, leading to disparate knowledge production in various fields.

This entry will first discuss some ethical and methodological issues in conducting perpetrator research and discuss how disaggregation of perpetration into actions allows a more nuanced and complex understanding. Subsequently, the entry will discuss several main topics in perpetrator research: the motivations of perpetrators to participate in violence and the violence dynamics; the dynamics in post-violence societies, particularly surrounding transitional justice efforts and within the context of the politics of memory; the way perpetrators are represented culturally; and the gendered dynamics that surround perpetrators during and after violence. Finally, two cases that have received an overwhelming amount of attention in the literature will be briefly discussed here: the Holocaust and the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi.

Approaching Perpetrators: The Ethics and Methods of Perpetrator Research

Perpetrator research spans various disciplines from philosophy to literature, sociology to law, psychology to history, and anthropology to political science, among others. As such, there is no set methodological canon across these disciplines, but most research on perpetrators focuses on archival documentation or fieldwork with perpetrators. Archival documents are predominantly generated either by the perpetrators themselves – official communications, policies and directives, as well as personal diaries, letters, or memoirs – or through transitional justice processes, in the form of investigation documents, court documents, truth commission hearings, or reports. Fieldwork for the most part consists of in-depth interviews with perpetrators, sometimes using an oral historical methodology, other times more thematic, while some researchers engage in longer-term ethnographic field stays; other researchers

also engage in large sample surveys with perpetrators. Beyond this, innovative work is conducted on the cultural representations of perpetrators in memorialization processes, literature, exhibitions, plays and dance performances, and other similar cultural activities.

While the challenges and shortcomings of archival research and studies on cultural representations resonate with the relevant debates in the respective fields of the researchers (often history), given the burgeoning amount of fieldwork conducted, an interdisciplinary discussion of methodological challenges and ethical questions that are specific to research on perpetrators has begun. Particularly salient are discussions on issues regarding how testimony is to be interpreted, the question of the veracity that perpetrator interviews can generate, and how to deal with incentives to lie in interviews, as well as the nature of truth, the difficult access to perpetrators, as well as ethical questions of what to do with incriminating evidence when this is disclosed during interview or how to do justice to “do no harm” and other ethical principles in ensuring that the research avoids a stigmatization of the perpetrator in the community or hampers potential reintegration or reconciliation, as well as potential danger to researchers (Fujii 2009; Schmidt 2017; various articles in Jessee 2015).

Perpetration as Action and as Complex

One key development in perpetrator research sees the object of study disaggregated analytically into individual acts of perpetration, comprehending violence inherently as action (Gudehus 2018). This enables one to go beyond assumptions that actors need be consistent in their actions over time, allowing for motivations to vary and engagement with the violence to fluctuate. Furthermore, the types of actions can vary over time, with an individual engaging in acts of perpetration at one point of time, being a bystander at another, or even rescuing at times. This disaggregation is important as it allows an understanding of the perpetration in the broader context of the situation in which it occurred, rendering the subjective

understanding of the act of perpetration more comprehensible for researchers. This is furthermore important as it reflects the diverse recollections of the past that the perpetrators themselves hold.

Disaggregation also allows for a more nuanced perspective regarding the complexity of perpetrator roles and the agency that various individuals acquire in violence settings. Erin Baines (2009) pioneered the concept of complex political perpetrators using the example of Dominic Ongwen who was abducted and recruited as a child soldier, thus clearly demarcating him as a victim, and yet he also rose through the ranks, himself committing a multitude of atrocities, including abducting children to be soldiers; it was through these acts of perpetration only that he was able to develop the agency to overcome his own victimhood. Erin Jessee (2017) also discusses various forms of complex political actors during the Rwandan genocide whose experiences include variable combinations of perpetration, rescue, and victimhood from different ethnic perspectives (see also Fujii 2009). Discussions of agency thus become more nuanced and insightful as they can deal better with fluctuating conditions and constraints (Williams 2018).

Violence Dynamics and Perpetrator Motivations

One of the key questions discussed within perpetrator research is what motivates these individuals. While there is a relatively broad consensus that these are ordinary men and women, aberrant neither psychologically nor in their personalities, “extraordinary only by what they did not by who they were” (Waller 2002, 8) and that only more complex explanations that embrace multiple motivations can fully capture the diversity of perpetration (Anderson 2017).

Within the plethora of motivations, one can differentiate – drawing on the terminology of social identity theory – between motivations that are focused on the ingroup of the perpetrators and the outgroup of the victims or are rooted in opportunistic intentions (for this systematic approach,

see Williams [forthcoming](#)). The most prominent motivation rooted in perpetrator ingroup dynamics is obedience to authority, as well as social dynamics between peers – notably the desire for conformity and peer pressure – that provide strong motivations for people to participate in violence as they seek to maintain positive relations with their peer group and identify strongly with their comrades and friends in the group (Browning 2001, 174; Fujii 2009; Kühl 2014, 148; McDoom 2013). Another motivation – often claimed by perpetrators themselves as it allows them to displace responsibility for their actions – is the threat of coercion that may have motivated many in the Holocaust but was not actually very credible but was considerably more credible in Rwanda and Armenia, and particularly in Cambodia under the totalitarian Khmer Rouge.

Motivations that focus on the victim outgroup include different types of emotions and ideologies. While hotly contested in the 1990s “Goldhagen debate” (Browning 2001; Goldhagen 1996), the consensus today is that many perpetrators are not motivated by ideology. Nevertheless, ideology can take on a number of other important roles, such as providing moral justification for the acts of violence, providing dehumanization of the victims, or construction of them as a threat, explored in most nuances by Jonathan Leader Maynard (2014). Emotionally, individuals can be motivated to participate in genocide as the emotions change their perception of the context and realign their interests, most prominently, fear, resentment, hatred, rage, disgust, etc.

Finally, opportunistic motivations mean that individuals hope for some form of personal gain from their perpetration, for example, forwarding their career, receiving the opportunity to loot and steal, receiving benefits for being members of the group like better food or working conditions, or eliminating political rivals or resolving personal conflicts that predate and are unrelated to the genocide (Gross 2003). Furthermore, the thrill of doing something otherwise forbidden can be motivating, as can the sadistic pleasure of causing pain to others.

Many more motivations and other conducive factors also exist, but it would go beyond the

scope of this entry to discuss them all. It is noteworthy, however, that there are many psychological factors that are particularly facilitative of someone participating but that do not actually motivate the individuals (see in particular Waller 2002; Williams [forthcoming](#)).

Furthermore, most of the literature that focuses explicitly on perpetrators’ motivations considers predominantly participation in genocide or similar mass atrocities; however, there are also studies that look at radicalization trajectories into terrorism, motivations to join and fight in rebel groups or militias, or why soldiers engage in sexual violence.

Post-Violence Dealing with Perpetrators

An important further field within perpetrator research is constituted by perpetrators’ post-conflict trajectories, particularly as they interact with societal dealing with the past in various forms of transitional justice; most studies focus on the perpetrators themselves, while others focus more strongly on how perpetrators are even constructed in post-conflict societies. These questions are of particular relevance because the perpetrators’ positions in society can be instructive in understanding the potential for post-violence reconciliation or the risks of potential re-ignition of conflict.

On a more individual level, scholars have studied how perpetrators deal with their past participation in atrocities, for example, through the development of shame or guilt after the end of the Holocaust (Kellenbach 2013; Tames 2016). As such, there is a keen interest on how this dealing with their personal past impacts reintegration, as well as its impact on the next generations and particularly how perpetrator children can relate to their parents (Jeftic 2019; Tames 2016). These post-conflict trajectories are important for understanding how the perpetrators themselves make sense of their past and cope with what they have done and what ramifications this has on their mental health and that of their families.

How perpetrators come to narrate their own personal histories, as well as the social history of

their countries, particularly diverging accounts vis-à-vis the post-conflict narratives propagated by the state, is also in focus. For example, work studies how perpetrators claim victimhood for themselves or attempt to redefine debates on national reconciliation (Jessee 2017; Manning 2015). Of particular interest here are child soldiers who can be seen as both victims and perpetrators (Drumbl 2012). These diverging narratives about the conflict and their own role in them can have serious repercussions for post-conflict repair, as responsibility and culpability are attributed differently and it can become difficult or impossible to find a narration of the past that is acceptable to different parts of society and thus could possibly provide the foundation for a reconciliation process.

The complexity of perpetrators as victims resides not only in their own perceptions but also in how they are discussed and constructed socially, here particularly in how they and their responsibility are depicted during their trials (Rauschenbach et al. 2016; Skjelsbæk 2018) and truth commissions (Anderson 2018; Renner 2015) or at memorials. As such, perpetrator constructions play into these societal debates on responsibility and have important impact on whether perpetrator self-representations are deemed acceptable or not. While in most cases perpetrators will tend to be demonized, there are more complex allocations of victimhood and perpetration in others. For example, former Khmer Rouge in Cambodia almost all self-identify as victims, a narrative that is also accepted in parts of society and that is reinforced by the transitional justice process as former Khmer Rouge can even become civil parties and claim reparations as complex political victims (Bernath 2016).

Cultural Representations of Perpetrators

While Adorno famously suggested it were barbaric to write poetry after Auschwitz, today there are still some questions about whether representation is even possible in light of the horror of genocide itself or whether it can even occur without sensationalization. Nonetheless, mass violence, genocide,

and other atrocities are represented culturally, and among them we find depictions of perpetrators across literature, film, visual art, memorials, and other cultural media (for an overview, see various chapters in Rau 2013).

One piece of literature that has received particular recent attention is Jonathan Littell's (2009) novel *The Kindly Ones*. This novel unsettlingly portrays the perspective of an SS officer during World War II and the Holocaust, raising questions of whether such an "honest" portrayal risks rationalizing and excusing the acts. Other scholars argue that there is more potential in this unsettling taking on the perpetrator perspective for honing critical sensibilities. For example, the book's visual objects and perpetrator images or "the aesthetics of excess" (Sandberg 2014) tie into broader discussions regarding the role of empathetic engagement with narratives of perpetrators in fictional literature (McGlothlin 2016).

Also, in cinematic representation of mass atrocity, a humanized version of perpetrators is often presented in which an understanding for the perpetrator is developed, and moreover even the trauma of the perpetrators is increasingly present (Morag 2013). As such, these cultural representations of perpetrators as "ordinary" men and women tie strongly into academic understandings of the individuals who become perpetrators, although potentially it could be detrimental to the overall understanding of the destructive nature of the acts they engage in.

Finally, perpetrators and their acts of perpetration also play a role in exhibitions or at memorial sites or in civil society memory projects, where representations of perpetrators are analyzed in their connection to broader memory politics and the ascription of responsibility (Knittel 2014). Here, responsibility and roles are ascribed through the way the exhibitions are curated and tie into the broader post-violence narratives discussed above.

Gendered Understandings of Perpetrators

An important development in the study of perpetrators is a more nuanced understanding of

gendered dynamics during violence, as well as in the aftermath of violence dealing with the past and in the representation of these perpetrators. A prominent entry into the topic argued that women are portrayed variously as mothers, monsters, or whores (Sjoberg and Gentry 2007), providing a useful analytical lens for much other work. For example, women perpetrators are often sexualized (Heschel 2004), playing into Sjoberg and Gentry's topos of a whore, something that does not occur for male perpetrators.

Given different constraints on their agency and differing, gendered expectations toward what roles are deemed appropriate for women and men, women participate in genocide in different ways (Brown 2017) and are allocated different roles in militant organizations, too (Eggert 2018). Nonetheless, gender analyses also reveal how women do also engage in sexual violence during war, even though stereotypical ascriptions allow only for women to be victims (Sjoberg 2016).

This gendered differentiation continues in post-genocide societal dealing with the past and have, for example, impeded investigation and prosecution of women involved with the SS (Heschel 2004).

Perpetrators in the Holocaust

In a similar vein to genocide studies, memory studies, victimology, and other sub-disciplines, perpetrator research is deeply anchored in and has emerged from debates surrounding the study of the Holocaust. The Holocaust is paradigmatic in almost all research on perpetrators and remains emblematic in representations of any violence, especially in representations of perpetrators. Nonetheless, or perhaps because of this, literature on the Holocaust is often also separate from much of the other literature on perpetrators, particularly in the more historical approaches.

First dealings with perpetrators in the context of the Holocaust focused strongly on biographical approaches, primarily with a focus on high-level perpetrators but with some mid-level perpetrators being portrayed, too. In the 1990s, the focus

turned more strongly to the lower-level individuals who had implemented the Holocaust, the men (and sometimes women) who had been the cogs in the machine. While deeply controversial, the "Goldhagen debate" (Browning 2001; Goldhagen 1996) was key in establishing this field of interest that has led to the broad interest in low-level perpetrators in academia, as well as cultural representations of them in various media.

The Holocaust was implemented by a wide array of actors, all of whom have received some attention in the literature. The most prominent actors – both in terms of popular perceptions and cultural depictions, as well as academic attention – are concentration and extermination camp staff, SS officers responsible for the gas chambers, and crematoria that have become representative of the Holocaust itself. Naturally, there are perpetrators active prior to the extermination at the camp and the individuals involved in consolidation and ghettoization, deportation, transportation, as well as the legal framework behind these, and the logistics that enabled them are key perpetrators who have been studied. More broadly, other bureaucrats and technocrats have been studied as perpetrators in the wider system of planned violence. Reserve police battalions conducted much of the killing in areas from which deportations were not easily possible, constituting another important perpetrator group that has been studied in-depth not only in the context of the Goldhagen debate but also since. Furthermore, there has been an increasing focus also on auxiliary troops, sometimes called *trawniki*, who were recruited from areas under Nazi occupation or from prisoner-of-war camps and who were often allocated the most disturbing and distressing tasks. Finally, there has been some attention paid to perpetrators within the local populations under Nazi rule, men and women who under Nazi duress or only with their tacit approval committed atrocities against the local Jewish population. This field of research has come under strong political attack from nationalistic governments in Eastern Europe (particularly Poland), as some politicians suggest that this is a minimization of German responsibility and a displacement of blame for the Holocaust to Polish (or other) individuals.

In disciplinary terms, the field of Holocaust research is dominated by historians, although there are interesting and important interventions from a broad array of disciplines, depending on the topic (see, e.g., Kühl 2014). While in-depth interviews with perpetrators have been conducted by some researchers, the vast majority of research is based on archival documents, sometimes from the bureaucratic structures of the government, police force, and concentration camp system but most often also documentation created in the context of post-Holocaust trials of the perpetrators, the investigations that were conducted for these, and the testimony these individuals gave.

Given the amount of trials that have been conducted, these trials and the shifts in international criminal law that they have provoked have also been the focus of considerable research, as have the many and manifold representations perpetrators have received in the media and cultural projects since the end of the Holocaust.

Perpetrators in the 1994 Genocide Against the Tutsi

Another well-studied case of perpetrators is in the context of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda. In stark contrast to the research on the Holocaust, there are few studies that focus on individual perpetrators and their biographies, instead focusing much more strongly on the low-level perpetrators and the killing groups they were involved with. This is due partly to the fact that the genocide occurred at a time when this shift in focus was already happening in the study of the Holocaust but also because of the nature of the violence.

In Rwanda, violence was mandated and ordered by the Hutu extremists who seized power in the aftermath of President Habyarimana's airplane being shot down, but its implementation was considerably less top-down and state-driven than in the Holocaust. The violence was organized by the state, and the mandate for violence was clear through extensive radio and print propaganda, as well as through state structures that were ordered to participate, but the actual killing was conducted

only partly by state personnel such as the military and gendarmes; instead youth militia, so-called interahamwe, who had been trained for this purpose over the past years, as well as large groups of civilians mobilized more or less spontaneously, were responsible for the vast majority of the killing. Killing occurred at the very local level at roadblocks, at people's homes, or in hunts across the hills and marshes of the country. As such, it is these localized dynamics that have been at the focus of research on perpetrators in Rwanda, rather than individual people responsible for the violence (Fujii 2009; McDoom 2013; Straus 2006).

Genocide in Rwanda has been dealt with in a vast array of ways, beginning with judicial handling of various cases at the UN-mandated International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, within the national justice system, as well as in the Gacaca court system, in which more than 1.9 million cases were tried. This comprehensive dealing with perpetrators is unprecedented for any other case and has led to much research on how perpetrators have been treated within the various justice systems, as well as how their crimes have been construed. Furthermore, the Rwandan government has engaged in a far-reaching program for unity and reconciliation that includes many activities such as re-education programs and labor programs that aim to re-introduce convicted perpetrators back into society after their releases, as well as many education programs for young people and others across society. As such, the government is extremely active in shaping the memory discourse around perpetrators in the country, and this hands-on approach as well as many of the programs has been discussed critically in the literature on dealing with the past in Rwanda (Jessee 2017).

Most research on perpetrators in the country is conducted drawing on in-depth interviews with perpetrators themselves (Brown 2017; Fujii 2009; Jessee 2017; Straus 2006), sometimes also survey-based data collection (McDoom 2013; Straus 2006). This is more feasible for the Rwandan context, first, given that the genocide is not as far passed as the Holocaust and thus there are many individuals with whom it is possible to speak (theoretically at least, whether it is politically possible and if they will engage is a different

matter) and, second, given that there is considerably less written documentation from the time of the genocide itself and its judicial aftermath.

Summary

Research on perpetrators has matured over the past couple of decades and will likely continue to establish itself within peace and conflict studies. With this expansion comes a normalization of the field and an acceptance of its research objectives. This is certainly important, and much has been gained by re-humanizing perpetrators and overcoming demonizing representations of these men and women in order to actually understand them and their actions. At the same time, the moral ambiguities in perpetrator research should not be completely neglected or forgotten, and it serves as a brief reminder here that for all the explanatory power that perpetrator research provides, the intention behind this is never to rationalize, justify, or legitimate the actions of the perpetrators but solely to fathom and explain.

This expansion of perpetrator research is also important as prevention is not possible without coming to terms with and understanding perpetrators, their motivations and actions, as well as what the violence means to them in retrospect. While this assumption of the importance of studying perpetrators to inform prevention work is a core rationale routinely vocalized by perpetrator researchers, relatively little research has actually been undertaken to translate the insights of the past years of perpetrator research into lessons learned for prevention. As such, the impact of perpetrator research in prevention practice remains limited and will continue as such until more work on microlevel prevention strategies is undertaken.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Art and Reconciliation](#)
- ▶ [Conflict Fieldwork](#)
- ▶ [Conflict, Memory, and Memory Activism: Dealing with Difficult Pasts](#)

- ▶ [Female Combatants and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Hybrid Courts and Transitional Justice](#)
- ▶ [Memorials and Transitional Justice](#)

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Phenomenological Peace

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Definition

Phenomenological peace responds to the longstanding and pressing issue of difference in peacebuilding theory and practice. The multitude of attempts to engage and “solve” the question of difference is reasoned by the empirical circumstance that differences, whether religious, social, political, or economic, are at the root of conflicts. Phenomenological peace perceives difference(s) in a non-essentialized way and posits this approach as the only way to view, and basis from which to act upon, differences that is conducive to peaceful relations. This is because all essentialist or essentializing perceptions of difference, such as those underpinning liberal and post-liberal peace, establish a hierarchy between different groups and require their subordination to one reified, universal script. This causes and triggers, rather than resolves, conflict. Phenomenological peace is based on a philosophical reading of the problem of difference which sees difference and the subsequent question of the construction of “otherness” as irreducible, experiential foundations of all social and political relations. Phenomenological approaches suggest that a non-essentialized understanding of difference(s) can render difference(s) as positive social and political forces. When framing the question of peace as a question of difference, two interrelated problems emerge which, although they cannot be fully explicated in the scope of this entry, must be alluded to. These consist of the following: first, the legacy of thinking difference in Western

philosophy and political theory establishes hierarchical and thus unpeaceful relations among individual people and conflict parties; and, second and related, the tradition of phenomenological thinking, beginning in the early twentieth century, opens up alternatives to rethink and reconceptualize difference and subsequently for peace thinking and peace practices. The innovative character of phenomenological peace is that difference(s) and “otherness” are conceptualized as a matter of our perception, and thus as open to transformation, rather than as possessing fixed substances and identities that could be grasped, stigmatized, or acted upon.

Introduction

Next to *liberal* and *post-liberal* peace, a third concept for thinking through peace and peace-making is *phenomenological peace*. The conceptualization of phenomenological peace harks back to the philosophical tradition of phenomenology and is mainly informed by the oeuvres of Georg Simmel, Alfred Schütz, Martin Heidegger, Emmanuel Lévinas, and Jacques Derrida. In the center of phenomenological peace stands the problem of difference. Phenomenological peace is built around the questions of how to think and act upon differences. Peace is thus fundamentally perceived as an engagement with “the” “other,” both theoretically and practically. According to phenomenological peace, every vision and practice of peace needs to reflect upon the question of difference, “otherness,” and the concrete “other” who is ultimately the one together with whom peace must be built. Whether we as individuals, citizens, political activists, politicians, or most importantly as conflict parties act in a peaceful way, or less so, depends on our relation to our fellow humans. Thus, phenomenological peace always articulates (as) a relation to the “other.” The main argument of phenomenological peace is that non-essentialist ways of thinking and acting upon difference(s) are more conducive to peaceful relations than essentialized visions of difference. The second, subsequent argument holds that, in practical terms, a non-essentialist way dealing

with difference surmounts in the maxims of political dialogue and optionality. These conceptions are empathetic for differences, embracing their free articulation, and steadily moving to and provoking the edges of established rationalities. There are two important basics of phenomenological peace: first, difference is a fundamental human condition and irreducible experience of political and social life; and second, difference and “otherness” are *not* the same and *cannot* be equated because “otherness” is already a particular perception and construction of difference (why “otherness” or “other”).

Phenomenological peace shares the critique of liberal peace in common with post-liberal peace, especially relating to the universalization of liberal individualism and the Western model of state-building. But phenomenological peace is also critical with post-liberal peace, particularly with regard to its essentialization and binary construction of differences as its language of “the local” reveals (conceived in opposition and/or in a hybrid relation to the “international”). Phenomenological peace, in contrast to “liberal” and “post-liberal” peace, allows us to see difference(s) as positive, and not as an obstacle to peace. This stands in sharp contrast to all notions which try to eliminate differences by imposing some universal identity and political and social order onto conflict parties under which they are required to unify, or which essentialize differences within and between them. Phenomenological peace, in contrast, regards difference and plurality as a fundamental human condition and political experience which must be accounted for in peacemaking. Phenomenological peace provides a distinct conceptualization of difference in a non-essentialist manner. Further to its *ontological* critiques of both liberal and post-liberal peace, phenomenological peace is reasoned in *epistemological* terms by the conceptual stalemate of “liberal” and “post-liberal” peace studies, a result of their shared theoretical terrain which emerges from the *misperceived* reading of Immanuel Kant’s *Towards Perpetual Peace* (see below under “Background: Academic”). Their misperceptions suggest, also in epistemological terms, the need for *rethinking* peace and an alternative to both liberal and post-liberal peace.

Background: The Rationales for Phenomenological Peace

Political-Ontological Impasse of “Liberal” and “Post-Liberal” Approaches

Peace studies and the practices of peacebuilding are persistently overshadowed by the notion of the “liberal peace.” Since the end of the Cold War, the “liberal peace” has been the prevailing peacebuilding model on a global scale, presented as the standard and orthodox venture for the establishment of sustainable peace. Although there are many complexities and varieties in both its scope and application, including its modification in recent decades to incorporate human rights concerns and the growing influence of NGOs, the “liberal” peace has endured as a conceptual vehicle for interventionist practices of Western states and their generalized standards for peaceful order. Although they differ from context to context, the imposition of Western political structures and the subjugation of difference are common features. The “liberal peace” is best understood as a mode of peacebuilding guided by the paradigm of liberal internationalism, manifest practically as a global experiment in social engineering which transplants Western models of social, political, and economic organization into sites of conflict in order to contain and prevent conflict. Drawing upon Boutros Boutros-Ghali’s *An Agenda for Peace*, alongside the neoliberal notions which underpin the Washington Consensus, liberal peacebuilding rests on conceptions of liberal-internationalist thought, on liberal institutionalism, and on Democratic Peace Theory (DPT). It is predicated upon the argument that the ideological intention of capitalist economic cooperation and the restraint that liberalism puts on states in their foreign policies can lead the way to world peace. The term *liberal* in the notion of the “liberal” peace refers to assumed origins in the Western history of political thought, most notably through a particular reading of Immanuel Kant (see below under “Background: Academic”).

Since the 1990s, however, the merits and dominance of the “liberal” peace have been deeply contested within both the academic literature and the international system. Despite its own

particular objections toward post-liberal peace, phenomenological peace shares much of the critique of “liberal peace” made by “post-liberal” scholars. The appraisals directed against “liberal” peace are manifest as a diverse series of critical frameworks that deconstruct and challenge its underlying political assumptions and practices. The main features of this body of critique can be broken down into two main areas which are shared by phenomenological peace: an opposition, firstly, to the universalization of Western individualism and, second, to Western modes of state-building.

Critiques, such as those posited by Oliver Richmond, Mark Duffield, and Michael Pugh, see “liberal” peacebuilding in part as the application of a standardized liberal social and political model that has been guided by an emphasis on individual autonomy. This can be seen, in practice, in the building of state institutions and their focus upon democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and capitalist market economies, established through the mechanisms of the state and market. It aims to establish a balance between individual freedom and regulation through international organizations, NGOs, and free market forces. This universalizes Western individualism over different forms of agency (e.g., guided by a prioritization of notions such as family, community, or seniority), considering the former as an essential component of sustainable peace and the latter as carrying problematic ideological and cultural baggage.

The second mutual opposition is to be found in a shared contention of the application of Western models of state-building. The notion of unstable or “weak” states as a driving force for conflict, beginning in the 1990s and escalating with the events of September 11, engendered a focus on state-building from many within the international community. This merged with practices of liberal peacebuilding through DPT, attempting to establish strong, effective Western liberal democratic states in areas of weak governance in order to pave the way for sustainable peace.

However, the “liberal” universalization of Western individualism and state-building and their “post-liberal” criticisms are only two

political-ontological variations of a similar universalization and essentialization of Western conceptions of difference as “otherness.” This is most observable through discussions pertaining to the “local turn,” a key aspect within “post-liberal” peace. The “local turn” is best understood as an attempt to decolonize knowledge concerning peace and peacebuilding, giving credence to locally based agencies within a conflict or post-conflict environment based upon the idea of everyday emancipatory practices that emerge from existing local agency. Such a project hopes to encapsulate the small-scale, practical mobilizations for peace which occur in the context of everyday life, through which the “local” is conceived as opposed to the “international,” ideologically and institutionally. This demonstrates, on the one hand, a distinct concern with situated, context-specific knowledges and practices; yet on the other hand, however, the “local turn” serves as a new form of essentializing difference(s) through the binary constructions of the “local” and the “international.” Such a construction is predicated on, and results in, three problematics: to begin with, the assumption that there are an identifiable, unified “local” and “international”; second, that these are placed in opposition to each other through their a priori stigmatization and terminological and conceptual definition; and, finally, subsequent to their stigmatization and objectification, that they are left in an indifferent and disengaged relation to each other, very often leading to the romanticizing of “the local,” because “post-liberal” peace has no yardstick to critically compare different localities and world-views, other than reproducing liberal imaginaries themselves. (A yardstick that phenomenological peace provides in form of a research hypothesis; see below at the end of the section on “[Phenomenological Philosophy: The Conceptual Background of Phenomenological Peace.](#)”)

Employing a genealogical perspective toward the development of “post-liberal” peace scholarship, the essentialization of difference, mainly in the form of a “local”-“international” dichotomy, can be seen to have emerged over time and appears as a result of the reception and dynamics of early works of Richmond, rather than the initial

ideas behind these works. However, the reception of ideas is not independent of their formulation in the first place. And even though there is inevitably some loss of control over ideas once they are published, the anti-essentialist character of the “local”-“international” differentiation could, and should, have been made clearer when the notion of the “local” was introduced into peace studies in the mid-2000s, including a more reflective engagement with the philosophical character of the question of difference(s) and its culturally diverse ontologies. Richmond’s attempt to bridge the “local”-“international” divide through Foucauldian terminologies of institutional and discursive power constellations, finally resulting in the “post-liberal” idea of hybridity, does not provide a sufficiently deep engagement and explication of (culturally specific) ontologies of difference, needed to conceptualize the relation between the “local(s)” and the “international(s)” as might have been intended.

Next to these political-ontological impasses of “liberal” and “post-liberal” peace, however, is also an epistemological stalemate (see next section), which points to the necessity to rethink and reconceptualize peace, necessitating the search for novel alternatives to both. Phenomenological peace is proposed as such an alternative (see next and next-but-one section).

Academic: The Epistemological Stalemate of “Liberal” and “Post-Liberal” Peace Studies

The “liberal” peace and its “post-liberal” critiques are to a large extent *epistemologically* speaking two sides of the same coin. Perhaps ironically, the critical scholarship remains firmly within the theoretical terrain mapped out by the “liberal peace.” This terrain has been developed through a shared reading of Immanuel Kant, which has its origins in Democratic Peace Theory (DPT). This “liberal” reading of Kant is adopted by “post-liberal” scholars and is a focus of their critique; however, such critique is directed not against its conceptual foundations but against its political consequences (see previous section). “Critical” “post-liberal” scholars have not gone back to Kant to scrutinize the interpretations of DPT and have not provided an alternative or novel reading of Kant, one which

could serve to unpack such liberal interpretations, but have instead (blindly) accepted and built upon them. Their (shared) reading and use of Kant, however, constitutes an arrogation of Kant's ideas. This is to be understood as the taking or claiming of ideas presumptively and without justification. This arrogation refers to the engagement with Kant's *Towards Perpetual Peace* (1795), an engagement which is pursued through a selective and negligent application of his arguments, showing indifference to their original context. Such selective use demonstrates little regard for the wider context of Kant's arguments and the position of the ideas contained therein as part of a larger, necessary whole.

Within contemporary peace studies, and for its advocates and critics alike, "the liberal peace" is seen as the prevailing peacebuilding model. Its central aim is understood as replicating liberal institutions, norms, and political, social, and economic systems across the globe in post-conflict environments as part of a standardized and regimented attempt to create sustainable peace. Liberal peacebuilding is predicated upon the idea of the pacifistic benefits as an inherent aspect of the liberal democratic state. As a result, liberal peace is commonly understood as a mode of peacebuilding guided by the paradigm of liberal internationalism, manifest as the transplantation of Western understandings and practices of social, political, and economic organization into post-conflict environments in order to engender stability and prevent further outbreaks. The foundations of the "liberal peace" emerged from DPT, a notable and foundational thinker of which is Michael Doyle. DPT began from the empirical argument that democracies rarely go to war and planted its theoretical roots in the work of Immanuel Kant, most importantly and nearly exclusively in his essay *Towards Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch*. His interpretations eventually became a policy prescription, leading to the practical understanding of liberal democracies as essentially *pacifistic* forces in international relations. In this capacity, Kant's *Towards Perpetual Peace* has become a primary citation and conceptual reference within the arguments within both the "liberal" and "post-liberal" literature.

The "post-liberal peace," along with the manifold critical camps which are associated with this adversarial position, posits itself in antithesis to the orthodoxy of the liberal peace, attempting to dissect and challenge its underlying assumptions and practices, in some quarters outrightly rejecting its totalizing assumptions and terminologies. However, since the "liberal" and the "post-liberal" peace reading of *Towards Perpetual Peace* is both negligent, ignoring the Appendixes and Preliminary Articles which form a necessary part of *Towards Perpetual Peace*, and selective, containing only specific, appropriated aspects of the Definitive Articles contained therein, this reading is problematic and undermines the "liberal" and "post-liberal" theoretical basis and conceptual validity. It portrays Kant as the author of concrete laws for peace, rather than as elaborating upon the conditions for the possibility of peace. Kant is cited, but not sighted. Regarding the "post-liberal," this shared basis serves to diminish its critical capacity. It prevents critical arguments from "going beyond" the theoretical confines of the "liberal peace," affecting the scope and capacity of critique. As a result, such critique attacks a hypostatized notion of the liberal peace, articulated within its own confines, and, therefore, cannot fully realize its aim of moving beyond such restrictive considerations. It has limited itself to the dichotomous stigmatizations of "liberal"/"post-liberal" and Western (or "international")/"local." The polarized nature of critique epistemologically situates this critical perspective within the understandings of the object of its critique. Instead of focusing on contextualized, situated understandings and practices of conflict and/or peaceful order, it focuses on the limited and problematic notion of the liberal peace itself.

The effect of this arrogation demonstrates the questionable theoretical foundation of "liberal" arguments in Kant's writing, as well as that "post-liberal" interpretations blunt the critical potential of their arguments by limiting their ability to go beyond the theoretical confines of the "liberal" peace. Such critiques take for granted the understandings of peace and peacebuilding which have been drawn from the arrogant reading of Kant by "liberal" peace studies, and, although

adopting a critical stance toward their policy implementation in the form of international invention, they thus reproduce the central theoretical tenets of the “liberal” peace. They fail to engage with concrete populations on their own terms, and, although employing the rhetoric of the “everyday” and the “local,” the basis of their critique remains predicated upon a reflection of the understandings of “liberal” peace. When critiquing practices in context, their critique is an attack on an essentialized and hypostatized form of “the liberal peace,” with which, however, they ironically share a central theoretical understanding and premise. This limited articulation thus fundamentally restricts the capacity of the “post-liberal” to realize its goal, as claimed, of a truly pluralist reflection upon alternative conceptions and practices of peace. This is the epistemological nature of the *conceptual stalemate* of current “liberal” and “post-liberal” peace studies.

If critique remains within the theoretical terrain of the “liberal peace,” it will at best peer through the keyhole but remain unable to open the door. This reveals the necessity of rethinking the epistemology of peace and peacebuilding. We must move beyond reductive dichotomies, their naturalizations, and hypostatization without theoretical predications (such as “liberal” or “post-liberal”). The task of peace studies should not be to reform and rescue the project of “liberal” or “post-liberal” peace, but to begin to search for alternatives outside their restrictive dichotomy. An alternative, third concept of peace and peacebuilding is needed epistemologically and politically-ontologically. We must genuinely rethink peace and re-examine practices of peacebuilding. The elaboration of “liberal” and “post-liberal” readings of Kant is, however, beyond the remits of this entry; nevertheless, it should be subject to sustained scrutiny in order to avoid the aforementioned arrogations. A guiding framework for the development of an alternative conceptual agenda does not try to rescue, go back to, nor critique within the confinements of Kant. It would involve the recognition and adoption of different, novel, and, in current peace studies, yet unused theoretical traditions for rethinking and reconceptualizing peace. Such a framework

might reach out, taking the diverse perceptions of identities and worldviews of conflict parties and other involved agents into account, rather than imposing the dichotomous conceptualizations of either “liberal” and/or “post-liberal” or “international” and “local” upon them. In order to escape this dichotomy, the work by Giorgio Shani, Jeremiah Alberg, and Alexander Hinton (2019) about *Rethinking Peace* or the Special Issue on *Peacebuilding and the Politics of Difference*, edited by Pol Bargaés-Pedreny and Xavier Mathieu (2018), points toward encouraging directions. A particularly promising way seems to consider peace along the themes of translation, memory, dialogue, and difference. To conceptualize and research the latter seems to be of outstanding significance, as difference(s) appear(s) as the root cause(s) of conflicts. Such a search must explore so far conceptually neglected philosophical traditions, Western and beyond. A rich tradition of philosophical thinking is represented, for instance, by the chapter on “Peace and Proximity” by the French philosopher Emmanuel Lévinas (1984). Here, Lévinas brings the relation between both difference and peace, as well as between politics and ethics, to our attention. Following his arguments, an ethics of empathy is necessary in peacebuilding politics which does not regard differences as obstacle to peace and thus as something to overcome and to assimilate under one universal script, but rather as positive political and social forces that have to be accounted for in sustainable and legitimate visions and practices of peace.

Phenomenological Philosophy: The Conceptual Background of Phenomenological Peace

We can now expand our reasoning into phenomenological philosophy, concretely to the works of Georg Simmel, Alfred Schütz, Martin Heidegger, Lévinas, and Jacques Derrida and their contribution to rethinking peace. Their conceptualizations of difference and “otherness” emphasize that difference and “otherness” are, *on the one hand*, intrinsic to human thought and agency. This

problematization occurs, *on the other hand*, against the background of their respective approaches to temporality. It is in the context of temporalized ontologies of difference where we find the possibility to conceive of difference in a non-essentialist way. Every attempt to essentialize difference(s) undermines their (possibility of) permanent transformation, not least their transformation from reasons of conflict to positive forces for peaceful change.

The advantage of temporalized ontologies lies in their *normative* strength over essentializing readings of politics. We find in temporality the conditions of the possibility to avoid naturalized and reifying ontologies of social relations. And, because most, if not all, social and political theorizing as well as concrete forms of human agency are a consequence of the way in which we perceive and look at the world and ourselves, the question of ontology, its normativity, and its epistemological consequences is crucial. “The understanding of being,” so Lévinas emphasizes, “is not a purely theoretical act, but (...) a fundamental event where one’s entire destiny is at issue; and, is not simply that between clear and obscure knowledge, but is a difference which reaches unto the very being of man (...) this understanding of being is itself being – it is not an attribute, but man’s mode of existence” (1996a, p. 16, 17). Thus, the question of ontology, its normativity, and its epistemological consequences has immediate practical implications for thinking peace and peacemaking.

In Simmel, “the” “other” *is* – reflecting his temporal and transformative mode of thinking difference – a “sociological form” in opposition to a natural something. Simmel’s concept of a “sociological form” implies that “the” “other” is always constructed. Simmel uses the same notion of a “sociological form” with regard to borders. This example illustrates what is at stake here. He describes borders not as natural, but as *social* (i.e., as constructed and imagined) “facts” with, however, enormous social and political consequences. Thus, the characterization of something as a “social fact” does not de-emphasize its factuality and actuality; rather it emphasizes its imagined, transformative, and changeable being instead of

its assertion as something “natural.” In analogy to the problematic of difference and “otherness,” we can say according to Simmel that “the” “other” exists a priori only as an empty category but becomes socially and politically real only through constructions and actual practices. Due to “the” “other” being a “sociological form,” we can further conclude with Simmel that “otherness” is both an immanent situatedness of the “self” and a construction in the discourses and narratives of every social group. Every individual and every group are mutually always *both* the subject (of the creation/imagination/stigmatization) and the object (of becoming created/imagined/stigmatized by another individual or social group as) of “otherness.” “The” “other” and “otherness” thus imply *proximity* and *distance at the same time*.

Schuetz, who is like Simmel an early sociological constructivist, discusses the figure of “the” “other” as the immigrant. For him, “otherness” is perceived as, and framed within, the concrete encounter between the stranger and a social group. This encounter is, as Schütz argues, a situation for interpretation from both sides. The “situation of approaching” is fundamental since it is here where *established and familiar* social systems of knowledge become challenged and are at stake to collapse. They are questioned by the stranger and his/her different ways of thinking, speaking, and behaving. Therefore, the stranger appears as a “man without a history,” i.e., in relation to the group he/she approaches, or which approaches him/her. The stranger appears without having any history due to his/her lack of tangibility. Without any stable classification by the group, he/she has no identity in relation to the group.

In Lévinas, several traditions of phenomenological thinking appear to be brought together. We find important influences from Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger but also crucial ideas from Simmel and Schütz. Plenty of references to all of them can be found in his oeuvre. Stating those interrelations, however, must not distract us from one fundamentally important aspect: whereas the thoughts of Simmel, Schütz, and Heidegger are influenced by Husserl’s concept of the intentionality between *noesis* and *noema*, i.e., between the

“subject” and “object” of knowledge, and consequently by the idea of reciprocity, Lévinas’s thinking breaks radically with this notion. This departure from intentionality has important influences on the perception and thinking of difference(s). Difference and other humans do not appear any more as an object of knowledge. Whereas modes of thinking about difference and “otherness” from Greek antiquity to present day operate on the assumption that difference and “otherness” are tangible and knowable, Lévinas abandons this assumption. He argues that by abandoning the idea of intentionality, “the” “other” – *l’Autre* – is finally set free from the totalitarian grip of Western political and philosophical thinking. The idea of intentionality, he argues, always subsumes and violates the “other” under systems of knowledge production and under own epistemological assumptions. This would result in intellectual and practical acts of seizure. Thereby, “the” “self” claims to know and to understand “the” “other” and thus would objectify and essentialize him/her as well as the difference(s) experienced. Contrary to this, “the” “other” and difference(s) are, according to Lévinas, “ungraspable.” The relation to “the” “other” is not primarily one of mutuality and reciprocity anymore.

One consequence of Lévinas’s refusal of the idea of intentionality is that “otherness” approaches us from infinity, i.e., from a borderless somewhere that Lévinas aspires to decipher and to express via a linguistic turn refraining from all kinds of essentializing and noesis-noema-dependent vocabularies and imaginaries. The main practical meaning of this important decipherment and turn is to avoid attempts to define, thereby essentialize, and envision “the” “other” as something dualistically opposite the/a “self.” Saying this does not intend to abolish the importance of our experiences of difference(s); the exact opposite is the case, namely, to conceive of difference(s) in a non-essentialist and de-essentializing way. “Otherness” appears then as a *constructed and procedural probability* of difference, not as initial or natural. We can thereby recognize that what appears as difference(s) is/are a genuine part of human experience. Their representation as “otherness” is, however, only one possibility of their articulation: a possibility which has, however, no reality beyond

language and images. The intellectual and practical challenges then consist of finding appropriate linguistic and visual articulations of this initial experience that are non-essentialist and non-essentializing. In this situation, everyone is different, *is* “the” “other,” a circumstance which highlights the perspectivity inherent in all attempts to find appropriate articulations of difference(s).

In declining intentionality, Lévinas creates the basis for the possibility of an unprecedented thinking of openness. Setting the “thing observed” free from assumptions, and delivering the categories of its cognition – precisely through breaking with the idea of intentionality and its transcendental correlation between observer and thing – Lévinas develops this liberation and the related idea of a dialogical *toward* the “other” (rather than claiming knowledge of the “other”). It is thus precisely the abolishment of intentionality (i.e., of claims and assumptions to know and to be able to represent) which creates a relation of each “self” toward the “other”; but, we have to ask, as Lévinas puts it: How is this relation-less relation (this *rapport sans rapport*)? Here the argument can receive important support through Derrida’s notions of “advent.”

Derrida’s notion of “advent” provides more specific ideas with regard to openness and to what it is that is to come from there. His notion of “advent” is most explicit in his writings about democracy and Europe (the latter especially in *The Other Heading*, 1992). In both cases, the political event – i.e., “democracy” or “Europe” – is not yet here as he says, but something “that remains to be thought and to come” (Derrida 1993, p. 19). Derrida uses the French *à venir* and *survenir* to describe this situation of “yet to be.” The French *survenir* links with Derrida’s emphasis on temporality. This nuance, however, seems lost in the English translation “to come about” (as in *Psyche. Inventions of the Other*; 2007, p. 24): the distinct meaning of *survenir* is that something (an event) comes about *suddenly, unexpectedly, and unpredictably*. This terrain or space from where the event is coming is unknown and undefinable and shall be kept undefined.

To keep this terrain undefined, and thus to preserve the suddenness of the event (of

democracy, of Europe, and, for our matters, of difference(s) is purposeful, since it will preserve its temporality and (possibility of) transformation. To do otherwise, i.e., to foreclose the openness and namelessness of the terrain from where the event is coming from, would mean “to totalise, to gather, *versammeln*” (Derrida 1997, p. 13). It would be a form of “monogenealogy” (Derrida 1992, p. 10) and depend upon and reproduce the “contagious or contaminating powers of a reappropriating language, (...) the language of the Same that is foreign or allergic to the Other” (Derrida 2007, p. 155). To preserve openness, namelessness, and dialogue and thereby the (chance of) transformation and finally the conditions of *peace as non-preconceived social relations* is crucial. It means to prevent totalitarianism, essentialism, and egocentrism.

This choice for preserving a critical and dialogical space is, according to Derrida, grounded in the aporetic experience of the impossible. It proposes a reading of the question of “otherness” and difference as *Dasein*, i.e., as not an entity or essence, but rather as a relational being-possible and becoming-possible (according to Heidegger, *das Möglichsein* and *das Möglichwerden*), as a being which is always unstable and multiple. The “aporetic experience of the impossible” assumes the intrinsic disunity of, and differences within, all things (histories, identities, cultures, institutions, groups, and individual psyches) as well as the proactive elaboration on, and widening of, respective disunities and their mutual tensions as critical practice. What Derrida calls deconstruction and *différance* (an activity of “temporization” and “spacing”; *Margins of Philosophy*, 1982, 9) is important here as they refer to deferrals, dislocations, and disruptions of all things (mainly identities in our regard) due to their intrinsic disunities, contradictions, and tensions. Derrida notes:

“There is no culture or cultural identity without this difference *within itself*” (Derrida 1992, p. 9, 10); or: ‘(The) identity of a culture is a way of being different from itself; a culture is different from itself; language is different from itself; the person is different from itself.’ (1997, p. 13)

The Lévinasian question asked above – How is this relation-less relation? – receives an answer

here. The aporia (impasse) of unity and essence as both an ontological and a normative demand asks and seeks for the opening up of dialogical spaces that make possible to think the impossible (as the unknown, intangible, unintentional, undefinable, or unpredictable). The impossible is here understood as unknown *what* “the” “other” may be and as the terra incognita *from where* the “other” may come from. The ontological and normative demand thus is neither to work within the framework of totalities nor to work against them, or to move out of the impasse (i.e., to either accept their rationalities or to oppose and destroy them from outside). Instead, it demands the disruption of totalities by elaborating on, widening, and negotiating their *inherent* tensions and disunities through non-appropriating dialogue. Such disruptions finally articulate the condition for the relation *toward* and *between* differences.

Summary of Phenomenological Philosophy as Novel Grounding for Peace Studies

- Phenomenological Peace consists in the:
 - (a) *Deconstruction and de-essentialisation of perceptions of “self” and “other”.*
 - (b) *Perception of difference(s) and “otherness” as temporal, transformative, and discursively produced.*
 - (c) *Opening-up of alternative spaces for the articulation difference(s) and the advent of the “other,” where we find both the limits of, and conditions for, for a peace as*
 - (d) *Positive and free re-articulation of and dialogue about difference(s).*
- *By way of a proposition/hypothesis: The lesser the degree of essentialist attributions to difference(s) and the lesser essentialist perceptions and definitions of “otherness,” the less likely the outbreak of conflict and the more conducive this is for peace, conflict solution, and reconciliation.*

(continued)

- The *added value of phenomenological peace: Phenomenological philosophy puts us in a position to understand and conceptualise differences as something positive. Their acknowledgement and free articulation are the avenue to peace and reconciliation, rather than their elimination or submission. Thus, differences are not obstacles to peace, but their free articulation and acknowledgement are conducive to peaceful social and political relations.*

The propositions posited by phenomenological peace culminate, therefore, in the practice of a dialogue for peace, which requires a considered research methodology and means of practical application. Therefore, a certain degree of operationalization, in order to enable and facilitate the uncovering of the conditions of peaceful order, is necessary. This is where the notion of *optionality* becomes an expansive element to phenomenological peace. While phenomenological peace is the basis for optionality, optionality serves as the methodological means through which the ideas of phenomenological peace are operationalized. Firstly, optionality serves to assist phenomenological peace as a research method which both determines the parameters of research and functions as the means by which the results gained from such research are interpreted and analyzed. Secondly, applied practically as the amalgamation of the manifold notions within phenomenological peace, optionality is employed as a series of theoretically reinforced guidelines for the establishment and maintenance of peaceful order, helping to create and manage a space in which the theoretical components of phenomenological peace can be put into operation.

Future Directions for Phenomenological Peace

Research

To begin with, optionality determines new research parameters which define the research

questions and outline research methods. A research agenda following the phenomenological approach to peace is primarily focused on the empirical exploration of perceptions of difference(s) and “otherness.” Here, the mutual perceptions of conflict parties, along with the perceptions of local and international NGOs and state actors are central. The following research questions are vital:

- How are perceptions of difference and “otherness” discursively framed in peacebuilding, peace negotiation, and conflict reconciliation processes?
- Are difference(s) and the “other” seen as “natural” enemies, are their characteristics essentialized (according to ethnic, national, religious, political, gender, and other criteria), and are they stigmatized a priori?
- What patterns follow “self”-“other” relations and definitions?
- Can distinct features of the “self”-“other” relation be learned from successful peace processes, peace negotiation, and conflict reconciliation? And vice versa, can failed peace negotiation, peace processes, and conflict reconciliation be traced back to distinct perceptions and framings of “self”-“other” relations?
- How and through what channels can a phenomenological approach to peace be communicated with conflict and warring parties?

Before a direct discussion of optionality, the tenets of phenomenological peace must be elucidated in relation to its research questions. One main idea of empirical research following the phenomenological approach is that any explanation of social and political phenomena must be grounded in the “meaning structure” of those studied. This notion refers to the web of meanings that are constituted by actors. Meanings, in other words, attain meaning in relation to other meanings. These processes of meaning constitution and construction at the social and individual level can be studied empirically. This means that actors’ perspectives and self-understandings are central to any analysis. A wide range of mainly qualitative

research tools such as discourse analysis, intertextuality, participant observation, non- or semi-structured and narrative interviews, and the analysis of policy documents; of performing arts, literature, music, lyrics, and pamphlets; and of popular culture can be applied in order to identify and study respective meaning structures. But, too, quantitative methods shall not be excluded. They are particularly worthwhile when complemented with interpretivist methods, such as digital discourse analysis that allows us to explore huge amounts of texts followed by the interpretation of longitudinal patterns of discursive transformations.

A second main idea of phenomenological research is that any study of meaning structures is an *interpretation* of these structures and not, in the social science sense, an explanation that would identify, and result in, causal explanations. This has been termed succinctly by Alfred Schütz “first-order” and “second-order” constructions, i.e., that the meaning structures and worldviews of political and social actors are constructions (of first order) and any scholarly statements on these constructions are themselves constructions (of second order). This is because we all live in a world of permanent construction, reproduction, and transformation of meaning, and both researchers and people to be studied are bound to a specific context in their meaning constructions. However, the starting point of research must be the ordinary social and political life of people.

The results of the phenomenological study of the construction of difference and of “self”-“other” relations in conflict and post-conflict scenarios are subjugated to a subsequent assessment and evaluation according to the hypothesis formulated above. This is a huge advantage and strength of phenomenological peace research that its philosophical grounding enables us to process empirical results by the way of clear practical conclusions, asking how our empirical findings relate to the hypothesis (formulated above) that *the lesser the degree of essentialist attributions to difference(s), the less likely the outbreak of conflict and the more likely peaceful relations, conflict solution, and reconciliation*. We may well find that empirical patterns of the construction of

difference among conflict parties reveal essentialist constructions, indeed perceptions such as along the lines of “archenemy,” naturally given identities, gendered or national identities, or strongly held religious beliefs; and this does not surprise, is there but conflict in the first place. However, the phenomenological approach to peace would not support any politics of abolishing those differences, an attempt that would result in even more violence. A phenomenological approach views its main practice in the de-essentialization of respective constructions. This is a permanent project that is neither teleological in that it would presuppose a certain end goal, nor would it define “peace,” nor can it readily be implemented. Its main focus is on the deconstruction of essentializing meaning structures. But it is also proactive in performing all kinds of de-essentialization in order both to prevent conflict and to mitigate conflict once it is virulent. Such proactive strategies relate to the performance of arts (e.g., music; see in this regard the Min-On Music Research Institute in Tokyo [<https://www.min-on.org>]); the incorporation of multi-perspectives in school and higher education; or the value of cultural exchange. But activities that contribute to de-essentializing language, visualization, or agency are principally unlimited, and our imagination is and should be open and creative.

Here, optionality becomes a useful methodological and practical addition to phenomenological peace. The conceptual framework of optionality emerges from phenomenological thinking concerning peace. It operates as a practical mindset through which research parameters are delineated, and research is conducted. In this sense, it is the *operationalization* of phenomenological peace. In other words, optionality determines what the research is looking *at*, and what it is looking *for*. As an operationalized conceptual framework, optionality is thus employed to study what institutions and people imagine the process and nature of peaceful order to be. The search parameters for such an endeavor are determined by the conceptual character of optionality itself as the conceptual conditions, which enable and facilitate a space for open and unobstructed dialogue and deliberation. This is intended to be a perennial process and space

within which the conditions for dialogue and deliberation are maintained. Optionality is intended not as the reflection of a concrete, preexisting practice in the “real world,” which will be discovered and observed and is ready to be implemented, but as the conceptual *conditions for sustainable peaceful relations*, reflecting the philosophical differentiation between the concrete possibility (the occurrence) of something and *the condition of the possibility* of something.

This resonates with the central aspects of phenomenological peace which form the basis of optionality. The first of these stems from “the encounter” in Schütz, recognizing the meeting between “self” and “other” as one of “approaching,” where the understanding of the other is, from both sides, predicated on interpretation. This relates directly to the assertion that phenomenological peace must be grounded in the meaning structures of those studied, and those who participate in existing and proposed dialogical spaces. This provides the first research principle for phenomenological peace, namely, the interrogation and interlocution of different situated ontologies and epistemologies in concrete conflict contexts. This is a research practice established on the idea of the encounter between the researcher and researched as one of “approaching.”

This is further reinforced by the second aspect of phenomenological peace, built upon Lévinas’ refusal of intentionality. Through this refusal, Lévinas posits difference and “otherness” as intangible experience; one cannot, and should not, claim to “know” the other, and any attempt to do so is built on essentialisms and impositions in an attempt to define and fix the unknowable and transformative. We must, therefore, conduct any research concerning the interrogation and interlocution of different ontologies and epistemologies with an ethics of humility toward those who possess alternative understandings, manifesting in the research tools and methods applied and their steady reflection in the research process itself. This is manifest as an openness toward these different perspectives, one which stands in stark opposition to any assumptions, impositions, and essentialisms, which could

deny or reduce this quality of the unknown and the inherently perspectivist nature of the other.

The aporia of unity and essence in Derrida provides a further theoretical contribution to reinforce the notions of interpretation, opposition to imposition, and the resultant necessity of openness to difference within any encounter. Derrida expands upon the need for such openness by outlining the requirement of thinking about the “impossible.” By this, Derrida refers to the unknown nature of the “other” and their perspectivity, suggesting we cannot accept totalities, or any attempt to remove this apparent obstacle, and instead must create dialogical spaces to elaborate tensions and disunities between us as a condition of our relation to the other. This provides an additional research focus upon dialogue.

The core of optionality, therefore, centers upon the interrogation and interlocution of different ontologies and epistemologies in concrete conflict contexts in a manner profoundly sensitive to the particularities of distinct/unique contexts and perspectives. Research practices should therefore follow the notions of humility, openness, and an opposition to imposition, assumption, and essentialization. This is what is understood by optionality as the framework for the development of concrete methods. Optionality also determines what a research agenda for phenomenological peace is looking *for*. In this sense, the focus is upon situated knowledges. The examination of different ontologies and epistemologies in conflict contexts requires the study of what people within those contexts imagine peaceful order to be, in terms of both its process and nature. Optionality does not prescribe nor instrumentalize such visions, but instead is the conceptual means through which they themselves can become part of a process of peace, being guided by the conceptual and practical notion of peace as a de-essentializing project.

Political Implications

Phenomenological peace also informs political practice in two ways: first, with regard to pedagogy and, second, with regard to reconciliation. While the first practical, pedagogical implication is conflict-preventive, the second aims at post-conflict reconciliation.

The main focus of the pedagogical practice consists foremost in the cultivation of dialogue *across* and *about* differences. Phenomenological peace does not regard it as helpful for conflict prevention to eliminate or unify difference(s) simply because differences belong irreducibly to human (and political, social, and cultural) affairs and cannot be abolished. They are first experience and the question of their ethical conduct is first philosophy. Differences have thus to be approached in a positive way, and the phenomenological approach enables us to do so through the dialogical practice of naming, negotiating, openly articulating, and discussing them without any preconceptions. Such dialogue produces and reproduces difference(s) while regarding them in the phenomenological tradition as transformative, non-fixed identities, as fluent and temporal. Such perception counters preconceptions of difference, liberating them from the negative stigmatization.

The practice of dialogue has to be cultivated and practically established. In other words, the phenomenological approach to peace has to be proposed to conflict parties and peacebuilders alike through all kinds of dialogical forums, e.g., in the form of workshops, through cultural, sport, and art events, or assemblies. In this sense it is interesting to look at the statements of General Petraeus, commanding general of the US forces in Afghanistan from 2010 to 2011, about his support of negotiations with the enemy and the Taliban (Interview in *Over the Horizon* (OTH), on February 11, 2019; <https://othjournal.com/2019/02/11/general-petraeus-exclusive-on-emerging-threats-negotiating-with-the-taliban-and-more/>, accessed 06/11/2019). Phenomenological peacemaking demands the deliberation of differences at the borderline of, and if needed also beyond, our own moral positions.

Yet, for dialogue to take place and produce the liberation from negative stigmas, it requires all parties to be willing engagers in the dialogue (or, speaking with Lévinas, *empathy* is needed as a fundamental requirement for dialogue), unified in approaching difference in a positive way. An example from everyday peacemaking practices (rather than high politics as the aforementioned example) that illustrates this is The Marian Chace Foundation (<https://adta.org/marian-chace-found>

ation) and their projects of dance and movement as therapy-based violence prevention programs. They demonstrate that dance could be an effective tool for reducing and limiting the aggressive behaviors of school students who took part in their projects that used dance and movement therapy in groups to enable a nonverbal dialogue between children experiencing conflict. This facilitated an understanding of their differences to overcome violent behaviors. However, if the students had been unwilling to engage in this creative dialogue, it would have been an ineffective approach to encourage the exploration of difference and rather could have resulted in further violence.

Phenomenological peace also informs post-conflict peacebuilding practices with regard to reconciliation. Its emphasis on the practice of dialogue opening itself up to questioning and negotiating own worldviews and their underlying ideologies and moralities requests the establishment of reconciliation forums which enable such dialogue. In those forums grievances and traumata caused by previous violence are communicated. Such exchanges often reproduce trauma as suffered atrocities are, while giving testimony, experienced a second time. As Derrida argues in relation to forgiveness, such forms of dialogue must be open for the advent of the impossible, i.e., they must be practically unconstrained by protocol and regulation. They must enable unexpected forms of anguish as documented by Antjie Krog in her *Country of My Skull*. Such forms of dialogue cannot and must not be squeezed in, and limited by, institutional protocol and timeframes. They must be open for the utterance and communication of grievances, trauma, and future visions. These requirements push dialogue always to the limits of own rationalities and moralities of the participants. In this sense, it is genuine and existential.

Another example of the interference of court procedures and legal understandings with actors' different perceptions is narrated by Alexander Hinton in *The Justice Facade: Trials of Transition in Cambodia*. The understandings and procedures of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of

Cambodia (ECCC) were and are in conflict with Cambodian Buddhist understandings of mind, body, and equanimity. Frequently the encounter of survivors and their family members with notions and practices of global justice was overlain by everyday understandings of transaction with the dead that resulted, for example, in ceremonies and prayers in the court rooms. Justice was thus less about the living than about achieving calm with the “restless mind” of the dead.

In its second manifestation as a practically applicable amalgamation of phenomenological peace, optionality provides the defining and limiting conditions of a space for open and unobstructed dialogue. This is manifest as the interrogation and interlocution of different ontologies and epistemologies within the contexts of concrete conflicts and between conflict parties. Although this may begin as a process of reconciliation after a period of conflict, it is intended as a perennial process and, therefore, as a preventative force regarding future conflicts. The term “optionality” refers to the establishment and maintenance of a plurality of “options” in both speech and action. It is intended to embody the commitments to openness made by phenomenological peace through the acknowledgment and facilitation of difference, temporality, and the disruption of totalities through the creation of an “optional” space for dialogue. However, the understanding of dialogue which optionality seeks to enable and maintain must be outlined. It is this practice of dialogue and the space in which it is practiced, which defines optionality as a practically applicable amalgamation of phenomenological peace.

Dialogue can be broken down into four crucial aspects: these are listening, speaking, pushing the edges of our own rationalities, and a non-hierarchical, informal structure. To begin with, a successful dialogue must be built upon listening. This, however, is not the simple listening which one might pursue in relation to an everyday conversation, but one conditioned by the phenomenological arguments outlined. Therefore, such a practice of listening requires the openness toward each encounter and patience toward the narratives and perspectives within such a dialogue. The second aspect of dialogue

is speaking. This is the means through which alternative narratives and perspectives are articulated and the way in which differences are vocalized. Both these aspects of dialogue are, to a large extent, conditioned by the third aspect: pushing the limits of our own rationalities. When we listen to the vocalization of the perspectives and understandings of other people, refusing essentialisms and maintaining openness, we must push the limits of what we think as “normal,” “established,” and “coherent,” in order to realize Lévinas’s refusal of intentionality and Derrida’s concerns regarding the aporia of unity and essence. The final aspect of dialogue is that it must be nonhierarchical and open with regard to its structure, and cannot be formalized through protocol or timeframes. Any such structuring would inherently serve as a limitation, one which would be imposed externally, and thus affect the unhindered unfolding of knowledge. It would curtail the openness of dialogue and apply conceptions of dialogue which were not those held by the conflict parties involved. The management of dialogue in this manner would turn a space for open, reflexive, and “optional” dialogue into a training seminar in the “right” way to talk and act. This is precisely what phenomenological peace, and its application as optionality, strives to avoid, as it would inevitably manifest as the suppression of difference, which is precisely what must be avoided in order to establish any condition of peace.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Everyday Peace](#)
- ▶ [Hybrid Political Orders and Hybrid Peace](#)
- ▶ [Liberal Peace in Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Liberal Peacebuilding in a Transitional International Order](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding and Spatial Transformation](#)
- ▶ [Post-conflict Nation-building](#)

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Photo-elicitation

- ▶ [Auto-photography](#)

Photography

- ▶ [Art and Reconciliation](#)

Photography and Peace

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Description

Peace photography is derivative, illustrative, and constitutive of peace: it is dependent on

definitions of peace; it exemplifies preexisting understandings of peace; and it shapes and diversifies viewers' understandings of peace beyond established and taken-for-granted ones. Peace photography is a pluralistic concept. Indeed, different forms of peace require different forms of visual representation just as do different positions on a social group's trajectory from war to peace. Conversations about different peace photographs – i.e., different photographs that individuals or groups of people regard as depictions of peace – help understand underlying notions of peace as well as the political and social conditions from which these notions emerge. Given that visual images never operate on observers in isolation, it will be very difficult to establish causality between a given photograph and peace. It is, therefore, more productive to conceive of the relationship between photographs and peace as an episodic relationship. Given the extent to which visual images dominate social life, it is reasonable to assume that nowadays this relationship is stronger than ever before. However, it is largely unexplored in peace research. Visual education should therefore be included in peace research curricula and selected photographs should regularly be designated as peace photographs so as to take the visual turn in the social sciences seriously and to recognize and capitalize on the peace potentialities of visual images.

Peace and Photography

Definitional Issues

Reflecting recent trends in image production and dissemination, photography nowadays is a “meta-network of machines, politics, culture, and ways of collective seeing” (Paglen 2011, p. 68). Ways of collective seeing include collective blindness: things we do not see, for a variety of reasons, or things we do see without, however, grasping their meanings and importance. Photographs of peace are a case in point. They are everywhere but seldom registered as such. As a distinct genre in photographic discourses, peace photography – in contrast to war photography –

does not exist and literature on the connection between photography and peace is conspicuous mainly by its absence. Dictionaries of photography include discussion of war photography (Herschdorfer 2018) but have little to say on peace photography. One of the reasons for the invisibility of peace in photography is photography's fascination in discourse and practice with violence. Another reason is the complex nature of the relationship between photography and peace. A third reason is lack of general agreement on the definition of peace making agreement on the definition of a photography of peace difficult.

There is a huge body of work on the connection between photography and violence (Wilkes Tucker et al. 2012). War photography, for example, is a major component of photojournalism, much discussed in the literature on photographic representation. However, photography is always about the seen and the unseen: photographs “reinforce the invisibility of some things by overtly focusing on others” (Smith 2013, p. 14). By focusing on war and violence, then, photojournalism contributes to the invisibility of peace. Traditional attempts to photograph peace include portraits of “statesmen and major political events” (Morris-Suzuki 2005, p. 103) in connection with commemorations or peace treaties. Recent work on peace photography is more ambitious. Allan, discussing photography as an ingredient of peace journalism, demands “the rearticulation” by means of photography “of visions of the world in the service of human rights and social justice” (Allan 2011, p. 163). Here, the issue is not mere documentation but advocacy. Ritchin (2013, p. 123) laments the absence of “a more developed photography that explores in some depth the move from pain to its resolution, creating reference points for those striving to move forward” and presents numerous examples of how such a photography might look like. However, in photographic discourses, core concepts such as violence, peace, and conflict remain largely undefined. Yet, definitions of peace do not necessarily make things easier: for example, a negative understanding of peace as absence of physical violence would result in an almost

unlimited number of photographs that would seem to qualify as photographs of peace, thus making peace photography as a concept largely useless. On the other hand, a positive understanding of peace as everything that is good and desired is utopian and cannot, therefore, be photographed.

Core Conceptual Aspects

Standard approaches in photojournalism reference peace *negatively* by depicting its absence (Linfield 2010; Mehrez 2019). In accordance with standard operating procedures in photojournalism, the purpose of such depiction can be mere documentation. However, it can also reflect the photographer's assumption that by showing what war and violent conflict look like when photographed, solidarity and compassion with the victims of violence may be produced and political engagement be triggered, ultimately ending violence. Yet, political responses to images of violence are notoriously unpredictable. They depend, among other things, on the overall political and cultural configurations within which images are circulated (Perlmutter 1999), contextualization by means of text and layout (Ritchin 1999; Morris 2011), and the degree of visual socialization readers bring with them to the process of reading an image. Furthermore, not every photograph that appears, in retrospect, to be an anti-war photograph was intended as such (Hariman and Lucaites 2007, p. 368 note 73). Ethical problems inherent in photojournalism are profound and well explored in the literature. They include re-traumatization and revictimization as well as exploitation and misrepresentation of the people depicted (Reinhardt et al. 2007; Sontag 2003). By visualizing violence, conventional photojournalism both contributes to the impression that the world is a violent place and exposes itself to accusations according to which the photographic act is, in itself, a violent and exploitative act, albeit, some authors argue, a necessary one (Kennedy and Patrick 2014; Roberts 2014; Solomon-Godeau 1991).

Photojournalism documents events including "war, conflict, or atrocity" (Lisle 2011, p. 877) and looks for both a given event's decisive moment and its adequate transformation into

photographic form. Proximity to "action" is key here. In contrast, aftermath photography is interested in the visualization of "what remains" of the event once it is – or seems to be – over (Saltzman 2010, p. 131). It is interested in the legacies of violent conflict. While photojournalism references peace by showing violence, aftermath photography references (the continuation of) violence by showing seemingly peaceful conditions. Much aftermath photography focuses on landscapes, ruins, and material objects, thus avoiding ethical problems in connection with photographs of human suffering. Aesthetically, it is often closer to art photography than to photojournalism. Ironically, such photography is often referred to as *post*-conflict photography although its intention is precisely to show that a given conflict is *not* (yet) over, even if acts of physical violence do not occur anymore. Aftermath photography refers back to the original violent event (Baker and Mavlian 2014) and revisualizes it in terms of the "event-as-aftermath" (Roberts 2014). In selected aftermath photographs, the original event is extended up to the present but the main reference point is the original event, not its transubstantiation into inherently more peaceful forms of social interaction. Thus, from a peace perspective, aftermath photography – despite its many merits (see Lisle 2011) – does not take advantage of all its possibilities. Aftermath photography and the meanings discursively assigned to it fail to mobilize all of the genre's inherent peace potentialities.

Focusing on the legacies of physical violence (including traumatic memories), aftermath photography does not normally make the step from aftermath to peace (see, however, <http://theaftermathproject.org>). Neither does it understand the aftermath of violence as an event in its own right – the "aftermath-as-event" (Möller 2019, pp. 151–157) – the "event-ness" of which lies in the absence of physical violence and some degree of detachment from the original event, enabling people in a forward-looking perspective to engage in activities they would otherwise not be capable of engaging in. Such activities can be photographed, visually decoupling the aftermath from the original event (without ignoring its existence and consequences), documenting everyday life, and

anticipating peace. The aftermath may lead, at some point, to peace and this process can be photographed. A good example for such an approach to peace photography is Rineke Dijkstra's series "Almerisa," documenting the adaptation of the subject depicted, Almerisa, who came from then war-torn Bosnia, to a more peaceful life in the Netherlands. Moving from an unstable plastic chair to a solid wooden chair symbolizes Almerisa's growing sense of stability and security in her new environment, photographically captured in Dijkstra's work and corroborated by Almerisa. However, the process from aftermath to peace is not irreversible and it can fail but failure can be photographed, too.

Research on the connection between photography and peace – visual peace research – thinks with photography about peace (Möller 2013, 2019). It is inspired by a twin question: how can peace be represented visually, and how can such representation contribute to peace? While sharing many questions with similar approaches in international relations (Bleiker 2018) and security studies (Vuori and Saugmann Andersen 2018), it is particularly interested in the uses and operations of visual images in peace processes, peace building, mediation, and reconciliation. Illustrating a process of peace consolidation, peace photography can show a given social group's trajectory from the original event to the event-as-aftermath, from the event-as-aftermath to the aftermath-as-event, and from the aftermath-as-event to peace. "Every post-war society can be analyzed as to its location on this trajectory at any given point in time and as to its movement along the trajectory over time. Such analysis can be aesthetic or political or, ideally, both" (Möller 2019, p. 31). Peace photography deviates from conventional photojournalism in its focus on process, rather than icon, enabling visual insights into long-term developments.

Recent research suggests that peace photography is *derivative*, *illustrative*, and *constitutive* of peace. It is derivative of peace in that it follows from and is dependent on definitions of peace; it is illustrative of peace in that photographs may exemplify preexisting understandings of peace; and it is constitutive of peace in that photographs

may shape, expand, enrich, and diversify viewers' understandings of peace beyond established and taken-for-granted ones. Thus, there is a creative tension between the illustrative and the constitutive function of photographs (Möller 2019, pp. 48–49). Peace photography is a pluralistic concept, acknowledging that different forms of peace require different forms of visual representation just as do different positions on the above trajectory from war to peace. Owing to the context dependence of meanings assigned to any given photograph, the search for a universal peace photograph may be in vain. However, conversations about different peace photographs – i.e., different photographs that individuals or groups of people regard as depictions of peace – may help understand underlying notions of peace as well as the political and social conditions from which these notions emerge. Given that visual images never operate on observers in isolation – they are always part of wider cultural and political configurations – it will be very difficult to establish causality between a given photograph and peace. It is, therefore, more productive to conceive of the relationship between photographs and peace as an *episodic* relationship, as "multilayered, concurrent, loosely structured arrangement" characterized by coexistence and simultaneity rather than causality (Taylor 2003, p. 274). It is a reasonable assumption that nowadays this relationship is stronger than ever before, given the extent to which social life is dominated by visual images (Bleiker 2018).

As an epistemological medium, photography is arguably most effective with regard to the visualization of everyday peace: ordinary people going about their business without resorting to violence. Such peaceful everyday interactions take place *after* violence, as in many aftermath scenarios, but also *during* violence (Möller and Shim 2019). Instead of appearing as victims of violence devoid of own agency, many individuals and social groups aim to maintain a somewhat normal life in adverse circumstances, cultivating peaceful social interactions rather than subscribing to the dynamics of violence. Such activities and photographs thereof may reflect "a minimalist interpretation" of everyday peace (Mac Ginty

2014, p. 555) but even such minimalism “involves considerable innovation, creativity and improvisation. It rests on considerable agency at the individual and group levels” (Mac Ginty 2014, p. 555). Due to its conventional interest in the spectacular, the extraordinary, and the iconic, photojournalism does not normally put much emphasis on everyday activities; it fails to represent important ingredients of (everyday) life, thus contributing to their invisibility. Yet, many photojournalists (including some of the most famous ones) were and still are interested in *both* “the everyday overturned” – war and violence – *and* the “temporality of the everyday” – the continuation of ordinary life in adverse circumstances (Dell 2010, p. 46). The reduction in photographic discourses of their work to representations of violence is a feature of discourse, not photographic practice (Roberts 2012, p. 9). It is, therefore, a part of visual peace research to rediscover and appropriate existing photographic work as peace photography so as to identify and establish a visual pedigree of such photography and de-marginalize it in public perception (Möller 2019, pp. 89–103).

Photography has traditionally been a form of image production characterized by unequal power relationships between the photographers and the subjects depicted. However, photography can also be addressed in terms of participation and coproduction (Delgado 2015; Harper 2012) with emphasis on the production process of an image rather than on the resulting image. Such a photographic understanding and practice alter the power relations inherent in the photographic act in the sense that the process of an image coming into being is implemented and experienced together, connecting the photographer intimately with the subjects depicted or transforming people who have formerly been represented by others into producers of their own image. Becoming agents of one’s own image is especially important if we understand everyday peace as including “adequate visual representation – defined as visual representation perceived as adequate by the subjects depicted ... – as the lack thereof contributes to anxiety and lack of peace of mind, in particular in highly mediatized environments” (Möller 2019, p. 36). Social media offers many

possibilities for people to become agents of their own image and citizen photography – as an ingredient of citizen journalism – has challenged photojournalism quite successfully (Allan 2017; Ritchin 2013). However, reaching out beyond one’s own peer group is difficult because digitization and algorithms channel and direct data flows and every image has to compete for attention with a seemingly unlimited number of images. Furthermore, images published on social media do not necessarily have to promote peace.

In 2008, Kelsey and Stimson observed “a widening rift between the models we had inherited for understanding photography and the new social and material conditions of the early twenty-first century” (2008, p. vii). If anything, this rift is even bigger now than it was then, given the speed and scope of technological developments in digitization and computation and the resulting changes in our understanding of and approaches to photography. These changes cannot be grasped solely by reading and adapting the classics of photography literature. They require taking seriously photography as a “meta-network” (Paglen) which operates with and on people fundamentally different from the operation of images in the analogue age. Furthermore, “the necessity of reading photographs, not just the text surrounding them” (Ritchin 1999, p. 41), clashes with short attention spans typical of digitization, rendering in-depth engagement with images – even selected ones – difficult and facilitating belief in what we are told to see rather than in what we see in fact.

Aims and Achievements of Peace Photography

What may peace photography achieve? Since exaggeration and hyperbole are regular ingredients of photography discourses since the inception of photography, some degree of caution and modesty seems to be in order. Despite claims to the opposite, however, photography is still strong in creating feelings of compassion and solidarity among audiences (Campbell 2014). Yet, as Johnson (2011) shows, the politics of compassion differ considerably from the politics of solidarity. Historically, photographic images not only

contributed to the emergence of solidarity with distant people suffering from violations of human rights (Brothers 1997) but also to the invention and acceptance of the *idea* of human rights in the first place (Sliwinski 2011). Referring back, in times of violence, to earlier conditions when peaceful interactions still prevailed may convince individuals and groups of people that violence is not inevitable and that peace may be reconstituted once violence stops. The same impression may result from photographs of “non-violent conflict resolution in situations that formerly would, in all likelihood, have resulted in violence” (Möller 2019, p. 31). Visualizations of post-conflict cooperation between former enemies may help transform cultures of violence into cultures of peace. Furthermore, as discussed above in the context of everyday peace, photography – without changing the overall political conditions – can help the people depicted maintain or build “a sense of themselves, of their world, of their place in the universe” (Linfield 2010, p. 187). The “moment when the experience of violence stops being the single most important reference point for individuals and groups of people formerly exposed to violence” can also be photographed, thus contributing to “the development of expectations of peace (while simultaneously acknowledging that this is not a linear process)” (Möller 2019, p. 31). Conversations about “different interpretations of the same image and different representations of the same subject – peace – can result in fruitful and constructive dialogue” about both peace and photography (Möller and Shim 2019, p. 253).

Visual peace research thinks with and about photography and with photography about peace, thus expanding and diversifying our understanding of peace. It challenges established limits of both representation and visibility. And it does so ideally in a nonhierarchical manner aiming at dialogue, understanding, and acknowledgement of difference. While peace photography shares many of the above aims with other forms of representation, three features of visual representation are worth singling out here. First, pictures co-represent the general and the particular: they “reiterate the general forms in which the particular is

contained” and by so doing visualize “the commonalities of being human” (MacDougall 1998, p. 246). Secondly, one of the things that differentiates photography from both painting and the special genre of art photography is the surround, i.e., those unintended ingredients of a photograph that appear in the margin or background regardless of the photographer’s intentions (Elkins 2011, p. 124). The surround “is often enough unwanted,” noted only “when it helps identify the place the photograph was taken, or when it adds a general atmosphere” (Elkins 2011, p. 117). However, the surround may also add something that challenges or undermines the intended message of a photograph. For example, in an image’s surround peaceful activities may be visible even if the center of the image shows acts of violence. Thus, and contrary to Elkins (2011, p. 124), the surround may advance our knowledge of the subject. Thirdly, photography is “uniquely fitted to mediate” what Thompson calls “the pathetic understanding of an *other*” (2013, p. 78) with *pathema* referring to “experience passively received: acquiescence to what is seen” (Thompson 2013, p. 14). That these three features do not figure prominently in most discourses on photography is a shortcoming of discourse rather than one of photography.

Summary

Peace photography is interested in process, not icon; it prioritizes representations of peace, not violence; and it focusses on everyday peace, not on the big questions of peace among nations. Peace photography aims to visualize peace processes, peace building, mediation, and reconciliation. It shies away neither from the seemingly unspectacular and mundane nor from a minimalistic understanding of peace. Indeed, photography is arguably most effective with regard to the visualization of everyday peace. Peace photography is dependent on definitions of peace and it exemplifies preexisting understandings of peace. However, it may also help diversify viewers’ understandings of peace beyond established ones. As a concept, peace photography should be thought of in the plural

(*peace photographs*), reflecting what Dietrich (2002, p. 54) calls “peaces” and acknowledging that different forms of peace require different forms of visual representation. Conversations about different peace photographs tell us a lot about underlying conceptions of peace. Peace photography has a verbal element in the sense that it is to some extent discursively constructed by people referring to selected images as peace photographs, thus helping to establish peace photography as a photographic genre in its own right.

Although “we still must learn how to become spectators of images” (Emerling 2012, p. 165), visual socialization is not a regular ingredient of peace research in theory and education. Many introductions into peace and conflict research have very little to say about the visual construction of peace. As a result, we still must learn how to become self-reflective and self-critical spectators of images. In particular, we must learn how to become spectators of images of peace. A first step in such a learning process would be regular inclusion of visual education in peace research curricula. A second step would be regular designation in academic discourse of (selected) photographs as peace photographs: peace photography as a concept requires people *doing* it; doing peace photography includes referring to images as peace photographs and, by so doing, contributing to the emergence of peace photography as a distinct photographic genre. A third step would be identification of existing images, including images routinely referenced as conflict photographs, as peace photographs so as to establish a visual pedigree of such photography and de-marginalize it in public perception. Peace researchers have to take seriously the visual turn in both the social sciences and the societies which peace research claims to analyze. We cannot blame photography for our failure to recognize and capitalize on the peace potentialities of visual images.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Art and Reconciliation](#)
- ▶ [Everyday Peace](#)
- ▶ [Theatre and Peacebuilding](#)

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Photovoice

- ▶ [Auto-photography](#)

Pluralist Photography

- ▶ [Auto-photography](#)

Polarized Cities

- ▶ [Divided Cities](#)

Police Reform and Peacebuilding

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Synonyms

[DDR](#); [Local Security](#); [Peacebuilding](#); [Rule of Law](#); [Security-Development Nexus](#); [SSR](#)

Introduction

While the policy field known as peacebuilding is rather “new” – *An Agenda for Peace* (1992) is usually seen as a turning point for peacebuilding literature – assistance to police forces is not a “new” phenomenon. During the Cold War, police

reform assistance programs were used as tools by recipient governments to improve their surveillance and persecute their political opponents within the context of the East-West divide (Call and Barnett 2000). Due to its potential link to human rights violations, assisting police forces was once perceived as taboo in the international development discourse, and the police were perceived as part of the problem. Within the peacebuilding discourse, however, the police were no longer perceived as part of the problem, but rather part of the solution.

During the Cold War, the division of labor between development assistance and humanitarian assistance was rather clear: “[armed conflict] was treated as an unfortunate occurrence, forcing development workers out and humanitarian in – an order to be reversed when the conflict was over and conditions were safe for normal development work to resume” (Uvin 2002, p. 5). However, as the timing of third-party intervention “broadened” following the end of the Cold War (Miall et al. 1999, p. 186), the international community had to engage in initiatives to work “in” and/or “on” conflict rather than work “around” conflict. It was this response to an operational necessity to bridge the gap between humanitarian assistance and development aid that brought about the term “peacebuilding.”

Peacebuilding is defined as “an action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict” (UN 1992). It is composed of two tasks – a short-term task of ending violence and preventing a relapse into war and a long-term task of constructing a self-sustaining peace – and is composed of activities to address political, economic, psycho-social, and security deficits (Miall et al. 1999, pp. 188, 203). The emergence of peacebuilding as a policy field led to the security/development nexus where the perception is that development is ultimately impossible without stability, and, at the same time, security is not sustainable without development. In short, security began to be perceived as one of the essential public goods like education, public health, and clean water. Within this context, police reform is expected to address security deficits and establish

a rule of law in postconflict and transitional societies.

Police reform is an important tool to dismantle the privatization of security at the domestic level. As Clapham depicts, “the development of wholly ‘public’ systems of security provision is often unattainable” especially in postconflict and transitional countries, and that means “the effective choice is between degrees or types of privatized security systems” for a majority of ordinary people (Clapham 1999, pp. 23–24). Under these circumstances, security is provided on an exclusionary basis, often in the interests of maintaining the status quo favored by whoever is in power. And those excluded may respond by further privatization: that is, by arming themselves. Dismantling the exclusionary privatized security system resembling that of a patron-client relationship is important in the process of police reform to make safety and social order one of the public goods. Thus, “the question is no longer whether the international community will assist” the police reform abroad, but “how well it will do the job” (Bayley 2006, pp. 13–14).

The aim of this entry is to deepen understanding about police reform by asking the following questions: What can be expected at the beginning of police reform? Who are involved and what is provided as a police-reform package? What are the lessons learned and challenges ahead? This entry will mainly refer to a case study of Sierra Leone – a classic case of postwar peacebuilding led by the international community during the 1990s to the 2000s – since it would be easier for readers to follow the discussion of a specific example. It will be an interesting case to retrospectively look back at, since the case of Sierra Leone is often referred to as a successful story of security sector reform in postconflict societies.

What Can Be Expected at the Beginning of Police Reform?

Police reform may look different depending on the contexts in which it will take place. Police reform takes place both in countries where governments are being replaced following armed

conflict, government collapse, and/or international imposition and in countries undergoing peaceful and/or postauthoritarian transition. Because the police forces undergoing reform in postconflict and transitional societies require different attention, police reform has to pay attention to different needs of local police forces in each context. Some may be politicized and tarnished with records of human rights abuses due to their involvements in a conflict, while others may be almost nonexistent after years of conflict (Hansen 2002). While some may only require advice, others may need institutional reconstruction, and a few may require the international community to temporarily take over the daily policing tasks from the local authority, as in the case of Kosovo and East Timor, which is known as executive policing (Dwan 2002).

In the case of Sierra Leone, the police force inherited by the newly democratically elected government in 1996 was not only suffering from damages from the civil war, but also from decades of political mismanagement. During the conflict, many police stations in areas contested by the rebels were looted and/or burned down. Offender records – including fingerprint files and crime evidence – were missing and/or destroyed in most police stations (United Nations 1999). By 1996, only six of the 23 largest police stations in the country had sufficient equipment to communicate with other police stations. Among 17 stations without a central communications network, only a handful had working two-way radio systems to contact officers in the field. By the mid-1990s, the main police-training facility at Hastings, as well as other regional training centers in the provincial capitals of Bo, Kenema, and Makeni, was severely damaged due to rebel attacks, resulting in suspension of training of new recruits. Police officers also had to purchase their own supplies, including uniforms (Republic of Sierra Leone 1998). By the time a peace agreement was signed in 2002, the Sierra Leone Police (SLP) suffered an overall reduction of almost 30 percent – from a high of 9317 to a low of 6600 (Meek 2003). These are some examples of how the SLP was affected by the conflict, and an important question that needs to be asked here is why were the police attacked during the conflict?

A major reason is that the SLP was perceived as a symbol of government authority by the rebel group known as the Revolutionary United Front (RUF). The SLP was deliberately targeted by the RUF in rural areas because of its close association with previous regimes. For example, following the 1992 coup d'état, the entire management of the SLP – a total of 19 senior police officers including the Inspector General – was “retired” in one day and replaced by those who were loyal to the new government (Republic of Sierra Leone 1998). And similar changes took place following each coup d'état in the 1990s, erasing the institutional memory. It is also said that new recruits who joined the force during the conflict were hand-picked based on their political allegiance. Changes in government were reflected in the management and affected appointments as well as recruitments. The root of political mismanagement, however, can be traced much further back to colonial times.

For colonial governments, as Killingray (1986) puts it, “the maintenance of law and order meant taking firm action to deal with any threat to the continuing system of rule imposed by the British”; thus, police forces in colonial Africa “did not exercise functions similar to those of European or modern police forces” (Killingray 1986, pp. 413, 425). A dual system of laws was established: European law and “customary” law. While the former was enforced by the colonial government, the latter was the responsibility of the native authority, and local tribal police forces were responsible for “traditional rules.” Sierra Leone was no exception.

In the case of Sierra Leone, while the modern SLP was established with the announcement of the Police Act in 1964, inception of the SLP dates to the Sierra Leone Police Force in the Crown Colony established in 1894. The Sierra Leone Police Force was, however, geographically limited to the Crown Colony to protect British interests, and the provinces, later to be referred as Protectorate (from August 1896), were policed by the Court Messengers. The Court Messengers were “the Protectorate Police” (Jeffries 1952, p. 199), and they still exist today as the Chiefdom Police. The Sierra Leone Police of the Colony

decided to formally extend into the Protectorate in 1954, and the two forces have coexisted since then (Furuzawa 2018). A fundamental feature of both the Sierra Leone Police Force of the Crown Colony – from which the SLP takes its origins – and the Court Messengers of the Protectorate is that both colonial security institutions (in particular, the former) were created not to defend the inhabitants, but to assist foreigners exploiting the country. Despite this complex policing structure in the country, the Chiefdom Police were not, however, originally a target of the assistance provided by the international community, since they were not technically a part of the police force.

In Sierra Leone, rebuilding the police from damages of a decade-long conflict was necessary, but that was not sufficient on its own due to the historical political mismanagement of the force dating back to colonial times. This was the starting point of the police reform in Sierra Leone.

Who Are Involved and What Is Provided as a Police-Reform Package?

Police reform may also look different, depending on the range of actors involved. Various actors are involved in the process of police reform, ranging from nongovernmental organizations, national police forces, national governments, and private security/military companies to international organizations. Each actor, however, has its own strengths and weaknesses in carrying out police reform. For example, United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) are “neither designed nor equipped to engage in longer-term institution and capacity-building efforts” (UN DPKO/DFS 2008, p. 28). In Mozambique, the actual “police reform” efforts following the withdrawal of the UN mission concerning police reform were bilateral: Police training in Mozambique was conducted by the Spanish Guardia Civil. In Sierra Leone, with funds from the United Nations Development Program and the UK’s Department for International Development, the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone constructed police stations and training centers. In Kenya, the Office of the President asked London-based INGO Saferworld to

provide assistance in the efforts to promote community policing in the country (Furuzawa 2011b).

The police reform in Sierra Leone can be divided into two phases: UK-led Police Reform (1996–2002) and PKO-led Police Reform (2002–2005) (Furuzawa 2011a, 2017). In contrast to the early (and realistic) concentration on its capital, Freetown, in the initial UK-led efforts, police reform gradually broadened its target areas to rural areas in the later PKO-led efforts (Albrecht and Jackson 2009).

UK-Led Police Reform: CPDTF and CCSSP (1996–2002)

Police reform in Sierra Leone started in the midst of armed conflict, despite occasional disruptions from the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council coup (May 1997 to February 1998) and the attack by RUF (January 1999) after Ahmad Tejan Kabbah became the president following the election in February 1996. The Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) led by Kabbah showed its commitment to the police reform on numerous occasions. For example, Article 25 of the Abidjan Accord signed in November 1996 stated that “[t]he police force shall be strengthened to ensure that the rule of law is upheld throughout Sierra Leone.” It was also Kabbah who appointed Sama Banya in June 1996 to chair a committee to “review the conditions of service of Republic of Sierra Leone Police Force, the Force’s public image, its recruitment and staffing policies, and functional capabilities and administrative structure” (Republic of Sierra Leone 1998, p. 37). Upon receiving a request from the GoSL, the Commonwealth Secretariat sent a small group of advisors in March 1996; however, all reform initiatives were halted temporarily due to the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council coup.

In July 1998, the Commonwealth Secretariat formed a Commonwealth Police Development Task Force (CPDTF) comprised of senior police officers from Canada, the UK, Sri Lanka, and Zimbabwe. The CPDTF was tasked to assist the GoSL in putting together a plan to rebuild the SLP. CPDTF activities can be divided into quick-impact activities and long-term activities (Horn et al. 2006). As a part of the quick-impact activities, the CPDTF used a part of their initial

budget of USD 900,000 to purchase necessities for the police force. For example, the CPDTF purchased medicines and vitamins for the police hospital – since many officers were ill – and a full uniform for all officers, which were not provided during the conflict. The CPDTF also provided bicycles, vehicles, and a basic radio-communication system.

The CPDTF also focused its activities on obtaining commitments from relevant Sierra Leonean stakeholders, as well as setting a direction for police reform. This was done by drafting a new police charter and mission statement to mark a new beginning for the SLP. In August 1998, personally endorsed by President Kabbah, the new police charter was announced, which clarified the government’s expectations for the police, affirmed the importance of equal opportunities and human rights, and ended with a phrase which became the new motto for the police: “a Force for Good in Our Nation”. The newly drafted police mission statement also delineated the importance of professionalism, human rights and freedoms, and responding to local needs – which would later be termed “local-needs policing” within the context of Sierra Leone, rather than the often-used “community policing.”

While the conceptual documents and agreements achieved could not be undone, many of the achievements were lost in an attack by the Revolutionary United Front in January 1999. Police stations were burned down, vehicles destroyed, and it is said that 250 SLP officers were murdered during the attacks, together with 375 of their family members (Meek 2003). Despite the attack, police reform continued. In consultation with the CPDTF, the GoSL appointed an expatriate senior police officer – CPDTF leader Keith Biddle, a British national – as Inspector General of the SLP in November 1999. This appointment was made to develop a new generation of leadership within the SLP (Horn et al. 2006).

In October 2000, the CPDTF was transformed into the Commonwealth Community Safety and Security Project (CCSSP). The focus of the CCSSP remained the same as that of the CPDTF, that is, to “re-establish the Sierra Leone Police as

an effective and accountable civilian police service” (Short 2002). The CCSSP provided training and management support, with a close working relationship with Biddle. The CCSSP allocated its budget toward training senior police officers at the UK Police Staff College at Bramshill from 2001. A ten-week course called the International Commander’s Program was provided for three years to Sierra Leonean officers, including Brima Acha Kamara, who later succeeded Biddle in June 2003.

Supported by both the GoSL and CCSSP, Biddle made difficult – however necessary – decisions toward police reform. The decision was made to reduce the number of SLP ranks from 22 to 10 by clarifying and redefining the roles and responsibilities. A new Executive Management Board, the highest decision-making body, was established to introduce a culture of open debate and a sense of team within the SLP leadership. New departments and units were also created such as the Complaint, Discipline, and Internal Investigations Department (a new internal accountability structure responsible for following up on complaints from the public about police misconduct) and the Family Support Unit (a new unit to handle increasing cases of domestic violence between ex-combatants and their so-called “wives” who were struggling to regain their freedom, originally called the Domestic Violence Unit).

PKO-Led Police Reform (2002–2005)

The conflict officially ended in Sierra Leone in January 2002. A peace agreement was signed, but significant areas of the countryside were not under the direct control of the GoSL. The SLP needed to increase its size from 6000 to 9500 personnel in order to cover the whole country. This required training at least 1000 new recruits per year until 2005. Furthermore, the basic ability of officers to carry out day-to-day policing was lacking due to the decade-long conflict. Both the CCSSP and United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) – especially its police component then known as the Civilian Police (CIVPOL), now referred to as the United Nations Police (UNPOL) – were expected to provide on-the-job

mentoring and monitoring at the Police Training School and throughout the country for newly deployed officers. Handing over the post of SLP Inspector General from British officer Keith Bidle to Sierra Leonean Brima Acha Kamara in June 2003 also brought a change of approach by Commonwealth advisers, whose role became less directive and more supportive (Horn et al. 2006). With the United Nation's increasing commitment to ensure an eventual withdrawal of its peacekeeping force, the responsibility for police reform shifted from the CCSSP to UNAMSIL at this time.

Up to 2002, the police component of UNAMSIL remained modest in size, since UNAMSIL was mainly involved in Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) of ex-combatants. Starting with a deployment of three officers with a limited monitoring mandate in 1999, it rose to six observers in February 2000 and then 30 additional officers to prepare for the 2002 elections based on the Security Council Resolution 1400 of March 2002. Thus, the Security Council Resolution 1436 of September 2002, which authorized the deployment of up to 170 CIVPOL to "advise and assist" the SLP, was a pivotal change in terms of police reform. The Security Council Resolution 1436 authorized a larger force to expand its activities beyond Freetown and into rural areas. The changing function of CIVPOL to take part in the police reform is closely linked to the plans for the drawing down of UNAMSIL. UNAMSIL closely worked with the SLP to maintain order and security in key points in the country; thus, rebuilding the SLP was a necessary condition for its withdrawal from the country.

By July 2004, UNAMSIL assisted in the re-opening of regional training centers in Makeni, Kenema, and Bo. One of the main achievements of UNAMSIL was its success in recruiting and training more than 3500 local police officers (UN 2005). UNAMSIL also helped the SLP re-establish their presence in critical areas of the country, such as the eastern part, that were very hostile to the police during the conflict. In a joint effort with a team from the Commonwealth, UNAMSIL was able to increase the SLP strength

Police Reform and Peacebuilding, Table 1 SLP personnel distribution by region (as of June 2, 2008)

| Region | Male | Female | Total |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| West | 4599 | 1117 | 5716 |
| North | 1220 | 153 | 1373 |
| South | 948 | 125 | 1073 |
| East | 1247 | 153 | 1400 |
| Total | 8014 | 1548 | 9562 |

Source: Created by author based on African Human Security Initiative (2009), p. 16

to its prewar strength of 9500 officers (see Table 1). The GoSL was able to take over country-wide security primacy from UNAMSIL in September 2004, which was followed by the CCSSP ending in June 2005, and the withdrawal of UNAMSIL in December 2005.

In summary, the contributions of the UK-led police reform between 1996 and 2002 can be observed in (i) setting the direction for the police reform, (ii) training a new generation of senior personnel within SLP, and (iii) carrying out organizational restructuring within the SLP, such as establishing an internal accountability measure. While reform efforts predominantly had to take place in Freetown before signing of the peace agreement in 2002, the PKO-led police reform between 2002 and 2005 was able to (i) increase presence of the SLP in rural areas by raising the force size up to 9500 and (ii) handing back policing responsibility to Sierra Leoneans, which can be symbolized by both the appointment of the Sierra Leonean Inspector General in June 2003 and the withdrawal of UNAMSIL in December 2005.

Unintended Consequences of Police Reform

Retrospectively looking at the case study of Sierra Leone – a classic case of postwar peacebuilding led by the international community during the 1990s to the 2000s – what lessons can we draw from this experience? How can police reform in Sierra Leone be evaluated? To put it differently, what were intended and unintended consequences

of police reform in Sierra Leone? From one perspective, “[g]iven the low level at which reform began, the achievement [of police reform in Sierra Leone] is praiseworthy” (Horn et al. 2006, p. 121). One may recall the early days of police reform in Sierra Leone. For instance, when police reform advisers returned to the country in April 1999 after the coup d’état, they reported that “the SLP does not have primacy for the maintenance of law and order and are unlikely to be able to achieve police primacy from the military and paramilitary forces in the near future” (Horn et al. 2006, p. 115). Between 2000 and 2005, the international community spent approximately \$27 million in order to (re)establish a police force, which resulted in a successful handover of daily policing tasks from the United Nations PKO to the local police force in 2005. It is a benchmark that should be applauded. Baker, however, pointed out that despite improved public trust and effectiveness of the SLP, actors other than the police and military still provide most forms of security in Sierra Leone (Baker 2006, p. 45). How should we perceive this comment by Baker?

Retrospectively, there seem to be at least two unintended consequences of the police reform in Sierra Leone. Two unintended consequences are both related to targets of the assistance provided by the international community. First, with the CCSSP closing down in June 2005 and the PKO withdrawing in December 2005, police reform efforts were handed over to a newly created Justice Sector Development Program (JSDP), which was implemented by the British Council as a five-year contract by DFID that commenced in March 2005. JSDP was different from previous police reform efforts, not only because it was designed to be led by the GoSL, but because police reform became a component of the justice sector-wide reform. In short, the “sector-wide” mandate of JSDP was different from that of the “institutional mandate” of previous police reform efforts (Howlett-Bolton 2008, p. 9). JSDP was based on the understanding that the development of the police was achieved “at the expense of the other justice institutions” and took “a coordinated sector-wide approach” (Howlett-Bolton 2008, p. 5 and p. 6).

Second, in order to foster perception of a justice sector-wide approach as well as to develop a long-term government strategy, JSDP assisted in drafting a policy framework in 2008 known as the Justice Sector Reform Strategy and Investment Plan 2008–2010 (JSRS-IP). JSRS-IP stipulated “a coherent, prioritized and sequenced set of activities to reform the operations of the justice system in Sierra Leone” with four main goals to be achieved: (i) safe communities, (ii) access to justice, (iii) strengthened rule of law, and (iv) improved justice service delivery (Republic of Sierra Leone 2008, p. v and p. vi). Within these four goals, the police reform falls in the first category of the “safe communities,” and JSRS-IP emphasized the key role of the SLP in keeping communities safe. However, within the same category, JSRS-IP also included “activities to strengthen the performance and supervision of Chiefdom Police,” which were never regarded as a target of assistance before 2005 (Republic of Sierra Leone 2008, p. vi) (see Table 2).

The Chiefdom is the basic unit of local administration in Sierra Leone, and the Chiefdom police are responsible for policing in the provinces (Furuzawa 2018). Chiefdom police officers work in each chiefdom and are under the command of the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, separate from the national police. This shift to incorporate Chiefdom Police took place because “the formal justice system [was] inaccessible to an estimated 70% of the population,” while Chiefdom Police were “often more accessible at the community level than their SLP counterparts” (Republic of Sierra Leone 2008, p. 4 and p. 15). In Sierra Leone, this shift in thinking was portrayed as focusing on both the “supply side” as well as the “demand side” of justice delivery (JSDP 2008, p. 4). This resulted in placing more emphasis on informal justice systems and alternative dispute resolution mechanisms.

These were not intended results of police reform efforts and constituted a sea change for the SLP. The case of Sierra Leone reminds us that (i) the police alone cannot maintain the rule of law and (ii) there is a gap between police reform policy and the reality on the ground – that is,

Police Reform and Peacebuilding, Table 2 Provinces/Districts and Chiefdom Police (as of March 14, 2017)

| Province | District | Population | Size of chiefdom police | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|------------|-------------------------|----------|-------|
| | | | District | Province | Total |
| Northern | Bombali | 606,183 | 110 | 392 | 1,013 |
| | Koinadugu | 408,097 | 78 | | |
| | Port Loko | 614,063 | 73 | | |
| | Tonkolili | 530,776 | 80 | | |
| | Kambia | 343,686 | 51 | | |
| Eastern | Kenema | 609,873 | 116 | 290 | |
| | Kono | 505,767 | 89 | | |
| | Kailahun | 525,372 | 85 | | |
| Southern | Bo | 574,201 | 86 | 331 | |
| | Bonthe | 200,730 | 83 | | |
| | Pujehun | 345,577 | 65 | | |
| | Moyamba | 318,064 | 97 | | |
| Western area | Western Area Urban | 1,050,301 | | | |
| | Western Area Rural | 442,951 | | | |

Source: Revised Table 1 from Furuzawa (2018)

police are not necessarily the only policing actor in the context of postconflict and transitional societies. How should we understand these unintended consequences?

Back to Square One: Why Police?

In reviewing the trends of security sector-related policies – including police reform – Ball and Hendrickson identified that policy discussion is “influenced by a normative framework and a standard set of assumptions about how ‘reforming’ countries should organize and operate their security sectors,” which “tends to be prescriptive (and technical) in nature, focusing more on outcomes and modalities for delivering assistance” (Ball and Hendrickson 2009, pp. 37–38). Furthermore, Olonisakin et al. also added that “[t]here is a tendency to strategically deal with supply-side issues relating to justice and security provision by the state,” which result in “[focusing] on formal structures, and far less on informal ones” (Olonisakin et al. 2009, pp. 24–25). This literature is questioning the underlying assumption of security sector reform, including police reform, within peacebuilding. These questions echo the experience in Sierra Leone.

From one perspective, safety and public order is considered one of the public goods. Hence, the first task of peacebuilding may be “to restore the monopoly as a foundation and precondition for all further institution-building efforts” (Paris 2004, pp. 206–7). But is there only one way to maintain order in a state? Can there not be other alternatives? Is it a task of the international community to make a decision on behalf of postconflict ad transitional countries – taking out possible alternatives – to provide a universal model of statehood? From a different perspective, however, the state itself is “a historically contingent reality,” and one can argue that “[W]estern commentators and policymakers have difficulty imagining any other form of viable political community than the state as it is understood in the West” (Williams 2010, p. 60). This illustrates that peacebuilding “is far less multidimensional than previously thought,” underpinned by “the same epistemic knowledge base, ontological view of the world and methods” (Richmond 2009, p. 69). In short, peacebuilding – including the police reform – needs to go beyond the one-size-fits-all prescription, and to “[think] about peace beyond the liberal state mechanism (rather than using peace to propagate liberal states)” (Richmond and Franks 2009, p. 212).



While the policy discussion tends to be prescriptive and technical in nature and focuses on formal structures, Ebo points out that, in the context of sub-Saharan Africa, “statutory forces are not the sole providers of security” (Ebo 2007, p. 47). Bruce stresses that “it is necessary to take seriously the fact that the idea of state police as providers of security on the Western model is generally not valid in Africa” (Bruce 2021, p. 26). Baker further concurs that “[w]hatever was true of Europe when [Max Weber] wrote, it is not an accurate description of Africa today” (Baker 2010, p.12). While it is important not to be overly romanticize the “local” (Mac Ginty 2008, pp. 120–21), they are all emphasizing the importance of contextualizing the police reform.

The case of police reform in Sierra Leone, particularly the shift that took place from supporting only the SLP to including the Chiefdom Police, can pose a question concerning the nature of the peace which contemporary peacebuilding is in the process of creating. The case of police reform in Sierra Leone echo points made by scholars, which can be interpreted within context of police reform as a question about equating the concepts of police and policing (Marenin 1996), that is, whether nonstate policing actors in postconflict and transitional societies should be treated as a hurdle to be overcome or as a partner to be welcomed in maintaining the public order. Put differently, police reform may need to acknowledge that “very different knowledge systems and political ordering mechanisms are already in place” (Richmond 2011, p. 50). This “very different knowledge systems” is often portrayed by the term “legal pluralism” (Griffiths 1986).

Some peacebuilding policy studies – including police reform – often assume and start their discussion as if postconflict and transitional societies are empty canvases. On the contrary, policing structures in postconflict and transitional societies are quite complex. While a final decision should be made by the government concerned and the people of that country, policy planners will need to be prepared to answer the following questions: What kind of messages will be sent to conflict protagonists by assisting state

policing in a given context? Is it not necessary to consider utilizing nonstate policing actors on the ground? If a decision is made to exclude them, what will that mean in the long run? If a decision is made to incorporate them, how can state policing and nonstate policing be balanced? Borrowing a phrase from a Kenyan friend, police reform policy needs to be able to respond to a simple question, why police?

Summary

The beginning of police reform will be different depending on each context, and police reform may also look different depending on the range of actors involved. Importance of police reform within peacebuilding seems to be widely accepted. For example, since the 1990s, the international community has acknowledged the importance of creating an “effective” police force that operates under the rule of law and respects human rights (e.g., Handbook on Police Accountability, Oversight, and Integrity by the United Nations (2011), 10 Basic Human Rights Standards for Law Enforcement Officials by the Amnesty International (1998)). However, as illustrated in the case of Sierra Leone, unintended consequences of police reform in post-conflict and transitional societies are questioning the underlying assumption of police reform itself and are yet to be examined fully.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration \(DDR\)](#)
- ▶ [Hybrid Political Orders and Hybrid Peace](#)
- ▶ [Rule of Law as a Component of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Security Sector Reform After Armed Conflict](#)
- ▶ [Security-Development Nexus in Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Sierra Leone](#)

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Political Decentralization

- ▶ [Decentralization and Conflict Prevention](#)

Political Demography

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Political Islam

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Politics of Passportization and Territorial Conflicts

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Synonyms

[Extraterritorial citizenship](#); [Extraterritorial naturalization](#); [Military intervention](#)

Description

The term passportization became prominent following the 2008 Russo-Georgian war and has been defined as the mass conferral of citizenship to the population of a particular foreign territory by distributing passports, generally within a relatively short period (Artman 2013; Nagashima 2019).

Passportization falls within the broader policy of extraterritorial naturalization, which numerous states have conducted. What makes passportization unique and dangerous are its consequences. Russia justified its military interventions in Georgia, and to an extent in Ukraine, by arguing that it had a responsibility to protect and defend its citizens (Medvedev 2008), who only recently had become Russian citizens.

Theoretically, passportization as a policy can be carried out by any state, but its current usage is almost exclusively used to refer to Russia's distribution of passports in post-Soviet de facto states and disputed territories from the early 2000s. Given the limited international condemnation/sanctions, Russia's actions have/can embolden it (and other states) to use passportization as a precursor for intervention in neighboring states. Thus, while passportization itself is not illegal (Natoli 2010), it can be used as a tool to justify intervention and transform contested territories into de facto Russian spaces inside de jure territory of a neighboring state (Artman 2013; Littlefield 2009). Thus, while most states use

territorial claims to substantiate citizenship, Russia has used passportization to justify territorial claims in its neighborhood (Mühlfried 2010).

Introduction

States may use a combination of coercive and noncoercive tools to respond to and gain an upper hand in territorial disputes that they are involved in. One relatively new tool used to influence territorial conflicts is that of passportization via mass-scale extraterritorial citizenship/naturalization. The first part of the entry will discuss the phenomenon of passportization and its place within the international legal framework. Following, the entry will discuss how Russia has used passportization as a tool for geopolitical ambitions in Georgia and Ukraine.

Passportization

The policy of extraterritorial citizenship is nothing new, and states have used it to maintain ties with diaspora or reengage with kin whose ancestors originate from the states (Agarin and Karolewski 2015) and in some cases has been used as an extraterritorial minority protection tool (Kolstø 1993; Pogonyi 2017). However, such acts have not always been positively received in the countries that are affected by these policies.

Every sovereign state has the exclusive right to decide who it chooses to confer citizenship to, but they should avoid abusing this right and use it for political goals (OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities 2008, pp. 19–20). The Bolzano/Bozen Recommendations on National Minorities in Inter-State Relations further notes that the granting extraterritorial citizenship can become contentious when states proactively engage in *en mass* extraterritorial conferral of citizenship to a “specified group of individuals or in substantial numbers relative to the size of the population of the State of residence or one of its territorial subdivisions” (OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities 2008, pp. 19–20). Furthermore, when granting extraterritorial

citizenship, states must ensure that there is a genuine link between the state and the individual who is conferred with citizenship (Nottebohm Case (Liechtenstein v. Guatemala) 1955). Thus, mass conferral of citizenship, without the consent of the host state goes against the principles of good neighborliness, challenges sovereignty, and threatens international peace and security (OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities 2008, p. 7). However, this is only a norm, and international law does not constrain states from issuing preferential extraterritorial citizenship provided that they do not interfere with the sovereignty of other states (Spiro 2017, p. 640).

A term closely related to the phenomenon of extraterritorial citizenship/naturalization is passportization. Historically, the term was largely absent in the English language. However, in Russian, it was used to refer to the process of the Soviet authorities requiring all citizens to possess identity documentation (i.e., internal passports) starting from the 1930s (Lyubarsky 2002; Potemkina and Kuznetsova 2014). Passportization, in its current usage, became prominent following the 2008 Russo-Georgian war, which was justified by the duty to protect Russian citizens in the region. Within this context, it has been defined as the “mass conferral of Russian citizenship on the population of particular [foreign] territories by distributing Russian passports” (Nagashima 2019, p. 188), generally within a short period. While passportization can be carried out by any state, its current usage is almost exclusively used to refer to the acts of Russia undertaken in post-Soviet *de facto* states and disputed territories from the early 2000s. Note that the older definition of passportization continues to be used in certain instances and can be used to refer to actions of *de facto* state authorities who undertake the documentation and issuance of “national” passports to residents living under their control. Thus, *de facto* states use passports as another tool for displaying sovereignty and creating a citizenry.

Until 31 December 2000, former Soviet citizens had automatic access (via a simple declaration) to citizenship under the 1991 citizenship law (Salenko 2012, p. 14; Shevel 2012, pp. 113, 127),

and ex-soviet citizens living in Abkhazia and South Ossetia maintained Soviet (internal) passports which were used to cross the border into Russia. However, with the decision to replace Soviet passports by 2004 (Salenko 2012) and the entry into force of a new citizenship law in July 2002 which was expected to restrict access to citizenship (Shevel 2012), there was an active uptake in Russian citizenship by Abkhazians (Nagashima 2019). Under the new law, only those born on the territory of the Russian Federation and former Soviet citizens that remained stateless would have simplified access to citizenship, with the latter pathway added as a compromise to parliamentarians who demanded a more expansive/inclusive definition of the “nation” (Shevel 2012, p. 130). That said, many residents perceived that the new law would eliminate or complicate the possibility to acquire Russian citizenship (Krivenyuk 2002; Nagashima 2019, p. 190). This forthcoming change prompted the Congress of Russian Communities in Abkhazia, a nationalist organization, to act as an intermediary and assist in the passport application process before entry into force of the new law (Khashig 2002; Nagashima 2019, p. 188). From 1 June 2002, the organization collected passport applications across Abkhazia and handed them over to the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs branch in Sochi. While as of June 2002, approximately 20% or 70,000 Abkhazians had Russian citizenship; by July 2002, over 220,000 or 70% had Russian passports; and by January 2003, it was above 80% (Khashig 2002; Krivenyuk 2002; Littlefield 2009, p. 1473; Nagashima 2019, p. 188). While most passports were issued before the entry into force of the new citizenship law, many residents of de facto states remained eligible and continued to acquire Russian citizenship due to the loophole which allowed former USSR citizens who were still stateless to acquire citizenship (Shevel 2012, p. 130). Interestingly, Russian authorities later found the 2002 legislation to be too restrictive and over the years they have amended it to simplify access for certain categories of people (Ganohariti 2020a; Shevel 2012, p. 141).

Despite passportization occurring in Abkhazia, Nagashima’s (2019) investigation shows that

passportization in South Ossetia began only 2 years later. In July 2003, approximately 55% of the population had Russian passports, with the majority acquiring them (under the 1991 law) in Russia after having fled the 1992 conflict (Bargov as cited in Kusov 2002). However, on 25 May 2004 following the incorporation of Adjara by the Saakashvili administration, the Russian MFA began distributing Russian passports to the South Ossetian population (Illarionov 2009, pp. 55–59). By June 2004, the number of citizens was above 95% (Nagashima 2019, p. 189), with the new acquisitions occurring under the statelessness loophole of the 2002 citizenship law. In contrast, passportization never occurred in Transnistria since the number of new citizens has been relatively constant (about 10,000 new citizens per year), but Russia has used citizenship to influence domestic politics in Transnistria (Nagashima 2019, pp. 194–196). Thus, Nagashima (2019, p. 190) argues that the passportization policy in South Ossetia contradicted the restrictive nature of the 2002 citizenship law and this was not a component of the Kremlin’s citizenship policy. Rather passportization has been applied ad hoc in reaction to domestic and geopolitical developments and security concerns such as the Chechen conflict, the 2002 US involvement in Georgia, and potential NATO membership of Georgia (Illarionov 2009; International Crisis Group 2008).

Thus, while the acquisition of citizenship had occurred in the de facto states before 2002, it is the number and speed at which new passports were issued, that makes Russia’s actions between 2002 and 2004 to be considered as passportization. Looking at the drastic increase of citizens, it is clear that without the logistical support of Russia, such a large number of passports could not have been issued (Glanin 2002). Furthermore, unlike recognized countries affected by extraterritorial citizenship policies, acquisition of Russian passports was actively encouraged by de facto state authorities (Artman 2013, p. 690). People saw the acquisition of a Russian passport to be beneficial as it brought higher pensions, travel opportunities, and security guarantees (Artman 2013, pp. 690–691; Ganohariti 2020b; Mühlfried 2010, pp. 9–10).

The main question concerning Russia's passportization is its legality. In short, determination and conferral of nationality remain within the domestic jurisdiction of states. That said, states may not forcefully impose nationality and the international community is not obliged to recognize the nationality if it fails to meet the genuine link criteria (Nottebohm Case (Liechtenstein v. Guatemala) 1955, pp. 25–26; Natoli 2010, pp. 405–406, 411). However, in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, Russian nationality was never imposed, and since the local population had continuously opposed the Georgian state and had closer links with Russia an argument can be made for the naturalizations meeting the genuine link connection. Therefore, “there does not seem to be a legal basis under international nationality law for saying it cannot” (Natoli 2010, p. 413).

However, other states are not obliged to recognize the conferral if it goes against “international conventions, customary international law and the principles of law generally recognised with regard to nationality” (European Convention on Nationality 1997, Art. 3; Convention on Certain Questions Relating to the Conflict of Nationality Laws 1930, Art. 1). Critiques argue that Russia's actions in Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and later Ukraine do not meet the genuine link criteria and is exorbitant (Allison 2009, p. 179; IIFFMCG 2009b, p. 289; Peters 2019), as possession of Soviet citizenship cannot be taken to be a sufficient condition for granting Russian nationality. Furthermore, *de jure* residents of the contested territories had automatically acquired Georgian citizenship following Soviet dissolution, even if in practice many did not have Georgian documents to prove it (Littlefield 2009, pp. 1471–1473; Mühlfried 2010, p. 9). Russian officials overlooked this fact and justified their actions on humanitarian grounds, by allowing “stateless people” living in the post-Soviet space to acquire Russian citizenship (following 2002) (Littlefield 2009, p. 1473; Mühlfried 2010; Nagashima 2019, p. 190). Furthermore, according to the Georgian (and Ukrainian) perspective, these conferrals cannot be recognized to be legal under international law. Thus, Georgia (and Ukraine) argues for the non-recognition of Russian nationality and passports

conferred to individuals living in the “occupied territories” (IIFFMCG 2009a, pp. 147–148, 2009b, pp. 155–179; MFA Ukraine 2019; Open Society Justice Initiative 2018; Zayets et al. 2018). Having provided a brief background into (the legality of) passportization, the following section will explore how Russia has used passportization as a tool to militarily intervene in Georgia and Ukraine.

Territorial Conflict: The Cases of Georgia and Ukraine

Russia has provided several legal arguments to justify its involvements in Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Crimea, and Eastern Ukraine; this section will focus on the use of citizenship as a tool to advance territorial goals in the near abroad (see Allison 2009).

In 2008, when Russia intervened in Georgia, one of the justifications used was the constitutional and legal obligation to protect citizens in South Ossetia following Georgian military aggression (Medvedev 2008; Guseynov and Demidenko 2009). Even prior to the conflict, Russian officials and institutions had made statements that they were duty-bound to protect their citizens from Georgian aggression (Illarionov 2009). This legitimization was seemingly grounded in the right of individual and collective self-defense enshrined in the UN Charter and the notion of responsibility to protect (Littlefield 2009; Natoli 2010). Thus, passportization provided the basis for Russia's justification for the use of military action against Georgia to protect Russian citizens, as a result of which it was able to claim *de facto* sovereignty over the territory (Artman 2013, p. 691; Littlefield 2009, pp. 1476–1477). In the case of Abkhazia, Russia argued its intervention to have been preemptive in nature, based on the belief of an imminent attack by Georgia (IIFFMCG 2009b, pp. 291–294).

However, such justifications have limited standing under international law. First, Russia's core argument of self-defense or collective self-defense as a result of Georgian aggression has

little legal basis as the territory of the Russian Federation was not attacked nor is there a general right of intervention in support of opposition groups in a foreign state (Allison 2009, p. 177). Rather, it could be argued that the granting of Russian citizenship was used to “justify in advance and indirectly the use of force to defend an entity that cannot be defended directly since (as a result of South Ossetia’s and Abkhazia’s non-state status) Russia cannot claim it is responding to their appeals for collective self-defence in the sense prescribed in the UN Charter” (Allison 2009, pp. 179–180).

Second, even if individuals possess the citizenship of a kin-state, generally speaking, it is their state of residence that is primarily responsible to protect them (OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities 2008, p. 20). However, due to the armed conflict between Georgia and South Ossetian “separatist,” in Russia’s view, Georgia was unable to display its ability to protect the residents of South Ossetia who Georgia legally considered to be its citizens (International Crisis Group 2006, p. 9), thus further aiding Russia’s justifications.

Third, states have limited jurisdiction over their citizens abroad and there exists no customary law concerning the right to protect, and states may intervene only in exceptional circumstances in a localized and proportionate manner (Allison 2009, pp. 178–179). This tied with the absence of Security Council authorization and not satisfying R2P conditions such as the seriousness of the threat, proportionality, and last resort make Russia’s claim difficult to substantiate (Allison 2009; IIFMCG 2009b, pp. 283–289; International Crisis Group 2008, pp. 28–29). Furthermore, the intervention “was not really about the protection of civilians as expected by the R2P concept, but protection of [Russian] nationals” (Allison 2009, p. 185). Rather passportization was a (convenient) tool that could then be used to justify military intervention (Natoli 2010). Also, Russia may be argued to have abused the rights doctrine which refers to “exercising a right for a purpose other than the purpose for which the right was created” (Kiss 2006). Thus, according to Natoli (2010), by using passportization and the

claim of protecting nationals to militarily intervene in a neighboring state Russia “violated international law and therefore the international community should not recognize Russia’s right to protect the citizens of South Ossetia on the basis of their being Russian citizens” (p. 416).

Furthermore, Russia’s intervention and subsequent recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia had broader geopolitical ambitions, which contradicts the protection of human/citizen rights argument since states cannot intervene in other states to further geopolitical interests under the clout of protecting human rights (Allison 2009; Littlefield 2009, p. 1471; Mühlfried 2010, p. 13). The mass conferral of citizenship was part of a longer process of gaining effective control in contested territories by creating a legal relationship between Russia, the naturalized persons, and the territory where they lived (Artman 2013). Russia’s relations with Abkhazia and South Ossetia were based on security and geopolitical considerations. Russia feared the “Adjara scenario” in Abkhazia or South Ossetia resulting in a change in the status quo, and “turning Abkhazians and South Ossetians into Russian citizens seemed to offer a way of consolidating Russia’s informal grip on the *de facto* states” (Artman 2013, p. 689). Thus, even though Russia’s actions may not have been legal under international law, they nevertheless were effective in meeting its goals (Littlefield 2009, p. 1475).

Allison (2009) maintains that Russia by using normative and legal arguments concerning the protection of citizens abroad was able to challenge the interpretation of customary international law, particularly in the post-Soviet space. This has resulted in possible new pathways in changing Russia’s (and the world’s) understanding of sovereignty and territorial integrity. Particularly, the defense of citizens abroad argument to support these citizens’ right to not only internal self-determination but also external self-determination undermines the principle of territorial integrity in neighboring states (Allison 2009, p. 186). Allison further argues that Russia’s actions and justifications were used to test international reaction and to become a norm entrepreneur in relativizing the idea of territorial sovereignty to its benefit. The limited nature of international condemnation

(including sanctions) clearly emboldened Russia's subsequent interventions in Ukraine in 2014.

While exact numbers are unavailable, Russia distributed passports in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine prior to the annexation/integration of Crimea (Artman 2014; Cuvelier 2018; Grigas 2016). That said, note that passportization can be both an argument for intervention and a consequence of it. The latter was the case in Crimea, where passportization largely occurred after its annexation/integration (TASS 2014) when all permanent residents in Crimea were recognized as Russian citizens (Open Society Justice Initiative 2018). Thus, the defense of citizens justification is not fully applicable to Crimea. Rather, the post-facto distribution of passports has helped entrench Russian presence in the peninsula.

Russia has continued to distribute passports in Eastern Ukraine, particularly after April 2019 when President Putin simplified naturalization procedures for residents of Donetsk and Lugansk. This simplification resulted in half a million Ukrainians naturalizing in 2019, almost double that of 2018 (Burkhardt 2020). Russia argues that this initiative is humanitarian and aims to facilitate mobility for those who are unable to renew their Ukrainian passports, but both Ukraine and the European Union have condemned these actions (Burkhardt 2020). Thus, while Russia has not officially intervened militarily in Eastern Ukraine and stands by the Minsk process, the ongoing passportization does not exclude an Abkhazia/South Ossetia or Crimea scenario in the region.

Summary

While passportization itself may not be illegal, as discussed, what is important are its repercussions. The literature shows that passportization has become an important (but not the only) soft-power tool used to entrench Russia's presence in contested territories (Allison 2009; IIFMCG 2009a, b; Illarionov 2009; International Crisis Group 2008). Particularly, passportization has become part of the repertoire of patron state

support of de facto states. However, as argued by Nagashima (2019), passportization policy has not been uniform and has been applied reactively based on domestic and geopolitical developments. As observed in Abkhazia and South Ossetia (unlike Transnistria), passportization provided a *casus belli* for foreign intervention since Russia could use the justification of protection of citizens to infringe the territorial integrity of Georgia (Artman 2013, pp. 691–692; IIFMCG 2009b, pp. 288–289; Littlefield 2009, pp. 1462–1463). Thus, passportization was used to infringe upon state sovereignty and undermine the *de jure* sovereign's attempt to consolidate its territory (Littlefield 2009, p. 1473; Mühlfried 2010, p. 12). This tool was used to create exceptional spaces and transform contested territories into “de facto ‘Russian’ spaces” even before military intervention (Artman 2013, pp. 682–684; Littlefield 2009, p. 1474), with Russia's borders becoming blurred by weakening the connection between territory and citizenship (Mühlfried 2010, p. 12), and thus challenge the existing citizen-state-territory relationship.

Given the limited international condemnation, Russia's actions may embolden it and other states in the future to use passportization as a precursor for intervention and could provide a justification for Russia to militarily intervene in Transnistria or Eastern Ukraine. Alternatively, passportization maybe a “safe”/legal middle-ground for states wishing to maintain influence in their neighborhood, without outright military interventions (as seen by the current case of Transnistria or Eastern Ukraine) (Burkhardt 2020).

Cross-References

- ▶ [Collective Security and Collective Responsibility in International Interventions](#)
- ▶ [Georgian-Abkhaz Conflict](#)
- ▶ [Moldova-Transnistria Conflict](#)
- ▶ [R2P and Prevention](#)
- ▶ [Russia and Frozen Conflicts in the Post-Soviet Space](#)
- ▶ [Secession and Self-Determination](#)
- ▶ [Statehood Conflicts](#)

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Popular Protest

► Popular Protest in Palestine

Popular Protest in Palestine

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Synonyms

[Anti-colonial struggles](#); [BDS](#); [Civil resistance](#); [Israeli occupation](#); [Liberation struggles](#); [Palestine](#); [Popular protest](#); [Unarmed resistance](#)

Introduction

Defenders of Israel's expropriation of Palestinian lands rely on various narratives to legitimize their territorial expansion and associated dispossession of Palestinians. One of the dominant motifs upon which they have relied is that of Palestinians as barbaric terrorists that threaten the security of the Jewish people living within Israel (Shehada 2020). There has been a long history of unarmed Palestinian resistance to the Zionist project, and it is the aim of this chapter to outline the main features of this history, from its first manifestations in the late nineteenth century up until the recent past.

Palestinian Resistance to the Establishment of the Israeli State, 1880–1948

In this section we trace the thread of Palestinian unarmed resistance against the expropriation of their land and the threat to their livelihoods posed by Jewish migration prior to the establishment of the state of Israel. What becomes clear is that the struggle against the Zionist project during the latter years of the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century was dogged right from the start by factionalism and division, which reflected in part the fractured nature of Palestinian society. This handicap was exacerbated by the weakness of external sources of support.

Palestinian Protest Against Jewish Immigration Under the Ottomans

Jewish migration to Palestine, in order to establish a homeland, commenced in the 1880s, at which time the Jewish community in Palestine numbered around 24,000, 5% of an estimated overall population of 500,000. By the end of the second wave of Zionist-inspired immigration in 1914 their number had risen to 85,000 (Mandel 1976, p. xxiv). As early as 1886, there were reports of clashes between the newcomers and the peasants evicted from the newly purchased land (Kayyali 1970, p. 10). Palestine at that time was part of the Ottoman Empire, and as early as 1891 Palestinian notables were voicing their protests in petitions to the capital, Constantinople.

By the end of the Ottoman period of rule, a pattern of protest had formed. The traditional landowning families saw Zionism as a threat to their position and responded by appealing to the authorities, as came naturally to those whose traditional role in the patron-client structure that characterized Palestinian society was to act as intermediary between the Ottoman authorities and the ruled. The more polemical forms of protest (newspaper articles, leaflets, and the like) were the domain of the middle-class professionals, particularly journalists and students who were most vocal in their opposition, the more directly confrontational modes of protest aimed at disrupting the territorial acquisitions of the incomers, which was primarily the response of those who were the direct victims of Zionist land purchases – the peasantry (Rigby 2010, p. 6). As Kayyali (1970, p. 61) has summarized the situation prior to the establishment of British military rule in Palestine in 1917:

within the ranks of the nationalist movement in Palestine, the notables performed the role of the diplomats; the educated middle classes that of the articulators of public opinion; and the peasants that of the actual fighters in the battle against the Zionist presence.

British Military Administration, 1917–1920

In November 1917, the British government affirmed in the Balfour Declaration its support for the establishment of a homeland for the Jews in Palestine, provided that nothing should be done to prejudice “the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine” (Khalidi 1997, p. 65). When news of the declaration reached the Palestinians, it led to a new awareness of the need to organize. A Muslim-Christian Association (MCA) was established as a counter to Jewish organizations, with branches around the country alongside new youth clubs and other organizations. There were renewed campaigns in the local press urging people not to sell land to the Jewish migrants, and a national day of protest to mark the first anniversary of the Balfour Declaration was held on November 2, 1918. A few days earlier, the British military commander, Allenby, had announced the

establishment of an interim military administration over Palestine following the defeat of the Ottoman Empire.

At this time the Arabs still believed they had an assurance from the British about self-government, and there was considerable support among the Palestinian political elite for a union with Syria under the rule of Sharaf Hussein’s son Faisal. Therefore, a formal announcement on February 27, 1920 that Britain intended to implement the Balfour Declaration provoked a number of demonstrations, with businesses closing down and protest petitions handed in to the authorities by representatives of the various MCAs (Porath 1974, p. 96.). The proclamation of Faisal as King of the Arab Kingdom of Syria, a few days later on March 7, 1920, was the occasion for another series of demonstrations in Palestine. The protests spilled over into violence, with attacks on Jewish passersby and stores and open threats to use force as a means of preventing the realization of the Zionist project. The following month, on April 4, 1920, there were further disturbances with clashes that left a number of Arabs and Jews dead and several hundred wounded (Porath 1974, p. 97).

British Mandate in the 1920s

Once the British received the League of Nations Mandate, the focus of Palestinian pressure was to convince their new rulers to abandon their commitment to a Jewish national home. However, the efficacy of their entreaties, deputations, petitions, and protest actions was weakened by a number of factors, not least the fractures within the Palestinian political elite and the society as a whole.

Examining the first decade of British civilian rule in Palestine through the prism of unarmed resistance a number of features become apparent.

1. “Spontaneous” clashes between peasantry and Jewish settlers – for the peasantry who experienced eviction through Jewish land purchases, the immediate response was anger and resentment that could lead to clashes with those directly responsible for their dispossession. But these clashes were localized. At no point were there serious attempts to create a nation-

wide movement of active resistance based on the peasantry.

2. The absence of a national leadership – the main reasons for the failure to develop a truly active national movement were twofold. First, the world view of the peasantry was very localized. They had no experience of coordinating collective action with those beyond their own village. Secondly, there was no “national leadership” to lead and direct them along such a path. There was a major fracture between two of the most notable and influential Jerusalem-based families, the Husaynis and the Nashashibis, which militated against the emergence of a unified leadership. Furthermore, the urban political elite and the peasantry occupied completely different life worlds. In the words of Sayigh (1979, pp. 14–15),

Not only did the indigenous ruling class have no experience of mass leadership, but the individual notable would never attempt such a course since it would only jeopardise his access to government, and it was on this access that his influence and status depended. (Sayigh 1979, pp. 14–15)

3. The commitment to negotiation – throughout the Mandate period, the main impulse of the Palestinian political elite was to continue in the role they had traditionally performed under the Ottomans by representing their own interests and those of their clients to the authorities. They were most at home as members of delegations to the British or the League of Nations, demanding the revocation of the Balfour Declaration, an end to Jewish migration and land purchases, and the establishment of representative self-government in Palestine.
4. Symbolic and polemical resistance – in the absence of any national-level popular movement of unarmed resistance, there was a plenitude of collective forms of symbolic and polemical protest (Rings 1982, p. 153 & 162). Regular items in the press urged people to oppose the Zionist attempts to establish a homeland in Palestine. Imams spread the message at Friday prayers in the mosques. Strike days were observed to mark the anniversary of the Balfour Declaration and commemorate other days of national historical significance (see chapter ► “Nonviolence and Civil Resistance”).
5. The timidity of the Palestinian political elite – in 1922, the British announced plans to establish a legislative council with very limited powers. At a congress held in Nablus in August 1922, it was resolved to boycott the upcoming elections. The boycott was effective, and the legislative council never met. But when, in the spring of 1923, it was proposed that leverage should be exerted on the British by withholding tax payments, this was rejected by the landowners who feared the punitive fines and other sanctions the British threatened to impose.
6. The slippery slope from unarmed protest to violence – whenever large numbers of Palestinians were mobilized for protest marches and the like, there was an ongoing risk of violence erupting. In 1921 there were riots in Jaffa which spread to other parts of the mandate territory. Order was eventually restored, leaving nearly a hundred dead and over two hundred wounded, Palestinians and Jews alike. However, it is relevant to note that the disturbances shook the British authorities, who determined to limit the rate of Jewish migration, which resulted in several years of relative quiet between 1922 and 1928.
7. Religion and resistance – the calm of those years 1922–1928 was superficial, nothing had changed in terms of the basic dynamics and the threat to the Palestinians, and it did not take much to spark off another round of clashes. Through 1928 religious tensions had been rising as the Jews sought to extend their right to worship at the Western Wall, just adjacent to the al-Haram ash-Sharif housing the Al Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock. Rumors abounded that the Jews had designs on the space. On August 15, 1929, Zionist extremists at the Western Wall provoked a counter-demonstration by Palestinians. The perceived threat to one of their most sacred spaces enabled the Palestinian leadership to cast the struggle in a religious light, and thereby mobilize those who had remained untouched by secular appeals to nationalism. The next

Friday, August 23, 1929, worshippers emerging from Al Aqsa Mosque attacked the Jewish Quarter in the Old City. The violence spread, with the Palestinian political leadership remaining aloof. The next day 67 Jews had been slaughtered in Hebron, despite the efforts of many Palestinian families who opened their homes to shelter Jewish residents of the city, thereby saving over 400 lives (Omer-Man 2011). The final death toll was 133 Jews and 116 Arabs, with over 500 wounded.

1930–1936: From Unrest to the First Palestinian Uprising

The harsh measures meted out by the British in the aftermath of the 1929 clashes, with collective punishments on whole villages and neighborhoods, caused added bitterness and strengthened the hand of those calling for violence. The tension continued to rise through the 1930s, with a worsening economic situation and the suffering of the Palestinians exacerbated by the rising tide of Jewish immigration, new land purchases, and the Jewish boycott of Arab labor. Clashes between Palestinians and Jews increased in frequency and seriousness, and on April 20, 1936, the call went out for a national strike. To enhance coordination an Arab Higher Committee (AHC) was formed with Haj Amin Husayni at its head. This was the start of the first Palestinian Uprising which lasted from 1936 to 1939 (see chapter ► “Nonviolence and Civil Resistance”).

The Palestinian Revolt, 1936–1939

There were two phases to the uprising. The first lasted for 6 months from April to October 1936. This was a period when the dominant forms of resistance were overwhelmingly unarmed: protest marches and demonstrations, strikes and boycotts, and noncooperation and civil disobedience. These were complemented by attempts to involve wider constituencies of support such as the leaders and the citizens of neighboring Arab states. By July, the Nablus district was in full revolt, with Nablus at the center. Matters were far beyond the control of the nominal Palestinian political leadership, who were coming under increasing pressure from citrus-growers to end the strike so that the

citrus harvest could be gathered (Kayyali, p. 292). The problem was how to find a face-saving way out so that it did not appear as if the leadership was submitting to the threats of the British. It was agreed that if the Arab leaders issued an appeal to end the strike, then their wishes would be followed. The appeal was duly made on October 10, 1936, and the AHC called for an end to the strike that same day.

Following the cessation of the strike, the British appointed a Commission of Inquiry led by Lord Peel. Its report, published in July 1937, proposed partition and was rejected out of hand by the AHC. Then on September 26, 1937, a British district commissioner was assassinated in Nazareth. The British responded quickly, outlawing the AHC and arresting its members. This marked the outbreak of the second phase of the uprising. A protest strike was called and by mid-October, armed bands were roaming the countryside attacking Jewish settlements, destroying railway stations and cutting communication lines. Jewish paramilitary groups such as Irgun responded in kind. According to one British official, “[b]y September 1938 the situation was such that civil administration and control of the country was, to all practical purposes, non-existent” (Porath 1977, p. 238). However, with the passage of time the uprising began to degenerate on the Palestinian side into an internecine struggle. A British teacher based in Bir Zeit observed that in early 1939,

the rebellion seemed now to be turning into a struggle between the two Arab political parties: the Mufti’s faction, who had organised it and who commanded the loyalty of the great majority of Arabs, and the Nashashibis, who hoped to get the power away from them by making up to the British.

More and more the rebellion was tending to degenerate from a national movement into squabbles between rival rebel bands. Bir Zayt, like many other villages, was no little better than a hornets’ nest of long-standing family feuds, stirred up afresh in the hope of getting some advantage through the help of this or that party of rebels. (Porath 1977, pp. 254–255)

When one looks at the key factors that led to the collapse of the uprising we encounter once again the fundamental weaknesses that undermined the Palestinian struggle.

1. The vested interests of the notable families in Palestine meant that as the revolt intensified, so their paramount aim became one of defending their property, wealth, status, and influence. They prioritized the protection of their personal and family interests above that of the nation.
2. To a significant degree the dominant political class that comprised the Palestinian leadership believed it was imperative to maintain good relations with the British mandate administration, so that they might exercise their powers of persuasion at negotiating tables. Again and again, representations were made to the British, delegations sent to London, and memoranda scripted. They failed to grasp the absolute commitment of the British to the Zionist project of establishing a Jewish national home in Palestine.
3. The economic impact of the general strike was limited in part because there was a whole sector of society (the Jewish) that continued to work and provide for the basic needs of their population. The real suffering was borne by the strikers themselves.
4. The Palestinians suffered from a severe asymmetry of leverage power, which they were unable to rectify. Their appeals for intervention from Arab and Muslim leaders beyond Palestine fell on deaf ears.
5. Brutal suppression of the revolt by the British was extreme and Palestinian paid high price for the revolt (see chapter ► [“Nonviolence and Civil Resistance”](#)).

The Period of Partition: 1939–1949

The British declared war on Germany on September 3, 1939. In Palestine the Arab population was relatively quiescent. The members of the AHC were in exile or jail, and the local-level cadres who were not in prison were exhausted and demoralized. The Jewish population in Palestine was driven by concern about the plight of the Jewish population in Europe. They were encouraged by their leadership to volunteer for the British military, and the Hagana (Defence) force coordinated its actions with the British forces, while using every opportunity to build up its infrastructure and resources.

By 1945, the British were exhausted and war weary. The Jews, on the other hand, were desperate to channel every possible Jewish refugee from Europe to Palestine in order to create facts on the ground and prove the necessity of a Jewish homeland. Much to their anger, the British stood by their pre-war commitment to maintain quotas on immigration, which provoked a violent reaction from the Jews. A state of emergency was declared and around 100,000 British troops were stationed in Palestine to combat the threat of Jewish armed struggle (Darweish and Rigby 2015). On February 25, 1947, the British announced they were handing over the responsibility of Palestine to the United Nations (UN). During June and July of that year, the UN Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) carried out its enquiries. It was boycotted by the Arab League, which had been established in 1945 and to whom the enfeebled AHC had handed over its negotiating rights. On August 1947, UNSCOP issued its majority report recommending partition, and on November 2, the UN General Assembly passed Resolution 181 in favor of partition. The Jews were delighted and the Arabs were appalled. Fighting began almost immediately, and what followed in the subsequent months was a slow degeneration into civil war.

By the end of October 1948, the Israeli army controlled 77 percent of the former Palestinian territory. A final comprehensive ceasefire was agreed on January 7, 1949, and over the following months a series of armistice lines were agreed between Israel and its Arab neighbours setting borders which were to last virtually unchanged until 1967. The defeat for the Palestinians was total. Over 400 villages had been destroyed or rendered uninhabitable. Around 75–80% of the Palestinian population had been displaced and dispossessed, and the social, economic, and political fabric of their society destroyed (Pappe 2006, p. 131). The Gaza Strip was under Egyptian military rule, while Jordan annexed the West Bank. In the new state of Israel all immigration restrictions were lifted for Jews, who flooded in and took over the properties of their previous Palestinian owners. Israel celebrated victory while the Palestinians mourned the catastrophe (Nakbha) that had overcome them.

Reviewing this period of partition, it seems as if the fate of the Palestinians had moved out of their hands. Bigger forces were at play – the British, the United Nations, and a vigorous and driven Zionist movement whose goal, a Jewish state, was acknowledged as legitimate by the major powers of the USA and the Soviet Union. The Palestinians had emerged from the 1936–1939 revolt exhausted and demoralized, divided and dispirited. They handed over their representation in the international arena to the newly formed Arab League, but their Arab neighbors faced their own challenges as newly independent states and failed dismally to live up to the trust invested in them by their Palestinian cousins. It is almost as if the Palestinian experience of these years followed the pattern of a Greek tragedy, where the tragic outcome is an inevitable result of the protagonists' weaknesses.

Palestinian Resistance, 1948–1987

The Lost Years of the 1950s

Between the disaster of 1948 and the establishment of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in 1964 there was virtually no significant public manifestation of Palestinian resistance of any sort and most form of resistance they expressed was quiet and hidden in its nature. The reasons for this are not hard to find:

1. Dispersal, dispossession, and division – Palestinian society had been devastated and fragmented by the defeats of 1947–1948, which were in fact the culmination of a long chronology of failure.
2. The trauma of loss – while they were scattered and separated from each other, Palestinians were also disempowered by the deep trauma and shock suffered by those with a deep attachment to place who found themselves uprooted, no longer a majority in their own homeland but relegated to minority and subordinate status in states that were not their own.
3. Faith in pan-Arabism – another reason the Palestinians were so quiescent through the 1950s was their identification with the ideology of pan-Arabism.
4. The priority of economic survival – for most Palestinians reduced to poverty and subordinate status in their new anomic conditions, the priority was survival, particularly economic survival.

Palestinians in Israel: Quiet Forms of Resistance

After the establishment of the state of Israel, about 160,000 Palestinians remained within the borders of the newly established state living as an alien group within the land that was once their own (Darweish 2020). They witnessed the destruction of their socioeconomic institutions and way of life and were subjected to military rule for almost two decades. In many ways they were a “forgotten people” but it would be wrong to view them as mere passive victims of fate during those first decades of life in the new state of Israel. They engaged initially in quiet forms of resistance to preserve what autonomy they could find as they strove to survive in the face of the harsh living conditions that accompanied their displacement and dispossession.

In many ways, the Arab minority within Israel in the years immediately following the Nakbha could be depicted as what Bayat has called a “social nonmovement,” or “collective actions of noncollective actors” (Bayat 2013, p. 15). Types of “quiet resistance” activities were undertaken by individuals and their families rather than by unified groups:

1. Determination to stay in on their homeland – the destruction of hundreds of entire villages and the accompanying infrastructure resulted in a humanitarian crisis. Perhaps the “quietest” form of resistance was the determination and resilience of the Palestinians to stay in their homeland whatever the suffering incurred (Darweish 2020).
2. Resistance through cultivation – large areas of land were confiscated or designated as closed military areas to which entry by Palestinians were restricted. However, local people found ways to circumvent the restrictions in order to

cultivate the land to which they retained access as they were aware that Israel would confiscate any land left uncultivated.

3. Culture, identity, and resistance – Palestinians in Israel expressed to the occupation by various forms of symbolic resistance aimed at preserving their culture and identity. In 1949, the village of Umm al-Fahim was handed over to Israel by the Jordanian forces. The residents were then instructed to celebrate the arrival of the Israeli army through singing and dancing. As an expression of resistance and defiance of this, older women sang songs expressing their sorrow and anger rather than joy. This was an early instance of the manner in which Palestinians in Israel expressed their opposition to the Israeli military rule through songs and other cultural forms of resistance. The Arab and Palestinian culture became a means to highlight their national identity (Darweish and Sellick 2017).
4. Resistance to restrictions on movement – Israel imposed curfews and other measures as a way of controlling the movement of Arab residents. In response the targets of such measures explored ways to bypass the controls (see chapter ▶ “Nonviolence and Civil Resistance”).

The Emergence of the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Israeli Occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, 1964–1987

In 1950, Yasser Arafat, a student in Cairo, set up a “Union of Palestinian Students” with some friends. A short while later in Beirut a medical student, George Habash, set up another student group, the “Arab National Movement.” Grass-roots organizations were also being established in the Gaza Strip, and by the mid-1950s there was the beginning of a network of nationalist organizations, all of them very small and weak. It was out of this network that the main resistance organization, *Fatah*, emerged and became the dominant force within the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) which was formed in 1964. In 1967, the debacle of the “Six-Day War” and the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza rang the death knell of the Palestinian faith in

pan-Arabism as a vehicle for liberation and boosted the fortunes of *Fatah*, which became the prime agency of the Palestinian national movement.

Looking back on the period prior to the first intifada through the lens of unarmed popular resistance, a number of features can be highlighted:

1. The glorification of armed struggle – it was with the rise of *Fatah* and the PLO that we witness the growth of the iconic figure of the Palestinian fighter with a Kalashnikov rifle that became the symbol of Palestinian resistance in subsequent decades. A Palestinian state was to be achieved through “armed struggle,” and the gun became the symbol of power and resistance.
2. Palestinians as victims – Palestinian history was presented as a narrative of heroic struggle against Zionism and by a people betrayed by traditional leaders and perfidious Arab states. One consequence of this worldview was that in the context of such asymmetric power relationships, the Palestinians could be absolved from responsibility for their failures.
3. The portrayal of defeat as triumph – Rashid Khalidi has pointed to a related peculiarity of the Palestinian experience: the manner in which failures came to be portrayed as victories, or at least as heroic perseverance against impossible odds (Khalidi 1997, p. 196).
4. Shifts in the Palestinian political center of gravity – during the years when the PLO, and *Fatah* in particular, was a burgeoning force, the Palestinian political center of gravity shifted. After 1967, the move was from the territories that were once part of the Palestine Mandate to the refugee communities and camps in Jordan, and after 1970 to Lebanon. It was the refugees who were seen by the PLO as potential recruits for the armed liberation struggle. This focus on the refugees distanced the PLO from the Palestinians in the occupied territories, a separation heightened by the problems of communication after the 1967 war and the ensuing Israeli occupation.

Palestinians in Israel: From Quiet Resistance to Audible Protest

By early 1960s, Palestinians in Israel started to move on from quiet and to a large extent hidden forms of resistance to more audible and open forms of protest and resistance. The overt purpose of the military rule was to maintain political and social segregation and control of the Arab community in Israel. The only political party that sought to involve both Jewish and Arab members as equals was the Israeli Communist Party (ICP) which was established in 1948. The ICP was a key vehicle for early campaigns against the restrictions and discriminatory practices imposed on the Arab population within Israel. As such the ICP and Al Arad movement played an important role not only in the struggle for full equality for the Arab minority but also in the maintenance of an Arab national identity and consequently they became the political home of leading Arab intellectuals, writers, and poets.

The 1967 war and Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip had the paradoxical effect of uniting Palestinians from both sides of the Green Line after years of separation. It enabled Palestinians in Israel to renew family relations and commercial links that had been severed since 1948, but this new situation also exposed Palestinians in Israel to the Palestinian national movement and its PLO-led struggle in the occupied Palestinian territory. In addition, Palestinians who had been living outside Israel had their first opportunities to understand the experience of Palestinians living within the state. This so-called "reunification" led to growing recognition of Palestinians' shared but differentiated history, as well as to a burgeoning consciousness of the Palestinian national identity they held in common (Şâyigh 1997; Rouhana and Sabbagh-Khoury 2011).

1. During the 1970s, Palestinians in Israel witnessed the emergence of new movements and civil society organizations which sought to articulate and represent their interests. One of the many groups that emerged was the National Committee for the Defence of Arab Lands (NCDAL) which was formed in 1975 as

a coalition of various political groupings and community-based organizations in an effort to oppose land confiscations by the state. The NCDAL called for the first national strike by Palestinians in Israel on "Land Day" on March 30, 1976, during which six protesters were killed by the Israeli police (Darweish and Sellick 2017). After years of military rule and relatively quiet resistance, Land Day represented the first act of mass, organized, civil resistance by the Palestinians inside Israel against discrimination and the ongoing expropriation of their land.

After years during which Palestinians had been effectively ostracized by the PLO leadership and Arab states, the Land Day protests marked a significant acknowledgment that the Palestinian minority within Israel was part of the Palestinian nation. Their acts of hidden, uncoordinated, and quiet resistance against military rule and oppression had been transformed into new forms of open, widespread, organized, and nonviolent resistance that Israel, the PLO, and the Arab states could no longer ignore.

Palestinians in the Occupied Territories Prior to First Intifada

The message for the Palestinians in the occupied territories embodied in all these developments became clear: stay steadfast and eventually you will be liberated as a consequence of the pressure generated by the PLO and its allies outside. In essence their allotted role was a passive one. In truth, the space available for organizing any form of collective resistance to the occupation was severely circumscribed. Any signs of opposition to the occupation met with severe repression by Israel.

The emergence of any coordinated leadership that could organize resistance to the occupation within the Palestinian territories was hampered by the Israeli tactic of deporting any suspected resistance leader, but it was also exacerbated by the suspicions of the external PLO leadership regarding potential rivals to its own leadership position. Denied the opportunity to express themselves openly in any overtly political organization,

activists within the occupied territories established other vehicles for education and mobilization. Student and professional associations, trade unions, women's societies, social and cultural associations, and other grassroots organizations were formed. They served as agencies for both offensive and constructive resistance – organizing and mobilizing the people while also providing the basic services that were not provided by the Israeli occupiers. As a consequence, these grassroots organizations gained the allegiance of the majority of the Palestinian population, and as such constituted the nucleus of an alternative structure of authority and power to rival that of Israeli military government [see chapter ► [“Women’s Community Peacebuilding in the Occupied Palestinian Territories \(OPT\)”](#)].

In 1987 the Palestinian Communist Party was finally admitted into the ranks of the PLO. This display of unity provided a necessary basis for coordination and cooperation between the different nationalist factions within the occupied territories which became manifest with the outbreak of the first intifada.

The First Intifada: December 1987–October 1991

In looking at the first intifada through the lens of popular unarmed resistance it is useful to distinguish two phases – from late 1987 through to early 1990, and the subsequent period through to the Madrid Peace Conference of October 1991.

Phase One: December 1987–1990: Horizontal Escalation of the Struggle

The outbreak of the uprising came as a surprise to the leadership of the PLO in their headquarters in Tunis. They were even more surprised by its scale and its coordinated nature. This was achieved through the creation of a Unified National Command (UNC) representing the different political factions. This clandestine body attempted to coordinate the resistance through regular communiqués and leaflets. The UNC was supported by an organizational infrastructure of popular committees which were formed in villages, towns, and refugee

camp, and together they took on the character of an embryonic state – coordinating activities and administering the provision of basic services. With such an organizational framework, organically linked to the different sections of Palestinian society, the months following the outbreak of the intifada saw a mass social mobilization – a horizontal escalation of the struggle which embraced all sectors of society.

The authority of the UNC and the popular committees was revealed during the first phase of the intifada by the solidarity of the response to strike calls and the instructions to merchants to restrict their opening hours to the mornings on nonstrike days. Moreover, as part of its attempt to undermine the authority of the Israeli occupiers, the UNC called on all those Palestinians who worked for the Israeli administration to resign. Those who ignored such instructions faced sanctions. Palestinians referred to this process as “cleaning out our national home” (Rigby 1997) (see chapter ► [“Nonviolence and Civil Resistance”](#)).

Less visible than the confrontations was the constructive work that was integral to the first phase of the intifada. As people began to suffer economic hardship as a consequence of the calls to disengage from the Israeli economy, the loss of income through strikes, and the boycott of Israeli produce, so families began to develop their household economy in their efforts to become more self-reliant, cultivating vegetable plots and rearing poultry. Women's committees were particularly active in promoting new forms of home-based economic activity. Homes were also the base for the clandestine education classes that were held as a means of countering the Israeli closure of schools and colleges.

In 1989 a Palestinian political activist in a refugee camp in the West Bank gave voice to the sense of solidarity and hope for the future he was feeling during what was the height of the popular unarmed resistance:

Everyone helps each other . . . all the people have the same way now, the same struggle against the occupation – from the children to the old men, all the same, they want to get rid of the occupation. One soul through many bodies, through many voices (Rigby 1991, p. 41).

Phase Two: Post-1990 Deterioration

By the summer of 1990 it was clear that much of the vigor and drive of the uprising had gone. There were a number of reasons for this:

1. The relative failure of disengagement and non-cooperation – Palestinians hoped that by their direct opposition and noncooperation they would raise the costs of the occupation to such a level that the Israelis would consider withdrawing. The weakness was that historically Israel has sought the territory of the Palestinians, not the people. In a nutshell, Israel did not require Palestinian cooperation to maintain the occupation, and this seriously weakened the impact of the unarmed resistance.
2. The escalating costs of resistance – furthermore, it turned out that in many ways the Palestinians were more dependent on Israel than the other way round. Israel could find replacements for the Palestinians who withdrew their labor, the Palestinians could not find alternative sources of employment and income. Moreover, Israel remained the only source for many of the basic necessities of life within the occupied Palestinian territories. Therefore, as the months passed the costs of resistance borne by everyday Palestinians rose, while Israel showed no weakening of its resolve.
3. The weakness of “shame power” and the appeal of “vertical escalation” – were two dimensions to the Palestinian leverage power in relation to the Israeli public – the attempt to convert and persuade by means of their preparedness to suffer for their just cause (shame power) and the attempt to force Israel to consider withdrawal by increasing the costs of continued occupation. Unfortunately, these two dimensions – conversion and coercion – do not rest easily together. Thus, the vulnerability to shame power of the many liberal Israelis uneasy about the morality of occupation could be (and was) negated by any act of Palestinian violence resulting in injury and death for Israelis. The dominant emotion within Israel, then as now, was fear, and any act of violence triggered that fear of a people surrounded by hostile neighbors who believe that their very survival as a nation and a state depends on the maintenance of their military strength and to show signs of weakness would be suicidal (see chapter ► [“Pacifism and Peace”](#)).
4. The fragmentation of resistance and the weakening of political control – one of the strengths of the intifada lay in the coordination between the different political factions achieved through the UNC and the popular committees’ structure. However, by 1990 not only were the tensions between the different factions increasing in the light of the perceived weaknesses of the unarmed struggle and the temptations of vertical escalation, but the majority of the experienced cadres who had been able to maintain cohesion in the struggle had been apprehended and imprisoned (or deported) by the Israelis.
5. Third parties and the impact of external events – Palestinians lacked the resources to affect the self-interest of the USA and other international actors and thereby push them to intervene constructively in the conflict. This was highlighted by the American response to Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, which led directly to the first Gulf War to expel the Iraqis from occupied Kuwait. During this conflagration the hardship and the suffering of the Palestinians intensified, as did their bitterness. By mid-1991, more Palestinians were being killed by their fellow Palestinians than by the Israelis, as anger and resentment turned against those suspected of collaboration and “betrayal” of the uprising (Rigby 1997, p. 54).

Palestinians in Israel: The Impact of the First Intifada

Palestinians within Israel were quick to show their solidarity with the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip after the outbreak of the first intifada. A general strike was called on December 21, 1987, designated as “peace day.” The Palestinian leadership in Israel issued a statement affirming their engagement: “The events in the

occupied territories directly concern the Arabs in Israel as an inseparable part of the Palestinian people and as citizens of the state of Israel. We proclaim our full solidarity with the struggle of this people, our people, against Israeli occupation” (*Al-Ittihad*, December 20, 1987). The strike call met with a solid response in the Arab towns and villages, accompanied by protest marches and demonstrations that led to clashes with the police and the arrest of over a hundred protesters. The strike actions and demonstrations in support of their compatriots continued throughout the early years of the intifada, with the largest taking place in Nazareth with a reported 50,000 participants (Darweish and Rigby 2015). Support also took on a more substantive form, with a number of the communiqués of the intifada leadership being printed in Arab-owned printshops within Israel. In addition, people organized relief committees for the provision of humanitarian aid and supplies for delivery across the Green Line.

The intifada had a significant impact on the Palestinians within Israel. There was a deep sense of pride and admiration for their fellow nationals resisting the Israeli occupation. It strengthened the sense of shared identity with those living in the occupied territories. It also served as an example and a stimulus for their own struggle, feeding into a new sense of empowerment and solidarity.

The Oslo Process, September 1993–September 2000

In the aftermath of the Gulf War, an attempt was made to kick-start an Arab–Israeli peace process. It commenced in October 1991 with a conference in Madrid which led, eventually, to the September 1993 signing of the Israeli–Palestinian *Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements*, the “Oslo Accords.” The rhetoric of the preamble was, with hindsight, hyperbolic. The reality that unfolded on the ground was a salutary experience for all those who dared to dream of the “just and lasting and comprehensive peace settlement” alluded to in the Declaration. As Derek Brown observed in 1994,

“The Palestinian flag flies over the Gaza Strip and Jericho, but Israel holds the boundaries, dictates the security policy and, to a large extent, controls the economy, of the autonomous areas” (*The Guardian*, July 25, 1994).

What followed was a cycle of violence fueled on the Palestinian side by a growing sense of frustration at the lack of any substantive progress towards the realization of any significant “peace dividend.” It was also driven by those Islamist political groups who considered the Oslo Accords a sellout. On its part, Israel continued to negotiate from its position of strength, imposing its demands on its weaker partner and resorting to targeted assassinations, collective sanctions, new expropriations of land for settlements, and other “facts on the ground,” while ratcheting up the pressure on the Palestinian Authority (PA) to deal with the “terrorists.”

The result was an “Interim Agreement” signed on September 28, 1995 that became known as “Oslo II.” It divided the West Bank into three administrative divisions categorized as Areas A, B and C, each to enjoy a different degree of Palestinian self-government: Area A, covering 4% of the West Bank, was under exclusive Palestinian control. In Area B, covering 25% of the West Bank, Palestinians were to exercise civilian authority while Israel continued to be in charge of security. Area C covered the remaining two-thirds of the West bank and was designated to remain under exclusive Israeli control (Shlaim 2010, p. 202). The combined impact of these developments was to bring about a set of conditions that undermined the possibility of launching any new mass-based unarmed resistance movement against the occupation.

1. The PA that had been tasked by Israel and its international backers with controlling dissent within the Palestinian community. Hence, they were directly involved in maintaining the occupation (Roy 2007, p. 245).
2. The dominant Palestinian political and socio-economic strata were developing vested interests in the status quo of occupation.
3. The breakup of the West Bank into different zones increased the socio-geographical

fragmentation of the Palestinians, not least because of the obstacles to free movement created by the Israeli road-building program.

4. The leverage power over Israel that could be exerted by Palestinian noncooperation was minimal as Israel reduced its reliance on Palestinian labor and markets.
5. There was a lack of potential leaders of any coordinated unarmed popular movement. The cadres from the intifada followed different trajectories, but two career paths were common. Some joined the new PA, while others established or joined nongovernmental organizations concerned with themes like democratization and peacebuilding, invariably funded by foreign donors keen to promote peaceful coexistence (Herzon and Hai 2005).

The Second Intifada

The Al Aqsa Intifada began in September 2000 following Ariel Sharon’s provocative entry into the Haram Al-Sharif area (Temple Mount). But the deeper cause was the buildup of frustration, resentment, and anger resulting from 7 years of a peace process that only served to deepen Palestinian dispossession and deprivation while strengthening the Israeli occupation. The malfunctioning of the PA and the cronyism that was its dominant feature only served to deepen the feeling that “something must be done.”

The rapid militarization of the uprising reflected to some degree the emergence of a younger and more militant generation of cadres who were influenced by the example of Hezbollah in Southern Lebanon, whose guerrilla tactics had succeeded in forcing Israel to withdraw in May 2000. Thus, it was that within a short while every Palestinian faction, secular and Islamic, had spawned its own armed militia, each seeking to contribute to the collapse of the occupation through violent confrontation and armed struggle. Among these, the armed wing of Hamas reemerged and took the fight beyond the borders into Israel itself. The suicide bombings inevitably brought about massive Israeli retaliation. Amidst the carnage and the associated destruction of the

socioeconomic fabric of Palestinian society, there was no space for any large-scale unarmed resistance, by contrast with the first intifada.

The main points of contrast between the first and the second intifada are summarized in the table below (Table 1).

Palestinians in Israel – the Impact of the Second Intifada

On September 30, 2000, the Palestinian leadership in Israel called for a general strike to protest the killing of Palestinians in the Al Aqsa compound in Jerusalem the previous day. Demonstrations spread across the Arab towns and villages in northern Israel over the following days. The response of the Israeli police was harsh. They used live ammunition, resulting in the death of 13 protesters (Darweish 1991). It was as if the Green Line had disappeared. As Graham Usher reported at the time, “what pulled Palestinians out onto the streets of their villages was televised murder – relayed again and again on Arab TV – of 12-year-old Mohamed Al-Dorra at the Netzarim junction in Gaza after 45 minutes of continuous Israeli army fire. And what put rocks into their hands was the lethal response of the

Popular Protest in Palestine, Table 1 Main points of contrast between the first and the second intifada

| First intifada | Second intifada |
|---|--|
| Predominantly unarmed resistance | Predominantly armed/violent resistance |
| Mass civilian involvement | Civilians confined to “support” functions |
| Cohesion and unity via popular committees | Fragmentation with power to local militias |
| Predominantly secular | Enhanced confessional character |
| Attempts to influence Israeli publics through dialogue of words and actions, shame, power, etc. | Attempts to influence Israeli publics through intimidation and fear |
| Active support from Israeli peace groups | Limited role for Israeli peace groups in context of suicide bombings/terror attacks |
| Significant international support and third-party pressure for peace settlement | Particularly after September 11, 2001, resistance viewed through the lens of “war on terror” |

Israeli police, for whom there has never been a Green Line as far ‘their’ Palestinians are concerned” (Usher 2000).

The strength of the response reflected not only the level of support for those Palestinians resisting the occupation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, but it also grew from the deep sense of frustration felt by the Palestinian minority at the discriminatory treatment they experienced as marginalized second-class citizens of Israel. Indeed, the lethal force used by the Israeli police only served to highlight the manner in which the whole community was discriminated against (White 2012, pp. 80–81). As Ilan Pappé (2011, p. 234) noted,

If one can summarize the Palestinian take on what lay behind October 2000, it would be to say that this was an institutional use of state power to deliver a message to a fifth of its population: be docile and accept your status as second-class citizens, or encounter the wrath of the army and security forces.

A new development of this period was the emergence of Israeli solidarity groups composed of Arab and Jewish citizens of Israel opposed to the construction of the separation wall.

The Separation Wall and the Reemergence of Unarmed Popular Resistance

The suicide bombings and associated targeting of Israeli civilians provided the Israeli government with the rationale to justify their decision to embark on the building of a physical wall between the West Bank and Israel “to keep the bombers out” according to Israel’s claim (Darweish and Rigby 2015). Construction commenced in the spring of 2002, and by September 2003 it had become a focus of international attention. It was clear that while the Israeli government justified the wall in terms of the security needs of Israeli civilians, its route was also determined by the desire to expropriate even more Palestinian territory and impose an additional layer of suffering on the Palestinians. Within a very short time it had impacted deleteriously on the lives of tens of thousands of Palestinians who were denied access to their fields, prevented from reaching their

places of work, and forced to travel circuitous routes and negotiate armed checkpoints to get to their land, school, university, or medical center. It was the imposition of such a new, direct, and visible challenge to their well-being that provoked a wave of popular unarmed resistance among those most directly affected.

Looking back over the period of popular resistance between 2003 and 2014, it is clear that at no stage was there anything comparable to a mass movement of protest. What occurred was a series of localized centers of active unarmed resistance against the construction of the wall or the threat of land expropriation from Israeli settlements. At the height of the popular resistance during 2010–2011, there was a maximum of 40–50 villages and neighborhoods where there was some form of organized unarmed resistance against the ongoing occupation (Darweish and Rigby 2015). The centers of resistance changed over time, and as the construction of the wall progressed new “hot spots” emerged. Some of these pockets of resistance, such as Budrus and Bil’in, gained an international profile during the peak of their resistance, but this declined with the passage of time.

In 2013, a senior political figure in the Bethlehem area identified some of the weaknesses of the unarmed protest aimed at ending the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory:

If there was a massive popular resistance, there is a possibility of success. . . . But some of the leaders have a personal interest in the status quo. . . . So this is part of the cycle of mistrust. People want to see their leaders to the fore, as an example to people on the ground. . . . At the moment popular resistance is very localised, every Friday the same few villages, the same thing. It is not popular as it does not include the mass of people. If we were serious we would make life hell for the settlers, blocking the roads, making the soldiers work. That would be popular resistance. (Darweish and Rigby 2015, p. 2.)

Lack of Social Solidarity as Main Reason for Weakness of Contemporary Popular Unarmed Protest

It has become clear to informed observers that a major reason for the weakness of the

recent unarmed resistance to the expansion of the Israeli occupation is the erosion of any significant sense of social solidarity among Palestinians during the first decades of the twenty-first century. There have been many reasons for this deepening of the horizontal and vertical divisions within the Palestinian population, among which are:

1. The geopolitical fracturing that took place as part of the Oslo process with the division of the West Bank into Areas A, B and C
2. The blockages to easy communication and movement between areas – particularly between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip
3. The political fractures – particularly the division between *Hamas* and *Fatah* which reached its nadir in 2007 when *Hamas* took control of the Gaza Strip by force
4. The economic impoverishment of large numbers of Palestinians who can no longer find employment in Israel, resulting in them prioritizing the satisfaction of basic needs above participation in a common struggle for some distant goal like the end of the occupation
5. The widespread disillusionment with the cronism and corruption that has permeated the PA, and which has fed a country-wide lack of trust in those seeking to act as leaders
6. The harsh Israeli punishment and sanctions against the activists in the popular protest against the wall

The Important Role of Third-Party Solidarity: Grounds for Hope

Perhaps the most significant feature of the post-second intifada period of popular resistance has been the increased involvement of “internationals” as accompaniers, coparticipants in actions, and as “activist tourists” expressing their solidarity through their presence. The significance of these overseas activists has been threefold.

1. By their presence they created a kind of protective shield for Palestinian protesters.

2. They established linkages between Palestinians and wider activist networks around the world.
3. On their return home they act as powerful advocates of the Palestinian cause among networks and groupings in their own countries.

One outcome of this trend has been an expansion of the international grassroots movement of solidarity with the Palestinian struggle. This loose “movement of movements” has been one of the prime vehicles for implementing a Palestinian initiative that emerged out of a meeting of Palestinian civil society organizations in July 2005 – the call for a worldwide boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) campaign against Israel (Barghouti 2011).

There would appear to be increasing numbers of people around the world who do think that the continued Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands and the “blockade” and virtual imprisonment of the citizens of the Gaza Strip constitutes a gross and unacceptable violation of basic human rights and international law about which “something must be done” (Darweish and Rigby 2018). In this, there are grounds for hope. On their own the Palestinians lack the leverage power to cause the Israelis to change their stance and seek a substantive and self-sustaining peace, but we have now moved into an age where transnational social movements do exercise an influence on publics around the world and hence upon political leaders and decision-makers (Keck and Sikkink 1999). There is no reason why the BDS campaign and related movements should not grow into such a force for change (Darweish and Rigby 2018).

Cross-References

- ▶ [Conflict Fieldwork](#)
- ▶ [Nonviolence and Civil Resistance](#)
- ▶ [Pacifism and Peace](#)
- ▶ [Search for Peace, the](#)
- ▶ [Statehood Conflicts](#)
- ▶ [Women’s Community Peacebuilding in the Occupied Palestinian Territories \(OPT\)](#)

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Post-Conflict Elections

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Definition

Elections are central to peacebuilding, but poorly timed elections may have negative consequences

for the consolidation of both peace and democracy. This chapter examines key issues of electoral timing: how soon to hold elections following hostilities, whether to sequence national- and local-level polls, and which models of electoral system and administration are most appropriate in post-conflict environments.

Since at least the end of the Cold War, elections have been an integral element of post-conflict peacebuilding. Indeed, international norms often seem to consider no other avenues for conferring legitimacy and authority on a new government, and for concluding international support missions. Elections also have broader effects on the post-conflict environment including the development of political parties, government stability, and the reconciliation of former warring groups. Decisions on electoral processes are therefore linked to many of the broader objectives of state reconstruction and liberal peacebuilding.

This chapter provides an overview of the relationship between elections and post-conflict peacebuilding. It will examine the timing of post-conflict elections; the sequencing of local, regional, and national elections; specific electoral systems; and electoral administration. Electoral democracy in any society will be affected by the choices taken in each of these areas. But in a post-conflict environment, the stakes are heightened. Domestic and international actors typically face acute time and resource pressures, with choices in one area constraining or enabling options in another. Policymakers need to be aware of these trade-offs and, importantly, tailor their choices to the specific needs of the situation in order to achieve the best long-term outcomes.

The Challenges of Elections in Post-conflict Countries

Conflict transformation is inherent to the appeal of elections. Elections are not a means of resolving conflicts, but rather of allowing them to be expressed by peaceful and rule-bounded processes. By moving “from bullets to ballots,” elections ideally provide a means of taking social conflicts out of the realm of armed violence and

into institutionalized, constitutional procedures. While peacebuilding is not assured, in theory the application of free elections allows the rule of law to prevail over the rule of the gun.

This approach to conflict transformation helps explain the centrality of elections to post-conflict peacebuilding, but also raises numerous political choices and dilemmas. One is the relationship between the electoral process and a new political order. Should elections precede the writing of a new constitution, so as to confer democratic legitimacy on that process via a widely representative constituent assembly, as was the case in Nepal in 2008 shortly before the monarchy was abolished? Or should they take place only once the rules of the game are clearly established, as argued by reformers in Egypt during the Arab Spring uprising that commenced in 2010, fearful of the likely consequences of Islamist parties gaining power?

These are not abstract questions. In Nepal, successive attempts to agree on a new constitution prior to 2015 were stymied precisely because the electoral process was unable to deliver a workable and cooperative majority in the constituent assembly. In Egypt, after the 2011 revolution and fall of President Hosni Mubarak, liberal groups worried that elections held before a new constitution guaranteeing basic rights and freedoms would lead to the dominance of the Muslim Brotherhood. They were proved all too correct – leading to a 2013 military coup and the return of the generals to power.

International policymakers must also confront the issue of whether to support elections, particularly when international “boots on the ground” are involved via a peacekeeping mission. Timing of the first post-conflict elections is often a particular concern. Because successful elections often form part of an “exit strategy” for international interventions, initial post-conflict elections typically take place within a short-term time frame, reflecting a desire on the part of international actors to disengage from their commitments and demonstrate success to domestic publics (Reilly 2008; Caplan 2012). For instance, the timing of the November 1996 elections in Bosnia, the first to be held under the Dayton Accord, were dictated less by events on the ground than the Clinton

administration's desire to show progress in the Balkans before mid-term elections in the United States (Reilly 2008, 167).

More diffuse temporal concerns also encourage premature elections. Building and consolidating a representative democracy is a long-term process, but the domestic political pressures weighing on states which usually oversee and implement international peacebuilding missions are almost all short term. Quick results are required. An early establishment of home-grown institutions, such as representative legislatures and multi-ethnic peace and security forces, is needed to create both the shell of a functioning state and a legitimate body politic for the international community to deal with. But financial pressures push many electoral assistance missions to scale back their immediate presence and reduce the levels of their assistance as soon as it is minimally feasible to do so (Lyons 2005).

All of this places considerable pressure on the post-conflict election timetable, and frequently leads to elections being held as early as possible in the life of a peacekeeping mission in order to create some kind of legitimate government – a pressure which in Iraq led to elections being held in 2005, in the absence of public security and in the face of a boycott from one of the country's main religious groups, the Sunni. Such “premature” elections have become the norm in post-conflict environments. Researchers have found that the time between a conflict ending and an election has halved since the end of the Cold War: prior to 1989, an average of 5.6 years passed before post-conflict countries held their first election; since 1989, this has fallen to 2.7 years (Brancati and Snyder 2013, 823). During the “electoral boom” of the 1990s and 2000s, most of these post-conflict elections were conducted in states with little or no prior democratic experience, generating lots of activity but limited lasting democratic dividend (Flores and Nooruddin 2016).

A constrained timetable also places great pressure on electoral administration. Elections are extremely complex national events which require the mobilization of the adult citizenry and massive allocations of resources, typically culminating in a

single-day event which affects the entire country. Few other peacetime events are comparable. Meaningful elections also require significant investment of time as well as the human and financial capacity to establish a legal framework; build institutional and administrative structures; design and implement voter education and training programs; identify and procure materials; conduct voter registration, staff polling stations, and counting centers; and of course provide the overarching security needed to implement all of this.

Despite this, both local and international policymakers are often attracted to quick elections in the aftermath of a civil war or other major conflict. This short-term bias leads to several recurring pathologies: premature post-conflict elections typically leave insufficient time for democratic forces to emerge, making it more likely that elections are fought out by nationalist or ethnic parties than by policy-driven ones; undue weight is typically accorded to administrative ease in the choice of electoral systems, with potentially debilitating consequences for accountability and governance; inclusion and descriptive representation are privileged over other goals such as competitiveness and accountability; and questions of longer term governability are too often overlooked.

A striking example of this final problem is the recent proliferation of post-election power-sharing deals struck between warring parties in the aftermath of disputed elections, such as the 2008 deal in Kenya to resolve the political, economic, and humanitarian crisis that erupted after the incumbent Mwai Kibaki was declared president over his opponent Raila Odinga (who eventually became prime minister). After an eruption of violence across the country, a dual-executive system which allowed both men a share in power was enshrined, creating in effect a “semi-presidential” system in which both the president and the prime minister were vested with executive power. Similar arrangements in Zimbabwe in 2009 and more recently in Afghanistan were also makeshift solutions to post-election impasses. These kinds of political fixes themselves often become the subject of dispute in countries with weak institutions and social mistrust. By entrenching political

divisions into the constitution through the creation of dual-executive systems, such approaches privilege short-term fixes to post-election disputes over longer term governability. A clear example was the 2014 pact in Afghanistan between the top vote-getter, Ashraf Ghani, who became president, and Abdullah Abdullah, named as chief executive, following a deeply compromised election which featured fraud on both sides (Mason 2014). Political compromise in such cases comes at the cost of cohesive governance.

Nonetheless, elections remain central to post-conflict peacebuilding, especially in regards to negotiated peace deals in which the international community is involved. A recent survey of such peace agreements found that half of them stipulated elections, mostly within 3 years of the deal but some within a year or less (Caspersen 2017, 110). Domestically, political actors tend to make judgments about the wisdom of early elections based on their perceived prospects and balance of power. For international donors, elections provide a tangible sign of progress, while emerging global norms favoring negotiated settlements and localization of authority in the period following a conflict have also contributed to this trend (Brancati and Snyder 2011).

A key issue is the relationship between repeated elections and post-conflict governance. Some scholars have argued for the idea of “democratization by elections” (Lindberg 2009), in which even flawed and partially competitive elections can, when iterated over time, contribute to greater democratization even under unpropitious circumstances. Africa’s democratic success stories such as Ghana or Senegal are cited as examples, although critics argue that elections per se had little causal impact (Bogaards 2013). In relation to some of the most high-profile cases of post-conflict elections of the past decade such as Iraq and Afghanistan, it could be argued that repeated elections have actually had the opposite effect, with flawed or fraudulent electoral processes contributing to political stalemate, institutional decay, and a growing crisis of governance (Reilly 2013a).

It needs to be stressed that unlike elections in stable established democracies, the purpose of

elections in post-conflict environments is rarely to effect a change in the holders of power. Uncertainty of outcomes, the hallmark of genuinely democratic polls, is often less important than the act of holding the polls themselves. Indeed, genuine uncertainty in terms of who will win elections can be acutely destabilizing in fragile, high-profile contests. Rather, elections are more often of symbolic importance, signaling to both domestic and international audiences that the cloak of legitimate government authority has been restored – an essential step in the process of state reconstruction. By enshrining a political order centered on rules-based competition for office rather than open warfare, elections in post-conflict settings are a means to channel the expression of societal conflicts within formal politics rather than through armed violence.

Timing and Sequencing

Because they play both substantive and symbolic roles, there is nearly always pressure to conduct elections as soon as possible following a period of violent conflict, as noted above. One peace agreement, in the southern Philippines Autonomous Region of Mindanao, called for elections within a week (Caspersen 2017, 82). At the same time, it has become increasingly accepted in the scholarly if not the policy world that early elections held in polarized environments tend to expose deep social cleavages, which can make the process of post-conflict peacebuilding more difficult. Indeed, in some cases, free and fair elections can actually undermine rather than reinforce the development of the post-conflict democratic order (Flores and Nooruddin 2016).

A case in point is Cambodia’s breakthrough 1993 elections conducted by the United Nations Transitional Administration in Cambodia (UNTAC), which was at the time the largest and most ambitious peacekeeping and democratization mission the UN had ever undertaken. After conducting a technically near-faultless election, the realities of power politics were exposed in the immediate post-election period, once it became clear that the incumbent Prime Minister

Hun Sen's party had gained fewer seats than the opposition (51 seats to 58 seats, respectively, in the 120-seat assembly), leaving no party with a working majority. Amid threats of renewed civil war, a hastily brokered deal saw a power-sharing coalition featuring "co-prime ministers" from the two parties installed – an arrangement which proved highly unstable in practice and fell apart completely in 1997, when Hun Sen routed his opponents to claim power alone. By then, UNTAC had long-since departed – it had declared the peaceful holding of the election as evidence of the success of the mission, despite leaving Cambodia a deeply defective quasi-democracy. Hun Sen remains in power to this day (Peou 2004).

This model was to set the stage for subsequent internationally sponsored elections throughout the 1990s. In some cases, such as Bosnia and Kosovo, international forces did not depart following the initial elections, but rather installed themselves as a kind of ongoing quasi-administration. While long-term UN or EU administrations remain in a few hotspots, in most interventions outside Europe, the "minimal security, quick elections, and departure" model was prevalent. This necessitated holding elections relatively early in the post-conflict cycle, giving both domestic and international actors a political and symbolic marker of progress that could be used as the justification to begin turning power over to local forces.

In Iraq, for instance, the rationale to hold quick elections after the US-led invasion of 2002 was both substantive (the need for a Constituent Assembly to draft a new constitution) and symbolic (to demonstrate the validity of the prevailing American policy of transforming Iraq into a bastion of democracy in the Middle East). But significant domestic pressure from local elites, such as Grand Ayatollah Ali Al-Sistani, for national polls to be conducted as quickly as possible led to elections being held in early 2005 in the absence of popular security and in the face of a Sunni boycott – a decision which arguably hindered rather than helped the longer-term process of democratization. A similar combination of local and international pressures was evident in East Timor in 2001, where the UN administrator Sérgio Vieira de Mello was

under pressure from Fretilin, the party of the resistance struggle, to hold elections before other parties could organize to challenge it. The role of local elites is always central to the success of post-conflict democratization (Berdal and Zaum 2012; Zürcher et al. 2013).

Despite such pressures, comparative experience suggests problems with elections held immediately following a conflict, with the partial exception of those accompanied by highly intrusive peacekeeping missions which essentially take over the state (Fortna 2008). Frequently, such elections can become a de facto contest between former warring armies masquerading as political parties. This can hamper the development of peacetime politics in deeply divided societies even years after the war ended – as demonstrated by the regular re-election of ethnic hard-liners in Bosnia, where nationalist parties and elites have not only prospered, but sought to use the democratic process to press for sectarian objectives under the rigid ethnic power-sharing provisions of the Dayton Accord (Hulse 2015).

So when should post-conflict elections be held? An extended process of consultation and local-level peacebuilding, in which some of the real interests and concerns that provoked the conflict are addressed in a step-by-step fashion *before* elections take place, may offer better prospects for a peaceful transition in post-conflict societies. Ideally, a period of 2–3 years between the end of a conflict and the holding of elections should be seen as a minimum, based on the examples of both Kosovo and East Timor, where a multi-year period of transitional administration took place before the first elections were held (Reilly 2008, 2011). This timeline has received support from a study of post-conflict elections, which found that elections held in the first year following a cessation of hostilities drastically shortens the time till conflict relapse, as do elections held in the second year. It was not until 3 years after conflict cessation that elections ceased to impact on conflict recurrence (Flores and Nooruddin 2012).

Such extended international commitment, however, is unrealistic for the majority of post-conflict states (Ponzio 2011). Indeed, pressure to hold elections quickly after peace has been

restored is likely to remain a recurring theme of international interventions. This is in part due to the symbolic issues noted earlier: the “signaling” role of elections remains important for the news media and other Western policy consumers, so the mere holding of elections is usually taken as an indicator of political progress. However, flawed elections can have the reverse effect, as in the 2009 presidential election in Afghanistan where major electoral fraud during Hamid Karzai’s presidency was effectively ignored by the international community, precipitating serious divisions within the UN agencies responsible. This led to a very public disagreement between UN Special Representative to Afghanistan Kai Eide and his deputy, Peter Galbraith, over the UN’s response to fraud in the elections. Galbraith was eventually removed from his position by the Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon. At the same time, the substantive value of providing international actors with a legitimate local counterpart as quickly as possible is undeniable. One recent study found that first elections were more likely to succeed when elements of the new political order, such as transitional power-sharing government or amnesty for past offences, were put in place *before* elections were held (Joshi et al. 2015).

A separate but related issue is the sequencing of national and sub-national elections. Several prominent transitions have chosen to start with municipal elections before national ones, using local polls as a trial run in the hope of privileging bread-and-butter concerns such as service delivery above fraught disputes over history or identity (Paris 2004). In Kosovo, for instance, local elections held soon after the cessation of hostilities in 2000 (less than 1 year after the war concluded) helped weaken the power of parties associated with the Kosovo Liberation Army while strengthening moderates in Ibrahim Rugova’s Democratic League of Kosovo, allowing for the creating of representative municipal assemblies in a first-step towards institution-building (Hysa 2004). Local elections can also provide good tutelage for election officials under less scrutiny than high-profile national elections, where stakes are higher, media attention is greater, and mistakes can quickly escalate into a crisis.

Elsewhere, local consultation processes preceding national elections allowed some breathing room for local and international actors. An example is East Timor’s National Consultative Council (which served as predecessor to the elected Constituent Assembly), held in 1999 in the immediate post-conflict period, two years before national elections, and offered a degree of accountability and representation to the local population. In Afghanistan, the emergency *Loya Jirga* (“Grand Assembly”) held in June 2002 following the overthrow of the Taliban similarly provided a degree of representation without requiring the organization of large-scale elections. By contrast, the 2010 local elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo had little positive impact on the highly flawed presidential elections conducted the following year. And the very act of holding subnational elections before national ones can also strengthen separatist parties with territorial bases, as occurred prior to the breakup of Yugoslavia (Brancati 2009).

This diversity of experience is reflected in the academic literature, with some scholars arguing that holding national elections before regional ones generates incentives for the creation of national, rather than regional, political parties – and hence that the ideal process of election timing is to start at the national level first (Linz and Stepan 1996). Others support holding local elections before national ones as a trial run in the hope of privileging service delivery above fraught disputes over history or identity (Paris 2004). While administratively more difficult, simultaneous national and local elections may be the best option for political development, as they “can facilitate the mutual dependence of regional and national leaders . . . by developing an integrated party system” (Diamond 1999, 158).

Electoral Systems

The choice of electoral system is perhaps the most important institutional decisions that any post-conflict democracy (and indeed any democracy) has to make. Electoral systems are fundamental to the operation and consolidation of democratic governance, having a direct impact on issues

such as the development of the party system, linkages between citizens and their leaders, political accountability, representation, and responsiveness. In post-conflict societies, they can also play a particular role in shaping the incentives facing political actors – for example, the rewards which may accrue to them by choosing to emphasize policy rather than personality in their campaigns, or whether to politicize or downplay ethnic cleavages in their rhetoric – with long-term consequences for the operation and consolidation of democratic governance. These variables make the choice of electoral system one of the most important political decisions taken in the immediate post-war period.

An electoral system is designed to do three main jobs. First, it determines how votes cast are translated into seats won in a legislature, presidency, or other representative body. Second, electoral systems act as the conduit through which the people can hold their elected representatives accountable, allowing more direct or more distant channels of accountability based on their design. Third, different electoral systems present incentives for those competing for power to couch their appeals to the electorate in distinct ways. In post-conflict societies, for example, where language, religion, or ethnicity may represent a fundamental political cleavage, particular electoral systems can reward candidates and parties who act in a cooperative, accommodatory manner to rival groups; or they can instead reward those who appeal only to their own group, which typically leads to problems of ethnic outbidding (Reynolds et al. 2005).

Electoral systems are often categorized according to how proportionately they operate in translating votes cast by electors into seats won by parties. A typical three-way structure divides such systems into plurality-majority, semi-proportional, and proportional representation (PR) systems:

- **Plurality-majority systems** prioritize local representation via the use of small, single-member electoral districts, rather than national-level proportionality. Among such systems are plurality (first-past-the-post), run-off, block, and alternative vote systems.

- By contrast, **proportional representation (PR)** systems use larger multi-member districts and typically deliver more representative outcomes. These include “open” and “closed” versions of party list PR, as well as “mixed-member proportional” and “single transferable vote” systems.
- **Semi-proportional systems** offer other approaches, including the “mixed” models by which part of the parliament is elected via PR and part from local districts, a common choice in many new democracies over the past decade.

One of the great political science debates of the 1990s and 2000s concerned which electoral systems are most appropriate for promoting peaceful politics in divided societies. Two schools of thought predominate. The scholarly orthodoxy has long argued that some form of PR is all but essential if democracy is to survive the travails of deep-rooted divisions. The tendency of PR to produce multi-party systems and hence multi-party parliaments, in which all significant segments of the population can be represented, including women and minorities, is seen as especially important in promoting more consensual post-conflict politics (Lijphart 1995; McEvoy and O’Leary 2014). By contrast, an alternative approach argues for systems which work to break down the political salience of social divisions rather than foster their representation. Examples include majority systems enabling voters to indicate their preference between candidates or that require candidates to demonstrate widespread geographical support in order to be elected. Such “centripetal” approaches endorse cross-ethnic incentives and broad-based parties that do not simply replicate ethnic divisions in the political process, allowing space for new, more productive policy cleavages to emerge (Horowitz 1985; Reilly 2016).

In practice, elections conducted under UN auspices have almost all favored PR, usually in its simplest closed-list, large-district form. Major transitional elections in Namibia (1989), Nicaragua (1990), Cambodia (1993), South Africa (1994), Mozambique (1994), Liberia (1997), Bosnia (1996), Kosovo (2001), East Timor (2001), Iraq (2005), and Burundi (2005) were all

conducted predominantly under party-list PR, often with the entire country forming a single-electoral district. This has strengths and weaknesses. On the one hand, depending on the number of candidates that are returned in each district, such systems tend to have a high level of proportionality and therefore lower barriers to entry. This can play an important role in ensuring minorities and marginal groups can be heard and their genuine power enhanced. On the other hand, such PR systems place few restrictions on chauvinist or ethnic parties, including those which are thinly veiled versions of former warring armies, as they require very little local organization and can deliver seats to parties which command only a small fraction of the vote. This may help explain the ambiguity of scholarly studies which have found that *both* proportional and majoritarian systems can be effective in maintaining peace in post-conflict elections, depending on the nature and form of social cleavages and the extent to which former combatants are able to transform themselves into political parties (Reynal-Querol 2002; Sisk 2009; Bogaards 2015).

Timing and sequencing issues are again important here. In practice, the adoption of large-district PR in post-conflict countries has often been dictated more by administrative convenience under time pressure, such as the wish to avoid demarcating individual electoral districts and producing separate ballot papers for each district, than by deeper concerns about political development. In many post-conflict environments, national PR offers the only feasible way to hold elections quickly, as a uniform national ballot can be used and no electoral districts need be demarcated, simplifying the process of voter registration, vote counting, and the calculation of results. In Liberia in 1997, for example, population displacement and the lack of accurate census data led to the abandonment of the old system of single-member majoritarian constituencies in favor of PR with a single national constituency (Lyons 1998, 182).

However, abandoning local representation in this way creates other problems, providing little or no geographic link between voters and their representatives. This can lead to difficulties in political accountability and responsiveness between

elected politicians and the electorate. Many new democracies – particularly those in agrarian societies (Barkan 1995) – have much higher demands for constituency service at the local level than they do for representation of all shades of ideological opinion in the legislature. In addition, PR systems such as those used in East Timor, Iraq, and Liberia, where the whole country was effectively one constituency, tend to reward political fragmentation, encouraging fractionalization rather than aggregation, as the “quota” required for election of a single seat is so small – sometimes, less than 1% of the total vote.

As one survey noted, nationwide PR is:

the most permissive system . . . politicians can join small parties, establish new ones, or split an existing one, safe in the knowledge that even a small percentage of the votes will bring some seats in the legislative assembly. For the same reason, voters feel safe to vote for such parties, and their votes make the minimal success of small parties a sort of self-fulfilling expectation. (Taagepera and Qvortrup 2012, 252)

The result is often a fragmentation of existing parties and a multiplication of smaller ones, creating real problems for post-conflict governance.

Some scholars therefore argue that PR systems at transitional elections should be modified to encourage a higher degree of geographic and personal *accountability* – such as by having members of parliament represent territorially defined districts, or by allowing voters to choose between candidates not just parties (Reilly 2013b). Such “open list” systems would, for instance, have enabled voters in Bosnia to choose candidates espousing policies of their preference rather than those simply placed by the party at the top of their list, some of them former warlords. But “open list” systems are far from panaceas, and can also have detrimental effects on other aspects of political development, such as party-building. The introduction of open list voting in Indonesia has seen a rapid deterioration in party institutionalization, as the locus moved from inter- to intra-party competition for votes, and celebrities started to colonize winning slots on the party ticket (Aspinall 2010).

A popular choice in many transitional democracies in recent years has therefore been for “mixed” systems, in which part of the legislature is elected on a national level by PR, and part from

single-member districts, so that both proportionality and accountability are present to some degree. But this also has a problematic record – it was the system used for the 2006 elections for the Palestinian National Authority (which it was hoped would favor the incumbent Fatah party but led to a Hamas victory), and the same year in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (which resulted in a highly fragmented parliament), and also to elect Nepal’s 2008 Constituent Assembly (which also proved unworkable). The judicial annulment of the 2012 Egyptian election was also a result, in part, of the mixed system chosen, as was also the case in Libya in 2014. These problems can be ameliorated to some extent by “mixed member proportional” models, as used in Germany and New Zealand, which ensure that over proportionality is maintained.

One implication from this potted history is that policymakers may need to consider using different systems for first-time post-conflict elections than in subsequent ones (Reilly and Reynolds 1999). For example, the administrative and inclusionary benefits of large-scale PR for first-time elections are clear, but might be tempered at later elections by a move towards more multifaceted systems which allow a great range of voter choice. This could include systems which give greater local or regional representation, or more open choices between candidates. Indonesia, for instance, moved from a closed list PR system elected at a provincial level for its post-Suharto 1999 elections to a more localized system a decade later, in a move which had costs as well as benefits (Aspinall 2010). For questions of timing and sequencing, the key message is that electoral systems appropriate in the immediate aftermath of a conflict may not be those best suited to subsequent democratic consolidation.

Election Administration

Elections are a unique area of public governance: large-scale national events that require substantial state capacity, demonstrated rights of speech and association, rule of law, and sufficient infrastructure and security to allow all adult citizens to participate. Of course, these are precisely the

facilitating conditions which tend to be lacking in post-conflict countries. As a result, post-conflict elections also require different models of election administration to those used in peaceful and developed democracies. These models vary widely: some countries locate responsibility for the administration of elections within a government portfolio like the interior or home affairs ministry; in others, the body responsible for running elections is created anew for each electoral event; while in cases of post-conflict peacekeeping, the international community itself may take responsibility for running the elections.

In post-conflict environments, it is critically important that elections are run not by the government but by some form of independent electoral commission. Comparative experience, including several global studies of electoral management,¹ leaves little doubt that independent and permanent electoral management bodies represent a clear best practice in terms of electoral administration (López-Pintor 2000; International IDEA 2006). Their perceived neutrality from political interference lends credibility and integrity to the electoral process – a crucial determinant of a successful election. As such, establishing an independent electoral commission should be one of the first steps in a transitional electoral timetable. However, issues of timing and sequencing impact here too: elections held under scheduling pressures are more likely to be conducted by ad hoc or temporary outfit than by a well-resourced, permanent electoral management body.

Conflict-zone elections also affect the *composition* of electoral management bodies. In some countries, electoral commissions comprise apolitical electoral officials, but in others they are the domain of judges, confusing the separation of powers. In the United States and other important cases, they are formed by the political parties contesting the elections themselves. Problems with these models in some important recent

¹Rafael López-Pintor, *Electoral Management Bodies as Institutions of Governance* (New York, NY: UNDP, 2000); International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, *Electoral Management Design: The International IDEA Handbook* (Stockholm: International IDEA 2006).

transitional elections (for example, the 1999 elections in Indonesia, and the failed 2011–12 elections in Egypt) as well as established democracies (for example, the 2000 presidential elections in the United States) have highlighted their propensity for politicization and deadlock, further underlining the importance of careful composition of electoral management bodies.

The comparative evidence, then, suggests that independent commissions run by non-partisan civil servants are a preferred model of electoral administration. By contrast, party-based commissions have a strong tendency to split along party lines. In Haiti, for example, the Provisional Electoral Council was made up of representatives of the political parties and hence divided by partisanship, with internal mistrust and divisions preventing efficient administration (Nelson 1998). In Cambodia, by contrast, a non-partisan electoral commission was widely seen as one of the outstanding elements of the entire UN mission (Austin 1998). Non-partisan commissions were also a prominent and successful aspect of UN missions in Namibia and in East Timor. This model also allows the commission to respond to changing circumstances: in East Timor, the 2001 election held under UN administration included three international members and two Timorese on the commission, while the proportion was reversed for the commission that oversaw the 2002 presidential election that took place at the time of the new country's independence.

Another perennial issue for post-conflict election administration is how to handle internally displaced people and refugees. Because electoral districts and polling places are typically drawn and allocated on the basis of voter registration records, post-conflict elections will often be constrained by the availability of basic demographic data. Problems of population displacement and the lack of accurate census data also work in favor of a proportional system with a single national constituency, as such systems do not tie voters to specific electoral districts. This was the system used at South Africa's first post-apartheid elections in 1994, in part because of doubts about the reliability of population data – but which, by breaking the geographical link with voters and insulating the African National Congress from unified competition, has undermined the

development of South African democracy ever since.

One solution to this problem is to abandon the idea of an electoral roll altogether, a strategy followed by several of the transitional elections discussed in this chapter. Alternately, countries moving towards a first election (or first in a long time) typically need to conduct a national census before elections can be held. For instance, as part of its extended political transition, Myanmar held a (widely criticized) national census in 2014, its first for several decades, in preparation for its transitional 2015 elections, which were won in a landslide by the former opposition National League for Democracy led by Aung San Suu Kyi. The Myanmar census also revealed major population changes between regions including shifts in the relative population shares of some ethnic groups – a highly contentious issue in ethnically diverse states, with politically fraught consequences (Horowitz 1985).

Population shifts and displacements are typical of conflict-zone elections, and further complicate questions of electoral system design, election timing, and the sequencing of local and national polls. They also constrain the choice of electoral system, creating a circular process of cause and effect. Most electoral models require accurate demographic data and population registers, but these are often absent in post-conflict settings. Post-conflict societies ideally need local representatives who can focus on service delivery – but the most viable electoral models compatible with the flawed demographic data common in post-conflict settings, such as national party-list PR, provide little or no ties between a member and a geographic area. Post-conflict elections are thus often stuck between the longer term needs of political development and the short-term demands of a minimally acceptable electoral process.

Summary

Issues of election timing, sequencing, and systems exert considerable pressure on post-conflict peacebuilding – including on the likelihood of conflict recurrence. Fundamental challenges of election administration, electoral system choice,

and political party development are all influenced by the demands and attenuated timetables that typify post-war reconstruction efforts. Similarly, the timing of the initial post-conflict elections – specifically, whether to hold these elections quickly, or wait until basic security and services are in place – represent a perennial chicken-and-egg dilemma. The sequencing of local, regional, and national elections, and the coordination of these elections with the choice of a new constitution, also impact directly upon the prospects of a viable post-conflict democracy emerging.

Recent studies show that the international community can play a crucial role, both in terms of assistance to first- and second-time elections, and to a more substantive “positive” peace, in which issues of social justice and inclusion are taken seriously. As long as all sides to a conflict are included in the electoral process, the positive role of external actors in offering security guarantees to prevent both pre-electoral violence and post-election exclusion and discrimination is clear (Cederman et al. 2013). Election observation backed by foreign donors with credible coercive inducements via foreign aid also appears to be useful in building a liberal peace (Matanock 2017). At the same time, however, the past decade has seen shift in practice towards more “hybrid” and localized models of peacebuilding and away from the interventionist United Nations assistance missions that prevailed during the 1990s (Richmond 2015). The subtle but unmistakable drift away from demanding “free and fair” elections which meet international standards to merely holding “credible” ones, in order to reduce the burden on the international community and take account of local realities, is one example.

This shift towards a less interventionist and more locally-led approach to post-conflict elections is to be welcomed, but may also be indicative of the declining priority attached to elections at a time in which democracy is increasingly under threat worldwide. While enormous international resources have been spent organizing, assisting, and monitoring elections around the world in recent decades, it has also become clear that elections themselves cannot build state capacity or ensure enlightened leadership. Indeed, competitive elections by their nature

tend to highlight social cleavages and emphasize areas of difference rather than commonality, and can actually make the basic tasks of government more rather than less difficult, particularly in transitional states where conflict recurrence is always possible. At the same time, by channeling conflict into rule-bounded competition and creative avenues for all segments of society to be represented in government, elections remain essential in the transformative process by which positive peace is created.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Democratization in Postconflict Western Balkans](#)
- ▶ [Liberal Peace in Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Voting Systems](#)

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Post-Conflict Nation-Building

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Synonyms

[Commemorations](#); [Heritage](#); [State-building](#);
[National identity formation](#)

Definition of Nation-Building

Nation-building is the construction and institutionalization of the official national identity and heritage of a population within a nation-state. Nation-building differs from state-building, which is dedicated to the establishment of political infrastructure and the governing institutions of the state. While the two processes overlap, they are mutually supportive, and interdependent to some extent; nation-building focuses primarily on the symbolic components of the nation-state and its cultural, national identity. The primary objective of this process is to foster unity in the population's inherent diversity and build imaginings of a nation-state with which all can identify, and to which there is a subsequent sense of allegiance. In other words, nation-building is a process by which a sense of national unity and cohesion is fostered within the political unit of the state. This internal national unity enables a level of stability for the state, a requirement to be considered a strong and "successful" member of the international community. Consequently, nation-building is a highly important, though often overlooked, process of post-conflict reconstruction. As a process, it is complicated further in postcolonial contexts and in states recovering from intrastate, ethnic conflict where identities connect to political violence and culture and conflict resolution can be contentious. This renders the process integral not only to post-conflict reconstruction but peacebuilding efforts.

Nations and Nationalism

Under an official identity and heritage, it is possible to unite many thousands of people in a sense of shared nationhood, however, within post-conflict contexts the challenges to nation-building are heightened by the multitude of experiences of violence. Potential challenges to processes of both state- and nation-building include both practical and ideological issues: from effective governance and a strong economy, to the ways in which community and authority are defined, and how the practical and ideological issues overlap. The challenges are perhaps even more apparent in post-conflict states where intrastate violence had formerly been perpetrated along ethnic or ethno-nationalist lines. In order to understand these challenges better and to grapple with the fundamentals of nation-building, it is first necessary to briefly deconstruct "nationalism" and expose the various components of "nations" and nationhood; what is being built?

Nations are broadly defined as "a large body of people united by common descent, history, culture, or language, inhabiting a particular country or territory" (OED, 2020). Within the scholarship on nations and nationalism, these components are generally accepted but there is much debate over the creation and reproduction of nations. How they came into being and how they have endured through the ages is the crux of the divide in the dominant theoretical approaches to nations and nationalism: Modernism and Ethnosymbolism.

Modernist thought generally posits that nations and national identities are constructed phenomena, emerging out of processes of modernization and industrialization, and forged with the express intention of organizing and governing populations. It argues that post-Industrial Revolution, nation formation was conceived of to maintain control and order in the midst of accelerated processes of industrialization, urbanization, and capitalism (see Özkirimli, 2017, pp. 81–153). Prior to this era, Modernists argue that people and communities were largely organized along kingdom, religious, or local community lines and it was only following

events such as the French Revolution that peoples were organized into nations as we understand them today.

Leading theorists include Ernest Gellner, Eric Hobsbawm, and Benedict Anderson, and each stresses different social and cultural tools that are utilized to assist in the construction of nations. For example, education, tradition (symbols, cultural artifacts and emblems, and rituals), and language and print media, respectively (see Gellner, 2006; Hobsbawm, 2013; Hobsbawm & Ranger, 2013; Anderson, 2006). Later contributions such as Michal Billig's seminal work, *Banal Nationalism* (1995), furthered these arguments by identifying the everyday symbols, practices, and performances of nationhood that permeate social life within nation-states, inculcating a sense of loyalty and positive identification at a subconscious level and assisting in the reproduction of nations in seemingly banal ways. Billig's assertion is that the everyday consumption of and participation in nationalist symbols, rituals, and discourses sanctioned by the state or political leadership with the intention of fostering unity and allegiance is a fundamental way in which constructed nations are able to continue to exist. In sum, as Hobsbawm asserts, "nations do not make states and nationalisms but the other way round" (1990, p. 10).

Emerging as a critique of Modernist approaches, Ethnosymbolism posits that nations are premodern, ancient ethnic communities that have endured through centuries. Led by Anthony D. Smith, Ethnosymbolists argue that these "ethnies" have been able to preserve their unique ethno-cultural identities through symbols, myths, traditions, values, and memories passed down through oral histories (Smith, 1991, 1993, 2009, 2013a, 2013b; Armstrong, 1982, pp. 6–9). The critique of Modernism stemmed from the perceived inability of a constructivist approach to account for ethno-cultural communities that claim nationhood and a premodern collective history. Ethnosymbolists instead argue that the phenomenon of nationalism, as the guiding ideology of national communities, is modern but could not have come into being if nations did not previously exist.

Though the two approaches differ on this significant point, the core recognized elements of nationhood are common to both: a shared national identity; common cultural heritage; a shared history; usually a common language; and a sense of attachment to a homeland. These tenets of a national community and its identity are inextricably connected to, and problematized within, processes of nation-building. Thus, if we are to better understand nation-building as a pillar of post-conflict reconstruction, it is useful to underline the main components that make nations and nationalisms, so that we can identify them more clearly in the material practices of post-conflict nation-building and the challenges they face. Considering the contemporary nature of much post-conflict nation-building in the international arena today, a Modernist approach is most appropriate for its analysis, since we explicitly see processes of constructing and producing nationhood take place in real time. Indeed, the deliberate and ideology-driven nature of these processes demonstrates most clearly how institutionalizing nationalism is conducted with the express intention of creating and sustaining nations.

To institutionalize is "to establish (something, typically a practice or activity) as a convention or norm in an organization or culture" (OED, 2020), and in the context of nation-building this translates as nationalism becoming the normalized ideology of the national community. Traditions, customs, and cultural practices become *the* culture of the nation-state in principle. This process of post-conflict reconstruction can thus be seen as a formalization of Gellner's notion of "high culture" (2006, pp. 34–37) through education and an enactment of Hobsbawm's "invented traditions," which "seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past" (Hobsbawm, 2013, p. 1). Through this lens, we are able to delineate the various intricate components of nation-building and reveal the complexities that are inherent in attempts to unify large, diverse groups of people under one identity. This paper begins with a consideration of the ways in which conflict complicates national identity construction and nation-building processes. It then

identifies some of the core elements of nationhood that are commonly institutionalized and explain their powerful role in community formation. The paper will then focus on the primary symbolic ways in which nationhood is institutionalized, through performative and visual symbols. In doing so, it is possible to elucidate the various practices of and challenges to post-conflict nation-building, and the politics of fostering the unity and allegiance of the national community within the nation-state, and the challenges therein.

Post-Conflict Challenges to Nation-Building

Nation-building has been a prominent global political phenomenon of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Following the era of decolonization, numerous nation-states established themselves as independent actors in the international community across the Global South. In the years following the Cold War, former Soviet bloc states declared themselves as distinct nations with unique characters and identities and gained self-determination. A great many of these new nation-states achieved their independence through violence, and the “youngest” nation-states in the world still undergoing nation-building attest to this: South Sudan, Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbia, and Timor-Leste. As with all processes of post-conflict reconstruction, legacies of the violence and division pose significant challenges to nation-building, not least of all because the ultimate goal is to foster a sense of unity, kinship, and shared heritage. Indeed, if we consider the significant unlikelihood of a sense of cultural, ethnic, or even political homogeneity within a collective that has *not* experienced violence, legacies of conflict then inevitably compound challenges to nation-building. The various elements of nationhood that are institutionalized through this process and managed through state apparatus can directly relate to causes of hostilities (identity politics and othering), and grievances can threaten a recently established peace. Since national identity and nationalism are emotive phenomena, capable of inciting violence itself (Stern, 1995) – we

need to only consider Northern Ireland and the Balkan states to illustrate this fact, the delicate nature of nation-building cannot be underestimated, nor can the rewards be reaped with its success.

A primary area to consider carefully in any process of post-conflict reconstruction (whether state- or nation-building) is the internal demographics of the new nation-state. If the conflict was ethnic or ethno-nationalist in nature and former enemies are expected to coexist peacefully under one shared identity, the problematics are evident and the task of unifying such a population can be herculean. Since ethnic conflict is defined along identity and cultural lines (Ross, 2007, pp. 17–27; Ross, 2000), the nature of nation-building becomes highly sensitive. To avoid reigniting tensions between different ethnic groups, the role of the state becomes prominent and a less emotive, more civic nationalism is preferable to institutionalize (for example see Hayward & Komarova, 2014). Civic nationalism, as André Lecours asserts,

does not equate cultural homogeneity with nationhood. This conception of the nation insists on the territorial and legal dimensions. It does not define the nation using cultural markers but [...] makes the individual's commitment to that political-legal framework the only requirement for membership (2000, pp. 154–155).

In principle, civic nationalism aims for inclusivity and consideration of internal demographic. On this particular point, state-building can complement nation-building and mitigate potential problems, for example, through the way in which different ethnic groups are represented formally in the political-legal framework. By establishing an electoral system that allows for equal representation and acknowledgment of the different groups' identities, it is possible to facilitate peaceful coexistence while establishing the foundations of one, unified national community within the new civic nation-state. Much has been written on the different forms of electoral systems that could facilitate this coexistence, and the different models of democratic government for multiparty, multicultural representation. These include consociationalist governments, with electoral systems based on proportional representation (PR),

as was established in post-conflict Northern Ireland and Bosnia-Herzegovina, and national-cultural autonomy models offer opportunities for peaceful coexistence in divided societies (in particular, see Lijphart, 1977a, 1977b, 2012; Nimni, 2007). While these have been implemented relatively successfully in practice, it should be noted that consociationalism has received much criticism for permeating ethnic divisions and entrenching differences along voting lines. For example, Matthijs Bogaards (2013), Joel Selway and Kharis Templeman (2012) argue that the evidence to support PR and consociationalist or power-sharing models contributing to peace in post-conflict societies is weak. Nevertheless, no significant alternative has been proposed or implemented, rendering the consociational model the most appealing, contemporary post-ethnic conflict structure of government to ensure stability.

Establishing governance systems and bodies is critical to any state formation, yet in order for people to engage positively with political structures, electoral systems, and the state, that sense of allegiance and identity needs to be simultaneously instilled. Even when civic nationalism is the goal of nation-building, a clear, civic collective identity is needed to foster a sense of political community. Consequently, there are key components of the new nation-state that need to be officially institutionalized and enshrined to help this process. Once a shared identity has been established, it is then possible for this sense of collectivity to permeate other areas of state life, structures, and policies, and thus establish Gellner's "high culture."

National Community, Narratives, and Identity

At the heart of nation-building is the construction and institutionalization of an official national identity. If we understand a nation to be a type of community, a group of people who "have something in common with each other, which [...] distinguishes them in a significant way from the members of other putative groups" (Cohen, 1985,

p. 12), then the core distinguishing feature is an identity or national character that sets the nation apart. Indeed, names and identities – a sense of "who we are" – is crucial "not only for self- and other-identification, but also as expressive emblems of the collective 'personality'" (Smith, 1993, p. 50). By anthropomorphizing the abstraction of "the nation" and giving it a name, character, and personality, such communities can begin to attach greater emotion and value to it. Simultaneously, the nation then gives a sense of value to its individual members in return; as Smith argues,

The primary function of national identity is to provide a strong 'community of history and destiny' to save people from personal oblivion and restore collective faith. To identify with the nation is to identify with more than a cause or a collectivity. It is to be offered personal renewal and dignity in and through national regeneration (1991, p. 161).

Consequently, this profound sense of belonging and value that comes with national identification is a primary contributing factor to the emotive nature of nationalism, and thus nation-building. Even for those individuals who identify less intensely or emotionally with their national community, there will inevitably be some connection or identification because of the innate benefits of group membership for humans, such as increased self-esteem and feelings of security (McCrone & Bechhofer, 2015, p. 10; see Stern, 1995; Jenkins, 2004).

Yet in order for individuals to actually identify as a collective through a common identity, and gain the national consciousness that is crucial for the nation's very existence (Smith, 1993; Connor, 2004), the abstraction of "nation" and nationhood must be made tangible. Indeed, for the practical processes of post-conflict nation-building to take place and become institutionalized, there must first be something concrete to embed in the state's structures and culture. National identity narratives consequently become the foundation stone of nation-building, since it is within and from these narratives that identity and all aspects of nationhood are articulated and become real. As Craig Calhoun asserts, "nationalism is partly a matter of narrative construction, the production (and

reproduction and revision) of narratives locating the nation's place in history" (2007, p. 45). These national identity narratives inculcate collective, positive identification based on a belief in the sharing of the unique, national character (Arthur, 2019, p. 9).

The foundation of national identity narratives is an official version of the national history, since "the sense of 'whence we came' is central to the definition of 'who we are'" (Smith, 1991, p. 22). At the head of nation-building processes, the political leadership is highly influential in writing "official" histories and consequently has great political power. They have power to construct a version of the past in a way that presents imaginings of the nation (and even perhaps themselves) in a positive light, which often then reflects the power dynamics within the state since, in a Foucauldian sense, "discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power" (Foucault, 1976, p. 100). This writing of history is deliberately and ideologically undertaken with the intention of fostering loyalty through pride in the nation's past endeavors, glories, victories, and conquests. In this way, just as there is rarely one "true" version of history, the recounting of histories is never neutral or objective (Said, 2000). This particular aspect of nation-building is perhaps the most powerful since it renders those in political leadership capable of influencing how the past is understood and thus how the present and future are imagined, but also because it underpins the various other symbolic aspects, as will be discussed. Histories are central to the forging of national consciousness, positive identification processes, and thus nation-building because they influence the relationship between the national community, the homeland, and the state. Laura-Jane Smith notes, "the past is valued and understood differently by different peoples, groups or communities and how the past is understood validates or not a sense of place" (2006, p. 80). A significant source of this value, social capital, and validation comes from the state; when a version of history is endorsed and even promoted by the state, it gains a sense of authority, fact, and truth. One of the most subtle but most powerful ways in which this can take place is when national

histories are enshrined in official, state-sanctioned symbolic forms. These include constitutions, performative symbols (including national holidays, commemorative events, and national anthems), and physical, visual symbols such as national flags, monuments, and even everyday items such as postage stamps. This is the focus of the following sections since the symbolic aspects of post-conflict reconstruction constitute some of the most critical elements of nation-building. Though often overlooked, the symbolic is crucial to forming a sense of community but simultaneously is often directly related to the fundamental sources of tension that led to the conflict.

Constitutions

In "new" states undergoing post-conflict nation-building, nationalist narratives are outlined by the state in various ways (as explored below). A cornerstone of nation-building is the drafting and institutionalization of the new nation-state's constitution. Constitutions are instrumental in nation-building, akin to the "mission statement" of the national community. Though they are primarily considered a facet of state-building, they have a powerful, symbolic function that is reflected in the narratives they enshrine. Joanne Wallis argues that "Constitutions can play a role in nation building by recognizing and organizing the popular sovereignty of the people; establishing binding, reciprocal relationships among them; and serving as an expression of their self-determination" (2014, p. 30). If we recall that nationalism is the ideology under which a nation strives for self-governance or self-determination, this is key. Wallis continues, "they often identify shared characteristics, values, aspirations, symbols, and principles that build a sense of national identity capable of constituting a political community" (2014, p. 30). Thus, constitutions are one of the clearest examples of the nationalist narratives that are fundamental to establishing a sense of national identity and community.

In post-conflict nation-states, the values and identities enshrined in constitutions can emit a powerful message that can seek either to directly

address the previous violence or reconcile former enemies in this transitional period. For example, the constitution of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste explicitly references the “colonisation and illegal occupation” of the past that led to the conflict, articulated in emotive, nationalistic language that acknowledges “the sacrifice of thousands of lives [...] [and] all martyrs of the Motherland” (RDTL, 2007, p. i). Conversely, the constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) avoids similarly emotive language and instead outlines the collective political identity as one that is democratic, peaceful, and egalitarian in its multiethnicity,

[Bosniaks, Croats, and Serbs,] Holding that democratic institutions, based on respect for human rights and freedom best produce harmony among themselves and their communities. Rejecting the violence of war. Wishing to contribute towards peace promotion. Desiring to support individual liberty and to develop a free market. (Constitution of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1994, p. ii)

The nature of the conflict in these two contexts is key; while Timor-Leste experienced incredible violence at the hands of the foreign occupying powers of Portugal and then Indonesia, the conflict that took place in Bosnia-Herzegovina was internal and ethnic in nature. If the intention of constitutions and their narratives is to forge close emotional bonds among the population, then these discursive strategies are logical. It is powerful to enshrine emotive narratives of martyrdom and sacrifice as inspiration for the nation, and it is unproblematic in the case of the East Timorese people fighting foreign powers for their freedom. In the Bosnian case, it is a prudent strategy to omit any reference to ethnic communities or identities, and instead focus on the post-conflict future, in which all can share in the benefits of peace. In sum, we see how past violence shapes narratives and imaginings of the future “nation” as community and the nature of the violence determines the narrative presented, since all identities enshrined in constitutions seek to unite those within through a carefully constructed representation of the past.

While it may be the case that many or even the majority of citizens never read their national constitution or be familiar with the ideas or identity

exactly as outlined in its text, this component of post-conflict state- and nation-building sets the tone of national identity narratives at the state level. Constitutions are, to an extent, symbolic documents of national identity narratives. Hobsbawm argues that it is through numerous invented traditions and symbolic forms that national identity is embodied and brought to citizens in a more relatable way. If we consider constitutions as discursive symbols of identity, we see how they complement and coincide with a canon of symbolic forms that are required to build nations and a sense of nationhood.

Symbolic Forms of Nationhood

Performative Symbols of Nationhood

Symbols are essential for the existence of nations since they are the visible, physical, and perceptible forms that objectify and embody the abstractions of national identity, including the national community’s history (Arthur, 2019, pp. 14–18). Consequently, the selection and institutionalization of core symbols is a fundamental component of nation-building. By embodying and making identity tenets more real, it is possible to engage many thousands of individuals in processes of positive identification with the nation. They can wave the flag, sing the anthem, celebrate the heroes, and in doing so, they can actively share in and participate in a national identity and heritage with others. Symbols enable Anderson’s “imaginings” of community to take place, offering a visual or sensory referent, and unite diverse populations under one identity. This is crucial in any state but of critical importance in post-conflict contexts, where it is possible that in processes of nation-building, one identity aims to unite former enemies in the same community. Though challenging, unity is possible and national symbols are central to this since “[the nation] must be personified before it can be seen, symbolized before it can be loved, imagined before it can be conceived” (Walzer, 1967, p. 84). Within the category of the symbolic, there are broadly two types of national symbols to institutionalize: performative and visual.

Performative “symbols,” or symbolic performances of national identity, are important elements of nation-building. These include national anthems, national holidays, commemorative days, and perhaps religious festivals and sporting events in those contexts where religion and sport constitute distinguishing markers of identity (Elgenius, 2011, p. 2). These performances of nationalism are points in time that remind members of the nation of their identity, their history, and the fact that they share these with the rest of the national community. Habitual reminders of identity through such invented traditions are powerful in forming and sustaining nations in nation-building, which is necessarily a process of “formalization and ritualization, characterized by [...] imposing repetition” (Hobsbawm, 2013, p. 4). Performative symbols are institutionalized through their official addition to the calendar and after often quite explicit celebrations of nationhood. Through music, communal celebrations, and shared ritualized experiences, performative symbols encapsulate the essence of nationalism and instill in citizens a sense of membership, belonging, and respect.

In post-conflict societies, the challenges of transition are apparent, and the creation of performative symbols like national days and ceremonies can provide a source of contention. In deeply divided societies recovering from ethnic conflict, it is most challenging to construct national history narratives that are representative of, and appealing to, all ethnic communities residing in the new nation-state. For example, in post-conflict Bosnia-Herzegovina, 25 November is officially celebrated as “Statehood Day,” but is challenged by some. This national day attempts to enshrine the historical narrative that sees this as the moment of inception of the modern state; commemorates the ZAVNOBiH (the State Anti-fascist Council for the National Liberation of Bosnia-Herzegovina) and the stance taken against fascism in the 1940s; and revives the idea that Bosnia-Herzegovina belongs equally to each ethnic community (Ćustović, 2018, p. 127). The intention to unite the population is clear, however, the version of history that sees the emergence of the modern state on this date in 1943 has been challenged by

Serbian politicians. They do not believe that the Bosniak nation existed at that time, and so see nothing of import to commemorate (Mønnesland, 2012, pp. 256–259). In post-genocide Rwanda, there is a national day to commemorate the lives lost on genocide against the Tutsi Memorial Day (Republic of Rwanda, 2021). This institutionalized commemorative day has been largely successful, with national and local media outlets dedicating their broadcasts and coverage to the day on 7 April, though research has suggested that commemorations have been exclusive in nature, and have overlooked the lives lost by moderate and innocent Hutus in the violence (Zorbas, 2004, pp. 39–40). These examples highlight the challenges of commemorations, performative symbols, and of institutionalizing a unified national identity in post-conflict contexts. Once more, the nature of the conflict is important to note; it is most challenging to represent and appeal to various ethnic groups in a state that has previously experienced internal ethnic conflict, and which now seeks to reconcile former enemies, victims, and perpetrators.

Yet in post-conflict societies that do manage to institutionalize national holidays, which are unchallenged and promote engagement with the majority of the population, we see the power and unifying influence that this symbolic performance can have. For example, in Timor-Leste there are numerous national days that commemorate important dates and figures in official narratives of the past: Nicolau Lobato National Holiday; Veteran’s Day; Popular Consultation Day; Proclamation of Independence Day; and Restoration of Independence Day (RDTL, 2020). Though there are still members of the national community who once identified with former occupier Indonesia and even collaborated and fought with them, these national days are now widely celebrated and have not been publicly challenged or critiqued. Here, we see how these holidays represent an official history that glorifies and honors the liberation struggle, and an identity of a people who fought foreign powers to gain their freedom. Despite the challenges to these performative symbols in post-conflict and deeply divided societies, they are considered an integral part of nation-

building and are consistently enshrined as commemorations of an official national past. The most powerful elements of these public performances are their repetition (consistent and habitual reminders of nationhood and collective awareness) and their sense of longevity through a connection with the past (Hobsbawm, 2013), giving an impression of resistance to change and challenges which in turn leads to a sense of security and comfort in convention (Elgenius, 2011, p. 3). Thus the success of national holidays attests not only to the strength and appeal of the official national history narrative it represents, but to the potential unifying function of symbols. Performative symbols like national holidays can literally and physically bring people together to share in positive identification with their common history and heritage.

A further performative symbol of nationhood is the national anthem, which is the musical and discursive articulation of the values, character, and ideals of the nation (Gilboa & Bodner, 2009). Abril defines anthems thus:

A national anthem is a unique musical work in that it functions primarily as a malleable symbol of a bounded geographical region. [...] An anthem can only be brought to life through performance, where it is then filled with meaning which extends beyond the notes, silences, and words. The music is interpreted and realized by the performer(s), situated in a sociocultural and historical context, and reconstructed by the listeners – who might also be the performers (2007, p. 73).

Indeed, it is perhaps the participatory nature of national anthems as performative symbols that renders them so powerful. Members of the national community can engage in the performance of inspirational music and simultaneously sing the same words as potentially millions of others, whom they do not know. In this way, anthems assist in the imagination process that Anderson argues is key to the formation and reproduction of nations:

each communicant is well aware that the ceremony he [sic] performs is being replicated simultaneously by thousands (or millions) of others of whose existence he [sic] is confident, yet of whose identity he [sic] has not the slightest notion (Anderson, 2006, p. 35).

Engaging in anthem singing (often in ceremonies and national festivities, which themselves are inherently public and popular phenomena) is an emotive and physical action that is symbolic in its ability to give form to cultural and symbolic capital, and make abstractions of nationhood tangible.

National anthems can be considered as “invented traditions” in that they are inherently modern symbolic phenomena, becoming standardized and popular in Europe in the nineteenth century (Elgenius, 2011, p. 141). Typically, they are rousing melodies with emotive lyrics that invoke past glories, often militaristic or violent in nature, and outline aspirations for the future of the nation, often with explicit reference to the members of the national community coming together and even familial ties. For example, the themes of war and sacrifice typify many anthems including the “Star-Spangled Banner” (“the rocket’s red glare, the bombs bursting in air”) and *La Marseillaise* (“may their impure blood flow in our fields”), and *Deutschland über alles* illustrates the common, familial language and hopefulness that is used in national anthems (“unity and rights and freedom [...] let us strive for it together, brotherly with heart and hand”) (cited in Elgenius, 2011, p. 143; 145). Not only are the lyrics intended to be emotive and inspiring in performance, but they are also yet another articulation of nationalist narratives and so also represent the national character and an official version of the national past.

The militant and proud character of such older anthems established a global tradition that has been adopted by many “younger” nation-states as part of nation-building, for example post-colonial nation-states. Once again, we see in these contexts how a history of violence and the nature of it shape history narratives, and subsequently the national identity that is represented. Postcolonial Angola and Timor-Leste, for example, both refer explicitly to “the heroes” of the national liberation struggles, to freedom as a defining characteristic of the nation, and to having “vanquish[ed] colonialism [...] imperialism, the enemy of people” (RDTL, 2021; Governo de Angola, 2021). These particular examples

illustrate clearly the ways in which a nation's history and heritage, marked by the violence of colonialism, become symbolically enshrined in its national anthem in a way that glorifies the national character and inculcates "the undivided loyalty" of its citizens in its performance (Elgenius, 2011, p. 141). The postcolonial, post-independent state celebrates its unique character and liberation from former oppressors and, in doing so, also seeks to inspire similar celebration from its citizens. This serves as a foundation of national identification and as a unifying force in the diverse national community. The power of this unifying lyrical force is only underlined and expounded when set to rousing music and performed as a collective.

States that have experienced intrastate, ethnic conflict inevitably face challenges when adopting a new post-conflict national anthem, particularly in institutionalizing the lyrics. Indeed, considering the typically militant nature of many national anthem lyrics, it would be inappropriate and likely contentious to enshrine an anthem of this nature – rendering the performative symbol divisive when instead its aim is to unite. Testament to such challenges are the cases of the national anthems in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo. The lyrics to the Bosnian national anthem were not finalized and enshrined until 2009, a full decade after the melody was composed in June 1999, precisely because of the critical, interethnic deliberation and attention required (Baltic Insight, 2009; Elgenius, 2011, pp. 145–6). In the interim ten-year period, the Bosnian anthem was solely instrumental but it was institutionalized nonetheless; this attests to the importance attributed to and recognition of the symbolic power of anthems as components of nation-building, but underlines the criticality of deciding on the right, or most diplomatic lyrics. Once the wording was finalized, concluding with the intended rousing line "We're going into the future together," it continued to spark controversy because of its avoidance of mentioning the ethnic communities and territories of Bosnia-Herzegovina, rendering it difficult for citizens to identify with it (Kovacevic, 2018). The lyrics of the anthem have not been approved by the state parliament and continue to be contested to the present day (Kovacevic, 2018).

Similarly, it was with sensitivity to potential tension in mind that the Kosovan national anthem was adopted as an instrumental piece and does not have lyrics, over a decade after Kosovo declared independence in 2008. The fear, or sensitivity to potential tension, is encapsulated by the composer of the melody Mendi Mengjiqi, who stated that "the song should not imply loyalty to any particular ethnic group" (cited in Elgenius, 2011, p. 145). Preparing for independence and beginning processes of nation-building, the anthem was one of the initial performative symbols to be considered in 2008. In an attempt to ensure the democracy of the decision, the composition of the anthem was put to a national competition. Parliamentary groups and members of parliament voted on the contenders (a decision which itself was criticized because the anthem was not put to the popular vote), and the winning melody, "Europa," was approved and enshrined on 11 June 2008 (Balkan Insight, 2008a, b). As processes of nation-building continue, identity and history narratives will develop and emerge that are sensitive to the ethnic violence of the past, and when this happens it is possible that the national anthem of Kosovo will have lyrics. Adding words to the anthem renders this performative symbol more powerful as members of the national community will be able to participate and sing together. The combination of senses engaged, together with communal performance, makes anthem singing an important unifying symbolic performance of nationhood, and could potentially serve post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding processes in Kosovo, if done sensitively and well.

Visual Symbols of Nationhood

Visual national symbols are perhaps the most obvious markers of identity and are the signs that nations use to represent themselves to the rest of the world. The visual symbols that are officially enshrined by the state in formal processes of nation-building include national flags, emblems/crests, and monuments and statues, often the representation of national heroes and key historic figures. Perhaps adding to the power of visual symbols is their ability to be

incorporated into performances of nationalism. For example, the national anthem is traditionally sung while directly facing the national flag in Japan, and the American “Pledge of Allegiance” is a daily ritual centered round the flag, followed by singing “the Star-Spangled Banner.” Key monuments are also incorporated into commemorative performances of nationalism, such as the ceremonies around the Cenotaph in London on Remembrance Sunday in the UK. Crests and emblems appear on official forms and legal documents, and are visible on the cover of passports. Consequently, the creation of visual symbols as part of nation-building processes is key to the institutionalization of a national identity, history, and heritage. Visual symbols are the embodiment of these abstractions and can be incorporated into the most formal, international performances of nationhood at sporting events, music competitions, etc., as well as the most “banal” aspects of everyday life (Billig, 1995), including food packaging, postage stamps, and even clothing.

National flags are primary visual symbols and for good reason. They are universally recognized and, as Gabriella Elgenius notes, national flags are “not only a piece of cloth fluttering in the wind; it makes claims to a historic territory, independence and nationhood” (2011, pp. 2–3). In processes of nation-building, the design and creation of national flags is deliberative and seeks to enshrine in their symbolism the core tenets of national identity narratives. The various colors, shapes, and components of national flags are each ascribed as specific symbolic meaning to reflect such narratives that outline the origins of the nation, the new nation-state, and its values and identity. For example, the Irish tricolor is comprised of three blocks of color, equal in size and shape; the green represents the Catholic population in the Republic of Ireland, the orange represents the Protestant, Unionist population, and the white symbolizes peace that is hoped to prevail between the two. The flag was designed and chosen as the official symbol of the Irish Free State in 1916, following the Easter Rising. The symbolism of this flag not only provides insight into the history of the island of Ireland and the violence that brought about the new Republic, but makes a

statement of intent for peaceful relations in the future. Indeed, the choice of a tricolor composition of the flag is reflective of revolutionary origins; following the French Revolution in 1789, tricolour flags as national symbols were adopted by many new states that emerged through similar processes throughout the nineteenth century.

In post-conflict nation-building processes, flag design and construction is also intended to represent the identity, history, and heritage of the nation, and those aspects deemed to be most important by the political leadership at the time. Upon closer scrutiny of the official symbolisms of national flags in such states, the national identity and history narratives become clear. For example, the role of the anti-colonial, revolutionary movement in Angola is enshrined as central to its history in the symbolism of the flag. The flag was adopted in 1975 following the war for independence, and was designed by the former national liberation movement, the *Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola* (MPLA). As is common in numerous postcolonial states, the color red of the Angolan flag symbolizes “the blood shed by Angolans during the colonial oppression, the fight for national liberation and the defence of the Homeland” (Governo de Angola 2021, Translation my own). Black symbolizes the continent of Africa, and the yellow used to depict a machete, five-pointed star, and a cog, represents the richness of the land (Governo de Angola 2021). Thus, the violent anti-colonial struggle is explicitly written into the symbolism of this national symbol as a representation of the nation’s history, and thus reflects official notions of national identity. Weapon imagery is common in national symbolism of postcolonial flags and crests to represent a history of violence or conflict. For example, Mozambique and Guatemala respectively depict an AK47 and swords and rifles to represent the armed struggle for independence. More implicit in the symbolism of the Angolan flag is the ideological history of the MPLA. The MPLA was Marxist in its revolutionary, anti-colonial ideology and though the national flag of Angola is different to that of the party in the 1970s, there are some visual allusions to this leftist leaning. The positioning of the machete, overlying the half cog, is distinctly

reminiscent of the hammer and sickle symbol of Communism, and the small five-pointed star is also associated with socialist symbolism. These examples demonstrate the commemorative function of symbolizing national identity and history narratives, and how the nation's past can be immortalized in its primary visual symbol.

The aspirations of a nation can also be enshrined in visual symbols such as national flags. In post-conflict societies that remain deeply divided along ethnic and ethno-nationalist lines, enshrining one narrative of a unified national past can be an almost impossible task, as evidenced in the discussion of performative symbols. Consequently, a focus on future-oriented values and imaginings, avoiding points of contention, can be the preferred approach to constructing symbolisms in nation-building processes. The example of post-conflict Kosovo is perhaps most illustrative of this aspirational narrative, and of the tensions and sensitivities that must be considered in flag design. In a process as unusual as that of creating a national anthem, the Kosovan national flag design was put to an open competition because of the highly politicized nature of national identity formation, and to ensure some degree of popular participation (Cosentino, 2015, p. 608). Interestingly, certain color combinations and emblems were banned from use in the competition, precisely because of their associations with different ethnic groups. A combination of red and black was prohibited because of its symbolic connection to ethnic Albanians, for example, as was the eagle (Cosentino, 2015, p. 608). The final flag that was adopted is blue with the map of Kosovo superimposed in gold, above which are six white stars that represent each of the ethnic groups of the state – Albanians, Serbs, Bosniaks, Roma, Turks, and Gorani (Cosentino, 2015, p. 610; Albertini, 2012, pp. 22–34). The outline of the land provides a neutral focal point in the center of the flag; the image of a homeland that can be shared by all is a powerful nationalist trope and indicates an appeal to all ethnic communities to find a sense of home and belonging therein. Interestingly, this is a strategy that was similarly employed in ethnically divided Cyprus and the creation of the Cypriot flag in 1960 (Republic of

Cyprus, 2021), though poignantly before the ethnic violence had broken out. Parity of recognition of the ethnic communities in Kosovo is representative of the inclusive ethos of the new state, seeking to avoid ethnic tensions related to the past conflict. The choice of colors is interesting in that the blue and gold combination, coupled with stars, is suggestive of Kosovo's aims to accede to the European Union – a suggestion only strengthened by the national anthem, "*Europa*." Again, we see how a focus on future ambitions and hopes is used to shape national identity narratives and shift attention away from a contentious past, marked by conflict. The Kosovan flag exemplifies how (former) tensions and sensitivities pose challenges to nation-building, common in post-conflict and deeply divided societies, and how the construction of visual national symbols is as politicized and deliberative as other formal processes of post-conflict reconstruction.

In addition to formal state-led processes, the reproduction of nationalism at an everyday level through visual symbols is another crucial, though often overlooked, aspect of nation-building. The reproduction of nationalism involves the maintenance of unity, self-governance, and stability as a nationalist and political community, enduring across generations. Indeed, in line with Gellner's argument for the naturalization of nationality, Özkirimli asserts that "it follows that the national cannot be subsumed by that which is 'symbolic'; it is also constituted in the volatile settings of everyday life" (2017, p. 222). Indeed, it is in the realm of the everyday where the symbolic and the banal intersect and produce some of the most common reproductions of national identity in modern nation-states. Following the formal, top-down processes of institutionalizing symbols of nationhood, reproductions of official symbols (primarily visual symbols, due to ease of reproduction) become embedded in everyday life at a local level, and constitute powerful tools for maintaining that sense of unity within the population. Depictions of national flags, icons, cultural symbols, heroes, and historic figures are commodified and mass-produced with the intention of permeating everyday life for citizens. Some of

the most common ways this has typically been done is through postage stamps, banknotes and currency, and food packaging (for example, see McGuinn, 1991; Hoyo, 2010; Raento & Brunn, 2005; Penrose, 2011; Andersson, 2020). With these everyday visual reminders of nationhood, the intention is that over time, the population will become accustomed to ideas and feelings of belonging, membership, and unity within the nation. To establish these feelings and a sense of “mindless remembering” (see Billig 1995) is to consolidate processes of nation-building and ensure unity and stability for the nation-state in the long term.

Nation-Building as Fundamental to State Life

Nation-building is fundamental to the success of post-conflict reconstruction processes for several reasons. First, it is in the successful establishment of a common, collective identity and history that former enemies can be reconciled within the political unit of the state, and make sense of a difficult past. This is not without challenges and in some cases, it is necessary to avoid all mention of periods of the past that are sources of contention. Second, if this is done successfully and the symbolic components of nationhood can be institutionalized in a meaningful way, this process can provide unity and stability, and complement peacebuilding. This is possible as the emotional ties to a common identity can assist in reducing internal tensions where ethnic identities are transcended by the new, national identity.

Claudia Derichs argues, nation-building is pervasive and must underpin other aspects of state life in order to achieve this goal of unity: “it is [...] an extensive process that includes a large number of policy measures and which can come to the fore in quite different policy areas” (2005, p. 46). We see how national identities, histories, and heritages are reflected in the life of the state in certain policy areas and structures. If we recall the core defining tenets of nations – a shared identity, history, heritage, and culture, inclusive of language and religion – then we can more easily

identify the policy areas that reflect contemporary imaginings of nationhood. A clear example of this is the official language policy of a new state, enshrined in the Constitution and applied in state structures. The official language of the state is the language used in parliaments, the courts, national media platforms, and by the majority of the population for much of the time (Language can be a primary marker of national identity in some cases, though not all. An interesting case of a nationalist movement that has arguably not considered language to be central is the self-determination movement in occupied Kashmir. Idreas Khandy (2021) argues not only has language not been a marker of nationalism but that contemporary nationalists are bound together *despite* the multiple languages that are spoken by many Kashmiris based on its unique historical, political, and cultural context.). In those contexts where language does serve as a marker of national identity, it is through exercising linguistic abilities that it is possible to explicitly, publicly make a statement about that identity. The example of Catalonia and its official use of Catalan within the devolved autonomous region in Spain illustrates this well. Unsurprisingly, language policy is also contentious in areas that have experienced colonialism and conflict. Post-independence, postcolonial states must decide whether or not to institutionalize the language of the former colonial oppressor, an indigenous mother tongue, or both, as was the case in Timor-Leste (see Arthur, 2018). In post-conflict Northern Ireland, the Irish Language Act is a source of continued tension as recognition of Irish Gaelic in a region of the UK is a symbolic act that many in the Protestant-Unionist communities have challenged, to the point of collapsing the devolved government (see Mitchell, 2018; Carroll, 2021). In this particular policy area, we see how connected issues of national identity can emerge. Thus the sensitivity that is afforded to institutionalizing symbols is also needed in post-conflict zones that see certain language practices as contentious and symbolic in themselves.

Linked to the policy area of official language is diplomacy and foreign relations. In many post-colonial nation-states, the language of the former colonial oppressor is not discarded but adopted as

an official language for the benefits it reaps in international relations. Common language capabilities between states can help facilitate political cooperation and positive diplomatic relations, and in this respect it is possible to see symbolic decisions having strategic and practical motivations. These benefits have been formally recognized by organizations such as the *Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa* (CPLP; Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries), the members of which were all former Portuguese colonies. Considered to be an “institutional emanation of the idea of Lusophony” (Mormul, 2020, p. 191), the CPLP brings together states that share in their colonial heritage and which seek to collaborate in the international area. While this organization has been criticized for its primary association with a Luso-African identity, as well as its failure to fully realize the economic potential of cooperation thus far (Mormul, 2020), the CPLP illustrates the practical and indirect outcomes of language policy decisions and the extent to which processes of nation-building do underpin state life, both at national and international levels.

Education is a further, perhaps yet more important policy area that is underpinned by processes of nation-building. Gellner (1982) argues that formal education that was standardized in the post-modern era was one of the primary contributing factors to the emergence of nations. Education is crucial because it not only shapes future generations of the nation, but it sets the standard of accepted “truths” and the way in which it is delivered. As Derichs notes, “a ‘classic’ example of associating nation-building with an important policy area is education policy” (2005, p. 46). The language in which lessons are delivered, the version of history that is printed in school textbooks, and the decision (or not) to teach religion(s) are all reflective of the official national identity narratives that the state promotes and thus the future nation it wishes to see. Educational institutions, defined broadly, can also encompass public museums and heritage sites that present an official, accepted version of the past built into the national landscape. The politicized nature of museums and heritage sites, and the way in which official history narratives reflect

contemporary power dynamics is common to states with a history of violence (for example, Cambodia, Vietnam, Northern Ireland, post-apartheid South Africa, post-dictatorship Indonesia, and Spain) and is a further area of state life that must be dealt with sensitively to promote reconciliation, healing, and unity.

To illustrate how political and changeable “official” versions of history can be, there is perhaps no clearer example than the case of the Auschwitz-Birkenau compound in postwar Poland. Following the end of the Second World War, accounts of the atrocities that took place in the camps varied as a result of the changing political leadership. The Communist government in Poland under the former Soviet Union presented history in a way that was sympathetic to the state ideology and Polish nationalism, overlooking the specific targeting of Jews that the camps are now widely associated with (Young 2009, pp. 51–53). Indeed, it was only following the collapse of the Soviet Union that the name of the preserved compound and its museum was changed from “the International Monument to the Victims of Fascism” to its post-Cold War “Monument to the Victims of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp” (Young, 2009, p. 52; Young, 1994). As heritage sites reflect power dynamics and political leaderships across time (see Logan and Reeves, 2009), we see how important history and heritage are to nationalist narratives. An awareness of this dynamic is therefore critical in understanding the politics of fostering unity and allegiance in post-conflict contexts, the role of culture and conflict resolution, and how such narratives can pose challenges to reconciliation and reconstruction processes.

Further scholarly consideration of the importance of nation-building is required if we are to grasp the core challenges to peacebuilding and reconciliation in societies divided by identity. The cultural and symbolic aspects of nation-building are much more than the final touches to post-conflict reconstruction, only added after the important structural and political changes are made. They are fundamental to and interdependent with processes of state-building, since the imaginings of commonality and nationhood are essential to fostering unity and thus

stability within the political unit of the state. Moreover, in divided societies and states recovering from internal, ethnic conflict, it is the symbols and elements of nationhood that must be prioritized, precisely for the sensitivity they require and for the fact that they underpin numerous policies and areas of everyday, state life. In attending to these elements of nation-building, post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding processes are more likely to be sustainable and successful in the long term.

Summary

In sum, nation-building is the institutionalization of an official national identity, culture, and heritage of a state. This formalized process of embedding nationhood, identity, and collectivity into state structures is evidenced primarily in cultural artifacts and rituals, such as national flags, constitutions, anthems, and national holidays. However, nationhood is infused into all aspects of social life and state policy in a deliberate effort to instill a sense of belonging and thus loyalty in the state's population. If successful, nation-building can foster this sense of community and with it, significant unity, cohesion, and stability within the state. It is for this reason that nation-building is a crucial aspect of post-conflict reconstruction, albeit one that is often overlooked. Nation-building draws attention to those cultural and identity-focused aspects of social life that can be contentious, and seeks to address the challenges that they raise, particularly in post-colonial and post-ethnic conflict contexts. However, it is precisely in these contexts that nation-building is most complicated and contentious. As we have seen, even when constitutions and anthems are carefully constructed to sensitively deal with past violence, they can be challenged and sources of continued tension between ethnic groups. This is perhaps because the aim of nation-building is to achieve an almost impossible task; to represent the identities and ideals of a multitude of diverse individuals, within one political space. The ongoing, long-term nature of this process, however, requires us to wait to

see how successful these attempts have been, and to watch as they evolve and adapt to changing political circumstances.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Bosnian Genocide](#)
- ▶ [Culture and Conflict Resolution](#)
- ▶ [Grounded Nationalism](#)
- ▶ [Identity and Political Violence](#)
- ▶ [Mozambique](#)
- ▶ [Post-Conflict Timor-Leste](#)
- ▶ [Reconciliation in Northern Ireland](#)
- ▶ [Troubles, The: The Northern Ireland Conflict](#)

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Post-Conflict Reconstruction

- [Liberal and Illiberal Peacebuilding in Sri Lanka](#)

Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development

- [Peacebuilding in Africa: The African Union's Evolving Approach](#)

Post-Conflict Recovery

- [Peacebuilding in Africa: The African Union's Evolving Approach](#)

Post-Conflict Timor-Leste

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Synonyms

[Colonialism](#); [Conflict](#); [East Timor](#); [Genocide](#); [Military occupation](#); [Peacebuilding](#); [Timor Lorosa'e](#)

Definition

On May 20, 2002, Timor-Leste officially declared independence and was welcomed into the United Nations (UN) as its newest member state. This was a day of widespread national celebration since self-determination had been hard won through much struggle and violence, after centuries of Portuguese colonialism and a brutal, repressive military occupation by Indonesia that lasted for 24 years. This long history of foreign occupation has shaped the culture, identity, and politics of the East Timorese in complex ways, presenting unique challenges to the state in the post-conflict, transitional years.

Timor-Leste: A Brief Historical Overview

The island of Timor is located in the Pacific Ocean between Indonesia and Australia, and the state of Timor-Leste is comprised of the eastern half of the island and the Oecusse enclave in the West (part of Indonesia). Timor-Leste, or East Timor, is mountainous and typically experiences a dry season from May to November, with monsoon season from December to April, giving the region a tropical climate and a terrain characterized by jungles. The population of Timor-Leste is estimated to be 1.4 million, and it is the youngest nation-state of Southeast Asia. Despite its small size, the island of Timor has been of great importance and interest to outside actors for centuries. For this reason, Timor-Leste constitutes a microcosm of complex political issues stemming from its history, shaped by the legacies of colonialism and conflict.

Pre-colonial Timorese society was structured around its various kingdoms, each ruled by a traditional king (*liurai*) and organized by clan and family ties, ethnicity, and language groups (Kammen 2003, 2010; Hägerdal 2006). The *liurais* represented the reigning lineage and ruled over the *atan* (workers or slaves) and the *datos* (the nobility) (Carneiro de Sousa 2001, p. 187; Butcher et al. 2015). Taylor notes that the “kingdoms were neither unified nor centrifugal combin[ing] loosely-knit localized territorial groups in a general hierarchy of clans” (1991, p. 2). The relationship between the clans, the organization of the kingdom, and social life were all determined by the exchange of *luliks* (sacred objects) and goods. From the bottom up to the top of the kingdom, tribute was paid and a hierarchical society based on principles of reciprocity functioned. These principles underpinned an East Timorese cosmology, something that has endured to the present day. Indeed, reciprocal binaries are central to contemporary beliefs that universal harmony is dependent on reciprocity, balance, and exchange. Rituals and custom for births, marriages, harvests, and burials all reflect this need for exchange and balance between the realms of the living and the ancestral spirits to maintain cosmological order (e.g., see Trindade 2011, 2015; Traube 1986; Bovensiepen 2009, 2014; Grenfell 2012). Day

and night, male and female, and land and sea must all be balanced. Failure to respect this balance through the incorrect performance of rituals is believed to have real negative consequences, for example, illness, death, crop failure, violence, or disaster (Close 2017; Trindade 2011, 2014; McWilliam 2007). Thus, the spiritual realm is perceived as very much related to and influential on the material world, and ritual is the medium through which balance is maintained and respect for ancestral spirits shown. This particular cosmological framing has endured through the centuries, shaping societal relations and order from the pre-colonial to the present day.

Before the arrival of the Dutch and Portuguese colonial powers, the island of Timor was crucial to trading networks in Asia, connecting Southeast Asia with India and China from at least the early C15th, and a valuable source of sandalwood (Taylor 1991; Hägerdal 2007, p. 3). By the early C16th, the Portuguese colonial powers had claimed the eastern half of the island as their own, sending Dominican missionaries first before establishing a mercantile and military presence there. The Dutch colonial powers had occupied Indonesia and the surrounding archipelago, including the western half of the island of Timor. For the following 450 years, the eastern half of the island – Timor-Leste – was ruled by Portugal. The kingdom system still formed the basis of social order and the *liurais* administered for the colonizers, with good and bad working relationships developing throughout. The approach and attitude toward Timor were common in Portugal’s other colonies; there was the express intention of undermining indigenous identities and eradicating “backward” superstitions; fostering *portuguesismo* [Portuguese-ism/ization] (Duarte 1988, pp. 36–37); and the complete economic exploitation of the territory, its resources, and people (see Taylor 1999, p. 11). This exploitation was accelerated in the latter part of the colonial era under the Estado Novo of the Salazar dictatorship from 1926, although briefly interrupted during the Japanese occupation of the island during World War II (1941–1943) (see Goto 2003, pp. 24–38).

Interestingly, by the end of the World War II and after the withdrawal of the Japanese,

Portuguese Timor remained firmly under colonial rule with no signs of a nationalist, anti-colonial movement developing, unlike other southeast Asian colonial territories that had similarly been occupied by Japan, such as Burma, Malaya, and Indonesia (see Gunn 2001, p. 11). In the post-war period, orders from Portugal for forced labor intensified, as attempts were made to reconstruct the colony in the wake of the destruction left by the Japanese. There was an intensification of the cultivation of cash crops, especially coffee, which is still a major export from Timor-Leste today. Members of the small Timorese educated elite were recruited into the lower echelons of the colonial administration. However, when armed resistance began in Portugal's African colonies, there was no similar movement in Portuguese Timor.

Following the Carnation Revolution and the deposition of the Salazar regime in April 1974, the Portuguese state began a process of decolonization and the East Timorese people began to organize to decide their own future after centuries of foreign rule. While Portugal was resolved to devolve power back to its colonies, the focus of decolonization was primarily centered on the African colonies of Angola and Mozambique. In Timor-Leste, the same process was not implemented or completed; the departure was abrupt, and the unstable political conditions led to internal conflict (CAVR 2005, pp. 13–16; Molnar 2010, pp. 37–42). In the wake of the withdrawal of the colonial administration, a brief and bloody civil war broke out in the summer of 1975 (see Hoadley 1976). The civil war resulted from divisions over the future governance of the nation-state between the two principle political parties, Fretilin (*Frente Revolucionária do Timor-Leste Independente*) and the UDT (*União Democrática Timorense*). Fretilin was fundamentally anti-colonial and nationalist, seeking an independent republic free from outside influence. The UDT sought some more executive power but wanted a continued association within a federation with Portugal. A third political party, Apodeti, was in favor of integration into Indonesia, though it was small and had minimal popular support (see Molnar 2010, pp. 37–45).

Fretilin emerged as the victors of the war and formed the first government of an independent Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste (RDTL), declared on November 28, 1975. However, that independence was short-lived; after only a few days Indonesia invaded Timor-Leste in full force. There had been Indonesian incursion troops on the ground as early as September, and by October armed attacks had begun, including the killing of five Australian and New Zealander journalists on the 16th of October, who had filmed the beginning of the invasion. Now known as the “Balibo Five,” they wanted to expose the illegal aggression and violence but were executed before they could smuggle the footage out (see Saul 2009; Jolliffe 2009). The military occupation that ensued lasted for almost a quarter of a century, until September 1999. Indigenous languages, culture, and custom had been outlawed; Indonesian law, specifically the Pancasila policy, and education were enforced; and the express intention was for the East Timorese population to either conform or be eradicated. In the face of this repression and violence, the East Timorese people who had previously been divided along the partisan lines of the civil war united in resistance to the common enemy of Indonesia. The resistance movement was comprised of different wings: the armed wing, the Falintil (*Forças Armadas de Libertação Nacional de Timor-Leste*); the clandestine wing, comprised of much of the civilian population, who fed and sheltered the Falintil guerrillas; the youth and student movement; the active diaspora community, who lobbied abroad in Portugal and Australia; and the political leadership, Fretilin (see Pouyé 2005; Cabral and Martin-Jones 2008; Ramos-Horta 1987; Pinto and Jardine 1997a, b).

The indiscriminate violence and repression perpetrated by the Suharto regime during this period resulted in mass human rights violations, forced displacement and starvation, and genocide (CAVR 2005, pp. 146–148; Dunn 2012; Kiernan 2002 and 2017). The final figures of lives lost are contested, and many families are still in search of the disappeared and remains of missing loved ones (see Kinsella and Blau 2013; Kent 2016). However, the final report from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (CAVR) conducted in

Timor-Leste in the transitional years following the occupation states that the Indonesian military forces were responsible for the deaths of at least 180,000 East Timorese (CAVR 2005, p. 146); in other words, about one quarter of the population at the time. Accounts and testimonies have been extensively documented by CAVR, established in 2001 under the UN Transitional Administration of East Timor (UNTAET), as well as by numerous scholars, activists, and lobbyists for independence (e.g., see Pilger and Munro 1994; Jardine 1999; Hainsworth and McCloskey 2000; Jolliffe 2009; Robinson 2009).

After 24 years of resistance and struggle, the East Timorese people were finally given a referendum on independence on September 30, 1999, under the auspices of the UN. Despite significant intimidation and aggression from the Indonesian troops and militias on the ground, an overwhelming majority of East Timorese (78.5%) went to the polls and voted in favor of independence. Indonesia conceded and withdrew from the island, though not before completing “Operation Clean Sweep,” a scorched earth pogrom designed to devastate the infrastructure, the people, and the land (Chawla 2001, p. 2293). Street-by-street arson attacks left 95% of buildings, homes, and roads in rubble, and within days of the ballot, around 70% of the country’s physical infrastructure had been destroyed (Chopra 2000, p. 27). Consequently, the task of rebuilding and restoring the independent nation-state was challenging, even with the assistance of numerous UN peacebuilding and state-building missions, international donors, and aid agencies. Nevertheless, Timor-Leste officially regained its independence on May 20, 2002, joining the UN as a member state and finally enjoying the self-determination that had been denied for centuries.

Legacies of Colonialism and Conflict

As a result of its long history of foreign influence and occupation, the modern nation-state of Timor-Leste continues to deal with enduring legacies of colonialism and conflict. This is evidenced in the very ways in which the nation defines its history,

heritage, and an East Timorese identity. Popular and state narratives of the history of island are characterized by an “insider-outsider” binary, primarily in relation to foreign occupying powers. Precolonial histories are rooted in tales of ancestors and the ancient kingdoms, though there is little documentation from this period (Babo-Soares 2003, p. 57). From the first encounters with the European colonial powers through the centuries of Portuguese rule, histories are typified by the ‘occupied-occupier’ dichotomy. The distinction between the foreign Other and the East Timorese was amplified under the Indonesian occupation, when the occupied East Timorese were the “rain-nian” (owners of the land) and the oppressed, and Indonesia constituted the violent, foreign oppressor (Babo-Soares 2003, p. 264).

Articulating history in this binary way, centered round the *Timor oan* (people of Timor) and outside occupation and interference, has contributed to the defining of a contemporary national identity. “East Timorese-ness” is defined as the capacity of the people to endure extreme hardship, suffering, and sacrifice (*terus*) in the long struggle (*funu*) for self-determination and freedom from foreign influence (see Arthur 2019). This identity is imagined to be as old as the struggle itself, which united the nation through the long colonial period, referred to as the “500-year *funu*” (Gunn 2001, p. 3), intensified under Indonesian rule. In the post-independence state, the fight against foreign occupation is over, and the struggle is now believed to be one against poverty and the socio-economic and political challenges of the modern world (Arthur 2019, pp. 171–172). Thus, both colonialism and conflict have shaped the very core of an East Timorese identity, even to their representation in the national flag (see Arthur 2016, 2019, pp. 37–69). It is perhaps not surprising that such an identity is profoundly felt and resonates so strongly with the vast majority of the population, since the legacies of both are still very much in evidence in everyday social and political life.

Language: Portuguese

The legacies of Portuguese colonialism are perhaps most clearly manifest in the use of language

and practice of faith. Portuguese is enshrined in the Constitution as one of the official state languages of Timor-Leste, alongside the indigenous lingua franca, Tetun (RDTL 2007, Article 13.1). It is the language of parliament, of the law, and it is taught to school children from an early age. Despite the apparent connotations of the language with a former colonial oppressor, there are several significant and symbolic reasons for the new state to privilege cultural ties to Portugal in the post-independence state. Indeed, it was influential in shaping East Timorese nationalism during the Indonesian occupation. Even though it was the language of a foreign occupier, the Portuguese language and culture that had been imposed on Timor-Leste for centuries suddenly became strategically used to differentiate the East Timorese from the Indonesian occupiers.

First, it was a practical way of communicating secretly in a language that was not widely understood by the Indonesian military who policed and patrolled the half island. Second, Portuguese and indigenous language were outlawed under Indonesian rule, and so its use was a symbolic and practical form of resistance (Leach 2017, p. 91). Third, embracing Portuguese was simultaneously a rejection of Indonesia in terms of national identity and culture. This was key because the Suharto regime's argument for integration was founded on assumption that Timorese and Indonesians belonged to the same nation and were "brothers," separated by the European colonizers (Robinson 2009, p. 46; Leach 2017, pp. 87–88; Hull 1999; Gunn 2001). Reacting against this, the leadership of the resistance movement embraced their Portuguese heritage and incorporated into notions of "East Timorese-ness," arguing that their unique history, including experiences of Portuguese colonialism, was proof that Timor-Leste was a distinct nation with the right to self-determination.

The extent to which this strategic embracing of Portuguese was incorporated into East Timorese imaginings of nationhood is evidenced in its persistence in the post-independence state. Not only did it have historic practical value but Portuguese has now gained some symbolic value and is esteemed by the state. The Constitution stipulates that "The Democratic Republic of East Timor

shall maintain privileged ties with the countries whose official language is Portuguese" (RDTL 2007, Article 8.3). Common experiences of colonialism and cultural heritage contribute toward this privileging of Lusophone states, as well as shared contemporary political interests. This symbolic valorization of Portuguese has also been advantageous for the young nation-state as it establishes itself in the international community. The Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP) is a collective of Lusophone states, founded in 1996 and consisting of Portugal and its former colonies. It was established with the aim of promoting collaboration in the areas of economics, education, health, and scientific research; defense; culture, sports, and media; and diplomatic relations (CPLP 2020). Timor-Leste joined in 2002 when it gained independence and the benefits of such collaboration are significant for a young nation-state that is still recovering from the devastation left by the Indonesian occupation. A further key objective of the CPLP is also to promote and disseminate the Portuguese language across the world; this in itself is perhaps representative of the role that this cultural legacy of colonialism has been given in East Timorese society. Once used as a force of control and a marker of European "superiority," the Portuguese language has now been strategically appropriated by the East Timorese nation and utilized to its benefit as a tool in the continued national "struggle" that is now against poverty and toward development.

Religion: Roman Catholicism

A further prominent legacy of colonialism in Timor-Leste is the widespread adherence to the Roman Catholic faith, initially brought to the island by Portuguese Dominican friars in the early sixteenth century. 97.6% of the population of Timor-Leste identify as Catholics (IndexMundi 2020), and the faith has become fused with an indigenous belief in ancestral spirits and cosmology (Bovensiepen 2009). Though Catholicism was originally associated directly with the former colonizers, over the centuries it has come to coexist with East Timorese animist beliefs and is now considered to be an integral part of a national identity. Similar to the Portuguese language, the

Catholic faith only gained real significance in uniting the nation during the Indonesian occupation, and it is because of this role that is considered to be so important today.

In the 1970s, the number of East Timorese who practiced the faith was relatively low. In the final years of the Portuguese administration, around one quarter of the population identified as Catholic. This number grew exponentially following the Indonesian invasion, from 27.8% to 90% in 1999 when the UN stepped in (Simonsen 2006, p. 557). The exceptionally high conversion rates under the Indonesian occupation can be explained in several ways. First, the Christian religion was an important signifier of difference between the occupied and the Muslim Indonesian occupier and underlined the strategic connection to their Portuguese heritage (Carey 1999, p. 87). This was a crucial way to undermine Suharto's argument that Timor belonged to Indonesia and shared the same heritage, while still obeying to the law of Pancasila that stipulated that all citizens must adhere to a monotheistic faith (see Weatherbee 1984; Arthur 2019, pp. 80–86). Second, the Catholic Church offered substantial practical support to the resistance movement in occupied East Timor, providing food, shelter, information for guerrillas and civilians, and vital medicines (Hodge 2013, pp. 151–157). Third, the emotional and spiritual support that the East Timorese people found in the Catholic Church throughout the occupation was a powerful motivator to continue to resist and gave much solace and comfort to the suffering (Hodge 2013, p. 159). In the later years of the occupation, the Catholic Church showed some solidarity with the resistance movement and the cause of self-determination when Pope John Paul II visited the half island in 1989. To a majority Catholic population, this visit was highly significant and gave much moral support and hope to those who had felt like the outside world had forgotten them (see Kohen 2001; Arthur 2019, pp. 86–89). Following his visit, the Pope received reports of the violence that continued at the hands of the Indonesian military and the Vatican's stance toward Indonesia hardened further. Strong statements of condemnation were issued that helped to raise awareness of the situation and consolidate

support for the independence movement around the world (Kohen 2001, p. 50).

As a result of its role in aiding the resisting East Timorese nation, the Catholic Church has been specially acknowledged in the Constitution of Timor-Leste, which “values the participation of the Catholic Church in the process of national liberation” (RDTL 2007, Article 11.2). The preamble pays specific homage to the Church and highlights the suffering that was endured with the people throughout the occupation: “In its cultural and humane perspective, the Catholic Church in East Timor has always been able to take on the suffering of all the People with dignity, placing itself on their side in the defense of their most fundamental rights” (RDTL 2007, p. viii). When we consider that East Timorese nationalism is founded on the concepts of struggle and suffering in the name of independence, it becomes clear why the Catholic faith has become so integral to identity and societal life in the post-independence state. Both religion and language were two of the primary cultural legacies of Portuguese colonialism that have endured through the centuries but which have become “Timor-ised,” incorporated into an indigenous culture and identity and now rendered fundamental. This was articulated succinctly by former President and then Fretilin representative to the UN during the occupation, José Ramos-Horta: “If you take away Portuguese language and religion, there is no such thing as East Timor” (cited in Leach 2017, p. 87).

Legacies of Conflict

Timor-Leste's transition from a state of conflict to peace has been far from smooth, and the effects of the conflict are still keenly felt in East Timorese society today. As the Indonesian military left and the UN peacekeepers arrived in September 1999, there was indiscriminate violence and destruction perpetrated in retribution for the pro-independence vote, including killings and forced displacements of civilians and attacks on UN staff on the ground (see Robinson 2001; Tanter et al. 2001; Bartu 2001). Once the violence had subsided, the UN's peacebuilding and state-building missions began in earnest. The missions that were undertaken in Timor-Leste from 1999 until the UN's

departure in 2012 were the United Nations Assistance Mission in East Timor (UNAMET); United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISSET); United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL); and the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT).

Peacebuilding and the UN

Peacebuilding under the UN is deemed to have been largely successful, however, not without serious challenges posed by a typically Western approach. This approach was incompatible and inappropriate within the cultural context of Timor-Leste for numerous reasons and resulted in limited trust and confidence from the East Timorese people in the initial years. In particular the UNTAET mission, which was established in October 1999 to administer the state and assist in the transition to full self-determination, was widely criticized for adopting a “one size fits all” approach to peacebuilding and disregarding the existing social structures, cultural associations, and indigenous values (DeShaw Rae 2009, p. 119). There was a lack of knowledge of local languages and culture; this was very problematic when communicating and “teaching” foreign Western concepts such as democracy, human rights, women’s rights, and development to a population that had limited experience of democratic self-rule (Molnar 2006, p. 346; Hohe 2002). Frustrations in this area were compounded by the UN staff’s lack of knowledge of traditional gender norms and roles, rooted in pre-colonial cosmology and custom. Without a firm understanding of the cultural context and tradition, the implementation of a Western-style system of governance, with little consultation from the population or leadership, staff also demonstrated a lack of respect for traditional authority figures and structures (*liurais* and village elders), both spiritual and secular. Considering the recent context of the occupation, this was a catastrophic move; under Indonesia, tradition and custom were outlawed, and sacred ritual objects and buildings were violently destroyed by the military (see McWilliam 2005). The withdrawal of Indonesia from the territory thus signaled the return of the East Timorese way of life, its valued traditions, and the freedom

to embrace and practice their customs once more. By undermining and thus indirectly delegitimizing the respected traditional leaders and beliefs, the UN’s actions cast doubt over this freedom and added to the mistrust felt by the East Timorese people, adding to the challenges of peacebuilding (Morison 2010, pp. 180–183).

One area of governance that proved to be particularly challenging to implement but which the UN addressed by engaging with the local population was justice. From its inception, there was wide mistrust in not only the UN but the institutions it sought to establish and the bureaucracy they brought. Consequently, the East Timorese people turned to their existing traditional justice and reconciliation methods that had been practiced for centuries and which retained greater popular legitimacy. One such practice is *Nahe Biti*, “unrolling the mat,” which is a customary method of resolving local level disputes, presided over by a village elder. In a *Nahe Biti* hearing, the disputing parties are brought together to present their cases to the elder and the local community. Judgment is passed by the elder, and a penalty is issued, and the process is concluded by ritual sharing of drinks and food (Mac Ginty 2008, pp. 153–154; Mac Ginty 2010, p. 404; Close 2017). Due to the cultural significance and legitimacy that this practice had for the East Timorese people and as a result of the numbers of people who turned to more traditional means of resolving local level minor legal issues, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission incorporated it into its methods in 2002. This was intended partly to reduce the volume of smaller cases that the judiciary had to deal with but also to improve popular engagement with the Commission (Mac Ginty 2010, p. 404). This proved to be successful and presents a clear example of the need for local participation in peacebuilding, as well as the criticality of knowledge of the cultural context in which international peacebuilders operate to their success (see Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013). *Nahe Biti* has since been adopted at a national level to deal with much larger disputes, such as the 2006 Crisis that saw widespread violence, looting, and riots across the country (see Close 2017, pp. 138–139).

The 2006 Crisis

One of the most significant challenges to peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction in Timor-Leste was the now infamous “2006 Crisis.” This was the worst period of violence that the nation-state had experienced since the withdrawal of Indonesia and saw 38 people killed and over 100,000 people displaced (Arthur 2019, p. 23; Scambary 2009; Van der Auweraert 2012). The crisis began within the national army; there had been perceived discrimination within the ranks in terms of promotion and opportunities felt by soldiers from the western regions of the country and their frustrations led to a strike. The state responded poorly, with much tension between the then Fretilin government and President Xanana Gusmão, and the strike ended with hundreds of the petitioning soldiers dismissed. This sparked outrage and a group of soldiers known as “the Petitioners” instigated widespread civil unrest and violence. The crisis constituted a period of intense political instability, with assassination attempts on the lives of both the President and Prime Minister, and was resolved in 2008 after, and Australian peacekeeping troops had been deployed (Arthur 2019, p. 213; Goldsmith 2009; Anderson 2006).

The root causes of the 2006 Crisis are arguably manifold but the origins in the perceived discrimination along regional lines, between western and eastern region soldiers, are to be found in the post-independence state’s valorization of the resistance movement and the struggle against Indonesia. As explored below, social prestige is given to those East Timorese who are believed to have contributed the most to the independence struggle. In the build up to the crisis, there was an assumption that those from the eastern regions of Timor-Leste had been more directly involved in the struggle, whereas the western regions had produced fewer veterans. As such, the perceived discrimination came from a sense that the soldiers from the east of the country were privileged and afforded better employment conditions and opportunities than those from the west. The 2006 Crisis is one extreme example of how this state valorization of the national liberation struggle has contributed to the complex social and political

relations of the post-independence state and which has ironically caused much division therein.

Internal Fractures: Valorizing the Resistance

Following the official declaration of independence in May 2002, processes of state- and nation-building, governance, and transition to a state of peace began in earnest and were faced with the task of tackling the legacies of the conflict. These were many and manifold: in the absence of a common enemy, different experiences of the recent conflict created divisions across East Timorese society, largely centered round notions of victimhood and honor for veterans. Due to the very recent nature of the Indonesian occupation, the new nation-state was founded on and sustained a social hierarchy that honored the resistance movement and its leadership above all else, specifically the Fretilin party and the Falintil veterans, for their role in leading the national liberation movement (see Leach 2002; Hill 2002, pp. 61–92).

The respect for the resistance movement has been institutionalized, enshrined in the Constitution, and is widely supported by the vast majority of the population. There have been both symbolic and material payments of respect. For Fretilin, respect is shown in the ballot box, and the party has enjoyed electoral success as either the government or the influential main opposition party (King 2003). Falintil veterans have been honored with their own government advisory body, the Council of National Liberation Combatants, and national holidays. These holidays include Falintil Day (August 20), National Veterans Day (March 3), Memory Day (December 7), and the Nicolau Lobato National Holiday (December 31, which commemorates the death of the first President of Timor-Leste (during the brief independent period of 1975) and the first leader of the Falintil (Leach 2017, pp. 212–213). In practical terms, veterans have received pensions as payment for their service to the nation. The veteran’s payment scheme has been highly controversial because of the initially narrow definition of “veteran” (female guerrillas and members of the clandestine resistance wing were excluded) and the vast amounts that

were being paid to a select few in a country suffering economically following the conflict (Niner 2013; Kent and Kinsella 2015; Kent and Wallis 2014; Wallis 2015; Roll 2018). The pensions were far above the average wage and other social security benefits, contributing to both an economic divide and an atmosphere of discontent that some contributions to the struggle were valued over others.

Victim's Organizations

The exclusive definition of who is deserving of honor and respect has sparked divisions for reasons other than the material compensation for sacrifice. Since 2002, numerous victims' groups, such as the 12 November Committee, *Novi Novi*, *Mate Restu*, *Rate Laek*, and the Association of Ex-Prisoners (ASSEPOL), have organized and lobbied the government for recognition (Arthur 2019, p. 94). The victims' groups are largely constituted of the families of those who died or were disappeared under the occupation and argue that victims of violence made the ultimate sacrifice for the nation and should be recognized as such. Their lobbying has resulted in two significant developments and limited success: the Santa Cruz Massacre monument and a proposed reparations law. The 12 November Committee successfully lobbied the government to build a commemorative monument to the Santa Cruz massacre, one of the worst of the Indonesian occupation and a turning point in the liberation struggle (see Arthur 2019, pp. 94–97; Blau and Fondebrider 2010). However, a full decade had passed from the initial petition for recognition and the final unveiling of the monument, suggesting that commemorations of victimhood have not been prioritized by the state. The reparations law proposed by victims' groups seeks financial compensation for the victims of human rights abuses under the occupation and has been repeatedly rebutted by parliament (Leach 2017, p. 212). This is perhaps due to the fact that the majority of the population would be able to claim compensation under this legislation, practically impossible for a state with a limited budget and challenging reconstruction project. Recommendations for symbolic recognition in place of

remuneration have been made (ICTJ 2010); however these are also yet to be formally considered by the government (Harson 2014).

Women and Conflict

Women's experiences of the conflict in Timor-Leste have been somewhat marginalized and overshadowed by men. This is typical of many (post-)conflict zones, and the issue is further compounded in an East Timorese context, where custom and tradition dictate social order and are based on traditional gender norms that privilege men (Niner 2011). As such, women have experienced the post-independence years differently and continue to deal with the legacies of the conflict in a personal capacity, in addition to the wider implication for East Timorese society as a whole.

During the Indonesian occupation, women were both victims of violence and heroes of the resistance movement, though there is yet to be full state acknowledgment of this fact. Throughout the 24 years of violence, an unknown number of women were raped, tortured, and coerced into long-term sexual relationships with members of the Indonesian military. Rape was used by the Indonesian military as a strategic weapon of war; it was used as an interrogation technique and to "breed more Indonesians" within the occupied territory but also as a "reward" for soldiers to boost morale (Mason 2005, p. 744). Of the hundreds of reported cases of sexual violence, 26% were instances of what it referred to as "sexual slavery" (CAVR 2005, p. 116). CAVR's report found that women and young teenagers were coerced into a number of different kinds of relationships that constituted sexual slavery. In some cases, a military officer lived with a woman and her family, or the woman was held in a house rented by the military. In others, women were detained in military bases where they were treated as the sexual property of a number of men. In a traditionally conservative and patriarchal society, where a woman's virtue is a large part of her value, to be raped was a source of immense shame for both the woman and her family. Consequently, many women kept their violations secret and never spoke out about sexual violence against them, for fear of being ostracized (Mason

2005; Niner, pp. 424–425). Such fears are not unfounded; many women who spoke out or who had children conceived in sexual violence were disowned by their families and communities because of the shame (Kent 2016, pp. 39–42).

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Timor-Leste gave special mention to the experiences of women and their need for dedicated attention because of the violence perpetrated against them. It highlighted that women who had been violated experienced strong symptoms of trauma and recommended and conducted “healing workshops” with victims (CAVR 2005, pp. 40–41). In a Catholic society that traditionally views sex and a woman’s chastity to be taboo, this recognition was not inconsequential. However, since the Commission ended, its liberal human rights discourse has been overtaken by a more traditional, conservative, and nationalist narrative that has reverted to and consolidated male-based traditional structures (Kent 2016, p. 40; Niner 2011).

During the conflict, women were not just victims of violence but perpetrators of it as well. During the Indonesian occupation of Timor-Leste, women had active roles in the resistance movement, both fitting with and challenging traditional gender roles. They were tasked with mending uniforms; cooking and preparing the guerrilla army’s food; passing messages to the Clandestine front; taking care of war orphans and running crèches; establishing and running literacy campaigns, health, and welfare programs; and defending their country with arms. Though downplayed, the armed participation of women in the struggle was significant, and their numbers were many; along the Indonesian border, there was a women’s military unit of over 100 (Franks 1996, p. 158; Hill 1978). Female combatants of the Falintil and resistance movement were critical to its ultimate success, and yet there is still no formal government policy on recognition of their services. A separate women’s policy would be required since they do not qualify for the existing veteran’s pension scheme (Cavanough 2018). In addition to the symbolic importance of such a policy, the financial compensation would afford many women economic independence and empowerment, no small feat in a society where

inequality and lack of opportunity is highly gendered.

Following the occupation and the return to indigenous traditions and customs that had been outlawed by Suharto, there has been a notable trend of East Timorese women occupying subservient positions in family and society under the prevalence of more traditionally patriarchal gender roles and norms (Niner 2011). There is evidence to suggest that this is the case; however, there is evidence of the gains made for gender equality and women’s empowerment. In the post-independence years, young girls’ attendance and participation in school have steadily increased, with particular progress made following the 2010 government initiative to address the gender gap in education (Pekular 2019). Notably, women’s participation and representation in national and local politics and civil society have increased dramatically in the post-conflict state and offers positive signs for gender equity in the country (Wigglesworth 2012; Wigglesworth 2013; Niner 2017; Trembath and Grenfell 2007; Wigglesworth, 2010).

Generational Divisions

Recognition and recompense are highly significant sources of social divisions, disaffection with the government, and instability in the new nation-state. Compounded by the cultural legacies of colonialism, issues of recognition have also contributed to social divisions along generational lines in the post-independence state. In the years following 2002, distinctions between three main generational groups emerged; the “Generation of ‘75””; the *Geração Foun* (the “new” generation); and the “Independence Generation” (Arthur 2016, p. 176; Ramos-Gonçalves, 2012, p. 4). Generational differences and groupings are based on differences of education; cultural-linguistic backgrounds; and recognized contributions to the liberation struggle.

The “Generation of ‘75,” raised under Portuguese colonialism, has been privileged as a result of its leadership of the national liberation struggle from Indonesia and has subsequently held positions of state leadership since 2002. This older generation has institutionalized its Lusophone

heritage and monopolized nation-building, constructing ideas of “true” East Timorese-ness based on their own identity, including the Portuguese language. The younger *Geração Foun* (the “new generation”), who grew up under Indonesia, have consequently been marginalized. Their cultural-linguistic and educational background is seen to delegitimize their membership in the nation (90% of this group speak Bahasa Indonesia and less than 3% claimed fluency in Portuguese in the initial independence years) (Leach 2003, p. 144), and their contributions to the liberation struggle have been overlooked. Numerous youth and student organizations that contributed greatly to the wider and external efforts of the resistance movements, such as RENETIL (*Resistência Nacional dos Estudantes de Timor-Leste*), OPJLATIL (*Organizasaun Popular da Joventude Louriku Assuain de Timor Leste*), and the LEP (*Liga dos Estudantes Patriotas*) (see Fox and Babo Soares 2000, p. 63), are not afforded the same respect and honor, either symbolically or materially, as the Falintil veterans. The negative outcomes of the generational divide include high youth unemployment; underrepresentation in national politics; cultural alienation; increased participation in martial arts groups and gangs; and waves of emigration.

Since 2002, many thousands of East Timorese have migrated for work as a result of limited prospects at home and the majority of them belong to the *Geração Foun*. Significantly, these younger East Timorese have migrated in part because of the cultural alienation from the nation-state but also because of encouragement from the government through labor migration schemes outlined in the National Employment Strategy (RDTL 2017, pp. 116–130). The migration destinations specified by the government are primarily members of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), with many living and working (temporarily and permanently) in South Korea, Indonesia, and Australia (Wigglesworth and Fonseca 2016; Wigglesworth and dos Santos 2018). Additionally, an estimated 16–19,000 East Timorese have migrated to the UK as EU citizens, travelling on Portuguese passports (Wigglesworth 2016; Wigglesworth and Boxer 2017, 2019; Peake

2013). Many work to earn money to send home – their contributions to the nation-building project and new struggle against poverty – and believe that their sojourn in the UK is temporary until they can return home.

Contemporary National Politics in Timor-Leste

East Timorese national politics is often lively and unpredictable; there have been nine governments since independence was declared in 2002, including numerous coalitions; the 2006 national crisis that threatened the state leadership itself; corruption scandals and accusations of nepotism that go to the very top of government itself (see Gunn 2010; Shoesmith 2011; Niner 2016); and tensions with neighboring Australia over espionage claims and rights to the lucrative oil and gas reserves, legally belonging to Timor-Leste and much needed to bolster its economy. Personality clashes have led to emergency elections and cross-party alliances between the most unexpected bedfellows, with the most recent parliamentary crisis put on hold only to respond to the global pandemic, COVID19 (Leach 2020). Yet personal clashes are not the sole source of political drama, and, similar to other aspects of social life in Timor-Leste, the present is very much guided and influenced by the past.

The dominance of the independence struggle from Indonesia in East Timorese society is in part due to the recent nature of the conflict and the fact that the violence is very much retained within living memory for many. The fact that the struggle and resistance movement have been enshrined within the nation-state has enabled former resistance leaders to dominate national politics since 2002 and ensures their positions of leadership in the future (Arthur 2019, pp. 137–138). Although there are over 25 political parties in Timor-Leste’s young and lively democracy, it is common for parties to be either led by a former resistance leader (and campaign on that platform) or to make some symbolic connection to the struggle (Arthur 2019, pp. 171–202).

State commemoration and valorization of the liberation struggle have been conducted in such a way as to enable a monopolization of

nation-building to legitimize the continued leadership of a select few in the post-independence state (Leach 2002). These individuals had prominent roles in the liberation struggle, either in Fretilin and the first government of 1975 or in the Falintil. Key figures include José Ramos-Horta (founding member of Fretilin, the East Timorese Foreign Minister during the occupation, Prime Minister 2006–2007, and President 2007–2012); Mari Alkatiri (founding member of Fretilin and its Minister for Political Affairs in 1975, the current Secretary General of the party, and Prime Minister 2002–2006, 2017–2018); José Maria Vasconcelos aka Taur Matan Ruak (former Commander of the Falintil, President 2012–2017, and Prime Minister 2018–2020); Francisco “Lu Olo” Guterres (former Falintil guerrilla, President of the Fretilin party, President of the National Parliament 2002–2007, and President of the state 2017–2020); and Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão (Commander in Chief of the Falintil, President of Timor-Leste from 2002–2007, and Prime Minister from 2007–2015). Gusmão, an undisputed national hero figure (Arthur 2019, pp. 137–168), officially retired from politics in 2015 but has lingered in an advisory capacity and indirectly through his political party, the CNRT, and may even return as PM in 2020 (Leach 2020). A cult of personality, or personality politics, has consequently typified East Timorese politics since the return to independence (McWilliam and Bexley 2008, p. 69; da Silva 2008).

Yet in recent years, there has been some shift in the power dynamics of electoral politics and popularity. In response to the pervasive generation gap and the frustration of younger East Timorese with the dominance of the older “Generation of ‘75,” there has been increasing popular support and votes for younger candidates. In particular, KHUNTO (*Kmanek Haburas Unidade Nasional Timor Oan*) has gone from very modest beginnings in 2011 to becoming a significant political player in a short time. In the 2012 parliamentary elections, the party won only 2.9% of the vote; however, in 2017, its vote share increased and KHUNTO won five seats in parliament (Aspinall and Scambary 2017). This gain affords the party relatively significant influence as a key faction of

the coalition government in a parliament where obtaining a majority has proven to be challenging in recent years (Leach 2020). KHUNTO is unique in that it has no ties to former resistance leaders and is led by younger East Timorese, running on a platform that combines indigenous tradition and spirituality with an independent voice that criticizes corruption and nepotism of the older generation’s parties (Aspinall and Scambary 2017). The party’s recent increase in popular support is not enough to rival the more established parties led by key figures such as Gusmão, Alkatiri, and Taur Matan Ruak, but it is enough to suggest that change is possible and that, in a generation’s time, East Timorese politics could be very different.

Cross-References

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- ▶ [Grounded Nationalism](#)
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Post-Liberal Peace

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Prisoners' Dilemma

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Summary

Prisoner's Dilemma is an early mathematical method for choosing whether or not to cooperate based on the relative benefits of the payoffs expected from the choices made by two opponents.

In a lecture at Stanford University in 1950, Albert Tucker gave Merrill Flood and Melvin

Dresher's mathematical model of cooperation and conflict its now familiar structure and name, Prisoners' Dilemma (Poundstone 1992). In Tucker's scenario, a district attorney, sure of the guilt of two suspects but lacking sufficient evidence for conviction, seeks a confession. Isolating the suspects, each is told they have a choice to confess or not. If both refuse, the district attorney will book them on petty charges, and they will receive minor sentences, B. If both confess, they will receive moderate sentences, C. But, if only one confesses, then the confessor will receive the most lenient sentence of all, A, while the one who refused will get the toughest sentence of all, D. That is, $A < B < C < D$. The situation looks like this:

| | | | |
|--------------|-------------|----------------|-----------|
| | | (Prisoner One) | |
| | | (Not Confess) | (Confess) |
| Prisoner Two | Not Confess | B (B) | D (A) |
| | Confess | A (D) | C (C) |

If the prisoners trust one another completely, neither will confess. If not, Prisoner One should compare $(B)+(D)$ with $(A)+(C)$ and confess or not based on the smaller total (because all prisoners presumably prefer short sentences presumably to long ones). Prisoner Two will do the same based on $B+D$ and $A+C$.

A mathematical "game" like this with a finite number of players and strategies will produce the same optimal solution no matter how many times it is "played." Axelrod (1984) pitted pairs of researchers familiar with Prisoners' Dilemma against one another in an unknown number of repetitions (but averaging 151). Anatol Rapoport obtained the best score by always cooperating on the first round and then imitating his opponent on each subsequent round. Once the opponents figured out what they were doing, they cooperated. Axelrod concluded from this result that this was one way cooperation evolves naturally.

With a view toward ending war or keeping the peace, Prisoners' Dilemma analysis has directly impacted policy (Marshall 1991). It played a part in the decision to employ the atomic bomb to end World War II. During the Cold War, Thomas Schelling (1960) applied it to determining the number of

missiles needed to ensure that both the USSR and the USA would continue to choose Cold over hot war. In the 1970s it was influential in the decision to remain in South Korea and in the 1980s in overcoming opposition to deploying Stinger. Recently, analysis of the terrorist threat concluded that there are too many targets (every plane, ship, embassy, and consulate, every business at home and abroad, every reservoir, bridge, school, shopping center and sports facility, and more, each requiring four 42-hour a week security shifts) to defend. Thus, the optimal post-9/11 strategy – easier said than done – was to destroy al-Qaeda training bases, cut off their financing, infiltrate their networks, and eliminate their state support, if any.

Cross-References

► Culture and Conflict Resolution

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Private Peacemaking and Dialogic Approach to Mediation

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Introduction

Peace mediation (also referred to as conflict or international mediation) is customarily defined

as a process that begins with the prospective mediator (a third party) being invited to work for a peaceful (re)resolution of an armed conflict, (Wallensteen and Svensson (2016, p. 12)) presupposed to be “acceptable, impartial, and neutral” (Bercovitch 2007, p. 166; United Nations (UN 2012)). Broadly speaking, peace mediation can be understood as “a process of conflict management, related to but distinct from the parties’ own negotiations, where those in conflict seek the assistance of, or accept an offer of help from, an outsider (whether an individual, an organisation, a group, or a state) to change their perceptions or behavior, and do so without resorting to physical force or invoking the authority of law.” (Bercovitch 2007, p. 167). A conflict transformation perspective departs from a resolution and agreement-centric focus, and approaches peace mediation from a broad and inclusive perspective as *a peace-seeking exercise that includes different forms of third-party intervention to support the peaceful transformation of violent conflict by sustaining dialogic interaction among parties to conflict* (Lehti 2019, p. 97).

Peace mediation has a twofold reputation. On the one hand, it is presented as the most cost-efficient way to address armed conflicts in peaceful terms. On the other hand, it is seen as a somewhat conservative practice of peace diplomacy, executed mainly by retired diplomats. Both impressions, as always, manage to encompass only a narrow understanding, neglecting the multiplicity of peace mediation. In the past decades, peace mediation was dominated, in particular, by states. However, during the past two decades agency and the scope of peace mediation has expanded far beyond the narrow corridors of official diplomacy. The engagement of multiple nongovernmental actors into the field of peace diplomacy has contributed to a new kind of pragmatic approaches to peace, and transformed conventional mediation practices. *Private peacemaking* refers to the activity of nongovernmental actors that supplement official peace diplomacy.

Mediation as Peace Diplomacy

The term “mediation” was launched into the sphere of peace diplomacy in 1948 when the

United Nations appointed Swedish Folke Bernadotte as the United Nations mediator in Palestine. Peace mediation developed as a specific and regulated practical tool of international diplomacy in the post-Second World War era, although the early roots of international peace diplomacy can be dated back to the era of the League of Nations. During the first decades after the Second World War, the UN was the primary provider of mediation, while leading powers (the USA, the UK, France, Soviet Union, and China) also held important roles. The UN could mandate individual mediators such as Bernadotte, Ralph Bunche, or Olof Palme and in some cases, UN secretary-generals acted as mediators themselves (e.g., Dag Hammarskjöld) (Greig and Diehl 2012, pp. 62–70; Svensson and Wallensteen 2010; Wallensteen and Svensson 2016). The Camp David negotiations (1978) between Israel and Egypt, mediated by then president of the USA Jimmy Carter and his team, are an excellent example of mediation executed by a great power during the Cold War period. Only leaders of states—those of Egypt and Israel—were allowed to participate and contribute to negotiations in isolated settings, even though it was the fate of the Palestinian people that was in the balance. The mediator, President Carter, utilized the power of the USA to persuade parties to achieve a conclusion that was favorable for the USA (Quandt 2016). At the time, international peace mediation was exclusively limited to the sphere of state diplomacy.

In the mid-1990s, the world witnessed a peace mediation boom, and the number of mediation cases skyrocketed from 30 cases in the 1970s and 1980s to roughly 170 cases per year (Greig and Diehl 2012, pp. 62–70). The boom was one consequence of a remarkable normative shift within the international order, that is, the emergence of the era of liberal peace(building), which made peace interventions an indispensable obligation of the international community. During the Cold War era, a majority of violent conflicts ended in a military victory for one party, but, as a consequence of this new mediation-friendly environment, armed conflicts increasingly ended in a negotiated agreement (Coleman 2012, p. 65; Eriksson and Kostić 2013b, p. 162). The

development during the past decade was paradoxical. The number of peace mediation actors has steadily increased including several new official actors, such as small states and international organizations. Further, an increasing number of non-governmental actors have adopted peace mediation into their agenda. Simultaneously, mediation has become a more professionalized field. Despite all of these developments addressing both quantity and quality of mediation, there have been fewer agreements achieved in track 1 peace negotiations during the past few years. In the era of new world disorder, the internationalization of armed conflicts is on the rise, and intrastate conflicts are more often entangled in great power rivalry and power–political interests, further hindering the resolution of conflicts and, in particular, decreasing options for track 1 negotiations. The space for international peace mediation has become limited as a result of the increasing power–political rationale. Great powers are less willing to invest in soft forms of peace diplomacy. An example of this is Syria, an intrastate conflict that has become entangled in great power struggles with the USA, Turkey, Russia, Iran, and Saudi Arabia, with alliances and power interests in a state of dynamic change.

Peace practitioners are in increasing terms worried about that mediation is becoming ineffective because prevailing practices and tools of mediation and dialogue “were created for traditional inter- and intrastate conflicts.” (Pentikäinen 2015, p. 67.) In an increasingly complex landscape of internationalized asymmetric conflicts mediation practice has preserved its focus primarily on “conflict as a struggle between armed groups”; even in current messy wars “armed groups generally comprise marginalized actors who could never achieve their ambitions in a peaceful context” and who often benefit economically from fighting. Indeed, it was crudely noted that focusing on armed groups mediation “does little to address the problems of the suffering population.” (Adapting to a new conflict landscape, Oslo Forum (2016).) Since mediation still seen to represent the best option for third-party intervention and because even there “where mediation fails to settle a conflict, mediators can still

secure important, lifesaving wins,” a new, more inclusive, and holistic approach to mediation has been called for by several practitioners. (Martin Griffiths, Foreword to *Alert 2016!*, p. 9; Oslo Forum (2016).)

If peace mediation is examined beyond a quantitative criterion (the number of signed agreements) and focuses on more qualitative criteria, which measure the durability and sustainability of peace, the track record on favorable outcomes is limited. The conventional practices of mediation have been developed during the Cold War years to fit into an interstate context, while during past three decades a great majority of armed conflicts have been asymmetric, intrastate conflicts in which state has lost “the monopoly on the legitimate use of physical force in a given territory,” and the sole legitimacy to make agreements (Winter 2012). The definition of the main parties involved in violent conflicts has become a highly complicated exercise in comparison with the simplicity of interstate wars since parties lack an official legitimate position. For example, in the Syrian war, the Carter Center has recognized hundreds of armed groups with loose, fluid, and rapidly changing relations with one another. (MSN report no. 7. See more about new multiple agency in new wars Kaldor (2006).) The confusion regarding who the parties of the war are, and thus who should be allowed to participate in peace negotiations are characteristic of asymmetric wars.

This constellation has set a profound challenge for Westphalian peace diplomacy since states want to preserve their monopoly for diplomacy, despite the nature of asymmetric wars calling for a more flexible approach (Aggestam and Björkdahl 2009, pp. 17–18; Fixdal 2012). Major powers have remained particularly suspicious in engaging nonstate actors in peace negotiation even when there are several nonstate warring parties. That was case in the Bosnia in the 1990s, but also in the Ukraine in the 2010s. The situation looks a bit different if examined from the perspective of the small state-led or the UN-led peace mediation processes, but the major challenge is how peace mediation can address the diversity and contingency of actors, and how it should recognize legitimacy of those actors.

From the perspective of classical mediation practice, the plurality of primary parties has been regarded as highly challenging for the success of peace talks, since a simple negotiation setting with a limited number of actors can better be managed, and is easier to achieve a quick result. Within complex asymmetric conflicts, classical mediators have aimed for simplicity by limiting the number of negotiating partners and looking for bilateral settings, thereby consciously denying the challenges of agency often experienced in asymmetric, scattered, and fragmented settings (Paffenholz and Ross 2015, pp. 28–29). Following that principle, Lakhdar Brahimi, the United Nations and Arab League Special Envoy to Syria until 14 May 2014, aimed to create a simplified negotiation setting between the opposition and the government in Syria. The Geneva-based negotiations under the leadership of Staffan de Mistura predominantly continued with the same strategy, even if in diversified ways. The diversity, fragmentation, and heterogeneity of the rebel side was thus attempted to be explained away, and several other actors like the Kurds have been excluded. (UN Mediation in the Syrian Crisis; MSN report no. 7.) In some cases, but not certainly in all, due to the exclusive nature of bi-party negotiations, it has been possible to achieve a cease-fire in a relatively short time; however, simultaneously, the two-party model “ultimately led to reduced legitimacy” of the peace process as civic society actors have mostly been sidelined from the early phase of peace talks. Some mediation cases in particular are accused of failing because of their incapability to also engage nonfighting parties that were regarded more as secondary to armed groups (Höglund and Svensson 2009, pp. 183–185; Destradi and Vüllers 2012). It seems obvious that the applied criteria for participation in the mediation process could have drastic influences throughout the whole peace process and may constitute a major obstacle to achieving sustainable peace as exclusive peace mediation setting omits inclusivity and local ownership of the process that may diminish legitimacy of the peace agreement. This would explain why too often violence escalates again only a few years after signing agreements.

Peace diplomacy (as well as diplomacy in general) is fundamentally based on regulated, resilient, and stubborn practices and presuppositions that all resist reform. Changes in the field often occur slowly as official diplomacy operates within a conventional structure, focusing on traditional procedures and learning through experiences. Demand for revising mediation practices has arisen mainly from a pragmatic perspective. During the past two decades, peace diplomacy has tried attaching to new asymmetric conflicts, integrating mediation goals into liberal peace norms. How to build more locally owned, inclusive peace processes is a principle which cannot be ignored in any mediation effort (Paffenholz and Ross 2015). Still, adaptation of new norms into peace mediation practice and the renewal of official practices of peace mediation have been slow to take place. Simultaneously, new non-governmental actors have managed to expand peace mediation beyond Westphalian diplomacy and better address, in their practices, normative challenges of inclusivity and local ownership.

Peace Mediation Beyond Negotiations

Conventional definitions comprehend mediation solely as a means of active assistance in (official) negotiations among parties pursuing an agreement or other kind of compromise. Nonetheless, it is also possible to understand, more broadly, peace mediation as a particular nonviolent format of third-party intervention that pursues “improving efficacy and quality of transforming” violent conflicts towards peace. This may but also may not require the achievement of agreements, and it does not necessarily require traditional negotiations but “a major service of mediation is helping adversaries communicate with each other, even when they are engaged in deadly conflict.” (Kriesberg 2015, pp. 10, 13–14). A narrow perspective characteristic to conventional peace diplomacy comprehends peace mediation as a resolution-seeking exercise and particular negotiation-supporting techniques looking for achieving a compromise between the incompatible interests of the conflicting parties. From a broader and

more comprehensive perspective, peace mediation refers also to third-party activity that changes the perceptions or behaviors of conflicting parties in relation to violent conflict. Peace mediation can also be understood within a broader spectrum of dialogues and peace support which encompasses more than just (diplomatic) negotiations among selected political and military leaders, including and placing an emphasis on civic society processes. From this perspective, peace mediation becomes a necessary component at all stages of a conflict cycle to support conflict transformation: before, during, and after the violence (Francis 2002, pp. 10–11; Ropers 1995, p. 22).

Peace mediation is diversely approached and comprehended by academics. If mediation is understood within a conflict management perspective, as a particular tool adapted to negotiations, scholars are interested in how to develop engagement within the negotiation setting more efficiently (Bercovitch 2002, 2007; Bercovitch and Gartner 2008), with a focus on the mediator’s personal styles as well as studying practical styles of mediation (Svensson and Wallensteen 2010; Wallensteen and Svensson 2016). According to Zartman’s ripeness theory, based on conflict a management tradition, mediation is presented as an appropriate tool only when the primary parties of conflict are ready for it, and when they recognize that they cannot achieve their goals by violent terms anymore (Cantekin (2016, pp. 80–81). Transformative understanding contests this simplified model of the conflict cycle and suggests that a conflict peace mediators’ task is to prime peace even when parties are not yet willing. Further, this understanding suggests that within asymmetric conflicts the status of the primary party is always contested and constantly transforming. A new broader understanding of peace mediation would shift the interest of mediation research from the negotiation process to peace intervention and ask how mediation practices and agency can be constructed in complex, contingent, and particular peace processes. The success of a peace mediation is traditionally measured by the creation of a peace agreement. This approach omits the question of the durability of a peace agreement and examines success solely

through the frame of “negative peace.” New approaches to mediation prioritize questions of agency, impartiality, inclusivity, and local ownership and are interested in how peace mediation addresses “the long-term processes that shape the outcome of peace,” thus discussing peace mediation within the frame of a liberal peace critique (Eriksson and Kostić 2013a, pp. 9, 17).

Nongovernmental Actors Within Multiparty Peace Process

Many of recent mediation efforts can be defined as multiparty and multitrack peace diplomacy. There are several kinds of third-party actors – big and small states, international and regional organizations, and “widespread presence of religious, humanitarian and development NGOs”—that have created the complex and contingent field of peacemaking (Crocker et al. 2002, pp. 228–230). One of most remarkable changes in the peace mediation field has been the drastic increase in the number of nongovernmental third-party actors who have adopted a more central and diverse role in peace processes. There is no regulated term that would cover all nongovernmental peacemakers, and the most obvious would be call them just nongovernmental peace mediators or, like Dunn and Kriesberg, transnational organizations (TO) that have adopted peacemaking as their *raison d’être* (Dunn and Kriesberg 2002).

The term “multiparty mediation” refers to this diversity of mediators and how their simultaneous actions or sequential actions are combined and coordinated. Beside multiparty, many current peace processes can also be described as multitrack mediation that transforms operational structures “from monolithic, centralised, hierarchical and rigid toward more delayed and flat organisations in virtually all sectors of life.” (Piiparinen and Brummer (2012, p. 13). See also Crocker et al. (2002, pp. 228–230).) With the increase of potential third-party actors “the international playing field of mediation is becoming increasingly crowded” and with the complexity of the peace mediation field the questions of cooperation and coordination have become crucial (Piiparinen

and Brummer 2012, p. 13). Nonetheless, it is impossible to avoid competition among potential third-party actors because competitive attitude arise from the necessary efforts of nongovernmental actors to secure the role of mediator through procuring funds and recognition. However, mutual trust is easier and indeed more essential to achieve within the operational level. Even if multiparty mediation increases complexity in peacemaking, “it can help build the momentum required to help push peace negotiations to settlement and provide leverage and other key assets to a peace process.” (Crocker et al. 2015, pp. 382–383.)

The emergence of nongovernmental peacemakers is associated with a broader development of the growing sector of transnational NGO actors (TOs) and, in particular, so-called humanitarian organizations. TOs are “NGOs operating internationally and they may be multinational in their membership and leadership, as international NGOs (INGOs) are generally considered to be, or they may be based in one country and conduct their activities in other countries as well.” (Dunn and Kriesberg 2002, p. 194.) The history of TOs dates back to the nineteenth century. In the beginning, the TOs were predominantly associated with humanitarian assistance without any commitment to any political or development goals and agendas. The International Committee of the Red Cross founded in 1863 is the earliest example of this kind of humanitarian transnational organization taking an active role in the war zone. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the transnational NGOs gained a remarkable role in the growing sector of humanitarian aid, development, and human rights. The Biafra war 1967–1970 was an epoch-making conflict as some of humanitarian TOs intervened without an official mandate, and eventually their humanitarian assistance within the rebel site was crucial for prolonging fighting, indicating clearly that humanitarian aid also has political consequences and cannot be completely neutral (Foley (2010; Casey 2016, pp. 167–208. About the Biafra war Yarrow 1978; Lehti (2019, pp. 56–57)).

Humanitarian aid and peace support remained separate for decades. Since the 1990s, in the era of

liberal peace(building), many former humanitarian and development-centric NGOs reoriented themselves towards peacebuilding, and often these approaches merged (Foley 2010). The emergence of transnational organizations with a particular niche in peacemediation has been a characteristic phenomenon belonging predominantly to the 2000s and 2010s. They are different in background and size: there are organizations having a background in humanitarian aid and development, particular faith-based organizations that are community based with a transnational agenda, and nonprofit organizations founded solely for peace mediation. All of these organizations compete for external funding which enables their peace activity. Financing is received primarily from public sources. Thus, they cannot be regarded as fully independent from official actors and political interests.

Besides the rise of humanitarianism and the emergence of the international nonprofit sector, the changes in peace diplomacy are also entangled with the privatization of functions previously regarded as a sole monopoly of sovereign states. Big powers have, in recent years, even allocated parts of warfare and security sectors to private companies. Privatization of some parts of diplomacy is part of the same phenomena. Blurring the line between official and nonofficial is not just managed by states, but by the emergence of a nonprofit sector and growth of humanitarian policy which has created new spaces of peace diplomacy that transnational organizations have filled (Régnier 2011). Peace diplomacy executed by nongovernmental actors is, in essence, transnational and asymmetric as it includes the agency of actors, and expands peace diplomacy beyond the spheres of Westphalian diplomacy. Rules, roles, and definitions within these new multitrack fields of peace and humanitarian diplomacy are primarily shaped in everyday practices by participating organizations.

In organizational terms, private peacemaking organizations have grown in size and status, establishing the basis of their funding. Although the number of nongovernmental actors involved in peace mediation has increased, their numbers still remain relatively small in comparison with

NGOs in peace building, civil crisis management, and conflict prevention. Further, it is not possible to present clear listings because most of the non-governmental organizations are not strictly engaged in mediation, but rather in various forms of mediation support activities. Nonetheless, it is a widely shared view that there are, at present, four big private peacemaking organizations in the field – the HD Center, the CMI, the Bergh of Foundation, and the Carter Center. It is important to note that this situation may change quickly, and the list also depends upon the perspective in question (Lehti 2019, p. 48).

Nongovernmental peacemaking organizations can be roughly divided into two groups: private diplomacy organizations and faith-based organizations (FBO). Two groups are, however, overlapping – as is membership in two umbrella organizations: Mediation Support Network (MSN) founded in 2008 and the Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers (Network) founded in 2013. Even if their approach to peace mediation practice is in many ways rather similar, these labels – private diplomacy and faith-based organization – are good indicators of certain differences in their self-identification as well as in their normative basis, which also reflects their comprehension regarding their contribution and position in the peace process.

Within conflict resolution, the technical term “track 1.5 diplomacy” has often been used in situations in which nonofficial actors work in supporting official processes. In many ways, private diplomacy is a better term which encompasses this new grey zone, linking official peace diplomacy. Private diplomacy actors are often involved in enabling track 1 mediation by engaging with members of the political elite. Private diplomacy actors primarily gain their legitimacy as mediators through their established and recognized status within the international peace diplomacy field (Lehti 2019, pp. 108–117).

Faith-based organizations have long heritage in peacemaking, for example, the Quakers, the Mennonites, and Catholic Sant’ Egidio. Indeed, all these organizations have continued to be active in peacemaking. However, several new organizations have now entered the field. The religious

element often explains the dedication of FBOs to peace in general, but their mediation and dialogue approach do not necessarily have a particular religious dimension. However, as religious and indeed religious-based extremism have become a more important dimension of current transnational conflicts, FBOs have been more ready to deal with religious actors and questions entangled within religion and faith. At the operational level, FBOs have often, but not exclusively been engaged with civil society actors (Ibid., pp. 117–123).

By increasing the number of nongovernmental peacemakers, the field of peace mediation has become professionalized and, for their staff, mediation appears as a career choice. There has been an enormous investment in the training capacities and professional guidelines. Indeed, they have brought a new kind of brainstorming energy invested in the revision of the organizations' strategic thinking including in-depth analysis of the essence and objectives of peace processes, as well as rethinking appropriate means and approaches of peace mediation and reassessments of their role as peacemakers (Ibid., pp. 105–106).

Private Peacemaking

Nongovernmental peacemakers may take three different roles in peace processes: offering advisory services and mediation support, the facilitation of various kind of formal and informal dialogue processes, and actual mediation. Mediation support may include, for example, capacity building, training support, advisory services, and so on. If the objective of this kind of mediation support is to change the attitudes towards violence of parties in the conflict and to enable peaceful transformation, they should still be regarded as peace mediation. This kind of instrument is a recognizable part of almost every operation, but they may also serve as an entry point to other roles in a peace process. Private peacemaking may support the larger, internationally coordinated process, or they may have separate private platforms for mediation and dialogue. Organizing and facilitating various kind of informal dialogue

processes, some of them confidential and some of them more public, have become the primary form of private peacemaking. Most of these processes are looking for increasing inclusivity and legitimacy of peace processes, but also for opening up new paths and horizons for peace. There are only a few examples in which private actors have taken on the role of the main mediator for an internationally recognized conflict, as these duties are often reserved for state or international organizations. The role of CMI and HD in Aceh (Shea 2016), or Sant' Egidio in Mozambique as a chief mediator is merely exception in the practice rather than an example of a trend (Lehti 2019, pp. 59–60).

Private peacemakers appeared at first to be pondering and seeking their role and agenda within the state-dominating field, but during the past two decades they have transformed themselves from purely assisting towards a complementary actor (Strimling 2006, p. 96). Nongovernmental actors have expanded peace mediation beyond track 1 and opened up completely new fields for peace mediation. Instead of just distinguishing between different tracks it may be more helpful to make a distinction between, on the one hand, official (states and IOs) and nonofficial (private) actors, and, on the other hand, between formal (mandated) and informal mediation activities (see Table 1). Classical track 1 mediation represents a formal mandated mediation by an official third party. A great deal of a mediation literature concentrates on this particular field. Formal activity by unofficial actors or

Private Peacemaking and Dialogic Approach to Mediation, Table 1 Peace mediation actors and approaches (original Lehti 2019, p. 42)

| | Official actors (states, IO) | Unofficial actors (NGOs, nonprofit organizations) |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Formal/mandated mediations | Track 1 mediation | Supporting and complementing track 1 processes |
| Informal/nonmandated mediation | Enabling track 1 mediation | Peace mediation beyond mediation (e.g., dialogues, mediation support, capacity building) |

informal activity by official actors can be regarded primarily as processes targeted at supporting and enabling track 1 negotiations or formal, mandated peace processes. This is the primary target of private diplomacy. Informal, mostly nonmandated activities by unofficial actors (predominantly track 2 mediation) have been steadily increasing, but this has remained the least studied field within peace mediation literature. This has been mostly a field of private peacemaking, expanding the scope of participations and new practices of mediation beyond conventional negotiations. The great majority of private peacemaking can be described as peace mediation, but within their conceptual fluidity and flexibility of nongovernmental actors' approach to peace interventions, the question about the definition of mediation loses its meaning, or indeed turns into a question of whether it is necessary, or to what point it is relevant, to make clear distinctions between mediation, peacebuilding, conflict resolution, and dialogue.

The role of private peacemaking has become increasingly crucial while the shortcomings of official diplomacy in responding to the complex crises have become evident. Informal peace diplomacy is too often presented only as reinforcing and complementing state-centric official peace diplomacy rather than examined according to its potential role of influencing peace processes on its own terms. Nongovernmental peacemakers emphasize that they are able to mediate when it is not possible to mediate (Lehti 2019, p. 125). Thus, they can act where official mediation is not possible and gain the parties' acceptance to introduce some mediating elements to the process. Private actors are often "better placed to open discreet channels of communication and serve as 'incubators' for creating a climate of dialogue." (Oslo Forum 2015). They can also act where stakeholders do not want mediation and dialogue processes, at least not those that are internationally supervised. These are cases where there is a clear need for support, but conflict parties or main stakeholders do not, often for political reasons, want to officially acknowledge the need for a dialogue process. The involvement of private peacemaking is also invisible in comparison to UN-mandated process, and the main stakeholder – usually the

hosting state – may then still cherish the idea of ownership of the process (Lehti 2019, pp., 126–127).

The unofficial nature of private actors' work is particularly relevant in the early stages of a process and in breaking deadlocks but they "can also reinvigorate a stuttering process by bringing in new thinking and actors." (Oslo Forum 2015). Private peacemaking could bring elements of conflict prevention to mediation in situations that official mediation cannot enter because private actors' involvement does not legitimize and delegitimize power structures in the same way that official processes do, and thus they can act more quietly and invisibly, and cross boundaries that official actors cannot. Therefore, private actors have the potential to work more efficiently to prevent escalation and become involved in potential conflict situations before the conflicts have been internationally recognized. It seems that this preventive mediation is still for them a new and partly unused but fully recognized dimension of their work. Indeed, "[preventing] violent conflict from erupting" is the best way of building peace but that requires the existence of early-warning systems that allowed recognition of the early signs (Lehti 2019, pp. 201–202; Väyrynen et al. 2018, pp. 31, 39).

Nongovernmental actors can more freely choose the people with whom they work, and what kind of dialogue they facilitate, while the actors who are part of the officially recognized process have their hands tied. The "unofficial nature" of private peacemaking makes it possible to work with groups that are marginalized or even excluded from the official process. Instead of a formal position, private peacemaking is emphasizing informal legitimacy that local actors have, since the ability to sell agreement and transformation to the public at large is dependent on that. This shift from formal to informal legitimacy contests the primacy of mostly elite-driven peace processes since long-term change would not take place if the process and agreements do not have the support of the population at large (de Waal 2014).

For private peacemaking, the mandate is no longer as dominant and determining a prerequisite

as it used to be, and attitudes towards mandates have become more practical and flexible. In some cases, a mandate is needed, and in other cases it is not. Or, a mandate can be achieved after entering into the process, if one's own role and the conflict dynamic is changing. Instead of a mandate, nongovernmental peacemakers now search for alternative entry points to a particular peace process or conflict situation that cannot no longer be seen as internationally given, but it always has to be based on an invitation from a local actor. The inviting party can be a local NGO or other local actor instead of a state or other official authoritative agent. A classical mandate given by an international organization or the conflict parties themselves is always a binding legal document that sets strict and nonnegotiable frames for a mediator. A local invitation, on the other hand, gives the third party more freedom and the flexibility to define the goals and agenda of the process, and to update and refocus them throughout the process when changing conflict dynamics require it (Lehti 2019, pp. 135–136). Emphasis of local invitation and local partnership strengthen local ownership of process and enable better-to-learn expectations and needs of local people.

Towards Dialogic Mediation

The dialogic approach best describes the new fresh, revolutionary informal peace diplomacy executed by certain private peacemakers. The dialogic mediation differs from that of negotiation in fundamental terms. Negotiation situations are based on announced positions, and there are various solutions available to address incompatibilities. At a certain point, negotiations reach a point where no one can move without someone else benefiting from that move. Negotiations are changing power positions. By contrast, dialogic processes are about transforming perceptions. In addition to negotiated agreements “resolving complex conflicts and building sustainable peace require profound changes of attitude, relationship, and behavior among individuals and groups” that is what private peacemaking is chasing up (Strimling 2006, p. 96).

Transformation is an apt concept that increasingly describes nongovernmental peacemakers' view of the whole peace process. The transformative approach to (peace) mediation practice contests the conventional frame of conflict management, and thus has substantial consequences for the framing of (peace) mediation goals and practices. Nonetheless, the private peacemakers are far from a uniform group in this regard and their understanding of what the relationship is between mediation and transformation, and how drastic terms old premises of mediation should be revisited diverge between organizations as well as between individual staff members. Transformation and resolution are not seen as either/or option, but instead it emphasized how conflicts “not only need to be resolved, but also transformed” and therefore mediation and transformation should be seen “as mutually entangled processes.” (MSN report no. 5.) Some of peacemakers have a more conventional understanding to differentiate between resolution and transformation and it is seen as a question of difference in temporal engagement to whole peace process. Then transformation is something requiring long-term process as mediation is short-term intervention. Alternative approach comprehends transformation as a way of understanding the whole peace process combining multiple overlapping and intertwining processes. Peace process is then no longer comprehended as linear processes; rather, it is acknowledged that peace processes experience pauses, advances, and ruptures that reflect the complexity and unpredictability of conflict itself. Transformation process cannot be (externally) designed and transformation does not have any generalized pattern nor any necessary pre-given phases and its end goal should be as open-ended as possible. Because of this dynamic setting, there cannot be fixed positions or grand plans of management (Lehti 2019, pp. 205–215). If it is not possible to verify clear causal and linear relationships between particular actions of peacebuilders and their output to the conflict dynamic, the whole strategic thinking process from planning to goal setting, and from design to evaluation, needs to be revisited.

Instead of overall, all-encompassing planning, what some peacemaking organizations now call for is an adaptive approach that emphasizes humility, a multinarrative understanding, and an obviously flexible and protean approach (de Coning 2018). The various overlapping conflicts and peace processes require private actors to fit their strategic planning to this highly contingent and erratic setting. To meet these challenges is to try to hit a moving target as described by one private organization. A transformative approach has made private peacemakers more aware of the limits of their own ability to influence the whole peace process as well as contest ability of remain completely neutral. Tolerance towards the limited possibility to design peace projects as well as the ability to express creativity to cope with unpredictable changes and uncertainties are seen as new virtues of peacemakers, since in complex settings it is not possible to execute rational linear planning and solution-centric methods. Peacemakers need to recognize that even how well designed in detail, a plan does not automatically lead to peace, and that some seemingly minor contribution may have significant consequences from long-term perspective. Core skills of peacemaker are then the ability to pick, recognize, and engage local partners that could carry the process. (Eronen 2016).

With dialogic mediation, private peacemakers have met ethical questions that have not been essential in official mandated mediation processes. Beyond official mandates, the question of participation and the legitimization of the mediator's role has become a more complicated and contingent process. With whom should they cooperate and how should they engage with local partners? Does inclusion of particular partners exclude others? How does this act of selection contribute to the whole peace process?

Applying this kind of approach into practice is far from an easy exercise since several principal conventions and practices of peace diplomacy are so firmly and so deeply grounded in conventions of rational management. Even if the ultimate goal is long-term transformation, in day-to-day operations the time perspective has to be of a shorter term and indeed local parties often expected clear

goal settings (Lehti et al. 2019, pp. 20–21). Then, peacemakers should concentrate on looking at how particular interventions can contribute to the transformation process and move the peace process forward as a “precision strike,” particularly when there is a glitch, a halt, or a setback in the peace process. The task of the mediator is therefore to set the ball rolling by supporting the process and by increasing the capabilities of the conflict parties to carry on the transformative process. The intervention is successful if it creates a snowball effect and leads self-sustainable local processes and practices (Lehti 2019, pp. 179–189).

By transformative shift, the organization of dialogue processes has gained increasing significance in private peacemaking as dialogues allow for better addressing to demands of inclusivity and local ownership. National Dialogues (ND) represents official and mandated format of peace dialogues focusing on power sharing at the national level. Beside ND there has been increasing amount of transformative dialogues “that has evolved from technical thematic dialogues, civil society dialogues, international dialogues and ongoing confidential negotiations.” (Siebert 2014) The transformative dialogues are often informal and civic society centric in regard to the issues as well as to participation. Transformative dialogues can be roughly divided into two kind of dialogues according their approach to inclusivity: participatory and targeted (see Table 2). In practice, many dialogues may have elements from both but, in general, the division highlights quite fundamental differences in design, objectives, and practice. The inclusivity of the peace process constitutes an omnipresent and uncontested normative basis of all private peacemakers' aims, but what inclusivity requires and how it can be operationalized differs among organizations and, indeed, divides the processes of dialogues to participatory and targeted.

Participatory dialogues refer to public dialogues with broad participation and targeted to confidential processes with carefully targeted participation. Participatory dialogues gain bottom-up legitimacy for the peace process by increasing societal participation. These kinds of dialogues

Private Peacemaking and Dialogic Approach to Mediation, Table 2 Transformative dialogues (original Lehti 2019, p. 201)

| | Participatory dialogues | Targeted dialogues |
|-----------------------|---|--|
| Third-party role | Facilitative, passive | Enabling, active |
| Agenda | Externally and/or locally set | Locally set |
| Objective | Societal inclusion, legitimacy of peace process | Perception change, breaking deadlocks |
| Connection to track 1 | Complementary or parallel | Complementary or supportive |
| Participation | Open, emphasis on local invitation | Confidential, actively handpicked by third party |

aim to engage with social groups like women or youth often marginalized from official processes. In some cases, the question is more about capacity building, but in other cases private peacemakers are focusing on assisting, for example, engagement of local women organizations to crucial public dialogue platforms.

The targeted dialogues focus on engaging certain selected persons or groups that are presumed to have a crucial role for transformation. They may be used as a tactical tool for breaking deadlocks, engaging new actors in the peace process, and facilitating the envisioning of a more peaceful future, in particular when the official negotiation forum is stalled. Even there may be a link to the official peace process but a link rarely appears visible and public. As confidential processes, targeted dialogues are reminiscent of the mediation process, but instead of a problem-solving emphasis targeted dialogues recognize problems to open up new horizons for the future.

All in all, beyond old conventional frames, there has been the development of a new pragmatic approach to mediation that can be called a *dialogic one*. The dialogic approach is not a uniform and coherent tool, but it is possible to detect certain main characteristics. Indeed, it is still perhaps at a certain level more an ideal model than a systematically operationalized practice, even if

there are efforts to make it the latter. Dialogic approach or dialogic mediation draws from theories on transformation and complexity. Dialogic mediation is founded on a focus on dialogue, long-term change and sustainability, and local ownership. It emphasizes context specificity, localized approaches, and the fluidity and flexibility of concepts and approaches, and derives from local actors' invitation rather than official mandates. Dialogic mediation suitably describes a new kind of interaction between a third party and the parties in conflict, but the same approach can also be labeled a post-management approach since it determinedly departs from the hegemonic rationalistic conflict management framework and its emphasis on incompatible interests. It has contested the meaning of a central symbolic signs of management approach and in particular be aware of controversial role of peace agreements that was previously regarded an uncontested goal of mediation. Emphasis is now more on transformation, rather than resolution. Resolutions are still needed in goal-oriented fieldwork, but the peace process as a whole is understood as a long-term transformation process.

From a broader perspective, it is not just the question of change of practice and agency but a fundamental redefinition of what peace is all about. Conventional mediation has been heading towards negative peace in the form of cease-fire or other agreements that end actual fighting. Within the liberal peace frame, mediated peace has been understood to include some pre-given and universal normative goals like respect of democracy and human rights. Dialogic mediation recognizes messy, contingent, and context-specific makeup of peace. It emphasizes the community's ability to self-organize, and thus prefers self-sustainability of peace that within the complex system emerged "from messy political processes embedded deep within the cultural belief systems of the societies in question." (Brusset, de Coning and Hughes 2016, p. 4.) As peace mediation is about working for peace, revisiting what peace is all about necessarily revisits the whole scope of peace mediation practice and indeed opens up, from the third-party perspective, the fundamental question of how transformation

towards this kind of open-ended peace can be best supported. This indeed indicates a radical paradigmatic change that has been so far primarily pragmatic. Nonetheless, even if in an ideal world dialogic mediation are seen to enable more locally designed processes, in practice there are still obvious pitfalls in execution as norms and practices of liberal peace are so deep rooted.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Asymmetrical Warfare](#)
- ▶ [Civil Society Inclusion in Peace Mediation](#)
- ▶ [Conceptual Evolution of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Everyday Peace](#)
- ▶ [Insights from Complexity Theory for Peace and Conflict Studies](#)
- ▶ [Local Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Mediation](#)

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Private Tribunals

► [Alternative Dispute Resolution](#)

Property Disputes

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Protection of Civilians

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Definition

United Nations peacekeeping operations are now regularly given the task of protecting civilians from direct violence, along with the other obligations in their mandate. This can be one of the most

challenging aspects of peacekeeping and has become increasingly relevant where these missions operate in areas of ongoing conflict. The responsibility was first added in tentative terms to the mandate in Sierra Leone in 1999, but is now expressed in more prescriptive ways, including the use of force. It refers to protection from direct violent attacks on civilians, rather than structural violence. However, actions are not limited to patrolling, presence by peacekeepers, or direct military action. A much broader range of activities is called for under UN policy on protection of civilians (PoC), including support for a peace process, inclusion in political dialogue, and human rights initiatives. But many challenges arise, such as sovereignty, host state consent, training, and gender representation among the mission members. Troop contributing countries and commanders on the ground may be risk averse, knowing there would be a very real cost for taking robust action. The use of force can be a key dilemma in how the mandate is implemented, with serious consequences from acting and from failing to act. Some notable failures to intervene and protect civilians have been seen in missions such as South Sudan, but the evidence shows that violence is reduced by PoC actions. The concept of protection of civilians by peacekeepers is distinct from the ideas of responsibility to protect, and from humanitarian actors' reference to social protection.

Introduction

In many ways, the idea of protecting civilians from direct attacks goes to the heart of the very idea of peacekeeping. It is certainly central to the popular perception what these missions are supposed to do. The idea is, however, one which emerged only at the very end of the twentieth century. The original concept of peacekeeping dating from the 1950s was much more limited. It focused on monitoring a ceasefire and providing reassurance. It was less likely to deal with situations of ongoing conflict. The core principles included consent of all the parties in the conflict,

with the use of force in only very limited situations, where peacekeepers themselves were coming under attack. What remains consistent with today's multidimensional peace operations is that they cannot "impose" peace, but can help to create conditions where political solutions may be found by those willing to deal with conflict in this way.

Peacekeeping has of course changed significantly since the end of the cold war, and the world has presented new challenges. The traumas of genocidal killings in Rwanda (1994) and Srebrenica (1995) highlighted the cost of failing to act in some situations, and forced the internal community to consider its obligations and the limits of state sovereignty. One response was the very different idea of responsibility to protect (R2P), which was adopted at a UN summit in 2005. This relates to a wide range of measures up to and including full-scale military intervention, which clearly does not involve consent of all parties. But the separate question arose of where to draw the line in situations where a UN peacekeeping force is in place or about to be deployed. This question could no longer be avoided.

First Steps

The shock of seeing genocide taking place as the world watched and emergence of the concept of human security (as opposed to state security) placed civilians firmly on the agenda. Ethnic cleansing and gender-based violence, which have been around for so long, became recognized as relevant terms for the first time. The Report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict (UN Secretary General 1999, p. 22, par. 68) stated: "The plight of civilians is no longer something which can be neglected, or made secondary because it complicates political negotiations or interests. It is fundamental to the central mandate of the Organization." Later that year, the UN Security Council expressed its willingness to consider how peacekeeping mandates might address the issue better. This was followed shortly after by a mandate renewal for the mission in Sierra Leone which included protection for the first time, in

very tentative terms with many caveats. Citing Chapter VII of the UN Charter, it said the mission “may take the necessary action . . . within its capabilities and areas of deployment, to afford protection to civilians under imminent threat of physical violence, taking into account the responsibilities of the Government of Sierra Leone and ECOMOG [the military force of the Economic Community of West African States]” (UN Security Council 1999). It is important to note that the primary responsibility for protection is still attributed to the state (a feature shared with R2P), with the international community acting to complement this. In other ways, however, mandates have become much more definitive, and in some cases robust. Within a few years, most mandates – covering nearly all uniformed personnel – would include civilian protection among the many tasks (Hultman 2013; United Nations 2015).

The definition used by the United Nations for protection of civilians is “without prejudice to the primary responsibility of the host state, integrated and coordinated activities by all civilian and uniformed mission components to prevent, deter or respond to threats of physical violence against civilians, within the mission’s capabilities and areas of deployment, through the use of all necessary means, up to and including deadly force” (UN Department of Peace Operations 2020, p. 3). The caveat about capabilities is a significant one, given that peacekeepers may face restrictions on their freedom of movement, do sometimes come under attack, and often cover vast geographic areas where surface travel is difficult. However, the wording in mandates has become in stronger over time, and sometimes include calls for more proactive and robust approaches and effective patrolling. For example, the word “imminent” was removed from threats of physical violence which were covered as mandates were renewed for operations in Mali (MINUSMA) in 2015, and later for the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO), and South Sudan (UNMISS).

The UN commitment to civilian protection, and the difficulties involved, were underlined in the major review of peacekeeping in 2015 known as the HIPPO report (Report of the High level

Independent Panel on Peace Operations). It states that PoC “is a core obligation of the United Nations, but expectations and capability must converge” (United Nations 2015, p. 11). It says that mandates must be realistic and ultimately linked to a wider political approach. The report reminds us that a UN presence does not take away the obligation of a host government to protect civilians; however, this primary responsibility does not remove the UN obligation to act when the host state is unwilling or unable to protect its citizens.

It would be misleading to suggest, however, that protection is simply a matter of presence, a show of strength, and the threat of force. There is an understandable focus on these tangible aspects, but protection is a great deal more than this, especially when it comes to dealing with the root causes of violence against civilians. The related (but separate) concept of R2P also suffers from the same misrepresentation. Both include a wide range of actions, including supporting and encouraging a state to provide security for its citizens, with the use of force being an option at one end of the spectrum. Other aspects may be less conspicuous but can be just as significant in handling matters before they become a crisis. UN policy on PoC involves three different tiers (Johnson 2018; United Nations 2015; UN Department of Peace Operations 2020). One tier deals with dialogue, mediation, negotiation, and public information. This reminds us of the primacy of politics in peacekeeping: conflict ultimately requires political solutions rather than ones imposed by force, even if there is a role for military action in creating the conditions for political engagement. A second tier involves uniformed peacekeepers (police and military) deterring or respond to attacks on civilians, using methods such as presence, patrolling, and possibly the use of force under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. The third tier is a broader program which helps to create a more secure environment, including actions such as human rights monitoring, accountability, or security sector reform. Taken together, this ambitious and wide-ranging program involving all three levels is the kind of integrated, holistic approach which is often called for so that

long-term, meaningful change can be facilitated, rather than short-term, output-focused activities which are donor-driven and prone to unintended consequences. Ownership of such a program is, as always, a key issue, along with the questions of knowledge, decision-making, resources, and power. Mandates for multidimensional missions have become increasingly complex and detailed, making competing demands on peacekeeping operations. But this three-tiered approach recognizes the way in which conflict dynamics evolve and multiple causal factors interact as a complex adaptive system (Brusset et al. 2016; de Coning 2016, 2020).

As with any conflict analysis or humanitarian operation, essential aspects will be missed if a gender-blind approach is taken. Using a gender lens helps to see the way in which women and girls can experience war and insecurity differently to men and boys (Ní Aoláin et al. 2011). This includes power dynamics, social relations, expectations, stigma, and the roles both genders are presumed to fulfill. Conflict-related sexual violence is of course one way in which these experiences are different and has been experienced in alarming levels in some of the areas where UN missions have protection mandates, such as the Democratic Republic of Congo and South Sudan (UNMISS and Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights 2017). However, it is not a matter of portraying women as victims with no agency, or indeed men simply as perpetrators. Women and men can also have different networks, capacities, and social capital when it comes to warning of future conflict and mechanisms for managing it. Taking this analysis seriously means that training and systems in peace operations have to include a gender perspective. At a UN level, there is scope for a greater exchange between the sometimes parallel discourses on protection and on women, peace, and security (Cuzzuol and Wels 2021; Hultman and Muvumba Sellström 2019). It is worth noting that while the number of women in senior positions in peacekeeping operations has increased considerably, the number of military personnel still falls far below the UN's own target.

Protection in Practice

One of the places where the protection agenda has been pushed forward is the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), which is host to one of the longest-running peacekeeping missions (Berdal 2018). Currently called MONUSCO, it has close to 20,000 troops and police covering a huge territory for more than a decade. A variety of armed groups and state forces in the east of the country have attacked civilians, and sexual violence has been a feature as well. Each context is different, and some call for innovation or a response to specific events, perhaps at short notice. In the case of the DRC, a specific unit was set up to carry out "robust" peacekeeping in 2013, after the city of Goma was taken over by the M23 armed group. This Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) was a significant departure and was approved by the UN Security Council (2013). It was effectively a combat force of about 3000 troops, most of whom were from Africa. It also had artillery and attack helicopters, and specific rules of engagement (Berdal and Ucko 2015; Müller 2015; Murphy 2016). It defeated the M23 group and sent an important signal about peacekeepers' willingness to use force in order to protect civilians. It appears to be the kind of robust action which would meet some of the demands for the international community to "do something" in the face of atrocities. However, taking this example and merely scaling it up is neither a simple matter nor without serious consequences. There are many other armed actors in the country, and a war-fighting operation would completely change the nature of the mission and its relationship with the government and the people. Even if this kind of robust action meets a specific need, force is ultimately an interim measure in peacekeeping, with politics remaining the ultimate guarantor of rights, stability, security, and national ownership in the long term.

The use of force by peacekeepers, even with the explicit approval of the Security Council under Chapter VII in strictly defined situations, is of course contested. While calls for the UN to "act" are frequently heard when abuses are seen to be taking place, there are important risks and costs for taking action, as well as for deciding not to act.

Apart from changing the operation into something which few would recognize as peacekeeping, there may be civilian casualties, the UN would become more of a target, and losses among peacekeepers could make troop and police contributing countries reluctant to send their personnel to the mission. The matter has been discussed in detail by Hunt (2017), Slim (2001), Piiparinen (2016), Bellamy and Hunt (2015), Karlsrud (2015), and Howard and Dayal (2018). Kjeksrud (2016) has analyzed use of force for PoC according to the particular threats faced and actions taken, and shown that it is more likely to be effective in stopping violence in certain situations, with important implications for preparation, training, and planning.

The operation in South Sudan, on the other hand, faced situations where the UN was criticized for failing to act at times, despite having a mandate and the knowledge that civilians were under attack where its troops were deployed. The UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) was present even before the country gained its independence in July 2011, following a long war of secession with Sudan. The new state moved into civil war just over two years later, as a delicate power-sharing arrangement fell apart and ethnic divisions quickly became part of the conflict. The ethnic nature of forced displacement, killings, gender-based violence, and looting were immediately evident, and the war has in fact consisted of a number of overlapping conflicts (UNMISS and Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights 2017). But the main actors included government forces and the rival coalition partner who had been driven from power, each of which were dominated by a significant ethnic group. Both were responsible for brutal attacks of various kinds on civilians. Death tolls are notoriously difficult to estimate, but one based on epidemiological evidence put it at almost 400,000 in the first 5 years alone when indirect deaths are included (Checchi et al. 2018). A third of the population was displaced, amounting to about four million people. Food production and distribution was affected to the extent that famine – which was anything but a natural disaster – was declared in parts of some states in 2017. By 2019,

half of the population faced food insecurity. These conditions included exactly the kind of scenario described in the PoC mandate, yet the mission was faced with a hostile host state and sometimes struggled to respond effectively. Zambakari et al. (2019) describe the UN response as “nothing short of disappointing and showcases international hypocrisy. Nowhere is this more apparent than the conduct of UNMISS in regard to its mandate to protect civilians” (p. 124). They point to a mismatch between the mandate, its interpretation, political backing for the operation, and the resources and capacity made available.

One of the features which is unusual about South Sudan was the large numbers of civilians who spontaneously sought refuge at UN bases, and the way in which these were turned into camps (Arensen 2016; Briggs and Monaghan 2017; Kilroy 2018; Lilly 2014; Stern 2015; Sundberg 2020; United Nations 2019). The numbers and speed with which people turned up presented an enormous challenge, with approximately 20,000 people seeking protection at the UN base in Malakal in one day in December 2013 as the conflict erupted. One of the dilemmas was whether some of these were in fact armed elements, so a principle had to be quickly established, that only those without uniforms or guns could enter. UNMISS and humanitarian organizations had to organize a division labor, in terms of providing protection and also basic needs. After some relocation of camps with very poor living conditions, most ending up directly adjoining the UN base rather than inside it, and some held tens of thousands of people. At one point, more than 200,000 people were sheltered in them, amounting to roughly a tenth of the internally displaced people (IDPs) in South Sudan. While UN policy was developed in response to the situation, it referred to them simply as “PoC sites.” It was keen to avoid becoming responsible for them on a long-term basis. The mission started redesignating them as regular IDP camps and handing over responsibility for protection there to the state security services in 2020 (Mold 2020). While the state does indeed have primary responsibility for civilian protection, this caused great unease among some residents: the same

government which had attacked them was now being put in charge of their safety inside the camps. The UN argument was that people were staying because services were provided, and sometimes came and went to jobs outside the camps. Resources could be freed up to carry out patrols which were needed elsewhere to implement the PoC mandate.

Clearly camps like these are an emergency measure which cannot protect the whole population, yet they can still have an important role. Their existence arose from large numbers of people seeking shelter in the first place, when the most basic of services could barely be provided. The question of people moving on from sites or IDP camps to return home should always be subject to important principles: that it is entirely voluntary, informed, and supported. PoC as a whole in any case requires a wide range of activities: arguments can always be made about best use of resources, and not all options involve an opportunity cost which rule out other actions. One comprehensive assessment of the sites concluded they had “unequivocally saved lives and helped prevent a far worse trajectory for the conflict in South Sudan” (Day et al. 2019, p. 3). A possible analogy is that of a hospital emergency room, which is important yet does not replace the much wider health system of which it forms a part. The sites are not a solution in themselves but can play a vital role.

Even though important and urgent protection can be pointed to, there were repeated failings in several cases where sometimes dozens of civilians were killed inside PoC sites when organized attacks on them were responded to inadequately by UNMISS. These happened in Bor in 2014 (Foley 2017), Malakal in 2016 (Arensen 2016; Center for Civilians in Conflict 2016a), and Juba in 2016 (Center for Civilians in Conflict 2016b; Spink 2016). The killings in Juba were part of a wider outbreak of violence when a delicate power-sharing agreement once again collapsed. The UN itself came under assault, but was criticized for its failings at the sites and for not responding to reports of other ongoing attacks very close to its bases. The internal report was damning, saying that there was a failure to plan for foreseeable violence. It pointed to lack of

leadership and a “chaotic and ineffective response” when a swift action was essential, and that it “did not operate under a unified command, resulting in multiple and sometimes conflicting orders” (United Nations 2016). The force commander was relieved of his position in the mission shortly after.

Apart from risk aversion and lack of preparedness, one of the most significant difficulties is that of managing the relationship with a host government which is hostile, as evidenced by the physical attacks on the UN itself. The government of South Sudan has expelled humanitarian agencies and their staff, and repeatedly obstructed UNMISS. Despite the Chapter VII mandate, a UN mission is still dependent on the host government to allow it to operate: it is not an occupying power and is there only with the consent of the state. Governments have blocked deployment of the UN, can make things difficult in many ways such as restricting freedom of movement, and even require the peacekeepers to leave. Day et al. have spelled out how “systematic obstructions to the freedom of movement of UNMISS and its partners – by the Government and other parties – has created serious impediments to the Mission’s ability to deliver on its protection and humanitarian mandates” (2019, p. 13). The way obstructions arise has been detailed by Duursma (2019). The difficulty of negotiating and maintaining host state consent, and the very serious implications for peacekeeping, are explored by Sebastián and Gorur (2018), Gorur 2019, and Labuda (2020). This is especially significant in a situation such as South Sudan or Darfur, when a government or its proxies are responsible for some of the attacks on civilians.

Summary

In many ways, the protection of civilians is both new and old. Despite being seen as an innovation which presents us with many new challenges, many of which are still being worked through, it also deals with a fundamental of peacekeeping. It resonates with the high ideals of the UN Charter of sparing humanity from the scourge of war. In line

with this bold aspiration, PoC exposes the existing tensions which are already faced by peace operations in areas of ongoing conflict. These include:

- Complex, multidimensional mandates with long lists of tasks (some of which might seem incompatible).
- The difficulty in getting uniformed personnel from troop and police contributing countries and their understandable reluctance to put these people at risk.
- The de facto “double line of command” in which UN orders may not be implemented until a contingent has checked with their own national military leadership.
- The dilemmas around the use of force and risk aversion in general.
- The quality and training of uniformed personnel, their rapid turnover, and the number of women deployed.
- Working alongside state forces, which is a recognition of host state sovereignty, but is problematic where these forces have been involved in attacking civilians or other human rights abuses.
- Maintaining the consent of parties to the conflict and dealing with obstruction of all kinds, especially where the host government is among those responsible for the violence against civilians.
- Incorporating a gender perspective in planning, prioritization, and operations.
- Choices about allocation of resources and political risk, at a time when peacekeeping budgets are being reduced significantly.
- Ownership of the peace process, and indeed the health and very existence of an inclusive peace process.
- Involving local communities in the overall work of protection, many of which have significant (but overlooked) resources, understanding, and abilities to anticipate problems and deal with conflict.

Highlighting these difficulties, which in any case affect peacekeeping as a whole, may create the impression that civilian protection is unrealistic. In fact, there is no basis for a

generalized dismissal, and there are many examples of very real protection being provided. An “all or nothing” assessment does not take us any closer to the nonlinear, complex realities of people living in conflict zones. While specific shortcomings and failures have been seen, especially in South Sudan in 2016, it would be impossible to claim that PoC practices and policy have not had any effect on the security and safety of civilians. An attack which is deterred by presence, patrolling, or dialogue will not show up as an event or data point. The research on peacekeeping in general has repeatedly shown that operations do have a beneficial effect on several aspects of conflict (for example, Hultman et al. 2019), and recent studies show the effectiveness of PoC operations in particular on reducing violence (Carnegie and Mikulaschek 2020; Phayal and Prins 2020). It is significant that an effect can be seen, despite the causal complexity involving so many interacting variables besides any PoC initiatives, and the long timeframes which may be involved.

One way of assessing performance is to consider the case of Darfur, where the joint UN-African Union mission in Darfur in Sudan (UNAMID) concluded operations at the end of 2020 when its mandate expired. This included civilian protection, which was to be taken over the government of Sudan. The concerns expressed by communities in Darfur – including protests by displaced people – and by international human rights organizations about the withdrawal show that the operation was in fact valued by those affected (Guardian 2020; Human Rights Watch 2020; Mamiya and Hansen 2020). While making clear that there were failures by UNAMID amid constant restrictions by the host state of Sudan, Mamiya and Hansen also say that the operation “succeeded in deterring the worst abuses of the civilian population in Darfur, protecting thousands of people and facilitating the distribution of humanitarian assistance” (2020, p. 18). The increase in attacks on civilians and displacement in the months after this mission came to an end also suggests it was having an effect on protection (African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies 2021; Amnesty International 2021; UN Secretary General 2021).

Legitimacy and state sovereignty are of course brought into focus by the PoC agenda, and this is where the power politics of the UN Security Council are a significant factor. Civilian protection is another tool or framework available to “the international community” which can be used or ignored. Any proposed mission faces the threat of veto by a permanent member of the Council, along with the specifics of its mandate. The veto was used repeatedly by Russia and China on much less contentious proposals for Syria. Myanmar is also insulated from serious sanction or action by the Security Council despite the killings and expulsion of the Rohingya population and repression of protests in 2021. But this is a reflection on the structure of the Security Council rather than a weakness in the concept of protection.

In the end, while action to protect civilians may be most visible in terms of urgent needs and crisis actions, it is actually part of a holistic and sustainable approach to conflict. The primacy of politics rather than military action, and genuine ownership of a healthy and inclusive peace process, are part of the protection agenda in the long run.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Assessment of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Civil Wars in Sudan and South Sudan](#)
- ▶ [Conceptual Evolution of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Evolution of Practice in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations](#)
- ▶ [Peace Operations, Principles, and Doctrine](#)
- ▶ [R2P and Prevention](#)
- ▶ [UN Missions in Sudan and South Sudan](#)
- ▶ [UN Security Council and International Interventions](#)
- ▶ [Unarmed Civilian Protection/Peacekeeping](#)
- ▶ [Use of Force in Peace Operations](#)

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Protective Accompaniment

- ▶ [Unarmed Civilian Protection/Peacekeeping](#)

Protracted Conflict Process

- ▶ [Russia and Frozen Conflicts in the Post-Soviet Space](#)

Q

Qualitative Research

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R

R2P

► [R2P and Prevention](#)

R2P and Prevention

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Synonyms

[Crimes against humanity](#); [Ethnic cleansing](#); [Genocide](#); [Mass atrocity crimes](#); [R2P](#); [Responsibility to protect](#); [War crimes](#)

Definition

This chapter explores the concept of the responsibility to protect (R2P) populations from genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing, and charts the evolution of how it has been implemented since 2005. The chapter begins by outlining the institutional development of R2P and acknowledges its influence on the discussions on preventing and responding to mass atrocity crimes in various situations around the world.

Since its inception, normative progress of R2P has included dispelling myths and criticism about

the principles of the concept. These criticisms have ranged from R2P being an attack on sovereignty or another “Western” means to justify the use of force to now focusing on critiques of how the R2P has been implemented and whether national, regional, and international actors have the capacity to uphold their responsibilities for prevention.

While acknowledging some critiques of how R2P has been applied to certain country situations, as well as gaps in the capacity of the international community to prevent and proactively respond to atrocity crimes, the article highlights how mitigation strategies undertaken in Kenya, Côte d’Ivoire, and Gambia were instrumental in preventing the commission of large-scale atrocities. These cases highlight not just the role of international and regional actors but also increase our understanding of what can be done by national stakeholders to guarantee nonrecurrence.

What Is the Responsibility to Protect?

R2P is a political commitment, unanimously adopted by heads of state and government at the 2005 UN World Summit. It is aimed at preventing and halting genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and ethnic cleansing. R2P stipulates that every state has the primary responsibility to protect its populations from the four crimes, the wider international community has the responsibility to encourage and assist individual states in

meeting that responsibility, and if a state is manifestly failing to protect its populations, the international community must be prepared to take appropriate collective action in a timely and decisive manner and in accordance with the UN Charter. It is a political commitment and call to action that politics as usual cannot continue in the face of conscious shocking crimes of genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes, and crimes against humanity.

R2P emerged in response to the failure to protect populations during the genocides in Rwanda and at Srebrenica during the 1990s. It was designed as a new operational and political response to accomplishing the aim of “Never Again” – the idea that the world should never stand idly by when populations are suffering from genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and ethnic cleansing. This new approach would be based not just on crisis response, but also on taking steps to actively prevent the conditions that lead to the commission of mass atrocity crimes.

R2P also emerged as a response to the failures of so-called “humanitarian intervention,” whereby states acted unilaterally under the guiding principle of a “right to intervene” in order to protect populations from humanitarian crises. The disastrous consequences of such interventions without approval by the UN or the target state helped drive the establishment of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS), which initially devised the term “Responsibility to Protect.” In its final report in 2001, ICISS framed R2P around the idea of “responsibility” rather than a “right” and on “protection” rather than “intervention,” placing the needs of vulnerable populations first (Evans 2008; ICISS 2001). Unlike humanitarian intervention, where states could take whatever military actions they deemed “necessary,” under R2P, military interventions are restricted to the protection of populations only in the context of the four mass atrocity crimes and only when interventions are authorized by the UN Security Council under Chapters VII or VIII of the UN Charter.

Inclusion of the responsibility to protect principle in the World Summit Outcome Document

4 years after the ICISS report helped shift the focus from the right of interveners to the idea that the international community has a responsibility to protect populations from atrocities (United Nations 2005). This shift was reinforced by the near simultaneous development of other norms and concepts, like the Protection of Civilians, the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, and Children in Armed Conflict, that emphasized the responsibility of the international community to protect vulnerable populations rather than standing idly by in the name of sovereignty.

When heads of state and government gathered at the 2005 World Summit, they unanimously agreed to the responsibility to protect as formulated in the following paragraphs:

2005 World Summit Outcome Document

Responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity

138. Each individual State has the responsibility to protect its populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity. This responsibility entails the prevention of such crimes, including their incitement, through appropriate and necessary means. We accept that responsibility and will act in accordance with it. The international community should, as appropriate, encourage and help States to exercise this responsibility and support the United Nations in establishing an early warning capability.

139. The international community, through the United Nations, also has the responsibility to use appropriate diplomatic, humanitarian and other peaceful means, in accordance with Chapters VI and VIII of the Charter, to help protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. In this context, we are prepared to take collective action, in a timely and decisive manner, through the Security Council, in accordance with the Charter, including Chapter VII, on a case-by-case basis and in cooperation with relevant regional organizations as appropriate, should peaceful means be inadequate and national authorities manifestly fail to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. We stress the need for the General Assembly to continue consideration of the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity and its implications, bearing in mind the principles of the Charter and international law. We also intend to commit ourselves, as necessary and appropriate, to helping States build

capacity to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity and to assisting those which are under stress before crises and conflicts break out.

140. We fully support the mission of the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide.

R2P is a political commitment. Framed around the concept of “sovereignty as responsibility,” R2P builds upon the notion that state sovereignty does not shield governments from international scrutiny but rather that such sovereignty bestows a moral responsibility upon the government to protect all those within their borders (Deng et al. 1996). Moreover, in order to avoid repeating past failures, R2P served as a tool to counteract the politics of indifference. It was designed to ensure the international community responds to help protect populations within states that were unwilling or unable to uphold this sovereign responsibility. As noted by Gareth Evans, co-chair of ICISS, “the whole point of the R2P doctrine was to generate a reflex international response that genocide and other mass atrocity crimes happening behind sovereign state walls was everybody’s responsibility, not nobody’s.” The aim was “to create a new norm of international behavior which states would feel ashamed to violate, compelled to observe, or at least embarrassed to ignore” (Evans 2008).

Four Crimes and Three Pillars

R2P was created to prevent and halt the four crimes of genocide, ethnic cleansing, wars crimes and crimes against humanity. The crimes of genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity are clearly defined in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (United Nations 2002).

- **Genocide:** It includes acts committed in a deliberate attempt to destroy in whole or in part a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group. To constitute genocide, there must be a proven intent on the part of perpetrators. Victims of the crime of genocide are not randomly targeted: They are deliberately chosen,

based on their real or perceived membership to one of the four types of groups.

- **War crimes:** They include acts that constitute grave breaches of the laws and customs of armed conflict, particularly those of the Geneva Conventions. War crimes can only be committed in the context of an armed conflict or protracted armed violence. Combatants and noncombatants can both be considered victims of war crimes.
- **Crimes against humanity:** They include acts committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against a civilian population. Widespread refers to the large-scale violence in relation to the number of victims or its extension over a broad geographic area. Systematic means that it is part of a wider policy or plan: this excludes random, accidental, or isolated acts of violence.
- **Ethnic cleansing:** While there is no formal legal definition of ethnic cleansing, it involves the systematic forced removal of distinct minority groups from a given territory, often with the intent of making it ethnically homogeneous. The crime “ethnic cleansing” has not been recognized as an independent crime under international law and is therefore considered as a subset of crimes against humanity.

R2P is primarily focused on prevention. Apart from the moral imperative to prevent and halt mass atrocities, as well as a government’s relevant international legal and political obligations, prevention saves lives. Also as a strategy, prevention is more effective and typically less expensive than response. To further consolidate the preventive aspects of R2P within its normative structure, the first report of the Secretary-General on R2P conceptualized the implementation of R2P in the context of a three pillar strategy (UN Secretary-General 2009):

- **Pillar I:** Every state has the responsibility to protect its populations from the four mass atrocity crimes.
- **Pillar II:** The wider international community has the responsibility to encourage and assist individual states in meeting that responsibility.

- **Pillar III:** If a state is manifestly failing to protect its populations, the international community must be prepared to take appropriate collective action, in a timely and decisive manner and in accordance with the UN Charter.

Actions under Pillar 1 include policies a state can implement domestically to uphold its responsibility to protect, for example, constitutionally and legally protecting human rights and minority rights; ensuring equal access to justice for all; establishing laws against hate speech and incitement; ensuring education curriculum does not privilege one group over another or foster identity-based divisions; and memorializing and acknowledging past atrocities, both domestically (where relevant) and internationally.

Under Pillar 2 the international community should assist a state in upholding its responsibility to protect by providing financial, logistical, or development assistance to a state to enable the government to fulfill its Pillar 1 commitments. In this context, denying the means to commit atrocities by suspending trade, military training, and aid programs with governments that are abusing and/or violating human rights.

Pillar 3 includes both coercive and non-coercive measures that may be employed by the international community in protecting populations at risk. It must be noted that although R2P is often equated with military intervention, the tool box that the disposal of the international community includes multiple measures, such as using good offices, mediation and other forms of diplomacy; applying targeted sanctions against identified perpetrators; authorizing and upholding arms embargoes that restrict or deny the means to commit atrocities; establishing no-fly zones; authorizing Fact-Finding Missions and Commissions of Inquiry to gather evidence of potential atrocity crimes; establishing or providing support to international tribunals, the ICC and other institutions of international justice in order to hold perpetrators accountable; or deploying peace-keeping missions.

The three pillars have served as a framework for discussing the different facets of prevention and response in mass atrocity situations and have

been frequently invoked by member states when addressing R2P.

Normative and Institutional Progress Since 2005

Since its adoption in the World Summit Outcome Document, R2P has been a useful tool for energizing the discussions around mass atrocity prevention and demonstrating the distinction between atrocity prevention and conflict prevention approaches. In the first decade after its inception, discussions on R2P were about conceptually clarifying R2P and about expanding political consensus. There is now virtually universal acceptance of the abstract concept that all states have a responsibility to protect their populations. This normative development has largely been facilitated by actions taken by the UN and its member states that have encouraged wider acceptance of R2P and facilitated its implementation.

In August 2007, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon appointed Dr. Edward Luck as his first Special Adviser on the Responsibility to Protect. Working closely with the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, the two Special Advisers and their Joint Office have helped advance R2P within the UN system. The Secretary-General has subsequently appointed three other individuals to serve in this role (Dr. Jennifer Welsh, H.E., Mr. Ivan Simonovic, and Dr. Karen Smith).

Following the publication of the UN Secretary-General's 2009 report on R2P, the General Assembly held a formal debate on the topic in July 2009. This debate resulted in the General Assembly agreeing to adopt a resolution on R2P, which affirmed the decision to "continue its consideration of the responsibility to protect" (United Nations 2009).

Since the 2009 report, the UN Secretary-General has released ten subsequent annual reports on R2P, addressing issues related to R2P's implementation in his subsequent reports: Early warning, assessment, and the responsibility to protect (United Nations Secretary-General 2010), The role of regional and subregional arrangements in implementing the responsibility to protect (United

Nations Secretary-General 2011), Timely and decisive response (United Nations Secretary-General 2012), State responsibility and prevention (United Nations Secretary-General 2013), Fulfilling our collective responsibility: international assistance and the responsibility to protect (United Nations Secretary-General 2014), A vital and enduring commitment: implementing the responsibility to protect (United Nations Secretary-General 2015), Mobilizing collective action: the next decade of the responsibility to protect (United Nations Secretary-General 2016), Implementing the responsibility to protect: accountability for prevention (United Nations Secretary-General 2017), Responsibility to Protect: from early warning to early action (United Nations Secretary-General 2018), and Responsibility to Protect: lessons learned for prevention (United Nations Secretary-General 2019).

The UN General Assembly has held three formal debates (2009, 2018, and 2019) and eight informal interactive dialogues on R2P between 2010 and 2017. These dialogues and debates have provided a forum for states to discuss the contents of the Secretary-General's annual report, share best practices and challenges in implementation, reaffirm their commitment to R2P, and, in some cases, restate their government's outstanding issues with the norm. Every year at the annual interactive dialogue and debates on R2P in the General Assembly a growing number of states have expressed an endorsement of the basic tenets of R2P. Since 2009, 134 states and 7 regional organizations (speaking on behalf of 155 countries) have participated in the UN General Assembly's interactive dialogues and debates on R2P. Following 8 years of informal interactive dialogues, during 2017 states who support R2P mobilized action to advocate for it to be included on the formal agenda of the General Assembly. As a result of these efforts, member states have voted in favor of its inclusion on the formal agenda for the General Assembly's 73rd–75th sessions. This is a significant shift from the informal interactive dialogue structure as it allows for more time for states to discuss their views on the development of the norm and have their positions officially recorded within the records of the General Assembly.

States also continue to discuss R2P in other human rights forums, including in UN Security Council debates on the protection of civilians and at the Human Rights Council. Evidence of the normative progress achieved by R2P lies in the record of the UN Security Council and the UN Human Rights Council. The Security Council, which had before 2011 passed only four resolutions mentioning R2P, *after* its March 2011 decisions on Côte d'Ivoire and Libya has adopted over 80 resolutions directly referring to the responsibility to protect, including measures to confront the threat of mass atrocities in Yemen, Libya, Mali, Sudan, South Sudan, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Syria, Somalia, and the Central African Republic. Since 2008, the UN Human Rights Council has similarly adopted over 40 resolutions that include language on R2P.

Over the last few years, there has also been a substantial amount of thinking around identifying risk factors, developing early warning models, and articulating inhibitors for mass atrocity crimes. To translate this commitment into action, R2P has been implemented and operationalized through the application of an "atrocity prevention lens." Application of this lens includes assessing dynamics within the country as they pertain to the risk and potential commission of mass atrocity crimes. The value adds of R2P is that it provides a lens that can identify factors missed by traditional conflict prevention frameworks. The lens looks at incitement, hate speech, and other factors that exacerbate ethnic and identity-based conflicts and helps in identifying patterns that lead to escalation from violations to atrocities. During November 2014, the UN Office of genocide prevention and the responsibility to protect launched a Framework of Analysis for Atrocity Crimes as a tool for the prevention of mass atrocities.

Policy makers have also been innovative in creating new institutional mechanisms and networks to facilitate the normative development or R2P at the UN as well as to mainstream atrocity prevention within the policies of their governments. This includes the establishment of the Global Network of R2P Focal Points, who are senior government officials appointed by their governments to promote R2P at the national

level and the Group of Friends of the Responsibility to Protect, which promotes R2P at the UN in New York and Geneva.

Criticisms of R2P's Implementation

Despite the genuine institutional progress R2P has made since its unanimous endorsement by the international community in 2005, it has faced some controversy and misconceptions. An important part of the evolution of R2P has been the critiques directed at it from various countries in multilateral fora. At its inception, many states were particularly critical of how R2P could be used to justify the “use of force,” an inherent part of the R2P tool box. The criticism against R2P primarily focused on how it was an assault on sovereignty and a western norm which could be used as a guise for military and humanitarian intervention aimed at regime change.

Over the years as the understanding of R2P has evolved, the criticisms now focus on the failure of states to live up to the promise of this commitment to prevent and halt atrocities. The following are some of the common criticisms levied against R2P with a discussion of how the implementation of R2P and an understanding of its potential added-value to existing norms and protection and prevention agendas may address some of these concerns.

R2P Is Only Applicable to the “Global South”

In the last three decades, we have witnessed a global shift in conflict from largely interstate conflict to a growing number of intrastate civil wars. A predominant number of these conflicts have occurred in areas considered to be part of the “Global South,” including countries throughout Latin America and Africa. As a result, the perpetration of atrocities has been particularly high throughout these regions. Because R2P discussions have focused on where populations are most imminently vulnerable, R2P has been criticized as only being applicable to the Global South, rather than Europe and other “Northern” regions. One part of this criticism has focused on states in the “Global North” treating R2P as a

foreign policy priority, meant only as something they implement in other states through intervention, while encouraging those in the “Global South” to implement structural reforms aimed at preventing atrocities domestically. This same criticism has been faced by the International Criminal Court, which many states, academics, and civil society observers have at times deemed as being “too Africa focused.”

However, modern history unequivocally demonstrates that no country or region is immune to atrocity crimes. Less than a century ago, Europe witnessed the Holocaust, and in 1995 approximately 8,000 men and boys were massacred in the genocide at Srebrenica, Bosnia. In the Americas, civilians in Argentina, Brazil, and Chile have experienced military dictatorships that engaged in enforced disappearances, torture, and other grave human rights abuses. Recent responses of government security forces to mass protests in Nicaragua and Venezuela have included use of disproportionate and deadly force that may amount to mass atrocity crimes. Mass atrocities have also been perpetrated in Asia, including atrocities under the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia between 1975 and 1979, and more recently, a genocide perpetrated against the Rohingya ethnic minority in Myanmar (Burma). In Africa mass atrocities have been committed recently in Sudan, South Sudan, Central African Republic (CAR), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and elsewhere. In the Middle East and North African region, the UN has recently started exhuming mass graves following the 2014 genocide of the Yazidi population in Iraq, while populations in Syria and Yemen continue to live in situations where crimes against humanity and war crimes are committed with impunity.

There are currently more than 70 million people displaced around the world as a result of conflict, persecution, and atrocities. Groups continue to be targeted based upon their identity, including religion, gender, and ethnicity. Moreover, there is a need to address the wider risk factors for atrocity crimes, which affect populations everywhere. Across the world, including in the Global “North,” we are witnessing an unprecedented rise in toxic

nationalism, xenophobia, hate speech targeting migrants and refugees, targeted violence against human rights defenders, and diminishing space for independent media and civil society groups. These increase the vulnerability of minority groups and those deemed as “outsiders,” increasing the risk of mass atrocities and the pressure on governments everywhere to adopt policies that reinforce diversity and inclusion as well as laws that deter individuals from utilizing dangerous rhetoric and incitement.

R2P Is an Attack on Sovereignty

During the last 15 years a number of states, including Cuba and Venezuela, have expressed reservations regarding acceptance of R2P because they believe that R2P and other human rights norms are a way for hegemonic powers to assert their influence on them. Because R2P, unlike Peacekeeping and some other protection agendas, allows for the UN Security Council to authorize a response in the absence of state consent, such states have argued that it can be manipulated into a tool to “legally” authorize intervention that would violate their sovereignty.

Countries with a very “traditional” approach to the idea of noninterference in the domestic affairs of a state, such as China, India, Pakistan, and others, while acknowledging the merit in the need to prevent atrocities, emphasize that this responsibility should always fall to the state. This position has been expressed both within UN forums as well as regional institutions, where states in particular regions continue to be encouraged to not interfere with the domestic politics of other member states. However, despite their routine criticism, India, Brazil, and South Africa have individually contributed to the political, institutional, and operational development of R2P either through their resistance to the norm or in constructively engaging in clarifying its implementation through Brazil’s introduction and support for the concept of Responsibility while Protecting (United Nations 2011).

While some regional organizations continue to practice noninterference, the origins of R2P can be traced to Article 4(h) of the African Union Constitutive Act that rests on the principle of

“non-indifference” to mass atrocities as opposed to the previous adherence to a doctrine of “non-intervention.” Article 4(h) specifically espouses the right of the AU to intervene in the affairs of a state in response to the commission of war crimes, genocide, and crimes against humanity (African Union 2000).

In addition, for the ICISS Commission that conceptualized and coined the concept, R2P rests on the principle of “Sovereignty as Responsibility” and as such makes the prevention of atrocities a primary responsibility of the state. R2P builds upon the notion that state sovereignty does not shield governments from international scrutiny, but rather that such sovereignty bestows a moral responsibility upon the government to protect all those within their borders (Deng et al. 1996).

R2P Is a Foreign Policy Issue

Many experts and policy makers view R2P as primarily a foreign policy issue. This perception is derived from a number of sources. First, debates regarding the conceptualization and implementation of R2P have largely taken place at the UN. As a result, experts on the concept within governments have frequently been positioned within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in offices responsible for cooperation with the United Nations.

Another reason for the perception of R2P being strictly a foreign policy issue derives from the focus in debates on the applicability of Pillar 3. Since debates amongst states on R2P’s implementation in R2P’s first 10 years focused heavily on the legality of Pillar 3 measures and the parameters of the use of force, the emphasis for discussion of R2P was on how the international community should act. This is further augmented by the fact that most of the literature on R2P is primarily focused on implementation by the UN and regional organizations. Little attention has been directed towards implementation by states and prevention within national settings.

Commitment to prevention is at the heart of all three pillars of R2P – prevention of an initial outbreak of a crisis, prevention of its escalation, and prevention of recurrence. Mass atrocity prevention is, at its core, about the state’s

responsibility as a sovereign entity to protect all its populations, regardless of identity or citizenship status, and must be a domestic policy imperative. The primary responsibility to uphold R2P thus falls on the state and should be a national policy priority.

Atrocity Prevention and Conflict Prevention Are the Same Thing

There is significant overlap between conflict prevention and mass atrocity prevention, largely because armed conflict provides an enabling environment for the perpetration of mass atrocity crimes. However, the two prevention agendas are distinct. Although mass atrocity crimes are often committed in the context of an armed conflict, as is the case with civil wars in South Sudan and Syria, it is important to recognize that not all armed conflicts give rise to mass atrocities.

Additionally, atrocity crimes can also be committed outside of an armed conflict. For example, prior to the so-called clearance operations in Rakhine State, mass atrocity crimes committed against the Rohingya community in Myanmar have taken place in a context of decades of institutionalized persecution against this distinct ethnic minority group, including denial of citizenship, involuntary confinement to displacement camps, and severe restrictions on the freedom of movement and other universally recognized human rights.

Moreover, prioritizing conflict prevention over mass atrocity prevention may sometimes exacerbate the risk of mass atrocity crimes. For example, by focusing on maintaining the Arusha Peace Agreement that ended the Rwandan Civil War, the international community neglected evidence of the planning of genocide. This included underestimating or disregarding warning signs such as increased hate speech, the importation and stockpiling of small arms and machetes, development of target lists of ethnic Tutsis, and the radicalization and training of youth militias.

R2P Implies Military Force and “Humanitarian Intervention”

R2P is often conflated with military intervention. Most of the academic literature on R2P focuses on

Pillar 3 and the use of force to intervene when a state is failing to protect its populations. The overwhelming number of articles written on R2P that focus on the Libyan intervention to the exclusion of analyzing other cases, tools for response, or pillars of implementation.

Timely and decisive response to atrocity crimes includes a range of coercive and non-coercive measures from diplomacy, mediation, public advocacy, humanitarian assistance, protection of refugees and displaced persons, monitoring, fact-finding and verification missions, peacekeeping, sanctions, embargoes, as well as peacebuilding. Military intervention is one of the tools and should be considered as a tool of last resort, when all other measures have been exhausted and when and if decision to intervene is taken it must be undertaken in accordance with the UN Charter.

While policy makers debate the full range of options available to respond to atrocity risks – or hold perpetrators accountable in the aftermath of atrocities – the perception of R2P being “about” intervention is frequently raised in the media and academic literature. For example, during the 2017 “clearance operations” in Myanmar and again during 2019 as tensions rose in Venezuela between President Nicolas Maduro and opposition leader Juan Guaido, many were calling for (or advocating against) an “R2P intervention” or for states to “invoke R2P and intervene,” even though it was unclear how a military option could possibly resolve the political stalemate and prevent future commission of atrocities.

Prevention, rather than intervention, lies at the core of R2P, and when intervention is considered, it must only be done following careful consideration of all available options. When assessing the prudential criteria for authorizing the use of force, a number of questions should be raised, including:

1. What is the seriousness of the threat and is there a genuine risk of mass atrocity crimes?
2. What is the purpose of any use of force or possible military intervention?
3. Are there the proportional means to carry out any military intervention?

4. Is this a matter of last resort? Have all other measures been tried, within reason, to resolve the situation diplomatically and other collaborative and coercive measures?
5. What is the balance of consequences? Would the use of force alleviate the potential suffering of vulnerable populations or could it conceivably inflict further harm? (Adams 2019).

Furthermore, such action must be taken with the consent of the Security Council. As noted by Adrian Gallagher on Venezuela:

R2P does not permit military aggression as defined by the ICC. In fact, it acts as a barrier to it. Yes, [R2P] does allow states to consider all coercive and non-coercive measures under Chapters VI, VII, and VIII of the UN Charter when a government is 'manifestly failing' to protect its population from the four crimes. Though this does include the use of force, any action taken has to be authorised by the UN Security Council. In other words, any United States-led use of force without the consent of the Security Council cannot be undertaken on the grounds of [R2P]. (Gallagher 2019)

When the International Community Fails to Act, R2P Has Failed as a Norm

At a time when more than 70 million people are displaced by conflict, persecution and human rights violations – and when a growing number of conflicts around the world feature the commission of mass atrocity crimes by state and non-state actors and growing disregard for international humanitarian and human rights law, critics have often pointed to the demise of R2P. In his 2019 report on R2P, the UN Secretary-General noted that, “there is a growing gap between our words of commitment and the experience of protecting vulnerable populations.”

R2P has succeeded in its ambitious goal of making the commission of mass atrocity crimes intolerable anywhere they occur. The failure of individual member states to develop societal resilience to atrocity crimes – or the failure of the international community to respond decisively to the commission of atrocity crimes, does not signal a failure of the norm itself. As noted by Dr. Simon Adams, “the failure to end atrocities and protect civilians in Syria is not a failure of R2P, but of the

imperfect actors and institutions charged with its implementation” (Adams 2015).

For example, in the case of Myanmar, it was a failure by all actors to take adequate steps to prevent the genocide committed against the Rohingya. The government of Myanmar has consistently violated its Pillar I responsibility through institutionalizing discrimination of the Rohingya minority, including through denying the Rohingya a right to citizenship since at least 1982, imposing restrictions on marriages and reproductive rights, restricting religious and socioeconomic freedoms, and severely limiting access to life-saving humanitarian assistance. Such policies have created an enabling environment where the military and non-Muslim populations could abuse and discriminate against the Rohingya.

Despite ample early warning provided by regional and international organizations over the years and especially since 2012, the international community failed to address the plight of Rohingya in their dealings with the government and military leadership of Myanmar. The efforts of the international community were solely focused on nurturing the budding democracy in the country. Governments from across the region and the world continued to signed preferential trade agreement with Myanmar and continued to train its military and security services.

In the aftermath of so called clearance operations undertaken by the Tatmadaw in August 2017, when over 700,000 Rohingya fled Myanmar to escape acts of genocide being committed against them, the efforts of the international community have been disappointing (UN Fact Finding Mission on Myanmar 2018). Except for limited sanctions imposed by the governments of the United States, Canada, European Union, and Australia, there has been no concerted effort by the international Community to hold the government of Myanmar responsible. Since August 2017, the UN Security Council has not adopted a single resolution on the situation, and the only formal response issued by the Council has been the adoption of a Presidential Statement in November 2017 – 4 months after the start of the “clearance operations.”

These failures in preventing and responding to atrocities signal some of the deeper institutional barriers within the multilateral system – and particularly the UN Security Council – and our collective capacity to respond to emerging risks. It should not be seen, however, as a lapse in the commitment to protect vulnerable populations from atrocity crimes. In fact, the seemingly intractable differences that prevented a response from the UN Security Council in the cases of both Syria and Myanmar have otherwise provoked UN member states to be creative in their thinking around upholding R2P.

Over the past few years, there has been growing momentum around calls for the UN Security Council to voluntarily refrain from using veto in atrocity situations. Over 120 governments – in addition to two UN observer missions – have supported calls for restraint on the use of the veto by the Permanent Five members of the Council or adherence to a Code of Conduct in response to mass atrocity situations (United Nations 2015). Such calls were partially prompted by the repeated use of the veto in response to the situation in Syria. Twelve vetoes have been used by Russia on Syria over the past 8 years, including six double vetoes with China. It is worth noting, however, that since 2013 the Security Council has passed 24 resolutions on humanitarian access, peace talks, and chemical weapons in Syria; including a number of resolutions that reference the Responsibility to Protect.

In addition to these initiatives, in the case of Syria states have sometimes circumvented indecision in the Security Council by drafting resolutions on cross-cutting issues that may have an impact on vulnerable populations within the country. For example, during 2016, the Security Council passed Resolution 2286 on the protection of healthcare in conflict. Though the resolution did not specifically address the situation in Syria, during the discussion preceding the vote, Ambassadors focused heavily on the bombardment of medical facilities and personnel in Aleppo. The resolution helped open space for the continued discussion of the vulnerability of medical facilities in Syria and wider Council condemnation of deliberate targeting of civilian infrastructure.

Member states have also been innovative in utilizing mechanisms outside of the Security Council in order to bolster the protection of civilians and ensure accountability for atrocity crimes. During December 2016, the General Assembly passed a landmark resolution calling for the operationalization of an International, Impartial, and Independent Mechanism to assist in the investigation and prosecution of persons responsible for the most serious crimes under International Law committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011. States have similarly utilized Human Rights Council-based tools, such as Commissions of Inquiry, to strengthen the capacity to hold perpetrators of atrocities in Syria accountable and have also recently begun prosecuting criminals under the principles of Universal Jurisdiction in the absence of a UN Security Council referral to the International Criminal Court. Not only do such initiatives fall under Pillar III of the Responsibility to Protect, but they have set a precedent for multilateral response to other atrocity situations, as demonstrated by the recently established Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar.

R2P and Regime Change: The Case of Libya

Critics of R2P often point to the international response to the 2011 conflict in Libya, following the UN Security Council-authorized military intervention by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), as an example of R2P being used as a doctrine for regime change or to justify military intervention by “western powers.”

In response to the violent state repression of anti-government demonstrations in Libya in early 2011, the UN Security Council adopted Resolutions 1970 and 1973 in February and March, respectively. Resolution 1970 invoked the Libyan authorities’ primary responsibility to protect civilians while imposing an arms embargo and travel ban in an attempt to pressure the government to halt violence against civilians (UN Security Council 2011a). Despite this, the government of Muammar al-Qaddafi ignored the Security Council’s demands for an immediate end to the violence and proceeded to perpetrate (and incite) atrocities. Utilizing the framework of R2P’s third pillar, the Security Council utilized

Resolution 1973 to halt the commission of crimes against humanity and war crimes by Qaddafi's forces by authorizing the use of all necessary measures, including coercive military action, to protect the population, which led to the imposition of a "no fly zone," enforced by a NATO-led coalition, and the launch of airstrikes against Libya's air force, tanks, and artillery (UN Security Council 2011b). Alex Bellamy has argued, given Benghazi's imminent collapse and Qaddafi's record and rhetoric, "states could not plausibly argue that the threat of mass atrocities was not real. . . . With strong regional support (for whatever reason) and in the absence of reasonable alternative policies for preventing massacre in Benghazi, those Council members that remained skeptical about the use of force believed that they could not legitimize inaction" (Bellamy 2011).

During the months that followed, strict adherence to the R2P mandate waned, with several states admitting to breaking the UN-imposed arms embargo and supplying Libyan rebels with weapons. By the autumn of 2011, there was a growing view that the objective of NATO was no longer to uphold its civilian protection mandate but rather to overthrow the Qaddafi regime. Eventually on 20 October Qaddafi was captured and extrajudicially executed by rebel forces.

Furthermore, the post-conflict situation in Libya was exacerbated by the fact that decades of misrule by Qaddafi had resulted in a hollowing out of the country's institutions and the deliberate manipulation of tribal and regional rivalries. The international community also hastily disengaged politically from Libya after the fall of Qaddafi, leaving rival militias and armed groups to struggle for political control of the country, rather than focus on the rebuilding and redevelopment.

In the aftermath of Libya, Brazil championed the concept of "Responsibility while Protecting" (RWP). The essence of RWP was that military force must be a last resort that any response must be proportional to the threat posed and that no intervention should cause more harm than it seeks to prevent. RWP resuscitated meaningful dialogue at the UN around both the preventive core of R2P and the potential need, post-Libya, for prudential criteria for use-of-force mandates adopted by the Security Council.

Libya was a failure in terms of R2P's Pillar 1 and 2 implementation. But, despite the many criticisms, the response was a success in terms of Pillar 3. Through the adoption of Resolution 1973, the UN Security Council took timely and decisive action to stop the Qaddafi regime from committing mass atrocities. Within 2 days of the adoption of the resolution, a no-fly zone was imposed and countless lives were saved. However, the international community and the UN Security Council did not plan for the day after. The tepid international effort during the rebuilding phase in Libya was a contributing factor to the lawlessness, corruption, and warlordism that overtook the country, dividing it into competing factions. Furthermore, by not respecting the arms embargo imposed under Resolution 1970, the international community further contributed to the proliferation of small arms and light weapons that destabilized the region.

While there have been many lessons learned from the Libya situation, responding to atrocity situations will continue to require complex elements of coercion and consent, with legal authorization of the Security Council and active dialogue about how a state can uphold its responsibility to protect and how the international community can both assist and compel them to do so. Finally, it is also important to emphasize that Libya and military intervention are not the sole benchmarks to measure the success or utility of the Responsibility to Protect. The situations in Kenya (2007–2008), Côte d'Ivoire (2010–2011), and the Gambia (2017), among others, provide positive examples of national, regional, and international efforts to prevent and halt atrocities.

Implementation of R2P: Responding to Atrocity Risks in Kenya, Côte d'Ivoire, and the Gambia

While the situation in Libya brought R2P under the spotlight and bolstered the arguments on regime change and military intervention put forward by R2P's critics, a number of other situations have demonstrated that concerted efforts by the international community utilizing a combination of coercive and noncoercive measures can result

in a cessation of mass atrocity crimes and the protection of vulnerable communities. While it is difficult to measure the success of preventive efforts, in each of the cases described below actions taken by the international community in upholding its responsibility to protect helped to halt or prevent the commission of mass atrocities. Subsequent Pillar 1 initiatives by the states themselves, with the support of regional and international organizations, have helped strengthen their societal resilience to atrocities and prevent further crimes.

Kenya

One of the earliest examples of success for R2P was the timely response of the international community to the postelection violence in Kenya in 2007–2008. By deploying a high-level panel of mediators, which included former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, the international community was able to prevent and halt further escalation of violence in Kenya which had already claimed over 1,200 lives and displaced over 600,000 people. The mediation brought the two contending parties to the table and sketched out the long-term and short-term outcomes that needed to be implemented by the government of Kenya to address structural, social, and political root causes of the violence. Kofi Annan hailed Kenya as a success of “R2P in Action” and highlighted the role mediation could play in halting ongoing atrocities.

Furthermore, Kenya can be considered a success in terms of pillar 1 and 2 implementation. Although the next national elections in Kenya in 2013 were as bitterly contested, no widespread killing, endemic hate speech, or systematic ethnic targeting took place. This was a result of 5 years of local, national, regional, and international investment in both structural and proximate prevention. These preventive measures covered everything from constitutional change, to security sector reform, and local civil society peacebuilding initiatives, to laws regarding the use of hate speech.

Côte d’Ivoire

Similar to Kenya, the situation in Côte d’Ivoire is seen as a success of R2P, and particularly of the

positive effects of decisive action by the UN Security Council amidst a mounting crisis. The situation in Côte d’Ivoire escalated after presidential elections took place on 28 November 2010 with a run-off between incumbent President Laurent Gbagbo and Alassane Ouattara. While voting was relatively peaceful, a political crisis was sparked when the Constitutional Council overturned the Independent Election Commission’s (CEI) declaration that Ouattara won the election. Gbagbo refused to accept defeat, however, and the two men formed parallel governments while their supporters began attacking communities throughout the country based upon ethnic identity and corresponding perceived political support.

Regional organizations, including the Economic Community of West African State (ECOWAS) responded rapidly. The AU and ECOWAS both suspended Côte d’Ivoire’s membership and sent mediation teams to Côte d’Ivoire seven times between December and February. Meanwhile, ECOWAS’ regional bank, as well as the United States and EU, imposed targeted asset freezes and other economic sanctions against prominent members of Gbagbo’s government. The responsibility to protect was invoked in statements by the UN High Commissioner for human rights, the UN special advisers on the prevention of genocide, and the responsibility to protect and many other UN and member state officials.

Despite these efforts, during March 2011 the conflict escalated in the western regions of the country and in Abidjan, the economic capital, with Gbagbo supporters and security forces targeting political opponents, members of ethnic groups associated with Ouattara, and nationals from other West African countries. Armed Ouattara supporters were also increasing their assaults on Gbagbo supporters. Between 26 and 28 March, security forces and militias supporting both Gbagbo and Ouattara killed over 1,000 civilians in massacres near Duékoué in western Côte d’Ivoire.

Two days later, on 30 March, the Security Council passed Resolution 1975 authorizing the UN peacekeeping mission in the country (UNOCI) to use “all necessary means to carry

out its mandate to protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence... including to prevent the use of heavy weapons against the civilian population.” UNOCI had initially been mandated in 2004 to monitor a ceasefire agreement and their mandate had subsequently been expanded to help facilitate and monitor the election process, but in the timely adoption of Resolution 1975, the Security Council greatly expanded their protective mandate. After a 5-day operation conducted with the support of French forces, Gbagbo surrendered. Resolution 1975, which reaffirmed the “primary responsibility of each state to protect,” was widely seen as the Security Council’s second application of coercive measures under Pillar 3 of R2P.

While in the immediate aftermath of the post-election crisis, sporadic violence recurred, indicating that the roots of the crisis reach deeper than Gbagbo’s refusal to cede the presidential office, the AU, ECOWAS, and UNOCI remained engaged in Côte d’Ivoire’s recovery, reconciliation, and rebuilding process until the risks had dissipated. In keeping with R2P’s Pillar 2, UNOCI assisted the government in demobilization and reintegration of armed groups as well as in building its truth and reconciliation programs. When UNOCI finally departed in June 2017 it had helped demobilize thousands of members of armed groups and had conducted extensive training for the security forces in the protection of human rights.

The Gambia

Despite initially conceding defeat to Adama Barrow in The Gambia’s 1 December 2016 Presidential Election, former President Yahya Jammeh refused to step down from the presidency and his party – the Alliance for Patriot Reorientation and Construction – filed petitions to challenge the election results.

As the end of his mandate on 19 January 2017 neared, Jammeh made several public declarations threatening to use force, if necessary, to protect his interests. This included a speech on 13 December where he declared that any protests by opposition supporters would be met with extreme force and several threats that if regional organizations

intervened in support of Barrow it would constitute a “declaration of war.” The final escalation came on 17 January when Jammeh declared a state of emergency, banning any acts of “disobedience” that could threaten his presidency, curtailing civil liberties, and placing additional restrictions on independent media. Throughout the 6-week period between the election and his eventual resignation on 20 January, political tensions pushed the country to the brink of disaster. According to the UN, at least 45,000 people fled Gambia amidst the political crisis.

As president, Jammeh had consistently demonstrated that he had both the will and capacity to systematically persecute civilians he perceived as a threat to his power. Under his leadership, Gambian authorities participated in forced disappearances, arbitrary detention, torture, and other human rights violations against journalists, human rights defenders and political opponents. Security forces had routinely arrested and beaten opposition supporters during peaceful protests in the months leading up to the election. Jammeh’s disturbing and inflammatory rhetoric, his long history of human rights violations, and his apparent willingness to use force to protect his power combined to create a delicate and dangerous situation in which civilians’ fears of violence were justified.

Ultimately, the uncertainty caused by Jammeh’s refusal to accept the election results and cede power after more than 22 years in office did not result in widespread violence or civilian casualties. The crisis in Gambia was neutralized by timely and consistent action on the part of ECOWAS and its member states, the AU, and the UN Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS). On 13 December, the same day that Jammeh’s security forces blocked access to the electoral commission, ECOWAS sent a delegation of presidents from four West African countries to Gambia. After the delegation failed to convince Jammeh to concede to Barrow, they swiftly formed a formal mediation team and prepared standby forces for the possibility of military intervention.

Throughout January ECOWAS leaders and UNOWAS responded with consistent diplomatic

and military pressure – including clear demands and deadlines for Jammeh to commit to a democratic transition or risk being forcibly removed from the country. On 18 January, the last day of Jammeh’s presidential mandate, a regional intervention appeared imminent, with Senegalese troops were on the border with Gambia and Nigerian warships deployed off the coast. Although Senegalese troops did cross into Gambia, ECOWAS’ intervention was halted only after Jammeh finally accepted an amnesty offer and resigned, leaving the country.

In a briefing to the Security Council a week later, the head of UNOWAS called the outcome “a success of preventive diplomacy that has been achieved through the mobilization of regional actors in perfect coordination with the international community.” The situation in The Gambia merited ECOWAS’ attention from the day Jammeh contested the results – rather than waiting for atrocities to occur.

Summary

For R2P to fulfill the promise of preventing war crimes, crimes against humanity, ethnic cleansing, and genocide, individual states and the international community must look at strategies that advance effective implementation and enhance prevention and protection on the ground.

Implementation at the national level will involve a wide variety of actors and both political will and technical expertise. For example, creating an accountable security sector is not only a technical enterprise but a deeply political process. It will be slow and not always be easy to measure success. However, in order to strengthen the agenda for prevention, it will be important for all actors including stakeholders from civil society and academia to identify and collect empirical evidence of success. To identify strategies that work and policies that can be replicated.

It will be important in this context to identify both formal and informal ways in which states can assist each other and provide timely advice and capacity. Since 2005 there has been a steady development of networks and structures for mass

atrocities prevention. Networks like the Global Network for R2P Focal Points, a network of senior level government officials in charge of atrocities prevention policies within their government, will be crucial in not only embedding R2P in national policies but also advance its implementation by sharing best practices and lessons learned.

An important forum to gauge how states are strengthening human rights domestically and what this means in terms of their institutional resilience to the threat of mass atrocities is the UN’s Human Rights Council, with its Special Procedures and Universal Periodic Review. Such mechanisms are an indispensable part of early warning and response architecture of the multilateral system because they can highlight when human rights violations are increasing and what mechanisms within a country may be strengthened in order to prevent atrocities. Special Procedures mandate holders are also effective at ringing alarm bells when they observe mounting risks of atrocities within a country.

At the international level improving implementation of R2P will be about strengthening the early response mechanisms of the United Nations. In the most vexing and deadly cases, where a state is manifestly unwilling to protect its populations. However, most future mass atrocity cases that require coercive responses, including the use of force, will in all likelihood continue to look more like Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan, Syria, Yemen, or Central African Republic than like Libya. That is to say, they will continue to require complex elements of coercion and consent, with legal authorization of the Security Council and active dialogue about how a state can uphold its responsibility to protect and how the international community can both assist and compel them to do so.

Furthermore, policy makers and practitioners will need to translate the obligation to protect and prevent that is enshrined within R2P into actionable policy options that enhance protection for populations at risk. This will involve creating linkages with related and cross-cutting issues and agendas, including protection of civilians, peacekeeping, countering violent extremism,

countering sexual and gender-based violence, controlling the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, and sustainable development.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Assessment of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Conceptual Evolution of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Liberal Peace in Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Liberal Peacebuilding in a Transitional International Order](#)
- ▶ [Measuring Peace](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding: Utopia and Reality](#)

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Race

- ▶ [Feminist Peace Research](#)

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- ▶ [Transitional Justice in Croatia](#)

Reconciliation in Northern Ireland

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Synonyms

[Reconciliation](#); [Northern Ireland](#); [Ireland](#); [United Kingdom](#); [Interpersonal](#); [Relationship-building](#); [Cohesion](#); [Social cohesion](#); [Peacebuilding](#); [Transitional justice](#); [Dealing with the past](#); [Divided societies](#)

Description/Summary

Since the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement of 1998, Northern Ireland has grappled with the challenge of addressing its violent past while visioning and progressing a shared future, in the context of deep and persistent societal mistrust and division. While the burden of reconciliation is often placed most heavily on the direct victims and survivors of the conflict, reconciliation in Northern Ireland requires the commitment and active participation of all in the affected population, including state and non-state actors who

played a part in the instigation, maintenance, and eventual transformation of the violent conflict.

Reconciliation is broadly understood as the component of peacebuilding that seeks to address conflictual and fractured perceptions and relationships between individuals and groups in society (horizontal reconciliation) and citizens and state institutions (vertical reconciliation). That said, no consensus on the specific choice or combination of actions required to progress reconciliation has been reached in the wider peacebuilding field. This ambiguity is mirrored in Northern Ireland where there is evidence of divergent understandings and application of the term across and within communities, thus ensuring that even the term “reconciliation” is not without contention and dispute. This entry explores the concept of reconciliation in the post-accord context of Northern Ireland and identifies the significant top-down policy developments and bottom-up community approaches which have – and have not – been instigated to date.

Conflict and the Progress Toward Peace in Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland experienced significant and enduring violent conflict from the late 1960s until the late 1990s. The contemporary conflict was rooted in centuries of social, political, and religious tensions between Britain and Ireland and the existence of two distinct ethnonational identity communities on the island of Ireland from the mid-seventeenth century onward (see “▶ [Troubles, The: The Northern Ireland Conflict](#)”). The more recent conflict in Northern Ireland, known colloquially as “the Troubles,” was precipitated by the economic and political marginalization of the Catholic minority community by the Protestant-dominated Stormont government, which was established after the partition of Ireland in 1921 (Ruane and Todd 1995). This led to the rise of a non-violent civil rights movement in the 1960s, demanding an end to gerrymandering, inequality, and discrimination. Efforts to suppress the growing civil disobedience and disorder by the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) and

civilian irregulars precipitated the rise in republican and loyalist paramilitary organizations, the deployment of British armed forces from August 1969, and the rapid escalation of violence by the early 1970s. Following the introduction of direct rule from Westminster in 1972, the issues under contention grew as political and social schisms widened. Fundamental to the emerging conflict were the opposing territorial and constitutional positions held by the two main communities. The majority Protestant population wished for Northern Ireland to remain part of the United Kingdom (and are known as unionist and/or loyalist), while most of the Catholic population sought for Northern Ireland to become part of the Republic of Ireland (and are known as nationalist and/or republicans) (McGarry and O'Leary 2004).

Over a 30-year period, the Northern Ireland conflict was characterized by paramilitary-led bombing and shooting campaigns, militarized policing, internment without trial, targeting of army and security, tit-for-tat community killings, human rights abuses, the suspension of the normal rule of law, state-led and state-sanctioned violence, and widespread communal unrest and rioting. Over 3600 people died as a result of the conflict, and tens of thousands were physically and psychologically injured (Fay et al. 1999). While mainly confined to Northern Ireland, the paramilitary violence also included the targeting of towns, cities, and specific individuals in both Britain and the Republic of Ireland. It also resulted in the physical polarization of the population with patterns of residential segregation set by the population movements of the 1970s and solidified by subsequent social housing decisions made, the choice of residents to live alongside those of their own identity group, and the building of physical barriers and "peace walls" as a response to localized security threats.

Various efforts were made to resolve the conflict, including the 1973 Sunningdale Agreement, which led to the temporary establishment of a power-sharing devolved government (Tonge 2000), and the 1985 Anglo-Irish Agreement reached between the British and Irish governments, which sought to give the Irish government

an advisory role in Northern Ireland's affairs (Aughey and Gormley-Heenan 2011). Both agreements failed at implementation due to widespread unionist opposition and accusations of interference and betrayal. With a perceptible trend toward greater inclusivity in peace negotiations internationally, leaders of the main political parties and the British and Irish governments began peace talks in the 1990s. Strengthened by the paramilitary ceasefires of 1994, and after 4 years of on-off negotiations, the Good Friday Agreement (GFA) was reached in April 1998. The Agreement included arrangements for the establishment of a grand coalition of local political parties in a devolved, consociational administration, the instituting of new cross-border bodies to ensure greater cooperation between the new Assembly and the Irish Government (North-South arrangements) and between the British and Irish governments and the devolved political administrations of the United Kingdom (East-West arrangements). It also created opportunities to successfully demilitarize the society, reform the police service, release political prisoners, promote and monitor equality and human rights, and precipitate a significant reduction in the overall levels of violence (see "► [Independent Commissions and Peace Settlements](#)"). A majority (71%) of the Northern Ireland electorate endorsed the Agreement in a referendum in the autumn of 1998 (Hayes and McAllister 2001). However, it was publicly rejected and denounced by a significant section of the unionist community as well as a number of dissident republican groups.

Twenty years on from the Belfast Agreement, Northern Ireland remains a deeply divided society, starkly indicated by the number of interface walls (Byrne and Gormley-Heenan 2014); the prevalence of flags, murals, and emblems which act as exclusionary markers of territory; the very high levels of segregation of social housing by religious background (Gray et al. 2018); and the low (7%) numbers of children attending schools which formally integrate Catholic and Protestant pupils (Milliken et al. 2020). The legacy of violence has left scars of mistrust, suspicion, and bitterness which is manifest in many ways, from the reluctance of political leaders to work

collaboratively to resolve the significant social and economic challenges of the region to the escalation of violent protest when freedoms of cultural expression are perceived to be threatened.

Following a brief description of the core theoretical understanding of reconciliation, this entry will then outline how the concept of reconciliation is broadly understood, framed, and utilized in Northern Ireland. While acknowledging that reconciliation is messy non-linear and multi-directional, the entry then outlines the major top-down and bottom-up strategies and approaches which have been taken to address aspects of reconciliation to date. It concludes with reflections on the incomplete task of reconciliation and the new challenges to be faced in light of the United Kingdom's decision to Brexit in 2016.

Framing and Understanding of Reconciliation in Northern Ireland

In recent years, the concept of reconciliation has occupied an increasingly prominent place in the articulation of the peacebuilding tasks associated with a society's emergence from violent conflict. Alongside the United Nations' more frequent evocation of the term, reconciliation is now regularly cited in peace accords as an aspirational goal; is included in lists of crucial peacebuilding priorities in peace-focused, handbooks, compendiums, training manuals, and field guides (De Coning and Ngubane 2015; Mac Ginty 2013; Reychler and Paffenholz 2001; Salter and Yousef 2016); and is prominently incorporated into the objectives of structural mechanisms such as truth commissions, designed to address the legacies of violent conflict (Fischer 2011). Although much of the literature on reconciliation begins with an acknowledgement of its conceptual imprecision (Anstey and Rosoux 2017; Hazan 2009; Long and Brecke 2003; Murphy 2010), it is broadly understood as the component of peacebuilding that seeks to address conflictual and fractured relationships between individuals and groups in society (horizontal reconciliation) and citizens and state institutions (vertical reconciliation). As Bloomfield has argued, reconciliation is "an

essential (and essentially political) ingredient in peacebuilding, just as central and just as necessary as economic reconstruction, legal reform and all other post-violence reconstructive and preventative measures" (Bloomfield 2006, p. 9).

Despite ongoing theoretical debates as to whether reconciliation is an ongoing and action-oriented process or an aspirational end state, there is now broad agreement that reconciliation requires active top-down, bottom-up, and middle-out interventions in order to improve damaged relationships between individuals, communities, and institutions (Charbonneau and Parent 2012; Lederach 1997). The choreography and synchronization of the many individual processes which contribute to reconciliation, including justice, healing, truth-telling, and reparations, remain a challenge for both policymakers and peacebuilding practitioners alike, particularly when progress in one area can (at least temporarily) precipitate setbacks and new tensions in another (Hamber and Kelly 2005).

In Northern Ireland, the term "reconciliation" has appeared in both political and societal discourses since the early periods of the recent conflict. Perhaps unsurprisingly in an overwhelmingly Judeo-Christian society, the pre-accord debates and literature on (re)-building damaged inter-communal relationships tended to invoke theological understandings of reconciliation and were utilized by both church-based and ecumenical civil society organizations (Hurley 1994; Faith and Politics Group 1997). Problematically, reconciliation was often referenced in relation to those who had been directly engaged in, or affected by, the conflict. For some, this created associations between the concepts of reconciliation and the personal act of forgiveness, which was congruent for some, but by no means all, in society (Spencer 2011). As detailed further below, reconciliation was not broadly favored as the language of British government policy during the 1970s and 1980s and was not typically used to describe the peace-focused interventions taking place at communal levels. In the pre-agreement period, some political leaders, including the leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) leader, John Hume (White 1984), did

invoke the term as an aspiration, and it was incorporated into the title of peace-oriented initiatives, including the Forum for Peace and Reconciliation established by the Irish government in 1994. That said, in the context of persistent violence, the rhetoric of reconciliation did not gain significant traction until the post-Agreement period.

While the link between theology and reconciliation continued post-GFA (Clegg and Liechty 2001; Robinson 2014), a more secular understanding and expression of the concept became increasingly evident. The term was more prominently introduced into the wider peacebuilding discourse with the introduction of the influential European Union-led Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation (PEACE Programme) in 1995, of which the EU and the British and Irish governments were direct financial contributors. Worth 667 million euros in its first iteration (1995–1999) and, to date, having distributed over two billion euros in grand aid, the PEACE Programme was established to encourage grassroots support for the tentative steps being made toward a multi-party political negotiation (Bush and Houston 2011). The title choice not only reflected a core value of the European Union project as a whole but mirrored a growing international focus on reconciliation as a task of peace accord implementation in contemporaneous examples of societies emerging from conflict in the 1990s, including South Africa and Guatemala (Hayner 2002). The dominance and reach of the PEACE Programme, which supported the rapid expansion of an active civil society-led intervention in support of economic regeneration, equality and diversity, and improved intra- and inter-communal relationship-building, precipitated the more regular appearance of the term within wider societal discourse. Other external funding bodies, including the International Fund for Ireland (Skarlato et al. 2016), and the private philanthropic foundation, Atlantic Philanthropies (McKay 2015), also emphasized inter-communal and societal reconciliation in their core objectives, further solidifying its presence in the language of civil society focused activity over time.

That said, research undertaken in the 2000s provided evidence that civil society organizations

were broadly pragmatic and instrumental in their use of the term “reconciliation” in order to address the demands of the funding bodies (Hamber and Kelly 2005; McEvoy et al. 2006). In practice, organizations tended to preference the more descriptive and government policy-oriented language of “community relations” and later “good relations.” The unstated ambition of the term reconciliation, the implied focus on individual change, as well as its theological roots were regularly cited as reasons to avoid the term when engaging in practical community-focused interventions (Hamber and Kelly 2005; Porter 2003; Wilson 2006).

Broadly speaking, the term reconciliation has been more frequently cited as a pressing task and objective within republican/nationalist, rather than unionist, political discourse, creating some tensions around “ownership” of, and receptiveness to, the concept. These politically partisan associations may also explain why the term has not gained blanket usage as a peacebuilding task within the wider society (Beirne and Knox 2014; Hamber and Kelly 2018). Despite these tensions, passing references to reconciliation regularly appear in official documents and in popular discourse in reference to specific events, behaviors, aspirations, and objectives.

Top-Down Policymaking for Reconciliation

Despite reservations about the speed and quality of reconciliation since the 1998 GFA (Morrow 2016; Ruane 2015), progress has been made to address and reform some of the structures and institutions which gave rise to the conflict. The establishment of the devolved power-sharing assembly is, arguably, an impressive example of pragmatic reconciliation arising from uncomfortable ideological and constitutional compromise. Despite many challenges and long periods of political inertia, the new political institutions have required political adversaries to find ways of working together, and there have been optimistic periods in which more cordial working relationships have appeared possible. The 13-month

term in which the leader of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), Ian Paisley Senior, and Sinn Féin's Northern leader Martin McGuinness shared First Minister offices is regularly cited in this regard. That said, the failure of political opponents to work collaboratively to progress pressing policy decisions, and the long periods of suspension of the Northern Ireland Assembly (between 2002–2007 and 2017–2020), demonstrates the enduring levels of suspicion and mistrust between the various political parties and the superficiality of working relationships built.

The *Declaration of Support* preamble to the 1998 GFA included the aspirational commitment to “the achievement of reconciliation, tolerance and mutual trust” (Northern Ireland Office 1998, p. 3). A separate section on “Reconciliation and Victims of Violence” also referenced the specific needs of victims of the violent conflict and articulated a commitment to financially support organizations engaged in reconciliation-focused work. The document also cited the need to encourage a “culture of tolerance” (Northern Ireland Office 1998, p. 23) and to facilitate increased mixing in housing and education, although it lacked detail on modes of implementation. Subsequent agreements including the St Andrews Agreement (2006), which resulted in the restoration of power-sharing after 5 years of direct rule from Westminster, and the Hillsborough Agreement (2010), which facilitated the long-awaited devolution of policing and justice powers to the Northern Ireland Executive, made no direct references to reconciliation as either an objective or a practice. The Stormont House Agreement (2014) dealt specifically with issues of identity expression and proposed a comprehensive approach to dealing with the legacy of past violence. This document, addressed further below, cited reconciliation as an underpinning principle and included proposals to establish an “Implementation and Reconciliation Group” (Northern Ireland Office 2014, p. 9) as part of wider legacy structures, thus reintroducing the concept of reconciliation into formal peace negotiations.

The achievement of a multi-party peace agreement in 1998 also provided for a new era of cooperation and joint working between the British

and Irish states and facilitated the thawing of a historically difficult relationship. Symbolic important acts, including the laying of a wreath in Dublin's Garden of Remembrance by Queen Elizabeth II in 2011 during the first official visit of a British monarch to Ireland since independence and the reciprocal visit of the Irish President Michael D. Higgins to Windsor Castle in 2014, emphasized the efforts made to normalize relations between the two states. Other significant acts, including the handshake between the former IRA commander Martin McGuinness and the Queen in Belfast in 2012 and the apology given in the House of Commons in 2010, by the then British Prime Minister David Cameron for the Bloody Sunday atrocity in 1972, in which Catholic civilians were killed by British soldiers, have been cited as evidence of both a change in tone and as high profile reconciliatory gestures. Though the significance of these events should not be overstated, they may serve to encourage further acts of acknowledgment of wrongdoing and provide hope that previously difficult relationships can be repaired over time.

Reconciliation as Inter-communal Relationship-Building

While the Northern Ireland conflict centers on long-standing and incompatible national aspirations, internationally the “Troubles” became synonymous with the tensions and estrangement of the two dominant identity communities – Catholic and Protestant. This hegemonic “two communities” or “two tribes” analysis of the conflict suggests a predominantly internal dynamic and has been criticized for failing to acknowledge the wider dispute around the political legitimacy of the British state in the region, the ongoing power differentials in the social and political system, and the existence of other minority identity groups which have been sidelined in the preoccupation with the socio-religious divide.

In the emergent stages of the violent conflict, the British Government identified that interventions were required to address the increasing mistrust and polarization of the two main communities and the growing manifestations of sectarianism and segregation. Institutional bodies were

established, charged with formulating, reviewing, and challenging policy across government departments, in order to improve community relations, including the Ministry for Community Relations in the early 1970s and the Central Community Relations Unit in 1987 (CCRU 1991). The focus of financial investment was on encouraging cross-community initiatives and supporting community development strategies to boost individual communities' self-confidence to move toward increased contact. Fair Employment legislation was introduced at Westminster in 1976 and 1989 aimed at outlawing discrimination in the workplace. Over the longer term, this provided opportunities for greater inter-communal mixing at work and a narrowing of the socioeconomic gap between Protestants and Catholics.

In the education field, the early policy responses to addressing societal division centered on attempts to increase contact between pupils in a school system in which the vast majority attended institutions which were almost exclusively Catholic or Protestant in makeup. These government-funded initiatives to encourage inter-communal mixing involved collaborative school ventures and cross-community field trips but were criticized for failing to address the institutionalization of a segregated school system (Gallagher 2004). The introduction of a common curriculum across the school sector and the inclusion of a program of Education for Mutual Understanding in the late 1980s were likewise criticized for its failure to engage with the politically charged debates around national identities that remain at the heart of the conflict. This approach was subsequently replaced by a wider program of citizenship education, with a focus on human rights, equality, and social responsibility from 2007 (Niens et al. 2013). Parent-initiated efforts to establish an integrated education sector, where children from the two main communities and other traditions would be educated together, began in the early 1980s but were not formally endorsed and funded by the government until the late 1980s. Although there is still a policy commitment to support the integrated school sector, progress toward further expansion has been glacial, with only around 7% of pupils enrolled in schools which aim for

balanced representation of Catholic and Protestant pupils (Department of Education 2020). Policy focus has shifted in recent years to a focus on "shared education," whereby existing schools develop partnerships and collaborate on education planning and delivery while maintaining existing institutional identities (Gallagher 2016). The GFA provided for the establishment of two new non-departmental public bodies, the Equality Commission and the Human Rights Commission. The Equality Commission has a statutory responsibility to provide guidance to public authorities on their equality of opportunity and promotion of good relations duties and to ensure their appropriate fulfillment. In practice, its power to ensure the proactive transformation of societal attitudes and behaviors has proven limited. The early years of the new power-sharing Executive saw no new strategies to make good on the GFA commitment to achieve "reconciliation, tolerance and mutual trust" developed, although existing financial support for the quasi-independent Community Relations Council (established in 1990) and local authority work was maintained. During a period of direct rule from Westminster (2002–2007), an ambitious policy framework entitled *A Shared Future* was introduced by the Northern Ireland Office in 2005. It declared that "relationships matter and are central. Moving from relationships based on mistrust and defense to relationships rooted in mutual recognition and trust is the essence of reconciliation" (OFMDFM 2005, p. 21). The document also argued for a pragmatic approach to reconciliation on the basis of the significant socioeconomic costs of division. However, with the restoration of the Northern Ireland Assembly in 2007, the two dominant political parties, Sinn Féin and the DUP, took little ownership of the integrationist ethos of the document, and it was quietly shelved, much to the frustration of the smaller parties and civil society.

It was not until 2010 that a new policy framework was proposed. Entitled *Cohesion, Sharing and Integration* (CSI), the document was the product of painfully protracted negotiations between the two main parties (OFMDFM 2010). Following a public consultation exercise, it was rejected by both the smaller parties and wider civil

society for its lack of vision and ambition. No references to the term reconciliation were used in the body of the document, and an independent review concluded that CSI had rejected reconciliation in favor of “mutual accommodation” (Todd et al. 2010, p. 3). Placed under increased internal and external political pressures, another policy strategy entitled *Together: Building a United Community* (T:BUC) was proposed in 2013 and subsequently rolled out. This T:BUC strategy outlined a vision of:

A united community, based on equality of opportunity, the desirability of good relations and reconciliation – one which is strengthened by its diversity, where cultural expression is celebrated and embraced and where everyone can live, learn, work and socialise together, free from prejudice, hate and intolerance. (OFMDFM 2013, p. 2)

The language used in this current policy framework is more robust and ambitious, with the objective of reconciliation referenced on several occasions. The inclusion of actions, such as the development of shared (not integrated) education campuses, the building of shared social housing neighborhoods, and the development of urban villages schemes, indicated some understanding of the wider social context in which division can persist. That said, the allocation of Departmental Ministries between opposing political parties in a grand coalition is not always conducive to the development of a coordinated approach to address the complex societal and economic challenges of a region emerging from violent conflict, and the long-term impact of this policy approach is, as yet, unproven.

Reconciliation via Addressing the Past

The 1998 GFA contained a number of “past facing” provisions (McEvoy and Bryson 2016), including provision for prisoner release and criminal justice reform. Scant detail was provided on the issue of victims and survivors of the conflict, as the British government had, in 1997, established a Victims’ Commission “to look at possible ways to recognize the pain and suffering felt by victims of violence” (Bloomfield 1998, p. 8) and a report was imminently anticipated. On publication, the *We Will Remember Them* report by the Commission made recommendations

focused on victims’ needs, compensation, memorialization, and the broad issue of “truth.” However, it stopped short of outlining a workable mechanism for transitional justice or truth recovery and was criticized for creating a “hierarchy of victimhood” with its failure to acknowledge state violence (Ferguson et al. 2010). Over the past two decades, significant financial investment has been made to support the provision of support and advocacy services for victims and survivors within both statutory and community settings. Both the government-funded and PEACE Programme grant supports to civil society groups have been crucial to the support and visibility of victims of the conflict. While some organizations focus on the delivery of advocacy specialist services across all communities irrespective of identity and affiliation, there have also been divisions within the victim support sector, with organizations predominantly representing nationalist or unionist populations, or those affected by state or paramilitary violence. Although there have been challenging debates around the existence of hierarchies of victimhood, politicization, and manipulation of victims by political actors, there is also evidence of increasing levels of networking and collaboration between organizations and recognition of the shared impact of the conflict on all communities (Lynch and Argomaniz 2017).

As noted above, the GFA had little to say about how the society would deal with wider issues of truth, justice, and reparation in the post-accord period and did not propose an overarching framework to comprehensively “deal with the past.” In the first decade post-Agreement, there was little movement to develop formal transitional justice processes by the devolved government. In its absence, a piecemeal approach involving public inquiries and coronial inquests, police-led reviews into the significant numbers of unsolved conflict-related deaths, civil actions, and community-led initiatives were slowly progressed. During a period of direct rule from Westminster (2002–2007), an eight-person *Consultative Group on the Past* was established in 2007 to consult with communities and make recommendation “on any steps that might be taken to support Northern Ireland society in building a shared future that is not overshadowed by the events of the past”

(Consultative Group on the Past 2009, p. 22). In 2009, it published a set of 31 recommendations for the re-established local Assembly to consider; however controversy over one particular recommendation stymied its progress toward implementation, and it was ultimately shelved.

In 2013, formal efforts were made to revisit the issue when US Diplomat Richard Haass and academic Meghan O’Sullivan were invited to facilitate negotiations between the political parties on a range of contentious issues, including legacies of violence. Although no agreement was reached, the subsequent publication of the negotiating documents (The Panel of Parties of the Northern Ireland Executive, 2013) formed the basis for a second round of negotiations in 2014, resulting in the Stormont House Agreement (SHA), reached in December of that year. This cross-party agreement proposed a more comprehensive framework of institutional mechanisms to investigate conflict-related deaths and enable victims and survivors to seek and receive information about deaths of their next of kin and the establishment of an oral history archive and an “Implementation and Reconciliation Group” to oversee themes, archives, and information recovery and to encourage reconciliation and support a “better understanding of the past” (Northern Ireland Office 2014, p. 10). Progress on the fleshing out of the limited detail contained in the SHA was slow and was halted by the collapse of the Northern Ireland Assembly in 2017. The details of the SHA were the subject of another round of public consultation in 2018, instituted by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. Following the re-establishment of the Northern Ireland Executive in January 2020, a new commitment was made to publish and introduce legislation to implement the Stormont House Agreement within 100 days, as part of the *New Decade, New Approach* deal reached by the political parties.

Bottom-Up Reconciliation Practice

As noted previously, civil society has played a significant role in the design and delivery of processes and initiatives aimed at building trust, forming relationships and networks, and

addressing social needs in both the pre- and post-Agreement periods. Heavily influenced by social psychological theories around optimal contact (Allport 1954) and social identity (Tajfel and Turner 1979), there has been a significant emphasis on the need to challenge existing stereotypes, develop mutual understanding, and encourage positive behavioral change toward the “other.” In the pre-GFA period, this work was more typically been described as community relations or cultural diversity work, with self-described reconciliation work tending to be concentrated in the hands of inter-church and inter-community groups, such as the Corrymeela Community and the Peace People. In the context of ongoing violence, mutual suspicion, and polarization of communities, this work was challenging and under-resourced, with as many setbacks as achievements.

Community-Focused and Relationship-Driven Practice

By the early 1990s, a significant level of experience of grassroots dialogue, cross-community engagement, advocacy, and support practice had been built by community and voluntary organizations (Cochrane and Dunn 2002). This work remained somewhat detached from the wider peace process, although there is evidence that it contributed to an enabling environment in which the peace process gained a broader base of community support and acceptance (Belloni 2010). The introduction of the EU PEACE Programme in 1995 continued this trend, with its general avoidance of overtly political funding themes and its early emphasis on reconciliation through social and economic change (Byrne and Irwin 2001). During the course of its approximately 5-year iterations, the PEACE Programme became increasingly explicit in its articulation of reconciliation objectives (Hamber and Kelly 2009) and focused its financial support on programs involving both cross-community, relationship-enhancing activities and investments and initiatives which engage with community approaches to dealing with the legacies of the past.

Despite the focus on reconciliation by mainly international funding streams, the concept did not feature heavily in the ambitions of many bottom-up peacebuilding practitioners, with many

indicating that the term had too many divergent connotations and associations to be helpful as a descriptor for their work. This civil society-led relationship-focused work has been instigated by a wide range of actors, including community development workers, churches and faith-based groups, women's groups, youth workers, trade unions, former paramilitary prisoners, and victims' groups. It has involved a range of approaches, from the development of cross-community social enterprises and shared spaces, the challenging of sectarianism in the workplace, the alleviation of tensions at interface areas, the facilitation of deep dialogue on painful and contentious issues, and the establishment of working relationships with institutions such as the police and the legislature.

The significant injection of local, inter-governmental, and philanthropic grant aid from the 1990s onward provided for the rapid expansion of an entrepreneurial grassroots peacebuilding sector which was in a position to experiment, innovate, and deepen the quality of its interventions over time. It has also resulted in an increasing dependency on financial support with conditionalities and restrictions attached, an erosion of volunteerism and autonomous action, and increased despondency as the long-term sustainability of projects is threatened by the wind-down of grant programming in recent years. Community-driven work has generally been obliged to operate within the context of existing social divisions, rather than being in a position to affect significant change to the structural segregation which hinders progress toward reconciliation. This change would require ambitious policy commitments to ensure greater opportunities for contact and integration within housing, education, work, sport and leisure, cultural rituals, and use of public services (Hughes 2018). Increasingly, civil society organizations have developed service-delivery arrangements with government departments, which provides a level of support and mainstreaming of effective practice, but have also bound community organizations to the implementation of more rigid strategies on "good relations" designed by policymakers, rather than seasoned practitioners.

Addressing the Past from "Below"

In the absence of a wider policy framework to address the legacies of past violence, civil society has developed a range of bottom-up initiatives to address issues related to the past. These have included important cross-community contributions to the deliberation on what the top-down processes might look like, advocacy for the establishment of investigations in relation to particular atrocities and deaths, the development of both society-wide and community-specific commemoration, memorialization and oral history processes, and the encouragement of intra- and inter-communal dialogue processes to explore the challenge of facing the truths and perceptions of the past (Eriksson 2009; Hamber and Kelly 2016; Lundy 2011; Lundy and McGovern 2008).

These initiatives have relied heavily on external, non-governmental funding sources, although grant aid from the British and Irish governments and the European Union has also ensured that some civil society-led progress has been made on legacy issues, despite the failure to establish a more comprehensive framework of measures. These bottom-up processes have tended to take two distinct approaches – one framing the issue as a legal, human rights, and accountability concern (government facing) and the other focusing on the creation of trust, mutual understanding, and the improvement of relationships between estranged groups (human dynamics focused) (Beirne and Knox 2014). The former is often aligned with the more justice-oriented organizations and often involves victims, community organizers, and legal experts working together to work both on specific campaigns and wider institutional reform. The latter is more typically associated with (or self-describes as) having an explicit reconciliation agenda and might include the development of storytelling projects, encounters between victims and perpetrators, community education processes, or joint commemorative practices. While the latter could be described as the type of community relations practice described in the previous section, its gaze was more directly focused on the past and the coming-to-terms with challenging and contested interpretations of the past. While a "false dichotomy" has emerged (ibid 2014), these

two approaches are not mutually exclusive, and there are obvious overlaps and intersections. Increasingly, in both funding and practice, there is recognition that a more integrated and synergistic approach is possible. Civil society organizations, such as Healing through Remembering, have sought to approach the issue on the basis of agreeing a core set of principles (including “right to truth” and “trust, transparency and engagement”) from which a range of civil society-led practices and initiatives can develop (Healing through Remembering 2013).

Conclusion

The term reconciliation has moved in and out of favor in post-agreement Northern Ireland, and there are indications that the reluctance or hesitancy around its use is related to the inherent ambition of the concept, which demands bold societal transformation to be effectively progressed. That said, if reconciliation is understood to involve a wide set of individual, yet interdependent, processes which focus on the improvement of the complex web of horizontal and vertical relationships, there is evidence that aspects of reconciliation have been positively progressed in Northern Ireland over the past two decades. This can be seen in a range of social, political, and economic changes, from the increase in the proportion of mixed-identity neighborhoods (Nolan 2014) and the willingness to accept further sharing and integration among the majority of the population (Morrow et al. 2013), the increased legitimacy of the reformed police service (Bradford et al. 2019), and the ability of antagonist political leaders to, at least, agree an outline process for truth recovery, even if implementation has proved more challenging (Lawther 2014).

Though there is no definitive understanding of what a reconciled society might look like, it is safe to say that, to date, Northern Ireland is neither fully reconciled with its violent past or with the shape or form of its shared future. It remains a highly segregated society with a brittleness and fragility to relationships at both political and communal levels. Dissident republican groups are still

engaged in violence, loyalist paramilitaries still dominate and control working class communities and stymie opportunities for economic and social development, tensions around cultural expression and memorialization are regularly ignited, and sectarian antagonism persists. Significant levels of social and economic deprivation, educational disadvantage, and social exclusion across all identity communities endure. Reconciliation requires that the political, social, and economic structures and institutions that gave rise to and served to maintain the conflict and division must be fundamentally changed or transformed. Peace agreements can go some significant way in identifying and progressing this institutional change and encourage ambitious policy developments. However, a watching brief needs to be maintained in order to revise and course-adjust to respond to the changing social and political context.

The process of reconciliation requires the acceptance of paradoxes and contradictions, with tensions arising between, for example, the dual objectives of painful truth recovery and positive inter-communal relationship-building or the development of a vision of a shared and interdependent future while simultaneously acknowledging historical grievances and brutalities of the past. Like many other societies emerging from conflict, Northern Ireland has struggled to find the balance between securing political stability and encouraging the types of transformative social change demanded of an ambitious reconciliation process. In the implementation of peacebuilding practice, concepts of community relations and good relations have been more closely perceived as the “softer” end of reconciliation, while truth and justice demands have been framed as more adversarial and political, with only minimal alignment with wider reconciliation discourses. With the publication of, and progression toward the implementation of the Stormont House Agreement (2014), which includes institutional bodies to address both issues of truth recovery and reconciliation, there are indications of some tentative political convergence on these issues.

Reconciliation cannot be imposed from above or morally demanded from below, nor is

reconciliation solely the responsibility of those most directly affected by the conflict. A comprehensive process of reconciliation requires the involvement of all parties, including the post-GFA generation who did not experience the direct violence but live with the consequences of division and intergenerational transmission of polarizing narratives of the past. In addition, reconciliation is not just an internal matter for Northern Ireland. The decision of the United Kingdom to exit the European Union in 2016 has increased political tensions within Northern Ireland and between the pro-Brexit DUP and the Irish government and has the potential to hinder the progress made in the thawing of historic tensions between the British and Irish states. The indications are that Brexit has also accelerated the wider social and political debate around the realization of Irish unity. The Northern Ireland peace process has been lauded internationally as a positive model for conflict resolution and peacebuilding and has been thus marketed by the British, Irish, and US governments and the European Union. However, there is still much to learn about the processes, decisions, and investments that are required to address the hostilities, mistrust, and divisions that exist, if reconciliation is to take firm hold.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Art and Reconciliation](#)
- ▶ [Conflict, Memory, and Memory Activism: Dealing with Difficult Pasts](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Peace Agreements](#)
- ▶ [Search for Peace, the](#)
- ▶ [Transitional Justice and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Troubles, The: The Northern Ireland Conflict](#)

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Reflexivity and Fieldwork in Feminist Peace Research

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Synonyms

Feminism; Ethics; Fieldwork; Ethical research; Conflict research; Positionality

Definition of Reflexivity

This entry explores reflexivity as a method through which researchers can make visible the relationship between *what* is known (ontology) and *how* to know it (epistemology) (Hemmings 2012). Reflexivity is closely related to ways of knowing, which challenges the idea that knowledge is objective. This is an approach that understands knowledge as subjective, and reflexivity as the means through which these partial aspects of knowledge are foregrounded (Harding 1992; Behar 1996). Reflexivity can be particularly useful in research on peace as it provides opportunities to reflect upon the much larger political, and often violent, contexts informing research, including the choices we make about what to ask, who to speak to, and where to go. Reflexivity also makes the researcher a visible component of the research process, rather than assuming that research is done through impartial observation. Reflexivity as a methodological practice thus provides both tools and opportunities for researchers working on peace and conflict to engage in research that

attempts to be transparent about its aims, its limitations, the way in which it was conducted, and for whom (Wibben 2016).

Introduction

This entry discusses reflexivity as feminist method for peace and conflict research, with specific focus on how this can play out in fieldwork intensive research projects. In this entry, the authors discuss reflexivity as both a way to foreground the presence and impact of the researcher within the research project, and also to situate the researcher and the project in the wider political context in which struggles over meaning are fought, and the intersectional power relations that bely these struggles. Hence, reflexivity is a method that understands knowledge as contextual, and therefore partial. To “see” this partiality we need to *practice reflexivity* – asking ourselves how, where, and to what extent we influence or even construct the meaning and knowledge accrued from research. Researchers can foster stronger knowledge claims by being upfront about the ways in which knowledge is subjective (Harding 1992). Further, reflexivity helps to uncover how knowledge claims are never set, but negotiated in the setting in which research is conducted (Fujii 2010). The negotiation over meaning becomes even more fraught in research on peace and conflict, wherein knowledge about the meaning of conflict itself can be violently contested (Sangarasivam 2001). In short, research is never innocent, but always by someone, for someone, and researchers need to be explicit about how these broader relations of power shape and are shaped by the research they engage in (Collins 2012; Tuhiwai Smith 1999).

A reflexive approach situates the research *and* the researcher in the world that it seeks to observe and analyze, and in so doing, asks the researcher to reflect on how this situatedness shapes the research process, its outcomes, impacts, and even potential harms. This allows the researcher to think beyond the shelf life of the research project and understand and contextualize its contributions, be they academic or policy focused.

This is important in many disciplines, but especially so within feminist research, which seeks not only to produce knowledge but also to work toward a larger project of gender equality – similar in a sense to what Brooke Ackerly and Jacqui True discuss as part of a “feminist research ethic” (Ackerly and True 2020). Feminism, after all, is a political project geared towards gender equality. Reflexivity thus provides opportunities to critically reflect on the structural (and intersectional) context of both the researcher and the research project – making visible the impact of gender, class, race, and other structural factors on research and its effects.

This entry explores how reflexivity can practically function in the context of fieldwork-based research. First, the authors briefly explain how a reflexive approach fits into the theoretical, epistemological, and methodological contributions of feminist research on conflict and peace. The entry next draws on the experiences of the authors in undertaking research on peace and conflict in Iraq and Myanmar, illustrating opportunities as well as challenges in practicing reflexivity as a method.

Reflexivity in Feminist Research on Peace and Conflict

Feminist scholars studying issues of peace, conflict, and violence have broadened the (traditional/malestream) scope of inquiry, moving away from a focus on the nation-state as the unit of analysis to include women’s lived experiences in their studies (Wibben 2016). This is both a methodological and a theoretical challenge to mainstream accounts of conflict, its drivers, impacts, and relevant actors. As Swati Parashar reminds us: attempts to be objective often results in reifying male elite narratives and hides the complex continuum of violence women experience in conflict as well as in transitions from conflict to peace (Parashar 2014). Feminist research, on the other hand, centers on the question of gender. This makes visible not only the interconnected way in which war and peace operate, but the silent (and silenced) role that both gender, and indeed women themselves,

play in conflict and its aftermath (see D'Costa 2006). While this silence occurs in mainstream accounts of conflict and its drivers (which frequently leaves women or gendered analysis out of its scope of analysis), there are also silences in the way research is conducted – silences regarding knowledge production, the power dynamics therein that determine how research is conducted, whose voice is highlighted, which participants are invited in, and the role of the researcher in all of this. This is what reflexivity as a methodological tool helps to uncover, account for and mitigate.

Reflexivity in Practice

Both authors work in contexts in which knowledge production has a long and contentious history in relation to the state, as well as to Western governments and educational institutions. In the Middle East, Iraq sits uncomfortably both in relation to colonial legacies in the region, its own history of authoritarian rule under the Ba'athist regime, and most recently, its conflict relative to the War on Terror and the military campaigns against the Islamic State. Knowledge production by non-Iraqis about Iraq has historically, and at times continues to, rely on racialized, orientalist, gendered, and otherwise loaded assumptions about Iraq, the Middle East region more broadly, and the dynamics of conflict in this context (Abu-Lughod 2002; Bhattacharyya 2008; Mohanty 2003). For example, recent violent conflicts in Iraq run the risk of being simplistically attributed to sectarianism, when there are complex webs of actors, class dynamics, historical grievances, and experiences at play that shape violence and its many forms in post-2003 Iraq. Given the complexities and difficulties of conducting research in Iraq, there are also significant power imbalances between Iraqi and foreign researchers that need to be addressed when conducting research in or on the country. Similarly, the knowledge economy in Myanmar has been, and to some extent continues to be, controlled by the central state, restricting access to certain areas, topics, and subjects. This can be understood in relation to the broader security concerns of the state, currently engaged in

civil wars with multiple minority ethnic armed groups, and its recent history of military rule. As a result, knowledge outputs, including state curriculum, have a history of centering majority Bamar/Buddhist perspectives, while current research on Myanmar are undertaken in a context of recent or present trauma, discrimination, and violence. It is against these contentious backdrops that current research on Iraq and Myanmar must be understood.

Entering the Field: Decisions and Reflections on Identity

I am an early career research who is a member of the Arab Iraqi “diaspora.” In this sense, I had both much in common and some key difference between my own identity, experiences and privileges, and those who I interview (who were primarily Iraqi women working in civil society organisations, and largely on the Women, Peace and Security Agenda). Some too had dual citizenship, some had been in the diaspora before returning to Iraq (which carries its own baggage in Iraq’s post-2003 landscape), and some had lived through the final years of Saddam Hussein’s dictatorship. My identity informed the research process throughout for a number of reasons – I could never be a “neutral” observer, but had a vested interest in the rights, freedoms and safety of the people I spoke to, as well as a specific identity that I needed to communicate and navigate – someone simultaneously “local” and not. There was also the added complexity of being from an ethnically mixed but Arab identifying family and conducting the majority of my fieldwork in the relative safety of Iraqi Kurdistan. There were political tensions I was very much aware because of their centrality in published analysis on Iraq, and many that I was not aware of at the outset of my work. However, navigating my own identity and the identities of the women I spoke to helped me understand the importance of understanding and analysing the material and political reasons for why some of these tensions occur – a dynamic that became a central part of how I write about women’s networks and their members in Iraq – as

agential and responsive political actors rather than simply recipients of international norms and funding.

The above reflection focused heavily on identity – a key process through which reflexivity can be practiced. For me, reflexivity was an important process that took different forms from the outset of the research process; thinking critically about first my identity and positionality, how to communicate, disclose, or address it, how this shapes, limits, or opens up conversations with experts and research participants, and lastly, what True and Ackerly (2020) refer to as “deliberative moments,” which I took as opportunities to reshape my research questions to more responsively reflect the interviews I was conducting. This reflexive approach to positionality is useful in setting up research questions that seek to avoid assumptions about Iraq and Iraqi women (see Al-Ali and Pratt (2016) for an example of how this operates in Iraq too). Reflexivity here also allowed me to revise these questions as my knowledge deepened. In fact, leaving space for opportunity to discover silences within a context or topic can reshape the research project entirely (see D’Costa 2006).

Communicating my identity and values to the women I encountered throughout the research process was equally important – achieved through thinking about how to introduce myself, my research interests, how I would use the information provided to me, and what communicating this would show to participants (that I understood the sensitivity of what we were discussing, that I had an awareness of the complexities and tensions in post-2003 Iraq, that I had an interest in discussing sensitive or taboo subjects relating to gender). The conversations I had with research participants were a result of choices available to researchers about how much of themselves to share, how to frame interviews, and which questions to ask. I inhabited two scenarios during interviews, with one scenario being two women discussing the gendered dynamics of life in post-2003 Iraq, and the other of the PhD candidate with research goals to meet and a thesis to submit. Reflexivity allowed me to embody the complexities of both identities, and the myriad others, and understand how these

would go on to shape the research project in its entirety.

In the Field: Encountering Vulnerabilities

The woman in front of me looks barely eighteen, though she tells me she is in her mid-twenties. She has a low voice, and stops often to catch her breath, and she sits still, hardly moving at all. I am in Myanmar to interview women about women’s leadership opportunities in post-war settings, but she talks about war and the gendered violence she experienced at the hands of uniformed men. Mirroring her body language, I also keep still, and do not interrupt her narrative. When she is finished speaking, we sit in silence, before I thank her for sharing this story with me. I then ask if she wants this story published and explain to her how to get in touch with me in case she changes her mind. I do not seek out narratives of violence, as asking women about traumatic experiences might retraumatise them. Sometimes, like with this case, they surface anyway, reflecting, I believe, a need among survivors of violence for telling their story to someone living outside their community. I explain, again at the end of the interview, that she, ultimately, owns the story – so if she doesn’t want it published she can contact me after I leave the room. I ask her if she knows where to go when she feels sick, if someone helps her when she cannot sleep. She tells me yes.

Rather than pushing for facts and details, or reaching for some sort of detached objectivity, reflexivity here meant not asking for detailed information, nor ironing out ambiguities or contradictions in the story told (Page 2017). I felt it was important to sit in the moment with the woman, simply listening, rather than questioning. As Lee Ann Fujii (2010, p. 234) argues, the value of people’s narration does not necessarily lie in their “accuracy” but rather in the ways people make sense of their experience as located in a specific context. When sharing experiences of events taking place in an environment that is both politicized and conflict-affected, people may forget certain facts, or choose to tell them in

a different light. Paying reflexive attention to this “meta-data” helps render visible the grander political context which shapes experiences of violence and insecurity, and thus helps with the analysis as well (Fujii 2010, p. 232). In the above example, I found that a focus on the particular and the affective were helpful for generating knowledge about larger political events (see Mohanty 2003): the woman’s story brought into stark relief the relationship between gender, ethnicity, violence, and war in Myanmar’s border areas. Journaling after fieldwork, as a reflexive tool, helped to bring into focus the affective environment of the interview by reminding me after the event how I perceived the interview, complementing the transcription.

This experience is a reminder that a question about women’s leadership in a conflict context can, and often will, reveal violence even when it is not expected. The people we encounter in conflict fieldwork have a right to express their experiences of that conflict, even if it is not what we expected to discuss. As researchers conducting fieldwork in the aftermath of conflict, we need to have some tools prepared for when such a topic arises in an interview. Here, this meant relying on some ethical guidelines, like anonymity, sensitivity, and allowing the participant a degree of control over the conversation and what happens with it even after the interview is finished. In not wanting to further traumatize or harm the woman, I reminded her that she was in control of the story being told: she could stop at any moment, or choose to contact me after the interview ended to withdraw the story. Not asking for details about the perpetrators would also, I hoped, help to minimize potential reprisals. Her name was not noted down in any document; instead we used a code when discussing her. These attempts at ensuring confidentiality, trust and full voluntary and informed participation were key tools aiding the study’s reflexive process (Shwe et al. 2015).

In the Field: Navigating Political and Emotional Topographies

During my PhD research, undertaken in northern Myanmar, the conflict between the Kachin armed forces and the Myanmar military is worsening,

and rumours abound about impending military attacks on Kachin areas are bountiful. I am told bridges and roads are being reinforced by the Myanmar army to facilitate troop movements, and there is footage of military planes attacking Kachin fields, farms and displacement camps, although the Myanmar army refutes any claims of attacks on Kachin communities. Not knowing what is about to happen, and where exactly, I end up postponing my trip to Kachin areas. When I do go, a couple of months later, everyone I meet is bracing for assault: building bunkers, hiding valuables. There is a sense of urgency and tension in the air. Rumours produce fear and uncertainty; these impact not only who I meet, but where I go, what I ask, and also how people react to me. Fear prevented me from going into certain areas, both geographically and subjectively speaking. Fear also prevented people from speaking to me about certain things, rendering some people silent, and some topics off limit.

In this case, research reflexivity became a critical method through which I could tease out the affective environment of the research: in being attentive to emotions I could see how it affected the collection of information (where I went, who I spoke to), but also the ways in which I interpreted the narratives shared with me (Skidmore 2004). It helped me see how research includes the careful negotiations of the political topography and relationships of the field (Huggins and Glebbeek 2009), and how this shaped how I approached, understood, and conducted the research process (Sehgal 2009; Subramanian 2009). Reflexivity, which here meant being attentive to emotions, helped me trace “the subjectivities and partialities” that research entails (Sangarasivam 2001). This is particularly urgent in research on peace and war, where pervasive everyday insecurities often exist alongside memories and experiences of violence, inducing “rumors, inventions, denials, evasions, and silences” (Fujii 2010). Acknowledging emotions and their impact on the data collection and analysis can facilitate reflexivity at this point of the research, by foregrounding the way emotions shape decisions about methods, which data is collected, and where research takes place. This is a useful process even after fieldwork.

Leaving the Field: Impact and Expertise

In the process of conducting research on Iraqi women's participation, I meet a number of policy practitioners from Iraqi and international organisations, some of whom express interest in reading summaries of research findings once I have completed the thesis. This is not unexpected – ethically, I have an obligation to share what I find, and it is something I aim to do at the outset. It is also something that can be built into the research project (with resourcing), through validation workshops and renewed visits to research participants. Currently, there is both an incentivisation of producing policy relevant academic research, as well as a mismatch in how research for policy audiences and research for academic markers must be written. As I write this chapter, I am in the process of drafting a short summary of findings. I ask myself – what would Iraqi civil society actors want to know from me, what would policy actors in international organisations want or need to know from me, and lastly, how do I balance being critical about the work civil society engages in and writing something useful or encouraging? While I am encouraged to work through my 'imposter syndrome' as a young woman in an academic context, I am also keenly aware that my 'expertise' is granted because of my institutional affiliation and the training I have received. Many of the women I interviewed also have graduate degrees and have many years of work and leadership experience. What can I share or summarise that can meaningfully be useful for them in their work? And further, how should I target my 'expertise' in a way that can be useful to the larger peacebuilding project in Iraq?

In feminist research, reflexivity becomes ever more complex, as by design, feminism and feminist research is both a theoretical standpoint and a political project. This means understanding not only the ethical and epistemological considerations necessary in the process of conducting research, but also what happens with that knowledge and our acquired “expertise” after the research project is completed.

In the introduction to her chapter “Translation in the war-zone,” Malaka Shwaik (2020)

describes her dismay after being asked to help a media outlet connect with Palestinian youth living in the Gaza Strip, only to see their discussions of their experiences “rebutted” throughout the radio segment. The research we conduct, the knowledge claims we make, and the contacts and networks we build, exist in the world in which that knowledge is contested, politicized, and repurposed often outside of our intentions for it. Shwaik’s experience is a reminder that as researchers with a political purpose, our work exists beyond the “project,” and at times, our expertise is called on to contribute to a much wider conversation that we have little control over. Reflexivity in this context provides opportunities to critically reflect on what we do with these opportunities, and when they do not result in ways we expect or hope, how to account for this in the future.

Conclusion/Summary

Reflexivity is both a process and a tool, relevant for all stages of a research project – from outlining its parameters, asking questions and stating the curiosities about a particular issue, conducting fieldwork, and of course, in drawing conclusions, understandings, and recommendations. It is also an important part of how the researchers engage with participants, build trust, and discuss the research with those who may be involved in the research or its aftermath. Thus, in practicing reflexivity, researchers may consider how their identities (gender, class, age, ethnicity, and so on) affect the research process in its entirety. Others may go further and center the importance of emotions, feelings, and closeness in the interview settings (Hedström 2019), and some researchers may argue that the knowledge we create during research does not exist prior to the research process, but is co-constructed by the people involved in the research (Cavarero 2000). In the examples above, the authors stress their own positioning vis a vis their research participants and the research topic more generally, as well as the conscious and subconscious choices the researchers made throughout the process. This process allowed both researchers to reflect on how identity and positionality shaped the

fieldwork, the eventual analysis, writing and outputs of the research project, and lastly, the impacts of the research on the researcher, participants, and on the broader political context.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Conflict Fieldwork](#)
- ▶ [Feminist Peace Research](#)
- ▶ [Intersectionality and Peace](#)
- ▶ [Reflexivity in the Study of Security and Conflict](#)

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Reflexivity in the Study of Security and Conflict

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Introduction

This chapter will examine reflexivity, with a focus on three cognate disciplines: international

relations, security studies, and peace studies. It opens with an account of how reflexivity has become more visible in – and has actively shaped – the study of security and conflict, following spatial openings in the early 1990s within international relations and security studies in particular. This is followed by a brief exposition of how feminist epistemologies have influenced (and continue to influence) the theory and practice of reflexive inquiry. Finally, the chapter will examine how reflexive analyses have been applied via three prominent “turns” in the aforementioned disciplines, namely, the narrative, vernacular, and local turns.

Definition: Reflexivity and Disciplinarily in International Relations and the Study of Conflict

While many concepts across the social sciences (and beyond) certainly meet W.B. Gallie’s criteria of being “essentially contested” (1956), *reflexivity* is of a particularly slippery constitution. This is largely due to its simultaneous presence across a number of disciplines, each of which characterizes reflexivity in its own way. Tracing reflexivity across linguistics (“*Grammar* and *Linguistics*. Of a grammatical element or its meaning: that refers back to the subject of the clause or sentence in which it is used [emphasis in original]” (Oxford English Dictionary 2019)), philosophy (“*Philosophy* and *Psychology*. Of a mental action, process, etc. turned or directed back upon the mind itself; involving intelligent self-awareness or self-examination; introspective” (Oxford English Dictionary 2019)), and the social sciences (“*Social Sciences*. Of a method, theory, etc.: that takes account of itself or esp. of the effect of the personality or presence of the researcher on what is being investigated. [emphasis in original]” (Oxford English Dictionary 2019)), for example, presents an array of definitions – yet one can identify, at the very least, an underlying quality of “turning, deflecting, or bending (something) back” (Oxford English Dictionary 2019). In the case of social analysis – and by extension, the analysis of conflict – this “bending back” most

typically refers to the *ability* or *practice* of the researcher to reflect on their own subjectivities and to embed this recognition in the research process. Such recognition is often explicit – such as in the case of autobiography as method (see below). It can also be implicit, such as in cases where the researcher embraces a specific program of critical analysis – social constructivism (see Finnemore and Sikkink 2001) or post-structuralism, for example (see Howarth 2013) – that positions “truth” as a social construct and infers, therefore, that the researcher’s reflections on contingent social phenomena are themselves contingent. Either way, Amoreuax’s assertion that reflexivity entails “grappling with thought and action, which requires but moves beyond self-awareness” (2016, p. 23) is astute. When applied to international relations, security studies, and peace studies as academic *disciplines*, this exercised self-awareness can serve to elucidate the various power dynamics that underpin – and uphold – their traditional histories, rendering them not as identifiably whole but as a panoply of flexible narratives that offer various different stories depending on what(/how) one reads, and what – by extension – one distills as (ir)relevant from this literature. When Cox provided his famous dictum that “[t]heory is always for someone and for some purpose” (1981, p.), he was, essentially, speaking about reflexivity.

Exercising reflexivity at this systemic level opens the possibility of infinite readings around a wealth of phenomena, thus contravening the notion of paradigmatic “progress” that is foundational to classic interpretations of the academic enterprise. It is no surprise, then, that reflexivity is positively absent from most orthodox iterations of social or political science, a silence upheld by design. In traditional (or perhaps more accurately, *positivist* social analysis (see Harrison and Callan 2013; Smith 1996), the basic principle of *naturalism* reigns supreme: “[t]hat is, it is assumed that there is no fundamental difference between the social world and the natural world; the social world contains the same kind of regularities independent of time and place. . . as exist in the natural world” (Neufeld 1993, p. 40). These regularities – reproduced across a stable ontology – avail

themselves to *scientific* methodologies in particular, which are designed to subsume observable patterns of behavior under “general covering laws” (ibid.). Such “laws” are easily recognized in the traditional (hi)stories of conflict studies and international relations, ranging from Doyle’s democratic peace thesis (1983) to the myriad Cold War-era applications of rational choice theory and scenario planning (see Erickson et al. 2013). Grieco’s (1988) assertion that hegemonic neorealist/neoliberalist explanations in international relations (which *both* assumed that states act rationally and adjust to “ripples” in a structurally determined international system) constituted “two of the same coin” (see Waever 1996) came at a pivotal and highly symbolic moment: the Berlin Wall was about to be torn down, and with it, the *positivist* orthodoxy of conflict studies defined by the primacy rationally acting states and what Sandra Harding has called the “want for objectivity” (Hirsh et al. 1995, p. 193).

In the vacuum left by these events, a host of “critical”/*post-positivist* approaches could come to the fore – including social constructivism, radical feminism, post-colonialism, and poststructuralism – the seeds of which had, of course, been planted decades earlier through the work of critical theorists such as Wittgenstein, Foucault, Enloe, Rorty, and Fanon (not to mention various less prominent scholars), all of whom were exercising reflexivity in some way. Giving rise to what has been typically referred to as the “Third Great Debate” in international relations, this reinvigorated body of scholarship imbued the study of conflict with “patterns of dissent and the celebration of difference” (George and Campbell 1990), an important intervention indeed given that, as Lapid put it, “[f]or many years the international relations discipline has had the dubious honour of being among the least self-reflexive of the Western social sciences” (1989, pp. 249–250; see also Amoureux and Steele 2016). What we can say, then, is that the post-Cold War period of the 1990s presented time (and space) for reflexivity to become more deeply ingrained in the mainstream study of security and conflict, steadily moving away from its early iteration(s) as a totemic rejection of *positivist* orthodoxy to

becoming a byword for (self-)reflective inquiry that positioned the author at the core of analysis (see Hamati-Attaya 2013). This intertwining of the personal and the political – which can be strongly identified in what many would later dub the “narrative turn” – owes a lot to a well-developed kernel of feminist scholarship that had indelibly primed the critical landscape of the 1990s. Before providing examples of how reflexivity is employed in more recent literature, then, it is instructive to briefly explore the (continuing) influence of this intellectual progenitor.

The Personal, the Political, and the Reflexive

It is difficult to overstate the role of feminist research in promoting and subsequently normalizing reflexive inquiry in the study of security and conflict. To reduce the significance of feminist scholarship to disruptions of “gender” and “patriarchy” – essential though they are – is to miss the point: feminism should be more accurately evaluated as an affective bulwark against various forms of power: disciplinary, epistemological, methodological, and otherwise (see, e.g., Ackerly et al. 2006; Blanchard 2003; Sylvester 1994). Underlying the intensely disruptive bent of feminism lies the synthesis of the personal and the political, a recognition that elevating personal experience(s) can resonate with and give rise to broader social movements of collective resistance (and vice versa). Elizabeth Reid, channeling the pioneering work of feminist activists in the 1970s, reflects on this dynamic as follows:

Feminism empowers us to unlock the doors of our own resistance, enabling us to go back into ourselves, to recognise and reclaim our space, to re-orient ourselves. It allows a sense of self in solidarity with other women to emerge. This is a paradox: *to change ourselves is to turn inwards*, to begin the process of putting ourselves back together again. It is not to change the world. Yet it does for, in changing how we relate to the world, we change the world. Feminism, in taking women’s lived experience as its starting point,

makes the personal political [emphasis added] (Reid 2018, p. 13).

Given the personal/political formation at the heart of feminism, it stands to reason that the methodologies typically employed differed quite clearly from the “norm” – that is, from self-contained methodological coda that would delineate “dependent variable” from “independent variable” from “generalizability,” and so on (see King et al. 1994). Feminists, to the contrary, embraced the *pluralist* potential of methodology, claiming no single standard of methodological correctness, nor any desire to create one (Tickner 2006, p. 21). In the hands of feminist scholars, methodology was more so a byword for discovery, conversations with a text (and oneself), and an epistemological compass that would allow for the complexities of inquiry to reveal themselves in all their constitutive, circular messiness. At the heart of this methodological enterprise – as with the ethos of activist feminism that preceded it – lay the *individual*:

Unlike social scientific IR, which has drawn on models from economics and the natural sciences to explain the behavior of states in the international system, IR feminists have used sociological analyses that start with *individuals* and the hierarchical social relations in which their lives are situated. While social scientific IR has been quite system-determined or state-focused, feminist understandings of state behavior frequently start from below the state level – *with the lives of connected individuals* [emphasis added] (Tickner 2006, p. 25).

Here, we see the essential dialectic of reflexivity at play: by turning “back on ourselves,” we simultaneously project our politics outward to any number of political collectives – an endeavor that can only be achieved by forgoing the orthodox social scientific impulse toward “objectivity” and embracing, instead, the inherent multiplicity that comes with being human and communicating oneself on those terms. Little wonder, then, that traces of feminist intervention(s) can be so strongly identified in a more modern, “reflexively aware” international relations, where the researcher’s recognition of self, positionality, and power has become increasingly inseparable

from the empirical output produced in their name. This has become especially apparent in – and has perhaps even given rise to – the “narrative,” “vernacular,” and “local” turns currently in vogue in the (reflexive) study of conflict.

Reflexive “Turns”: The Narrative, the Vernacular, and the Local

The Narrative

While the practice of denoting disciplinary “turns” is somewhat problematic, it is a useful rhetorical device, nonetheless, to chart how certain concepts/epistemologies become more deeply sedimented as legitimate forms of inquiry. In the case of the narrative turn, the work of Naeem Inayatullah, Elizabeth Dauphinee, and Roland Bleiker (among others) in the late 2000s/early 2010s was instrumental in promoting reflexive practices such as autoethnography (see Brigg and Bleiker 2010) and novel writing (Jackson 2014), wherein “[t]he desire for introspection, to expose personal struggles, and to use alternative narrative styles. . . take on an almost therapeutic purpose, particularly when it appears that research is intimately connected with the researcher’s sense of being” (Eagleton-Pierce 2011, p. 5). As Doty and Dauphinee have reflected, however, there is a careful balance to be struck between the desire to accentuate the lived experiences of individual subjects of “conflict” and the somewhat unavoidable impulse of the author to elevate their own presence, thus presenting a fine line between “fieldwork and tourism between scholarship and voyeurism” (Dauphinee 2010, in Doty 2010, p. 1047). As Jenny Edkins also puts it: “[t]elling the stories of others as if they were somehow separate from us leads to. . . many ethical concerns. . . We want to give them voice, but we want it to be their voice and not ours. We want to collect stories, but we want them to be their stories, not ours.” (2013, p. 290).

Elizabeth Dauphinee’s *The Politics of Exile* (2013) – perhaps the most influential publication of this early narrative turn – is emblematic of this tension. A (semi-fictional) novel focusing on the

Bosnian War and its aftermath explores essential themes of “personal and civilizational guilt, of displaced and fractured identity, of secrets and subterfuge, of love and alienation, of moral choice and the impossibility of ethics” (2013, [back matter]) and in doing so, “challenges us to recognise pure narrative as an accepted form of writing in international relations” (ibid.). It is, undoubtedly, an excellent and accomplished piece of work, but its very *form* highlights the potential perils/limits of (autobiographical) reflexivity. “Known” IR/conflict scholars – who enjoy unique access to publication, promotion, and the projection of voice [based, of course, off their hard work to attain that position] – get to speak on *behalf* of their subjects, often reducing the source content to traces and snippets gleaned from interviews, focus groups, and in the case of novel writing, the ethereal truths of others wrapped in a fiction that ineradicably belongs to the author (Fitzgerald 2015). This is as much a reflection of the dominant practices and limiting structures of academic writing as anything else (Fitzgerald 2014), yet it also calls to mind that despite its emancipatory potential, exercising reflexivity cannot ever be a panacea – or wholly resistant – to pervasive structures of power that dictate the positionality of academics as individuals, yes but also, inescapably, as *subjects* who must produce work in their own name to fulfil the basic conditions of employment and in many cases – to return to Doty and Dauphinee [pace Lacan] their very sense of being (on the Lacanian concept of “lack” with regard to the production of ethnography, see Atkinson 2014.) Recognizing these limits, and navigating them effectively, represent an ongoing challenge for the “reflexive” scholar who chooses to employ (auto)ethnography, novel writing, or indeed, any number of associated critical methodologies (see Salter and Mutlu 2013). In the shadow of this problematique, recent reflexive scholarship has shifted more intently toward foregrounding the voices of “ordinary citizens” on matters of “everyday security,” individuals who have been typically spoken *for* on such issues, rather than spoken *to* as the basis of creating expertise: hence, the “vernacular turn.”

The Vernacular

The shift to accentuating the voices of “ordinary citizens” as expert mediators on their own “lived” experiences of everyday (in)security has gained much momentum since the early 2010s—though as with narrative approaches, its genesis can also be identified in influential feminist works, such as Dorothy E. Smith’s *The Everyday World as Problematic: A Feminist Sociology* (1987). In 2013, Lee Jarvis and Michael Lister published an influential qualitative analysis and research agenda on “vernacular security,” which set out to “offer a space for lay understandings of security to enter academic debate” (2013, p. 162). Jarvis and Lister’s work employed wide-ranging focus groups to capture – and replicate in text – public attitudes toward security, citizenship, and anti-terrorism policy in the UK (ibid.), inductively producing “six images of security” that differed quite intently from state-centric concepts typical of orthodox security studies (see above). By accentuating the voices of “everyday citizens” and their encounters with (in)security – all the while making them visible in typically “closed” academic settings – the authors propose that the very *vernacular* of how security is talked about, and thus conceptualized, begins to shift, offering a meaningful corrective to “the creeping monopolisation of security by ‘experts’... [which] conceals the inherently political character of security” (ibid., p. 173).

Recent developments in this literature have tended to concern everyday cultures of (in)security with reference to traditionally “vulnerable” communities – such as refugees and children – and have quite often (much like in the case of the narrative turn) centered on the concept of *exile* and its concomitant of border politics. This is hardly surprising, given the 2015 apogee of Europe’s “migration crisis” and the degree to which this issue continues to dominate media and political discourses against a backdrop of near-constant electioneering. In their *Border Narratives* project, for example, Löffmann and Vaughan-Williams (2018) set out to interrogate widely held assumptions contained in elite political discourses on migration, which have projected a notion of collective fear on the part of EU

citizens concerned with an “influx” of “irregular migrants” without, in fact, finessing the details – or veracity – of such fears through qualitative exposition. Developing a qualitative program of critical focus group research (CFGR) to “create a reflexive forum for investigating ‘how knowledge, ideas, story-telling, self-presentation and linguistic exchanges operate within a given cultural context’” (Barbour and Kitzinger 2009 p. 5 in *ibid.*, p. 391), the authors accept (and embrace) that unlike quantitative surveys of public opinion, the CFGR approach cannot claim replicability or generalizability, nor is it scientifically representative, due to small sample sizes. What it *can* provide, however – in the spirit of the vernacular turn and reflexivity itself – is an inductive understanding of “*how* citizens use and understand the concepts of ‘border’ and ‘border security’ in the context of their daily lives [emphasis in original]” (*ibid.*). From their wide-ranging study, the authors conclude that contra the overarching impressions provided by prominent opinion polls such as the Standard Eurobarometer 84 (which implies that citizens are overwhelmingly hostile to migrants and refugees, and supportive of tough(er) border controls (*ibid.*, p. 399)):

What emerges from the ‘Border Narratives’ project . . . is a rich and complex set of narratives that position the figure of the migrant in a highly nuanced way; as *both* a threat to political, economic, societal, and personal security, *and* as threatened by exposure to violence en route to Europe, unnecessarily restrictive policies upon entry to Europe, and exposure to racism, xenophobia, and forms of physical violence once in Europe [emphasis in original] (*ibid.*, p. 400).

Working through the *vernacular* to elevate the voices of the non-elite as the basis of re-understanding security politics is to act reflexively on two levels: first, it performatively inverts the orthodoxy of top-down expertise on matters of security that has typically sustained the traditional intellectual economy of IR and security studies; second, it is to reflexively interrogate – as academics – *our own* status as “experts” on matters of security and conflict that affect so many other (typically silenced) actors in much more profound ways. Further developments in

vernacular scholarship include shifts to not only provide voice(s) directly to “vulnerable” subjects themselves (such as refugees and asylum seekers) but to offer far more *open* spaces for articulation – such as dedicated platforms for self-uploaded content – than is typically provided in academic settings. (This approach is not without its ethical problems; however, an in-depth discussion of which is beyond the scope of this chapter. For further exposition on this issue, see Mackenzie et al. 2007; Kabranian-Melkonian 2015.) These projects include but are by no means limited to *Interrogating the Terrorist/Refugee Narrative: Human Stories of Resistance* (see Fitzgerald 2017); the UN Migration Agency’s *I Am a Migrant* (<https://iamamigrant.org/>); and the *Immigrant Stories* project, led by the University of Minnesota’s Immigration History Research Center (<https://cla.umn.edu/ihr/immigrant-stories>).

The Local

As with international relations and security studies, the early to mid-1990s provided conceptual space within peace studies – and the study of peacebuilding – for more critical analyses to come to the fore. Foundational works – such as Lederach (1995), Rupesinghe (1995), and Avruch (1998) – championed the notion of “peace from below” (see Leonardsson and Rudd 2015), which attempted to reposition local actors as “the primary architects, owners and long-term stakeholders” of peace (Rupesinghe 1995, p. 81), much in contrast to hegemonic notions of *liberal peace*, a familiar, top-down diktat centered on the almost exclusive capacity of (Western) states, and interstate agencies, to effectively impose and maintain peace in conflict and post-conflict zones. As MacGinty and Richmond point out, although this literature was beginning to make waves – and formed what some label a “first” local turn in peace studies (see Paffenholz 2015) – the *local* remained, nonetheless, predominantly conceived as “a near empty space, willingly subservient to Northern models and interests” (2013, p. 765). In the rich tradition of colonialist and orientalist epistemologies, “locals” – in typically storied (post-)conflict zones such as Timor-Leste, Kosovo, Palestine, and Afghanistan – were viewed as subjects whose

progress could (perhaps only) be elevated by the transplantation of *external* expertise and its accompanying promise of emancipation. As McGinty and Richmond elaborate, ingrained assumptions of *liberal peace* deemed local populations in (post-)conflict zones as acutely susceptible to Western governmentality, due to a supposed “lack of capacity at the local level to combat structural power wielded by elites or by colonists, and. . .the fact that most local agency was in any case constitutive of and willingly complicit with colonialism” (ibid., p. 765).

It is no surprise, then, that as scholarship in peace studies and peacebuilding began to develop a *second* – and seemingly more affective – “local turn” from the early 2010s onward; it leaned heavily on post-colonial and poststructuralist perspectives (see Paffenholz 2015; Hirblinger and Simons 2015), developing reflexive threads of analysis that paralleled those of the “narrative” and “vernacular” turns discussed above. In the midst of this growing body of critical scholarship, however, orthodox analyses of “the local” – driven by a range of influential national and international actors – have *continued* to “depict what local actors and institutions are *really* like. . .bringing forward idealisations of how local government *should* be [emphasis added]” (Hirblinger and Simons 2015, p. 430; in Bräuchler and Naucke 2017, p. 424). This *essentialization* of “the local” – which preemptively determines emancipatory route(s) to success – is, in essence, contrary to the spirit of more reflexive approaches to peacebuilding, which would seek to communicate the cultural, everyday, and even administrative practices that are procedurally generative of “peace from below” in ways that suitably represent the messy, circular and, indeed, *reflexive* character(s) of “the local” itself. This dilemma is neatly summarized as follows:

Where the local turn’s critique of liberal peacebuilding declared the impossibility of relating to everyday realities in the old framework that gave precedence to top-down solutions, the local turn itself proposed a normative solution of accessing everyday authentic forms of being in the world from the bottom up and the local. In an attempt to use the concept of the everyday as

an alternative to the top-down approach of the liberal peace, the framing of the everyday has come to be framed as the starting point in the struggle to uncover the hidden narrative and transcripts of peace. As a consequence of the normative, emancipatory drive of the local turn, it has been argued, *local agency has come to be identified, delineated and then judged on the basis of pre-established normative ideas regarding the social order*, as a direct reaction to what were perceived to be the ills of an ‘unbecoming’ liberal paradigm [emphasis added] (Randazzo 2016, p. 1362).

Randazzo’s intervention reflects (on) an essential, ongoing puzzle in contemporary peace studies and peacebuilding: what, now, for reflexive representations of “the local”? A variety of approaches have been put forward. Bräuchler and Naucke (2017), for example, have called for the careful (re-)application of anthropology, which, in their view, offers unique methodological and conceptual capacities to adequately represent – without claiming external ownership of – the culturally specific and highly contingent practices of peacebuilding:

“We would like to argue that the strength and core contribution of anthropological peace research lies in. . .a place-based approach that combines the methodological and conceptual dimension of the local. Methodologically and conceptually informed studies of ‘local’ conflicts and peace initiatives can highlight the creativity and resolution-finding ability of local actors that should be recognised, respected and supported through complementary peacebuilding – without reducing the local to yet another tool in the international peace industry and without ignoring the share of local actors in the conflicts and the problems, limitations or contradictions they face” (2017, p. 428).

Gearoid Millar (2018) proposes an ethnographic peace research (EPR) agenda that, while borrowing from the anthropological legacy of “thick description,” embellishes it with an attuned reflexive awareness on the part of the researcher to make available – and more *visible* – their hybrid methodologies, which may include semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and extensive qualitative field notes (ibid., p. 265) – Millar’s article is part of a special issue on “Decentering

the study of international interventions” in *Cooperation and Conflict* (2018); for a useful introduction to this special issue and its core themes, see Schroeder 2018. Finally, Julian et al. (2019) explicitly leverage feminist-inspired epistemologies of inclusion to “ensur[e] direct involvement of local people in the collection and dissemination of experiential knowledge. . . provid[ing] a basis for extending the inclusion of local ‘voices’, experiences and life stories to conflict analysis” (ibid., p. 215). In this spirit, their *Raising Silent Voices* project in Myanmar reflexively speaks about “non-standard entry points to the field”; offers colloquial accounts of working with – and delegating data collection responsibilities to – Burmese research associates; and explores the power of “arts-based methods,” such as drawing workshops, to aesthetically represent peoples’ experiences and the continuous production of a fragile, eternally malleable, but appropriately local vision of peace. As the authors reflect:

“Our. . . research experience is that conversational and arts-based approaches such as (but by no means limited to) our drawing workshops, in conjunction with local research collaborations in which outsider researchers are prepared and willing to let go of the control over the data collection process, seem particularly well suited to create the trustful space needed to explore the experiential side of our knowing even in rather short-term encounters between researchers and researched.” (ibid)

Conclusion

Returning to the opening gambit of this chapter, there is no question that reflexivity is a slippery, “tricky” concept, something one inevitably encounters not only when one attempts to elucidate but also (as I hope to have shown in the examples above) when one attempts to put reflexivity into practice. And yet, this is precisely the *point* of reflexivity; it emits an eternal sense of possibility, of circularity and *jouissance* that, when embraced, can positively develop the study of conflict in ways typically foreclosed by more “orthodox” modes of inquiry. This is not to say that reflexive analyses are the “correct” approaches and should be advanced, necessarily,

at the cost of more traditional studies. The two can – in fact do – coexist quite comfortably across a number of disciplines tasked with the study of conflict. In this respect, it is instructive to resist any temptation to become overly wedded to any “one” or “essential” conception of reflexivity, a necessity somewhat confounded by the structural requirements of an Encyclopedic entry, but an important reminder, nonetheless.

What we might say in conclusion is that reflexivity presents researchers across a number of cognate disciplines (such as international relations, security studies, and peace studies) with a means to “do” conflict studies in various ways that cannot but enhance our understanding of deeply complex and changeable dynamics of human interaction. Anthropology, ethnography, and storytelling – it is no mere coincidence that as reflexive analyses of security and conflict continue to drive forward, scholars find themselves turning *back* to some of the most fundamental, human-focused programs of social inquiry and reanimating them at/as the frontier of contemporary conflict studies. What is old appears new again (and vice versa); reflexivity is ever thus. This is precisely why it will always remain indispensable to our collective understandings of what it means to be secure, a performative reminder that the dynamics that sustain conflict and peace cannot be anything *but* precarious.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Conflict Fieldwork](#)
- ▶ [Conflict, Memory, and Memory Activism: Dealing with Difficult Pasts](#)
- ▶ [Everyday Peace](#)
- ▶ [Street Art and Peace](#)
- ▶ [Theatre and Peacebuilding](#)

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Reforms

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Resilience and Peace

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Definition/Description

Over the last decades, resilience has become a fast-growing topic within various academic disciplines and policy debates. The academic path of resilience finds its origins in the 1970s and lies rooted in the studies of (ecological) complex adaptive systems. In the following decades, resilience obtained significant field within the social sciences, and has more recently also been studied in relation to peace studies and practices. Despite the increase in resilience research, there is not one agreed upon definition. The following five factors that are, however, most common in current conceptualizations are (1) (adaptive) capacity, (2) local agency, (3) collective action, (4) social capital, and (5) social cohesion.

Within peacebuilding efforts, the focus mostly lies on local agency, or what is often referred to as the “actor-centered” approach. It is hereby deemed important to increase the adaptive capacity of the local communities, for example, through social capital/cohesion building, or to instigate collective action. The increased focus on resilience within both development and peacebuilding efforts led to the rise of resilience-critique. The most common critique focuses on the shift of accountability within resilience-based projects. It is argued that due to the actor-centered approach that has been adopted, there is an increased change of embedded neoliberalism within the projects. There is furthermore the notion that the “responsibilization of victims” does more harm than good within resilience practices. Despite this, there is a vast number of authors that argues in favor of exploring the opportunities that resilience brings to the field of peacebuilding.

Synonyms

[Actor-centered peacebuilding](#); [Adaptive capacity](#); [Complexity thinking](#); [Risks](#); [System thinking](#)

Introduction

We live in an increasingly complex world, filled with risks and uncertainties. Risks it seems we can't prepare for, and the ongoing uncertainty of them taking place. While the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020 clearly demonstrated a risk to global stability, uncertainties like these have been around for much longer and in different gradations. The perception of risks has, however, changed significantly during the last 50 years. During the Cold War, risks were mostly perceived as monolithic. At that time, a “Central Government” was in control over a relatively straightforward emergency contingency plan. The post-Cold War world has, however, been experienced as an increasingly complex world where the threats and risks have increased (Coaffee 2009, p. 263). This is, for example, visible in relation to climate change, which is unfolding rapidly and adds further to the existing risks of natural disasters (IPCC 2018). With as a result more frequent wildfires, longer periods of drought in some regions and an increase in the number, duration, and intensity of tropical storms (NASA 2019). The world population is moreover increasing rapidly, the United Nations (2019, p. 5) estimates the world population at 8.5 billion by 2030 and even over 10 billion in 2100. The Living Planet Report 2020 (WWF 2020, p. 74) argued that “Nature is essential for human existence and a good quality of life, providing and sustaining the air, fresh water and soils on which humanity depends.” Over the last decades, the crucial impact that climate change has on the increasing risks in this world has become clear. Both natural and man-made disasters as such leave the world in shock and deepen the existing feelings of uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity towards the modern-day world (Juncos 2018; Corry 2014).

The notion of increasing complexity lies at the heart of the current-day resilience-thinking and replaced the previous emergency planning processes (de Coning 2016; Coaffee 2009). Resilience became relevant to understanding current-day threats and to increase the likelihood of managing risks (Chandler 2014). While until half a century ago resilience was not a big word in the public domain, it is an old word as it comes from the Latin *re-silere*: “to spring back” (Deveson 2003, p. 24). Overtime, resilience has become a fast-growing research topic and made its way into various academic disciplines. The concept appears prominent in policy discourse on topics such as climate change or food security and more recently also in relation to peace and security (e.g., Chandler 2015; de Coning 2016; Taşan-Kok and Eraydin 2013; de Weijer 2013; Chandler and Coaffee 2017; Koonings and Kruijt 2015). In relation to peacebuilding, resilience has received unprecedented attention, and as such has split the field in two: those in favor of exploring its potential both as an analytical framework and in practice, and those arguing against the use of it. This will be further discussed in the last part of this chapter. Before diving into this, the first part will highlight the origins of resilience and explain its path to the first appearance in social science. After this, the position of resilience within peacebuilding will be discussed. This will be done in twofold, first the presence of resilience within the academic debate will be analyzed, which is followed by the use of resilience in practice. In this latter part, the controversy that comes with applying resilience in practice is clearly shown, which will be further described in the last part of this entry.

Origins and Operationalization of Resilience

While resilience is used widely nowadays, the contemporary usage of resilience dates back almost five decades and was introduced by Crawford Stanley Holling in 1973. Holling (1973) wrote an influential essay, challenging the

existing mathematical, or mathematical-ecological way of resilience-thinking, where resilience is understood as an abstract variable. Resilience is here the time (t) it takes a system to return to “equilibrium” after a disturbance, whereby equilibrium is understood as the equivalent to long-term persistence (Walker and Cooper 2011, p. 145). Holling (1973, p. 2) argued the focus on returning to equilibrium by stating that “an equilibrium centered view is essentially static and provides little insight into the transient behavior of systems that are not near equilibrium.” Instead, Holling (1973, p. 14) placed the focus on the sustainability of complex adaptive systems within ecology and defined the concept as the “persistence of systems and of their ability to absorb change and disturbance and still maintain the same relationships between populations or state variables.” Consequently, Holling paved the way for contemporary resilience-thinking to develop and broaden, while remaining rooted in studies of complex adaptive systems (Walker and Cooper 2011; Folke et al. 2010; Taşan-Kok and Eraydin 2013). Various other ecologists took the notion of resilience and developed separate understandings. Over the course of the last four decades, numerous definitions of resilience have been presented. Despite this, the definition presented by the ecologists Walker et al. (2004) is among the most often and most widely used definition, which argues that resilience is:

the capacity of a system to absorb disturbance and reorganize while undergoing change so as to still retain essentially the same function, structure, identity, and feedbacks (p. 4).

Over time, it became obvious to scholars that researching the resilience of ecological systems could not be done without focusing on the influence of individuals and social groups on ecological systems and vice versa (Adger 2000; Folke et al. 2010; Holling 1999). As a result, the social resilience-perspective first emerged at the beginning of the twenty-first century (de Weijer 2013). Socio-ecological resilience became an integrated way of understanding in what way people and nature depend on each other, it hence observes “people and nature as interdependent systems”

(Folke et al. 2010, p. 21). Resilience-thinking provides the opportunity to incorporate different components within a single system, components that would previously be studied separately. As Ami Carpenter (2014, p. 66) argues: “Simply put, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.”

As a result of this change in understanding, two different conceptualizations of resilience became clear. Within ecological system resilience “bouncing back after a disaster” is the preferred definition of resilience. This means the focus is not placed on preventing risks, threats, or problems from happening, but on quickly recognizing problems and addressing these in an adequate manner with minimum disruption (Chandler and Coaffee 2017, pp. 4–5; de Weijer 2013). Over time, the focus of resilience definition shifted to the first part of the definition, the “capacity of a system” or “self-regulation,” therewith emphasizing the dynamic identity of resilience. Here, bouncing back or returning to equilibrium is not key, but rather growth and development, or “bouncing forward” (de Weijer 2013; Rodin 2015; Manyena et al. 2011). David Chandler and Jon Coaffee (2017, p. 5) refer to this distinction as the first- and second-generation resilience-thinking, or the shift from an “homeostatic approach” to an “auto-poietic approach.” Where the homeostatic approach refers to maintaining essentially the same function or a state of equilibrium, the auto-poietic approach sees resilience as transformation, aspiring to generate new and innovative ways of thinking and organizing. Growth and development are hence the aim, which can be reached through an increased awareness of interconnections and processes (Chandler and Coaffee 2017, p. 6). In other words, resilience is seen as a process of ongoing self-transformation, and the focus on transformative capacity is hence important (e.g., Juncos 2018; Chandler 2017; Carpenter 2014; Koonings and Kruijt 2015; Chandler and Coaffee 2017).

David Chandler and Jon Coaffee (2017, p. 6) discern a third range of resilience approaches, which applies an emphasis on the rethinking of contextual possibilities to be better prepared for future risks. This notion has led to a shift towards resilience-thinking, and consequently organizing and governing on the basis of resilience has

become normalized (e.g., Taşan-Kok and Eraydin 2013; Davoudi 2012; Chandler 2014; Joseph 2013; Juncos and Joseph 2020). The use of resilience within governing approaches has, however, received wide critique, which will be discussed further below.

Operationalizing Resilience

As discussed above, there are various approaches for conceptualizing resilience, but all of these are rooted in the notion of complex adaptive systems. This implies that all resilience conceptualizations focus on systems that are first of all complex, meaning they consists of many working components that are all interrelated in some way. Secondly, these systems are all considered “adaptive”, which implies that they are subject to constant change; within ecosystems species evolve, and social systems change due to human behavior.

Because resilience has been applied to a wider field, it has become of high importance to define what Meerow and Newell (2016, p. 2) refer to as the “five Ws of resilience”: resilience for whom, what, when, where, and why. Despite certain similarities in resilience definitions, posing these five questions is of significant importance to the operationalization of resilience. Notwithstanding, assessing individual resilience to natural hazards differs in conceptualization from implementing community resilience to gang-violence. Despite these differences, a number of similar characteristics of social resilience come forward in the academic literature, which lead to the operationalization of the concept. These concepts are (1) (adaptive) capacity, (2) local agency, (3) collective action, (4) social capital, and (5) social cohesion and will be discussed here below.

Adaptive capacity is central to any conceptualization of a resilient system (e.g., Chandler 2012, 2017; Carpenter 2014; de Coning 2018; Taşan-Kok and Eraydin 2013; Juncos and Joseph 2020; Folke et al. 2010; Holling 1973). Over the last decade, conceptualizations of social resilience refer to adaptive capacity in the broadest sense; not just to return to equilibrium or “bounce back,” but to transform to a better condition (Harris et al. 2017; Menkhaus 2013). In other words: a form of learning is imbedded in order to “bounce back

better” or to “bounce forward.” Within the notion of capacity, an emphasis has been placed on “human” capacity, which comes forward in various forms, among others as capacity to learn, or as the capacity to transform after a(n external) shock. The notion of social resilience as adaptive capacity is hence rooted in the debate on *human agency* (e.g., Juncos and Joseph 2020; Shah et al. 2020, p. 15), as it focuses on the *agency* that individuals and communities possess to enhance their capacities to “bounce back better.”

According to Berkes and Ross (2013, p. 6), a community’s resilience is “understood as the capacity of its social system to come together to work toward a communal objective.” To “come together and work” is deemed of high importance in order to increase the resilience of a community. A community should here be understood in the broadest sense; a community of diverse (not homogenous) people – who are connected through their space of living, or elsewhere. According to Adger (2003, p. 388), capacities to adapt “are bound up in their ability to act collectively.” *Collective action* is therefore deemed an essential feature of resilience (Chaskin 2008; Magis 2010; Taşan-Kok and Eraydin 2013). As Arana and Wittek (2016, p. 764) argue: “Collective action is a community resource crucial to ensure the resilience of communities.” While collective action is not always referred to as such, and terms like “capacity for self-organization” (de Coning 2016; Chandler 2015) or “collective agency” (Otsuki et al. 2018) are used, there is a common notion that people have to work together in order to become more resilient as a social group, like a community.

Collective action and *social capital* are strongly related, and the majority of the academics consider social capital to be a key feature of resilience (Uekusa 2017; Aldrich 2012; Aldrich and Meyer 2015; Tierney 2014). An important reason for this is that social capital networks in the community provide access to various crucial resources in disaster situations, as aid, financial resources, or emotional and psychological support (Elliott et al. 2010; Aldrich and Meyer 2015). Social capital should hence be understood as instrumental concept, something that – along the lines of the social engineering approach – can be constructed (Portes

1998), and as Bourdieu (1985, p. 249) asserts “the profits which accrue from membership in a group are the basis of the solidarity which makes them possible.” Bourdieu goes on to affirming the negative possible outcomes of social capital, as group exclusion, or restriction on individual freedoms. Putnam’s (1995) definition of social capital focuses, however, on the more positive consequence of social capital, claiming that when people within a community possess a lot of social capital, this indicates there are “norms and social trust that facilitates coordination and cooperation for mutual good” (p. 67). This notion strongly links to the understanding of *social cohesion*. Already in 1893, Durkheim referred to the understanding of social cohesion as a “glue” that holds the society together through mutual trust and reciprocity (Durkheim 1893). A study by Patel and Gleason (2018, pp. 165–167), into the relation between social cohesion and resilience, moreover revealed that higher levels of social cohesion indicate higher levels of community resilience.

In order to analyze, or build, resilience of a community, it is therefore important to incorporate these components, as these have previously been studied in isolation (Carpenter 2014, p. 66). It is important to note, however, that these working components might change per resilience context and are hence, like resilience itself, not fully static. While various research has proven that enhancing social cohesion or instigating collective action are important in building social resilience, in practice, it becomes clear that decision makers do not often incorporate these findings into resilience-programming. Before analyzing the translation from resilience to practice, it is, however, important to focus on the theoretical debate that resilience instigates in relation to peacebuilding.

Theoretical Notions of Resilience in Peacebuilding

In light of the increasing geopolitical uncertainty, resilience-thinking seems to offer new opportunities to the risk management of (international) conflicts (Chandler 2014; Juncos 2018; de Coning 2018; Juncos and Joseph 2020). There is a

growing belief that it has become impossible to predict when the next crisis takes place or which countries, or areas, are at highest risk (Juncos 2018, p. 559). As Garschagen (2013, p. 31) argues, resilience has become the “management paradigm,” as it promotes an integrated approach to managing risks. In this understanding, societies form complex adaptive systems in which resilience is built. This begs for an integrated approach that can expose the “patterns of interconnections” and that aims to understand how different elements interact and form a system (Cilliers 1998; de Coning 2018). System thinking does, however, not always link to resilience: in a 2006 study by the Berghof Foundation, the authors argue in favor of the adoption of a “systemic conflict transformation,” in order to deal with the increasing complex and dynamic conflicts (Wils et al. 2006). Translating this systemic approach to practice, has the potential to transform the field of peacebuilding, as project-driven, one-off interventions no longer suffice to tackle the root causes of conflicts (Carpenter 2014, p. 66; Juncos and Joseph 2020, p. 259). In line with this, the European Union Global Strategy (EUGS 2016, p. 29) also reads that “we will pursue a multi-level approach to conflicts acting at the local, national, regional and global levels; a multi-lateral approach engaging all players present in a conflict and necessary for its resolution.” Prior to this understanding, however, the dominant liberal peace paradigm had to make way for peacebuilding to transform and adapt to more of these complex and dynamic conflict situations.

The Transformation of Peacebuilding

The adoption of the 1992 UN “Agenda for Peace” (Boutros-Ghali 1992) formalized the widespread notion that in order to achieve positive peace, states had to adopt and maintain a multiparty democracy, free-market economy, individual human rights, and rule of law (de Coning 2018, p. 302). Post-conflict societies were hence engineered through the export of “liberal frameworks of ‘good governance’, democratic elections, human rights, the rule of law and market relations” (Chandler 2017, p. 22). Over time, however, with peacebuilding failures as Rwanda

or Bosnia-Herzegovina, it had become clear that this liberal peace paradigm, on which the majority of the interventions were based, proved to be incapable of dealing with the complexities of present-day conflicts. As a result, peacebuilding finds itself on unprecedented territories. There is a clear wish to include voices from the ground, as there is a wide recognition of the inability to impose external top-down programs or institutions. Consequently, there is a shift towards working with existing strengths and capabilities, to focus on creating a form of peace that is accepted by the local society and is sustainable (e.g., UN 2015; Chandler 2017; Richmond 2015; Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013). As a result, various new approaches to peacebuilding appeared, of which the most prominent ones will be presented here.

System thinking lays at the basis of various recent or emerging approaches in peacebuilding, such as – but not limited to – sustaining peace (UN 2015; UN and WB 2018), adaptive peace (de Coning 2018), notions of everyday peace (Mac Ginty 2014; Firchow 2018), or the victim-centered approach (Brewer et al. 2019). First of all, Cedric de Coning (2018) introduced the concept of adaptive peacebuilding. This approach is based on complexity theory, which offers insights about complex social systems and its social processes relevant to peacebuilding activities. Adaptive peacebuilding aims to help societies develop resilience, to cope with and adapt to various forms of change as it “suggests using a particular form of structured engagement that helps to generate institutional learning and stimulates and facilitates adaptation” (de Coning 2018, p. 306). It is hereby important that the local communities are involved in all aspects of the peacebuilding process as peace has to emerge from within (de Coning 2018, p. 307). In other words, external wisdom will not offer aid if this is not internalized.

Another approach to peacebuilding is the focus on constructing “everyday peace,” as conceptualized by Roger Mac Ginty in 2014. Everyday peace refers to the “routinized practices used by individuals and collectives as they navigate their way through life in a deeply divided society” (Mac Ginty 2014, p. 549). It focuses among others on local coping mechanisms, as avoidance of

ethnically tensed situations. Everyday citizens are therefore crucial in designing a program that can construct a lasting, sustainable peace, instead of including a through an INGO artificially constructed civil society which is often distanced from the needs on the ground (Firchow 2018, p. 35). Following this line of thought, a global project to conceptualize everyday peace has been realized through the creation of Everyday Peace Indicators (EPI) – where bottom-up research is done to understand the local understandings of peace (Mac Ginty and Firchow 2016; Firchow and Mac Ginty 2017). Through this research, it has become clear that peace and peacebuilding mean different things to different people, and that, comparable to “adaptive peacebuilding,” it is crucial to understand these differences. Similar, though from a different perspective, is the victim-centered approach proposed by Brewer et al. (2019). After conducting extensive research, the authors argue that victims should be seen as central to any conflict transformation attempts (Brewer et al. 2019, p. 9). While victims are often the center of any peace discourse, they hardly ever get the chance to speak for themselves, which places victims in a dangerous ambiguous position. In line with the EPI projects, a victim-centered approach claims it is of great importance to focus on the reconstruction of everyday life, which Brewer et al. (2019, p. 15) refer to as “everyday life is the realm in which ordinary, taken-for-granted, habitual social life is performed, experienced and understood as ordinary, taken-for-granted and habitual.” After the “brutalization” of everyday life in the form of conflict, it is only possible to restore everyday life through the inclusion of victims.

While these different visions do not place the focus on resilience per se, in all these approaches, resilience-thinking is central. David Chandler (2017, pp. 165–191) describes this as the “rise of resilience” in intervention approaches. In all these different approaches, peace practices aim to incorporate local voices into the process, to build forth on existing local understandings of peace, and on local strengths and capacities. Resilience is central here, as it offers new perspectives, because it emphasizes the importance of existing capacities,

capabilities, and practices to strengthen a society from within (Juncos 2018, p. 562; Chandler 2015, p. 13; Juncos and Joseph 2020).

Resilience and Peacebuilding, Definitions?

With the growth of literature on resilience-thinking within peacebuilding studies and practices, different definitions appeared as well. David Chandler, for example, defined resilience broadly as the “capacity to positively or successfully adapt to external problems or threats” (Chandler 2012, 2017) and later added that the key point of resilience within peacebuilding practices is that the focus lays on “working with and upon the capacities, capabilities, processes, and practices already ‘to hand’ rather than the external provision of policies or program” (Chandler 2015, p. 28). This indicates that a community never becomes resilient when the actors are viewed as passive, without agency; change can only happen when they are conceived as having agency and being capable of self-transformation. While David Chandler does not refer directly to peace, or violence in his definition, Koonings and Kruijt (2015, p. 2) do: “resilience means that communities, networks, grassroots organizations, and public and non-governmental support structures mobilize to create alternative, non-violent spaces and practices in cities.”

Ami Carpenter (2014, p. 66) on the other hand argues that “community resilience to sectarian violence uses the lens of systems’ resilience – the ability of social systems to cope, adapt, and reorganize in response to dramatic challenges.” Following this definition, she presents an analytical framework of resilience (Carpenter 2014, p. 76), which is an interesting operationalization of community resilience to violence, or of what a community that is resilient to violent would look like. In her framework, she outlined a number of characteristics that allowed Iraqi communities to be resilient to sectarian violence: economic development, information and communication resources (IRC), social capital, and community competence. She distinguishes between resilience resources as regime characteristics, and community competence as resilience management. Community competence in this sense means

adaptation (the actual response to stressors) and is the product of the resilience resources. The community competence is hence depended on the regime resources.

While there are hence multiple ideas of what resilient societies looks like, a clear conceptualization of resilience – and most importantly, the effect on the ground – remains mostly unidentified.

Resilience in Practice

Despite the absence of a unified translation of resilience into practice, over the last decades, various attempts have been made. In the majority of the programming efforts that focus on building resilience, the reduction of risk or hazards, or risk-mitigation is central (e.g., Juncos 2018; de Weijer 2013; Mitchell and Harris 2012; Paton and Johnston 2017). Before explaining resilience practices in peacebuilding, it is therefore important to understand the relation between disaster risk reduction (DRR) and the rise of resilience. Within developmental work, the notion that risk management is crucial has been around for longer, which is shown in the establishment of the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) in December 1999, following the adoption of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (DRR) by the UN General Assembly. The mandate of the UNDRR is to coordinate UN disaster risk reduction activities, in order to ensure synergy between both UN activities and regional or local activities (A/RES/56/195 2002). Interestingly enough, resilience was not linked to DRR practices until much later, but currently “becoming resilient” is part of the UNISDR’s core vision (UNDRR 2020).

While the study into and practice of DRR was not initially linked to resilience, there is currently a general understanding that by increasing the resilience and reducing vulnerabilities, the “risks of disasters” will automatically also be reduced (e.g., Amaratunga et al. 2020; Tierney 2014; Alexander 2013; Uekusa 2017). The resilience discourse shed new light on the research of disaster reduction, resulting in a more balanced

research focus between disaster response, mitigation, and prevention (Uekusa 2017, p. 3). The 2015 Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 replaced the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015, which mentioned resilience in relation to DRR for the first time (UNDRR 2015). The Sendai Framework emphasized resilience and applied a broader focus of resilience, not focusing solely on natural hazards but including man-made hazards. As a result, the main objective includes the aim to “strengthen resilience” (UNDRR 2015).

While man-made hazards are referred to in the Sendai Framework, these imply industrial or technological hazards, and no threats of violence or conflict. In the final text, no references to conflict or violence sustained, as this was deemed “too political” (Walch 2015; Stein and Walch 2017, p. 3). The Sendai Framework does highlight issues that are parallel to the UN report “the Challenge of Sustaining Peace,” which was published in the same year (UN 2015). On top of that, the Framework references three main sets of factors: socioeconomic factors, politico-institutional factors, and environmental factors (UNDRR 2015). And, as Stein and Walch (2017, p. 7) argue, these factors are “parallel to those that would need to be addressed in a prevention or sustaining peace agenda.” It is understood that tackling these specific factors will reduce the risks of conflict and violence. There is thus a renewed focus on prevention articulated by the UN, among others through the Sendai Framework for Action, the Sustaining Peace Agenda and in the Sustainable Development Goals (UNDRR 2015; UN 2015; UNSDG 2019).

Following this line of arguing, conflict and violence are perceived as a risk to creating resilient communities, or to reduce or threaten the existing resilience to disasters. It is moreover apparent that resilience and DRR are often used interchangeable in the policy discourse, and while the aim is to follow an integrated approach to preventing risks – including conflict – in reality, the focus lies mainly on reducing the risks of, or building resilience to, natural hazards (e.g., Peters 2017; Walch 2010; Koliou et al. 2018; Zhou et al. 2009). It is interesting to observe that while this

discussion at first sight appears similar to the resilience discussions in peacebuilding paradigms, there is a significant difference: DRR or DRR frameworks are not mentioned in the peace and resilience discourse. Resilience in relation to peace is moreover to a great extent absent in the resilience frameworks and roadmaps presented by the main protagonists of international development (see, for example: the TANGO resilience framework; Wayfinder; USAID framework; CoBRA). Another interesting note: the over 400-pages Routledge Handbook of International Resilience edited by Chandler and Coaffee (2017) does not discuss resilience in direct relation to the creation of peace, nor in the practice of sustaining peace. Instead, conflict is often not understood as something that can be solved through resilience building but as something that undermines existing resilience. In other words: conflict stressors, or the risk of conflict, should be eliminated through resilience building, in order to keep resilience “high” (Carnwath 2017; Peters 2017).

Within peacebuilding practices, however, the resilience vision is more in line with the existing peacebuilding literature on, for example, sustainable peace. A study presented by USIP argues that “strengthening a society’s capacity to overcome violent shock and communal stressors could play a key role in preventing conflict and achieving a more sustainable postconflict recovery” (van Metre and Calder 2015, p. 5). Along these same lines, Interpeace introduced “resilience for peace” in 2016, therewith going against earlier notions of “resilience in relation to conflict.” By doing so, they placed a positive focus on the existing capacities for peace, the capacities from “ordinary” people to contribute to durable peace. To offer analytical insights into the functioning of resilience for peace, Interpeace launched the “Framework for Assessing Resilience” (FAR) program between 2014 and 2016, which was designed as an inclusive and participatory process, with a strong emphasis on local perspectives, ownership, and leadership. According to Interpeace, the Resilience for Peace Framework “can be approached both as a *lens* – or a way of seeing, analysing and understanding peace and conflict in

any society – and as a *vehicle* which serves as an operational guide in programming” (Interpeace 2016, p. 7). The framework is currently one of the few, if not the only, framework that observes peace and conflict through resilience lens in practice. In contrary to the frameworks presented earlier, this framework specifically aims at understanding how resilience interacts with durable peace. It does not offer a scale or measurements for ranking countries’ resilience but should be understood as a guiding framework, and it “offers a method for the systematic and replicable analysis of resilience using participatory mixed methods research approaches” (Interpeace 2016, p. 14). Similar to other conceptualizations of resilience, it emphasizes concepts as absorption, adaptation, and transformation capacities on different levels: from individual to society. It moreover makes a difference between positive and negative manifestations of resilience. Negative manifestations of resilience, for example, a resilient dictatorship or a violent youth gangs with high levels of resilience (Davis 2012, p. 67), may “foster conflict and resilience to conflict may in turn be undermined” (Interpeace 2016, p. 17).

Another interesting project, which ran throughout 2018, is the Resilient Peace network. The network brings together leading experts on resilience and peace, with the aim to achieve and exceed the aims of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 16 in West Africa. The SDG 16 implies to “Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels” (UNSDG 2019). This is done through a series of three workshops. While not directly focusing on the operationalization or definition of “resilient peace,” it “engaged with the challenges of building peace in West African states in the context of the withdrawal of Western actors and the promotion of resilience approaches in peacebuilding” (Resilient peace 2018). Unfortunately, a conceptualized understanding of resilient peace has not been presented. The project is closed, the website no longer updated, consequently only the anticipated outputs are presented. The article “Resilience in peacebuilding: Contesting uncertainty,

ambiguity, and complexity,” authored by Ana Juncos (2018) and used throughout this chapter, seems to be the only journal output so far.

While the literature on resilience and peace is growing quickly and it continues to play an enormous role in various conflict and peace programming, there is hence no agreement on how to define or conceptualize resilience in relation to peace. As Ken Menkhaus (2013) states in his speech at the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform:

This [defining resilience] is simply not possible. Moreover, it is not clear that it is even a problem to be solved. Instead, it may be an opportunity. That is to say, the different definitions and approaches to resilience in different disciplines are loaded with opportunities to borrow and adapt, in ways that can enrich our use of the term when applied to peacebuilding work.

While Menkhaus argues in favor of “adapting” resilience to peacebuilding work, there is currently no clear understanding of how to translate resilience practices to peace practices. And, at the same time, there is an increasing amount of critique on the “use of resilience” within peacebuilding, which will be explained in the following section.

The Resilience Controversy

While most scholars agree there is a necessity to remove the implementation of the external blueprint by the intervener, resilience is not by everyone accepted as the solution. David Chandler (2015, p. 48), for example, argues: “Rather than enlarging our understanding of problems and their solutions, the removal of the ‘big picture’, universalist meta-narratives, and critical sociological understandings could be seen as constructing a new and much more problematic paradigm.” This critique is crucial and also applies to other new peace paradigms, whereby the focus on the “local” has taken over the larger picture. Resilience on the other hand offers the capacity to, using the words of Ami Carpenter (2014, p. 66), focus on “the sum of its parts.” It hence creates the possibility to incorporate a wider view of the system, which implies that while building resilience on the very local level is important, creating a more resilient system can only be done when

other social levels are included as well. This links to the notion of trans-scalar peace (Millar 2019) – where the agency of the local should not be over-estimated, in other words: the power dynamics within the interactions of the local, regional, national, or global are crucial to creating peace. Creating peace through the resilience lens allows to analyze different fractions, levels, and understandings of a peace process at once, and to assure that no external conceptualization of peace gets lost in the wider peace process.

Another crucial critique that is shared widely is that the accountability of the peace process shifts by building forth on existing local capacities and capabilities (e.g., Juncos and Joseph 2020; Chandler and Reid 2016; Harris et al. 2017; Vilcan 2017; Joseph 2013, 2018; Koonings and Kruijt 2015; Bargués-Pedreny and Martin de Almagro 2020). By adopting an actor-centered approach, the focus has increasingly been placed on local actors which brought two (largely intertwined) lines of critiques to light: the use of resilience projects as a disguise for neoliberal practices and the “responsibilization” of victims. Regarding the latter, as a result of the actor-centered approach, the focus is often placed on the “capacity of affected communities to recover with little or no external assistance” (Manyena 2006, p. 433). The responsibility of creating “resilience” is thus placed more and more upon the victims – where (neoliberal) elites and authorities encourage victims to take ownership of the risks instead (Evans and Reid 2014; Lentzos and Rose 2009; Uekusa 2017). Vilcan (2017, p. 2) refers to this as the ongoing “responsibilization” of victims. An interesting example is put forward by the UK’s Cabinet’s Office, as the UK Strategic National Framework on Community Resilience read that the Government commits to “reduce the barriers which prevent people from being able to help themselves and to become more resilient to shocks” (Cabinet Office 2011, p. 3). Here it becomes clear that responsibility of the government to assist and support their citizens while facing adversities is shifting to the locals themselves.

Here the second part of the critique comes forward, whereby the use of the term resilience

within international projects or within government practices is understood as a disguise of the neoliberal agenda (e.g., Harris et al. 2017; Koonings and Kruijt 2015; Joseph 2013, 2018; Kastner 2020; Vilcan 2017). Neoliberalism here extends the notion of the free market and liberal democracy and focuses on the principle of competition, whereby the idea is normalized that individuals are ultimately responsible for managing their own risks and adversities (Mavelli 2019, p. 225; Joseph 2013). In doing so, there is an added danger that using resilience as a governing strategy tends to ignore social vulnerability or obscures preexisting social injustices (Uekusa 2017; Chandler and Reid 2016; Grove 2013). This pattern is, however, also visible within international interventions. Jonathan Joseph (2013, p. 51) even goes so far as to argue that the “resilience discourse of the UNDP, World Bank and others is a tool in a bigger game that applies governmentality to states in order to get them to reform their institutions in the interests of global capital.” A recent study by Bargués-Pedreny and Martin de Almagro (2020) also indicates a similar pattern within a European Union and United Nations sponsored project on gender equality in Liberia. While the project is executed by local actors, Bargués-Pedreny and Martin de Almagro (2020, p. 17) argue it builds forth on the assumption that “there are harmful values and social practices that Liberians cannot change alone, without external support.” Notwithstanding, within resilience interventions that fall into neoliberalism, more long-term systematic approaches to dealing with structural injustice or the root causes of conflict are often left aside (Uekusa 2017; Koonings and Kruijt 2015; Juncos and Joseph 2020; Bargués-Pedreny and Martin de Almagro 2020).

Despite the controversy over the applicability of resilience into practice, there appears to be general agreement that we should not “throw out the baby with the bathwater.” In other words, while it might be necessary to restructure current resilience practices, it is crucial to not deny the potential positive contributions that resilience-thinking offers to peacebuilding, both on a theoretical level and in practice (e.g., Grove 2018;

Kastner 2020; Koonings and Kruijt 2015; Juncos and Joseph 2020; Menkhaus 2013; de Coning 2018). The most commonly shared advantages are summed up by Ana Juncos and Jonathan Joseph, who argue that resilience-thinking offers: “(1) a focus on complexity; (2) a system approach; (3) a shift toward local capacities; and (4) an emphasis on human agency” (2019, p. 2). This is in line with the operationalization of resilience as explained above. Moreover, in contrary to other approaches present in the field of peacebuilding, this manner of resilience-thinking offers the potential to incorporate these four features into one approach, instead of merely focusing on one.

Conclusion

The notion of increasing complexity lies at the heart of the current-day resilience-thinking and replaces the previous emergency planning processes (de Coning 2016; Coaffee 2009). Resilience became seen as relevant to understanding current-day threats and to increase the likelihood of managing risks (Chandler 2014). While resilience stems from an old Latin word, its current use is rooted in the study of complex adaptive systems. More specifically, the contemporary usage of resilience dates back almost five decades and was introduced by Crawford Stanley Holling in 1973. Over time, resilience has also made its way to the social sciences, and while various conceptualizations of social resilience exist, the following five factors are most common: (1) (adaptive) capacity, (2) local agency, (3) collective action, (4) social capital, and (5) social cohesion.

Notwithstanding, resilience has become a fast-growing research topic within various academic disciplines, and more recently, the concept appears prominent in policy discourse, also in relation to peace and conflict. Over the last two decades, peacebuilding has seen significant transformations, whereby the focus has shifted from liberal, top-down interventions to the inclusion of local voices, in a variety of manners. The rise of resilience fit this perfectly, and as a result, resilience has also gained significant terrain within peace studies and practices. At the same time,

the critique towards the use of resilience within peace efforts is also growing. The most common critique focuses on the shift of accountability within resilience-based projects. It is argued that due to the adopting of an actor-centered (or bottom-up) approach, there is an increasing danger for embedded neoliberalism within the projects. On top of that, there is the notion that the “responsibilization of victims” does more harm than good within resilience practices. Despite this, there is a vast number of authors that argues in favor of exploring the opportunities that resilience brings to the field of peacebuilding.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Conflicts and Natural Disasters](#)
- ▶ [Emancipatory Peace](#)
- ▶ [Insights from Complexity Theory for Peace and Conflict Studies](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding and Postcolonial Subject](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding: Utopia and Reality](#)

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Responsibility

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- ▶ [R2P and Prevention](#)

Restorative Justice

- ▶ [Search for Peace, the](#)

Restraints on War

- ▶ [Humanitarian Disarmament and the Era of Disarmament Without Disarmament](#)

Results

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Revolution, Violence, and the Pursuit of Peace

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Definition

This entry understands revolution as emancipation from an oppressive constellation of power or from systemic forms of exploitation and subordination, achieved through mass mobilization. This way, this research hopes to update Skocpol's structural definition of revolutions (Skocpol 1979) for the twenty-first century. Contemporary scholarship has highlighted the limitations of foregrounding the state and class as central categories of analysis. While the modern state possesses a large arsenal of technologies and strategies to oppress resistance, the question how to achieve emancipation requires identification of networked forms of power that link state actors to transnational and domestic forces (Belmonte and Cerny 2021). Hence, revolutionaries' capacity to upend sociopolitical oppression and economic marginalization depends on their understanding of the strengths and vulnerabilities of power constellations that extend beyond and below the state. Indeed, if revolutions keep being conceptualized in state-centric terms, they are likely to remain trapped in the pattern of replacing one form of oppression with another. In a similar vein, exploitation and subordination need to be understood intersectionally, linking class, race, gender, sexuality, ethnicity and other identity markers (Crenshaw 1993) in order to fully grasp the emancipatory potential of revolutions. Incomplete revolutions might tackle one dimension of an intersectional structure of



domination or emancipate society from one oppressive heterarchy, while leaving others intact. A great revolution in the twenty-first century, by contrast, would need to uproot the structures that perpetuate different interlinked dimensions of exploitation, subordination, and oppression. By including the concept of emancipation, this definition aims to refocus structural approaches towards Arendt's notion that freedom is the main pursuit of revolutions (Arendt, [1963] 1990). The latter makes revolutions relevant for critical peace and conflict studies.

Keywords

Revolution · Oppression · Heterarchy · Violence

Introduction

Until the late twentieth century, revolutions were mired in violence through a multitude of mechanism, prompting prominent social scientists (e.g., Charles Tilly, Ted Gurr, Anthony Giddens) to define revolutions as intrinsically violent phenomena. Yet, the relationship between revolutions and violence is complex and subject to changes at the microlevel of social organization as well as in their international environment. Regarding revolutions as inherently violent thus serves conservative political agendas more than our understanding of the phenomenon itself: If indifference and the “fear of one man” fail to inspire voluntary servitude (de La Boetie, [1552/1553]2015), fear of destruction of a country by the “evils of revolution” (Burke, [1790] 2008) might help perpetuate oppressive forms of rule. Hence, this chapter scrutinizes the complex relationship between revolutions and violence before turning to recent attempts at nonviolent revolutions and their anti-systemic potential. By examining the emancipatory ethics of revolutions, this research tries to highlight why revolutions remain indispensable for our understanding of progress and emancipatory forms of peace, despite their bloody trails on the paths of history.

The first part of this chapter investigates various links between revolutions and violence. By distinguishing between different types of violence

and their role in the revolutionary process, this analysis aims to develop a clearer understanding of the mechanisms that perpetuate revolutionary violence. Moreover, the first section connects different forms of violence to revolutionary ethics in order to explain why even violent forms of revolution may constitute a pursuit of freedom and emancipation. The second part of the chapter investigates how contemporary nonviolent attempts at revolution have fared in their opposition to oppression, exploitation, and subordination. It also investigates the links between violence and nonviolence, which are often neglected in pacifist scholarship. Drawing heavily on the experiences of revolutionaries in the Arab Uprisings, this part questions whether revolutionary agency that wants to diverge from the well-trodden path of liberal catching-up can chart a “new beginning” with the instruments of nonviolence.

Revolutions and Violence

Diagnosing a growing interrelatedness of war and revolution, Hannah Arendt stated in 1963 that revolutions were “not even conceivable outside of the domain of war” (Arendt 1990 [1963], 18). Indeed, the links between revolutions and violence were historically well established: Prior to revolutionary insurrections, involvement in interstate wars might have weakened ruling regimes and thus emboldened revolutionary movements (Halliday 1999; Skocpol 1979). Guerrilla wars and armed insurrections often enabled revolutionary movements to seize power. Once in power, violence continued through wars waged by counterrevolutionary forces against revolutionary regimes, but also through revolutionary vanguards' use of large-scale violence against dissenters in their own population (Mayer 2000). How can this large array of links between violence and revolutions be reconciled with Arendt's assumption that revolution is the pursuit of freedom? This chapter argues that a fuller understanding of the relationship between revolutionary movements, violence, and peace can only be achieved through analysis of the underlying

ideology, political strategy, and ethics of revolutionary movements.

Historically, revolutions have often been facilitated by interstate wars that exposed the weakness or incompetence of a ruling regime. Poorly conducted wars, for instance, further eroded the legitimacy of the Russian monarchy and fueled public support for revolutionary movements in 1905 and 1917. Beyond impacting political authority, externally imposed wars can also shift the military balance of forces between an existing regime and a revolutionary movement. An example for this was the Japanese invasion of Manchuria, which militarily weakened the ruling Kuomintang government and thus enabled the communist movement to win its guerrilla war in 1949. Withdrawal from a war might equally embolden revolutionary movements. The American withdrawal from Vietnam, for instance, was seen as a world systemic opening and thus sparked a cascade of revolutions between 1974 and 1980 (Halliday 1999, 178/179). In this first category of links, revolutionary movements might benefit from war but are not the aggressors. Indeed, war-torn populations might at times consider revolutionary movements as an alternative to war-prone regimes. Yet, such wars have also limited effects on revolutionary dynamics. Effective challenges to an established political regime result from interlinked socioeconomic, fiscal, and political crises, in which interstate wars are only one contributing factor (Skocpol 1979). Similarly, revolutionary movements do not emerge in response to such wars, but from a complex conjunctural crisis (Mayer 2000; Halliday 1999).

If war-weary masses had hoped for revolutionary movements to end wars and establish stability though, they were often disappointed. Not only did revolutionary movements until the late twentieth century usually chart their path to power by way of armed insurrection or guerrilla war. Violence tended to continue between revolutionary and counter-revolutionary forces even after revolutionary movements seized power: Internally, revolutionary leaders tended to use purges and terror to solidify their hold on power, while counter-revolutionary forces have often waged wars to defeat revolutionary governments and restore previous regimes.

Of course, wars waged by counter-revolutionary forces against revolutionary governments demonstrate the violence of the former, not the ethics of the latter. However, such wars might curtail the scope of emancipatory possibilities in revolutions and thereby indirectly shape revolutionaries' ethics of violence. The Haitian Revolution illustrates this trap set by counter-revolutionary forces. As a previously unthinkable challenge to established political hierarchies (Trouillot 2009), the successful slave revolution in Haiti faced a multitude of external threats. Haiti's revolutionary government was acutely aware that its people's freedom remained under constant threat. Given the importance of slavery in the construction of capitalism and imperialism (Williams 2021 [1944]), slaveholding powers had a strong interest in crushing the dangerous precedent that the Haitian slave revolution set. Constant military mobilization and permanent debt bondage turned out to be the price of this newly achieved freedom. In order to be able to finance such commitments, the revolutionary government under Touissant Louverture had to reactivate and militarize the hated plantation system and force Haitian workers back into it (Shilliam 2008). Hence, political emancipation may require economic subordination.

Yet as Rosa Luxemburg observed "... the danger begins when [revolutionaries] make a virtue of necessity and want to freeze into a complete theoretical system all the tactics forced upon them by these fatal circumstances" (Waters 1970). Revolutionary terror, for instance, has often been the product of three factors that are spurred on by perceived threats to the survival of the revolution (Mayer 2000, 96/97): the inexperience of new leaders in dealing with sharp political, social, and cultural discord; an ideological imperative to destroy the *ancient regime* and other counter-revolutionary forces; as well as a paranoid mindset that sees conspiracy everywhere. Given counter-revolutionary forces' compulsion to intervene in revolutionary processes, the line between paranoia and real threat appears blurred in the liminality of the revolutionary process. Here, the violence of foundation (to establish a new political and social order) faces off against the violence of conservation (Mayer 2000, 76).

For all the devastation that revolutionary violence has caused in history, its use needs to be understood in relation to its cause. While feudalism and other forms of authoritarian rule may promise stability, they are the embodiment of structural violence (Galtung 1978). Revolution, by contrast, strives for the creation of a better world in which an emancipatory peace would follow the violent elimination of an *ancient regime*. Operating on the assumption that society can be transformed, revolution aims to lay bare the injustice, exploitation, and violence of the ruling regime, and replace it with a new social order (Hewlett 2016). This novelty comes at a price, but so does subservience to an unjust regime (Hegel [1837] 2009).

Problematically, once ideologically justified, violence has often enabled the hijacking of revolutions by ruthless leaders. Since ideology is molded to the interests of a political leadership, the defense of ideology might become indistinguishable from the defense of revolutionary vanguards. Excessive violence, such as used in Mao's Cultural Revolution, may be publicly justified as defeating the enemies of the revolution even if it only serves to preserve the power of a dictator. At this point, a revolution would have strayed so far from striving for freedom that it may have crossed the line into counterrevolution.

Nonviolent Revolutions?

Since the peaceful mass uprisings that toppled socialist regimes in Eastern Europe in 1989, nonviolence has been considered a revolutionary tactic. There are good reasons for this change of perspective: In the 1989 revolutions, nonviolence appeared to be able to achieve emancipation from oppressive power constellations that kept the socialist regimes in Eastern Europe in place, while also avoiding the ethical pitfalls of violent revolutions. In contrast to the isolated forerunners of this trend (e.g., Mahatma Gandhi's independence movement and the Iranian Revolution of 1979), the 1989 revolutions seemed to have cut the link between direct forms of violence and revolutions not only in their initial mobilization,

but even in the subsequent revolutionary process. Initially, the Arab Uprisings might have supported this trend towards nonviolent revolutions. However, the uprisings in Libya, Syria, and Yemen soon turned into civil wars, while Egypt's and Bahrain's attempted nonviolent revolutions were quickly crushed. This section first investigates the often ignored links between violence and nonviolence in contemporary revolutions and subsequently examines the limitations of nonviolent mobilization in achieving emancipatory objectives.

Starting from a normative commitment to nonviolence as the moral backbone of social mobilization, pacifists often fail to acknowledge the links between violent and nonviolent forms of uprisings. By contrast, practitioners of nonviolent resistance in oppressive contexts often recognize armed resistance as an alternative pathway to their own struggle. They might consider the methods of armed struggle counterproductive or even deeply unethical, yet they are often acutely aware that disowning armed resistance would create a moral equivalence between the oppressor and the struggle to end oppression.

As hinted to above, earlier examples of peaceful mass uprisings descended into wars and revolutionary terror in the revolutionary process. Despite Mahatma Gandhi's historical achievement of creating a peaceful nationalist movement that ended British colonialism in India, the revolutionary moment resulted in the War of Partition between India and Pakistan. Similarly, the Iranian Revolution of 1979 started with a peaceful mass uprising that toppled the oppressive regime of Shah Reza Palavi, but the formation of the Islamic Republic of Iran under Ayatollah Khomeini became quickly mired in revolutionary terror (as well as a counterrevolutionary war waged by neighboring Iraq). Hence, in both instances, the revolutionary processes became violent, despite initial peaceful mass mobilization.

Three decades on from the Iranian Revolution, the Arab Uprisings of 2011 serve as a reminder of the interwoven nature of armed and nonviolent struggle in the initial stages of mass mobilization. Indeed, even the peaceful mass uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt were to a certain extent enabled by limited forms of violence. In Tunisia, it took

2 weeks for the local uprisings in the interior to culminate in sufficient peaceful mass mobilization to unseat dictator Ben Ali. Within this period, limited violence employed by marginalized youth was as effective in keeping the struggle against dictatorship alive as nonviolent trade union mobilization. In Egypt, the international (academic and media) focus on the peaceful organization of mass resistance at Tahrir Square blocked out the violent clashes in the adjacent locations. Yet the bloody street battles between working class youth and President Hosni Mubarak's security forces allowed the peaceful demonstrations at Tahrir Square to reach the critical mass that allowed nonviolence to claim a prominent place in the mythology of the Egyptian uprising (Ryzova 2020).

The question arising from these examples for the ethical foundations of nonviolent revolutions is: Where does the enablement of nonviolent resistance by violent forms of struggle leave nonviolence as an ethical commitment to refuse the use of violence? Another ethical challenge to nonviolent resistance can be illustrated with the example of the Syrian uprising against Bashar al-Assad. While this uprising was initially marked by peaceful mass protests, fascist forms of violence (e.g., the use of chemical weapons and cluster bombs against his population) deployed by the Syrian regime and its external backers Iran, Hezbollah and Russia forced many dissidents to take up arms (Al-Haj Saleh 2017; Daher 2019). Here, a moral dilemma for nonviolent resistance arose from the strategy of the al-Assad regime to persecute not only dissidents but their whole families. Is it ethically permissible under such circumstances to jeopardize the lives of family members, while refusing to take any responsibility for their protection? Many activists joined militias when they realized that pacifism only allowed subservience to a dictator as an alternative to jeopardizing the lives of their loved ones (Al-Haj Saleh 2017).

More important to answer the question whether nonviolent mobilization can amount to a revolutionary strategy, is analysis of the outcomes of peaceful uprisings. With regard to the Arab Uprisings, only Tunisia fulfils the criteria set out

in the definition above and qualifies as an incomplete revolution. The Tunisian uprising has emancipated the country from the oppressive power network that connected Ben Ali's inner circle to its foreign backers. Yet Ben Ali's patronage networks and unaccountable security agencies have not only survived the revolution, but have been able to manipulate the democratic process in their favor (Gallien and Werenfels 2019). A change in Tunisia's development model has been prevented by a coalition of former regime cronies, conservative political parties, and the International Financial Institutions (Hanieh 2015). As a consequence, neither structural violence nor corruption have been eradicated.

In other parts of the region, nonviolent attempts at revolution have been crushed or turned into civil wars by regional counterrevolutionary forces. Faced with excessive violence, nonviolence has shown its major shortcoming: Its dependence on a conducive international environment rendered it vulnerable to shifts in geopolitics. As soon as the "iron cage of liberalism" (Ritter 2015) collapsed and the USA withdrew its military backing of democratisation movements in the Arab region after the R2P-intervention in Libya, nonviolent mobilization could no longer leverage the moral jiu-jitsu as its strongest political weapon.

By contrast, the events of 1989 occurred in a supportive regional and international environment. It stands to reason that their success depended on their limited ambition to duplicate the modes of governance employed by their dominant neighbors. Moreover, the Soviet Union ceased its military enforcement of socialism in Eastern Europe, rendering the epicentre of the counterrevolution in a state of disintegration. The Arab Uprisings, on the other hand, encountered no sustained regional or world systemic opening. While equally not being driven by a new utopian ideology, the Arab Uprisings seemed to demand transformations of governance that could only be regarded as a threat by their neighbors. Demands for democratization, human rights safeguards, anti-corruption, and accountability had the potential to expose their neighboring authoritarian regimes for all their failings on

these accounts. In this hostile environment, only one attempt at nonviolent revolution survived the onslaught of counterrevolutionary interference in a small country without geopolitical significance. And even here, revolution could not progress beyond achieving political emancipation.

Summary

This chapter aimed to elaborate the role of violence and nonviolence in the pursuit of revolutionary emancipation. It juxtaposed different types of violence and scrutinized the limits of nonviolence in order to avoid simplistic assumptions on “successes” and “failures” of revolutions. The ethics of violence in revolutions is plagued by the gap between utopian visions and their dystopian realities. Violent revolutions have often been more effective in removing an oppressive regime from power and charting a course towards a genuinely new beginning. Unfortunately, the confrontation of revolutionary and counterrevolutionary violence tended to lead to a radicalization process within revolutionary movements (Crane 1960), allowing new forms of oppressive rule to emerge. Nonviolent revolutions, by contrast, try to avoid these pitfalls and can lead to emancipation from oppressive power constellations. Yet nonviolence does not seem to enable a pluriverse of emancipatory revolutionary outcomes, but has in the past only served the catching up with prevalent modes of governance. Hence, rather than acting as harbingers of a novel socio-political order, nonviolent revolutions have at best enabled the implementation of a widespread (and already crumbling) ideology. Here, the role of the international environment in revolutions appears paramount in determining whether contemporary mass uprisings can in fact lead to revolutionary transformation. This highlights the role of networked power beyond and below the state in revolutionary processes. Indeed, it urges scholars to move their focus away from the choice between violent versus nonviolent tactics and towards the emancipatory possibilities of scalar strategies of revolutionary contestation

Cross-References

- ▶ [Asymmetrical Warfare](#)
- ▶ [Emancipatory Peace](#)
- ▶ [Maoist Conflict in India](#)
- ▶ [Nonviolence and Civil Resistance](#)

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Role of State and Non-state Terrorism in Peace Processes, The

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Description

The study of terrorism, with some notable exceptions (Findley and Young 2015; Fortna 2015; Kalyvas 2004; Sambanis 2008), tends to remain

silenced from the study of civil wars and peace agreements. On closer inspection, however, the data clearly demonstrates that terrorism is a common occurrence within the context of civil wars and other armed conflicts. Some prominent cases include the LTTE in Sri Lanka, Hamas and various other Palestinian factions in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and the PKK in Turkey. In each case, evidence shows that governments also use the tactic of terrorism against their respective non-state opponents. This can manifest as a policy of systematic rape and torture as seen in the case of the Sri Lankan government, the prolonged occupation with concomitant human rights abuse of the Occupied Palestinian Territories of West Bank and Gaza by Israel, or the state campaign to depopulate and demolish thousands of Kurdish villages to rout out the PKK in Turkey. Terrorism serves many functions for both state and non-state actors in civil wars ranging from forcing compliance (Balcells 2010; Kalyvas 2006) to outbidding rivals (Bloom 2005), from intimidating competitors and enemies to ensuring group survival (Kydd and Walter 2006). Terrorism can also be used as a tactic of attrition (Pape 2003), i.e., whereby its use seeks to undercut the enemy's will to continue fighting or as a mechanism of propaganda (Crenshaw 2011) and provocation (Lake 2002). However, perhaps one of the most significant roles of terrorism when used under conditions of conflict is as a tactic to “spoil” attempts at achieving a durable peace (de Mesquita 2005; Kydd and Walter 2002; Newman and Richmond 2006; Reiter 2016). It is worth pointing out that while both states and non-state actors use the tactic of terrorism to spoil peace agreements, the literature, with a few exceptions (Höglund and Zartman 2006; Ghanem-Yazbeck 2018; Kibrik and Kornberg 2019), tends to focus mostly upon the non-state actor's role in spoiling, perhaps because, more often than not, it is the non-state actor that engages in spoiling activities.

Introduction

Terrorism: State and Non-state

One of the fundamental problems with the study of terrorism concerns the definitional problem,

i.e., how should terrorism be defined. It is a problem that has confounded both scholars and practitioners and generated considerable debate and hairpulling in the field. Some have argued that this definitional failure has become even more acute after the iconic attacks of 09 September 2001. Moreover, the deluge of new literature in the wake of the 9/11 attacks meant that the term has been subjected to even more manipulation than before (Richards 2015). There are obvious advantages to a universally accepted definition of terrorism. For policymakers and practitioners, a universally agreed upon definition would facilitate cooperation against the phenomenon while for academics, it would facilitate theory-building and an advancement in the field of study. However, despite these obvious advantages, the term terrorism continues to be used so broadly, carelessly, and in so many contexts “as to become almost meaningless” and even those who accept the label challenge its contents (Richardson 1999:209). There is a clear division between scholars and policymakers who believe that attempting to reach a consensus definition is a waste of time and others who are firmly of the opinion that not only is this possible but imperative for the advancement of the field (Ganor 2002).

It has been argued that the term “terrorism” is a pejorative label, often arbitrarily used and rarely accepted by those being labelled as such (Richardson 2006). Indeed, there are several points of disagreement that prevent the emergence of a consensus definition of terrorism, albeit some argue that this absence of consensus may also be somewhat overstated (Schmid 2011). Nonetheless, it behooves mentioning, at the very least, a few controversies that are relevant to the discussion about the role of state and non-state terrorism in armed conflicts. First, one of the longest-standing debates is related to if a state can be categorized as a terrorist actor or if terrorist violence is the remit of non-state actors alone. In other words, is there even such a thing as “state terrorism”? The logic of those suggesting that states be left out of any definition of terrorism is based on their assertion that states and their militaries observe laws of war, while non-state actors involved in perpetrating acts of terrorism

adamantly refuse to be bound by these very rules of war and codes of conduct (Hoffman 2018; Lodge 1981; Richardson 2006). There are of course others who hold the opposite point of view (English 2012, 2015; Wilkinson 2011). English (2016) eloquently argues that state and non-state terrorisms diverge in terms of both scale and dynamics, making them difficult to study synoptically. Nonetheless, the argument goes that state actors, very much like non-state actors, can also practice terrorism. As such, the definition of terrorism should be founded upon the *nature of the act* rather than upon the *nature of the actor* (Jackson 2008; Singh 2018).

The logic exempting states from the study of terrorism because they evidently follow the laws of war is also linked to a second key point of disagreement, i.e., whether a defining characteristic of terrorism is that it targets civilians in peacetime environments or if attacks on combatants under certain circumstances, peacetime or not, can also be categorized as terrorist in character. The debate over targeting is closely linked to the often problematic distinction between what constitutes a combatant versus a noncombatant (see for instance, Schmid 2011); however, in relation to the intentional use, or the threat of use, of violence against civilians or civilian targets for a political motive (Ganor 2002), some scholars argue that as terrorism’s key intent is “to generate a psychological response beyond the immediate victims . . . *anyone* can become a victim of terrorism providing he, she or they serve their purpose as ‘message generators’ to a broader group or audience” (Richardson 2015: 18). In other words, the deliberate targeting of civilians, in peacetime or otherwise, represents just *one kind of terrorism* rather than being the defining characteristic of terrorism. Nonetheless, there exists to some extent a consensus that what distinguishes terrorism from other forms of political violence, for instance insurgency, is that the primary targets of terrorism tend to be civilians and/or terrorist violence, when exercised, is indiscriminate. This can explain how the tactic of terrorism can coexist with other forms of political violence, practiced by both state and non-state parties as a distinguishing character of a civil conflict.

Finally, basing a definition of terrorism upon the nature of the act as opposed to the identity of the actor or victim and/or the motivation behind the use of such violence, allows one to circumvent the old cliché, “one man’s freedom fighter is another man’s terrorist.” Not only do acts of terrorism directly contravene the laws of war which grant civilians immunity from deliberate attack – hence, underscoring that “one man’s terrorist is everyone’s terrorist” (Jenkins 1980: 2) – but most terrorists who claim to be freedom fighters would struggle to meet the standards set by international humanitarian law for resistance fighters/lawful belligerents (Schmid 2011: 22). Once again, this perspective allows one to sidestep both the motivations and identities of terrorist actors and instead focus upon the quality of their actions when characterizing them as terrorist and at least some of their activities as terrorism.

Given this discussion, terrorism may be defined as an anxiety-inspiring method of repeated violent action, employed by individuals, groups, or state actors for mainly political reasons whereby the direct and immediate targets of violence are not necessarily the main targets (Schmid 2011).

Spoiling

Just like “terrorism,” the notion of “spoiling” is somewhat difficult to pin down and there are several definitions used by researchers today. The original definition was proposed by Stephen Stedman (1997, 5) who originally defined spoilers as “leaders and parties who believe that peace emerging from negotiations threatens their power, world-view, and interests, and use violence to undermine attempts to achieve it.” In the period since the introduction of the concept of spoiling, it has come to be used in a much more general manner to describe any group or individuals opposing a settlement. In other words, researchers now “refer to spoiling as action taken to disrupt, undermine, hinder or delay a peace process” (Reiter 2016: 6; see also: Sisk 2006; Newman and Richmond 2006).

Stedman’s original definition was accompanied by various strategies for the “custodians of peace processes” (1997,12), i.e., international

actors, involved in implementing peace agreements, to cultivate and protect the peace while managing spoilers. He therefore offered a preliminary typology of spoilers that underpinned these strategies and asserted that a correct diagnosis of spoiler type was central to their successful management (Stedman 1997). Most subsequent scholarship on spoiling, building on Steadman’s seminal work, accepts that spoilers vary considerably in their stated objectives and consequently focusses upon identifying their underlying motivations for using violence to influence a peace process. Much of this work also follows Steadman’s original typology that categorized spoilers into three key categories based upon their objectives and their commitment to achieving these objectives, i.e., limited, greedy, and total. Hence, at one end of this spectrum are the limited spoilers who have limited goals and albeit, as Steadman argues, this does not correspond to their levels of commitment as they can be deeply dedicated and, as such, unwilling to negotiate. These actors tend to use violence “as a tool to gain leverage in deal making, and thus this violence can be halted if the sides strike the right deal” (Reiter 2016: 23). At the opposite end of the spectrum lies the category of the total spoilers or “zealots,” as Darby (2001) calls them. These actors are in pursuit of total power or “unilateral solutions” (Ayres 2001) and tend to hold immutable preferences, i.e., their “goals are not subject to change” (Stedman 1997: 10), and they can be neither bought off nor incorporated into the peace process. For peace to be successful, then international actors need to circumvent these total spoilers. In between these two extremes lies the category of the greedy or “opportunistic spoilers” (Darby 2001). These are a wide range of actors that, as the name suggests, can be motivated by political, military, or financial gains as the opportunity presents itself. The goals of such so-called greedy spoilers tend to contract and expand based on their calculations of costs and risks.

While Steadman’s typology has strongly shaped the research on spoilers, subsequent scholarship has also criticized it for its several shortcomings and limitations. For one, this newer research argues that Steadman’s model strongly

relies upon “explanatory factors that are endogenous to the parties no matter the contextual circumstances of the peace process, making it difficult to predict spoiler activities before they have occurred . . . [Furthermore, it also] fails to adequately explain why groups frequently change their behavior, from compliance to spoiling and vice versa, within a given peace process or even with respect to a specific peace accord” (Nilsson & Kovacs 2011: 615). Instead, subsequent researchers emphasize, for instance, the centrality of the structural environment of the peace process (Greenhill & Major 2007); the capabilities of potential spoilers (i.e., access to valuable tradable commodities and foreign patrons) and available opportunities (i.e., the presence of international peacekeeping forces and the group’s own vested interests in the peace process) (Zahar 2006); their considerations of costs and risks based on if they are located inside or outside the peace process (Zahar 2008); the intrinsic character of the group (i.e., if it is inclusive or exclusive) (Blaydes & De Maio 2010); group type (if it is a government or a non-state actor) (Johnston 2007); and so on. Stedman himself has acknowledged some of this criticism (2002; 2008), especially giving more weight to the structural conditions of peace processes. In short, the current consensus in the field of spoiler research seems to be pointing towards not only broader, more complex definitions of what spoiling is, but also the construction of more complex and nuanced models which can provide more robust explanations for the emergence of spoiler activities during peace processes.

A final issue worth highlighting in an assessment of spoiling is the normative nature of the terminology used. A critical concern of much of the research on spoiling is first, how to identify spoilers and second, how to predict their emergence in any given peace process. However, the very discussion around “spoilers” implies a “binary” between those who are interested in peace and those who are against it (Newman & Richmond 2006). This logic is also very clearly founded on the idea that all conflicts can be resolved once the obstacles to such progress are removed. The idea of actors who are “spoilers,” i.e., actively obstructing the peace, fulfills this

requirement. However, the evidence clearly demonstrates that peace processes are neither so simple nor quite as linear. In other words, all parties associated with a peace process carry the capacity for spoiling, and more importantly, actors frequently change their preferences, demands, positions, and loyalties. In short, a more dynamic understanding of actors engaging in spoiling activities better explains this phenomenon than the static identity-category of “spoiler.” Moreover, as Newman and Richmond (2006: 4-5) so effectively argue, at least some of the evidence suggests that the term “spoiler” is tremendously subjective and reflects the bias of third-party mediators who tend to see all actors opposed to a liberal peace as “spoilers” in a conflict situation. Hence very much like the discussion on terrorism, spoiling is best viewed as a tactic and as such, better understood in terms of the *nature of the act* (spoiling) rather than the *nature of the actor* (spoiler).

Key Issues

Why Is Terrorist Violence Used to Spoil Peace Processes and when Does Terrorism Become a Tactic of Spoiling?

As the research on spoiling has developed there has emerged a general consensus in the academic community that “violence directed at peace agreements poses a serious threat to the maintenance of peace” (Reiter 2016: 2; Kydd & Walter 2002; Darby 2001). Given the focus here upon specifically terrorist violence, this can be further qualified as terrorist violence undermines peace processes and poses a serious threat to the maintenance of peace. Warring parties use terrorist violence during war and associated peace processes in the hopes of gaining some particular outcome(s). Typically, all parties seek military victory on the battlefield which would guarantee full control over the postwar terms of settlement. However, given the difficulty of achieving the outcome of an undisputed military victory, warring parties pursue peace negotiations in the hope of gaining a share in the outcome of peace settlements, “which include a variety of factors, such as property rights,

electoral rules, disarmament, territory, amnesty for political prisoners,” etc. (Findley & Young 2015: 1119). In some cases, all groups want a share in these outcomes and use violence to force their way into contention for these benefits. In other situations, there are groups that oppose the settlement because it would usher in conditions that may fundamentally threaten their interests – and hence, they use terrorist violence to derail the process. State actors can also spoil a peace process. As Reiter (2016: 38) argues, government spoiling, i.e., when spoiling is directed by the political leaders of a state, presents a significant threat to peace agreements. Often negotiated agreements require non-state groups disarming which leaves the state party with a renewed monopoly on violence which it can then use to alter the terms of the peace settlement to its own advantage and gain more concessions. At other times, governments can use spoiling to ascertain the true intentions of rebel groups, especially if it is unclear if rebels are truly interested in negotiating a settlement or if they are merely using a lull in the conflict to regroup and rearm (Reiter 2016: 38). Government spoiling, like all spoiling, can also be deliberate or unintentional (Höglund & Zartman 2006; MacGinty 2006) and the result of its punitive counter-terrorism policies. When a state responds harshly to terrorist violence, this serves to not only neutralize the terrorist threat posed by the non-state enemy but also alienates more moderate negotiating partners due to issues such as collateral damage and collective punishment. This can not only serve to anger the targeted community, thereby helping mobilize new recruits and fighters, but also derail the peace process by instigating an escalating cycle of violence between warring parties (Singh 2011).

Steadman’s work argued that spoilers appear only when there is an existing or potentially emerging peace that can be undermined, i.e., *after a pact has already been signed* [my emphasis] or at least two parties have publicly committed themselves to some sort of comprehensive peace agreement (Stedman 1997; Nilsson & Kovacs 2011). In later works, Steadman narrowed his position even further stating that “in the absence of an agreement, the concept of spoiler should not apply” (Steadman

2002: 13; Nilsson & Kovacs 2011). However, many works by subsequent authors take a more relaxed approach and do not outline the context of a peace process while some, like Newman and Richmond (2006: 102) take the middle path and argue that spoiling can apply to situations where “*some form of peace process is underway* [my emphasis] and where at least one of the parties to the conflict is either engaged in, or committed to, a peace process.” Certainly, terrorist violence can appear at all stages of armed conflicts and peace processes.

In the pre-conflict or early stages of armed conflict, terrorism is often employed to provoke a violent response from the enemy. In other words, here terrorism functions as a catalyst for violence leading to a general escalation in the conflict’s levels of violence, and often provokes a full-scale armed confrontation between the parties involved. During an ongoing armed conflict, terrorism can be used by all parties involved in the conflict as a tactic of confrontation and may sometimes even function as a force multiplier. Often in these circumstances, terrorism is practiced by both state and non-state parties in tandem with other forms of political violence (“regular” wartime military activity, guerrilla warfare) as well as potentially combined with nonviolent activities (social work and humanitarian efforts). However, it is when terrorism is practiced during an ongoing peace process that it appears as a spoiling tactic used by parties to undermine and disrupt ongoing negotiations and destabilize the process in general.

Once a peace process is underway violence – including terrorist violence – can once again be used for various purposes and at different stages of the process. During early stages of negotiation, for instance, terrorism can be used by groups trying to force their way to the negotiation table. During implementation, terrorist violence can be used to derail the process completely, draw attention to specific clauses of the accord, or force parties to renegotiate specific terms of the settlement underway. In post-agreement periods, violence is often used by parties who are dissatisfied with the power-sharing agreement to gain additional concessions as well as by weaker groups

who are trying to reignite the conflict to generate conditions that would potentially enable group survival. In a post-agreement scenario, most spoilers tend to be outside the negotiated agreement with the more powerful of these posing a serious threat to the durability of peace. In all cases, research suggests that the more inclusive the peace negotiations are, the lower the probability of post-agreement spoiler violence (Sisk 2009; Blaydes & De Maio 2010).

Does Terrorism “Spoil” Peace Processes More than Other Types of Violence?

Terrorist violence directed against peace accords can, at worst, result in the collapse of the peace agreement, extend the duration of conflict and/or bring about the renewal of war, and concomitantly, engender mass civilian casualties and human rights violations. In addition, if the tactic of terrorism provokes broader armed conflict, this wider violence can produce consequences as varied as large-scale environmental degradation, humanitarian crises, and the emergence of safe havens (Rotberg 2004) which can be exploited not only by transnational and international terrorist actors but also by organized criminal groups involved in the trafficking of drugs, peoples, arms, cultural artifacts, and various other resources (Shelley 2014; Rothfield 2007). At the same time, empirical evidence also suggests that sometimes spoiling activities can – somewhat counter-intuitively – produce positive and tangible results. This is because spoiling can “raise new questions within a peace process, attract or divert attention to or from certain issues or actors, provide marginalized actors with a voice, delay or postpone progress in a process or future rounds of talks, prevent implementation of agreements, elevate the interests of one particular party, or illustrate the need to include other actors in discussions” (Newman and Richmond 2006: 18). In short, while it is clear that the effects of spoiling vary widely, it is unclear if terrorist violence, as opposed to other forms of violence in armed conflict, is unique in its ability to spoil the trust between moderate factions of warring parties or disrupt other conditions necessary to generate and/or maintain peace (Kydd & Walter 2002;

Findley & Young 2015). In other words, does the use of terrorism in spoiling tend to produce more negative rather than positive results? Some scholars certainly believe so. Abrahms (2013), for instance, argues that the appearance of terrorism during peace negotiations damages trust and the credibility of the actor using it, and demonstrates to other side that compromise is impossible leading to a drop in its willingness to reach a negotiated settlement, even when the demands of the enemy are relatively moderate. This can not only prolong the duration of a conflict but also contribute to the collapse of any peace process underway. However, given the general lack of theoretical and empirical work systematically addressing this question, the jury is still out. What does seem to be clearer is that even when terrorism is practiced by marginal or fringe elements in an armed conflict, it can, when compared to other forms of violence, disproportionately spoil peace processes, making wars not only more difficult to resolve but also more likely to recur (Findley & Young 2015).

The scholarship on spoiler activities in post-agreement scenarios has added much more nuance to our understanding of conditions under which spoiling occurs (Höglund 2008; MacGinty 2006; Darby 2001, Shikaki 1998). This work reveals how, even in cases where violence does not overturn the peace agreement when the post-agreement period is marked by acute terrorist violence, there are grave consequences for the sustainability of peace. For instance, the period after the signing of the 1998 Good Friday in Northern Ireland saw a spate of violent protests, assassinations, and bombings by those who were opposed to the accord (Reiter 2016; MacGinty 2006). Similarly, violence used by groups like Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad in the mid-1990s during the Oslo peace process contributed to a hardening of Israeli public opinion and the strengthening of political hawks, eventually leading to the election of a right-wing prime minister. This, in addition to, diverting precious resources that could have been used for rebuilding towards security also resulted in harsh counter-terrorism methods employed by Israeli state. In turn, harsh Israeli counter-measures served to

undercut Palestinian confidence and trust, and further obstructed the implementation of the peace accord, eventually leading to the collapse of the Oslo Accords (Reiter 2016; Singh 2011). Once again this underscores the position that terrorist violence carries more bang for the buck and may indeed possess a disproportionate capacity to undermine and disrupt peace processes.

Summary

As stated at the very beginning, much of the recent work on civil war and terrorism tends to treat them in a siloed manner, treating them as completely distinct phenomenon without considering the myriad ways in which they overlap, interact, and relate. Developing this line of inquiry should therefore be an important concern that should interest both researchers and policymakers. As demonstrated, the use of terrorism as a tactic of spoiling in armed conflict can have a disproportionately powerful effect on the outcomes of the war, even when used by so-called marginal or fringe actors. However, much of the work on the use of terrorism as a tactic of spoiling tends to focus on the non-state actor. This not only falls into the trap of ignoring the possibility of the existence of state terrorism but also leave a lacuna in our understanding of the phenomenon and its many nuances. In 2015, Findley and Young argued that despite the attention paid to the dangers of potential spoilers in peace processes, there is not much systemic empirical research on the topic. Most empirical studies are “insightful” but are characterized either by brief empirical discussions, or focused upon a limited number of cases, or are single-case studies. The existing cross-country statistical analyses which seek to examine the duration of peace following a conflict either “incorporate violence that risks spoiling the peace . . . only indirectly and not as a primary objective, [or once again] rely on a limited number of cases, [do not] examine multiple stages of the peace process and [do not] move beyond a descriptive application of the data” (Findley & Young 2015: 1118). In all cases, while these are important and substantial contributions to the literature on

spoilers, they leave room for a development of the research agenda, especially when it comes to moving beyond the distinctive approaches to studying the resolution of civil wars and armed conflict and role(s) of state and non-state terrorism in these processes.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Conflict, Peace, and Ontological Security](#)
- ▶ [Kenya’s War on Terror](#)
- ▶ [Peace Agreements](#)

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Roles of Victims in Peacebuilding

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Synonyms

Victims – survivors, harmed
Victimhood – suffering, injury, harm, identity,
status
Peacebuilding – postwar reconstruction, reckon-
ing, rebuilding, settlement, conflict management

Description

Until the late twentieth century, victims of war and violence were left on the margins of peace and peacebuilding considerations. They first started featuring as providers of information and evidence during court proceedings against war-crimes perpetrators in the 1960s and later as narrators of uncomfortable experiences. Thereafter, domestic and international peacebuilders continued to view victims through the humanitarian prism as passive and hapless actors of post-war reconstruction and in need of pity and assistance. This has resulted in constrained participation of victims in shaping peace processes and influencing how post-war reconstruction unravels. However, the last two decades have seen a transformation of victims' roles into active

shapers of peacebuilding and their more meaningful inclusion in peace processes. This process initially started with the spread of global human rights regimes in the late 1970s and the advent of transitional justice that has gradually placed victims at the heart of restorative justice through truth enquiries, reparations, apologies, and other forms of victims' redress. In some recent cases, victims have also assumed roles of active interlocutors in peace negotiations, placing their needs and their post-war integration at the heart of peacebuilding. This entry examines the evolution of victims' inclusion in peacebuilding and the related transitional justice. It highlights the transformation of victims' roles from passive beneficiaries of justice to active shapers of post-war politics and policies with both peace-inducing and peace-endangering effects.

Peacebuilding and Victims

Victims' roles in peacebuilding have undergone major changes in the past century. From initial side effects of wars and afterthoughts in processes of post-conflict rebuilding, victims have increasingly become key players in approaches to post-conflict reconstruction and sustainable peace – both domestically and in the international arena. In the past, victims were considered as “collateral damage,” “statistics” as the numbers of deaths, and in the case of violated women as “spoils of war” (Enloe 2004). Their identities and individual needs rarely featured as noticeable and noticed in war and peace. While the scholarly field of peacebuilding has generally focused on demobilizing soldiers, building institutions, and ensuring security, the related field of “transitional justice” as “the array of processes designed to address past human rights violations following periods of political turmoil, state repression, or armed conflict” (Olsen et al. 2010, p. 11) initially focused on punishing perpetrators without much comprehensive concern for victims (Baker and Obradović-Wochnik 2016). Yet the realization of the past two decades that victims are important peace stakeholders with a set of rights changed these attitudes. Domestically, victims' roles have

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become closely tied to and representative of national identities and understandings of one's community and/or national past and future. At the international level, victims have become the primary object – and at the same time beneficiary – of humanitarian interventions, human rights, and as part of wider peacebuilding interventions in the 1990s. In cases such as Colombia, victims even became directly integrated in peace negotiations with a significant bearing on the overall design of the final 2014 peace settlement (Brett 2018; Sanchez and Rudling 2019; Theidon 2016). The Colombian case is also an apt example of a wider transformation of victims' roles into more inclusive and participatory peace actors.

The change in victims' roles in post-conflict realities has also come with new evidence that bridging deep social ruptures and animosities between victimizers and victims is a critical step in overcoming the past and moving toward a shared peaceful future, especially in situations when previous perpetrators live side by side with victims – as is common in contemporary civil wars (Hozic 2014). This has led to wider enquiries into how to reconcile different groups emerging from wars with different grievances and traumas, how to transform previously violent relations into coexistence, and how to compensate those who suffered the most. More recent holistic approaches to transitional justice in particular lifted victims to prominence by including them meaningfully not only in processes of war-crimes prosecution, but also truth telling, reparations, redress, memorialization, and other elements of what is also referred to as “coming to terms with the past” (Dragović-Soso 2010). Yet the fundamental problem with bringing both peace and justice to war-torn societies through a more active victim engagement has been a potential antagonistic set of objectives of transitional justice and peacebuilding. As peace is conditioned upon stability, which victims' demands and memory-recovery efforts may undermine, the key dilemma has been how to include victims without increasing state fragility. This “justice vs. peace” dilemma (Sriram 2007) has focused on

the question of whether “settling the accounts” rather than “drawing thick lines” works better in terms of securing physical and societal peace (Thoms et al. 2008; Vinjamuri and Snyder 2004). This tension is also at the heart of the roles of victims outlined below as they can act as pioneers of justice efforts on the one hand but also as destabilizing elements in fragile post-conflict situations.

How can we understand the various roles of victims in contemporary peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction, both domestically and internationally? As this entry shows, victims' roles have not only undergone several transformations, but they are rarely unequivocally peace-inducing or clearly destabilizing. More often than not, war victims – that is to say both deceased victims and survivors – represent important symbols of post-war reckoning but also painful reminders of the bygones that societies resist to remember. In parallel, they can act as important forces of positive and more inclusive change, especially in societies that are ready to face unpalatable pasts. This entry analyses the diverse meanings and roles of victims in peace against the latest discussions in transitional justice regarding their contributions to building sustainable and comprehensive peace as well as on endangering it. The focus here is on victims who emerge from conflicts and violence with a set of traumas, grievances, and memory burdens. While killed victims continue to be used as “proofs” of victimization (i. e., in terms of numbers and methods of killing), surviving victims are living testaments to previous pains and losses. At the same time, they are critical pieces of the peace and reconciliation puzzle. Their experiences, needs, and demands often shape communities' understandings of themselves and their future political orientations. This entry first defines the complex concept of the “victim,” before conceptualizing victims' roles in peace interventions both domestically and internationally. It specifically offers three key understandings of victims' roles – as national bearers of injustice, as universal moral beacons of suffering, and as active influencers of peace and justice policies.

Defining Victims for Peacebuilding

The term “victim” has religious and spiritual origins from the fifteenth century when it denoted sacrifice for a higher cause (Oxford English Dictionary). While the meaning subsequently changed to a person unjustifiably or excessively harmed or killed, the term has preserved its moral connotations and continues to carry a great symbolic energy. By the 1940s, victims became the subject of a new discipline of “victimology” (pertaining to sociology) and criminology in terms of national crime. The concern with human suffering expanded since then at the international level and peacebuilding, and today victims figure prominently in most fields of social sciences (Jacoby 2015, p. 514). However, despite this proliferation in studying victims from a multitude of perspectives (or potentially because of that), clear definitions of victims remain sporadic. Similar to other fields, in the context of transitional justice and peacebuilding, defining war victims is fraught with highly sensitive power dynamics and legal concerns (Feyter 2005; Goldblatt 2006; Kiza et al. 2006; Miers 1978; Wemmers 2014). Regarding victims of conflicts, wars, and state oppression, the basic distinction is made between surviving victims and killed victims who are generally perceived to be of civilian character (although in some conflicts soldiers were also denoted as victims, see below). Both killed victims and survivors suggest an existence of a crime but while the first one invokes the possibility of death, the other invokes life after the trauma as a “surviving victim.” In terms of who the “surviving victims” are, the starting point is legal definitions, anchored in international human rights law, which sets out the broad categorization of victims as:

[p]ersons who individually or collectively suffered harm, including physical or mental injury, emotional suffering, economic loss or substantial impairment of their fundamental rights, through acts or omissions that constitute gross violations of international human rights law, or serious violations of international humanitarian law. (UN General Assembly 2005b, pt. Article V)

They are thus victims of “gross violations of international human rights law, or serious violations of international humanitarian law,” which form a long lists of breaches such as torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment, summary and arbitrary executions, abductions, or arbitrary detentions, either in the context of war or mass scale oppression. Victims can be both direct (also referred to as primary victims) – i.e., those abused, detained, or persecuted (or killed) – and indirect (secondary) as family members of a direct victim, who experience psychological harm or even economic losses if the main family breadwinner was killed and his/her loss signifies fall into poverty and the like (Bloomfield et al. 2003, 54; and also Goldblatt 2006, 62). As some argue, while there may be situations of mass victimization when most of society may make claims to victimhood (Saeed 2016), victims and victimhood identities are often determined by contexts and scales of harm – i.e., while entire populations may be victimized by wars due to economic and security losses, some groups still suffer disproportionately.

The term “victim” is thus not universally accepted as a socio-legal category as it is deeply influenced by the context and nature of the harms. For example, feminist scholars stress that the term “survivor” is better suited for crimes of torture and sexual violence as it implies agency and defiance as opposed to the passive and suppressed connotations of the term “victim,” which “makes them [harmed individuals] appear ill and in need of treatment; impotent and in need of help” (Bloomfield et al. 2003, p. 60). As Huma Saeed noted in her reflections on victims and victimhood in Afghanistan, to her the term victim “connotes passivity, stripping people of the very agency that the human rights community considers central to bringing societal change” (2016, p. 170). Yet she also admits that most of her respondents referred to themselves as “victims” anyway. While preferences for the usage differ across communities and individuals, socioeconomic status of victims and types of victimization, international human rights regimes as well as domestic legislation generally adhere to the generic term “victim”

for those disproportionately affected by violence and conflicts.

The survivor vs victim debate underlines the lack of a nuanced understanding of the different experiences of victimization in conflict. As Michael Rothberg recently noted (Rothberg 2019), we lack a precise vocabulary to describe the multifaceted roles and identities that individuals emerging from violence and wars assume. He introduced the term “implicated subjects” as those who might not have willingly participated and benefitted from injustice and violations but whose “actions and inactions help produce and reproduce the positions of victims and perpetrators” (Rothberg 2019, p. 1). His insights speak to the messy conflict situations when individuals assume different roles – some victims might have been directly involved in the conflict as soldiers while others had simply found themselves in the wrong place at the wrong time. In some cases the line between a victim and a perpetrator may be blurred as multiple roles are possible at different spaces and times (Drumbl 2012; Moffett 2016). The case of child soldiers or forcefully recruited fighters is indicative of the inherent definitional difficulties. Are they perpetrators or victims? Individual victims may also prefer to use different terminology for different audiences – they may privately resist the term victim but understand the need for its outward projection in order to be publicly acknowledged, especially in front of a court or state authorities (cf. Fernandes 2017; Močnik 2019).

Following from this, victimhood, i.e., the victim identity or status, may act as a social stigma for some individuals, while others may see it as the primary source of their identity, in particular if their victimhood is challenged, contested, or unrecognized (Schnabel and Tabyshalievna 2012). Individuals have also been frequently subject to multiple victimization (being a victim of many crimes or the repetition of the same one) or re-victimization such as social stigmatization or the denial of the existence of the crime committed (Bloomfield et al. 2003, p. 61), which makes their victimhood multiplied. To bear the “victim label” may thus be a double blessing – while it carries a baggage of essentialism and can be

psychologically crippling, it can also be a defining source of identity and grounds for public recognition (Buckley-Zistel 2013, p. 96). Despite these nuances, for the purposes of this entry, the term “victim” is used to denote all people directly affected by war crimes and human rights violations, e.g., maimed and injured civilian survivors, survivors of sexual violence, survivors of torture and unlawful incarceration, families of the missing people and killed civilians, refugees and internally displaced people, and all civilians persecuted and killed during conflicts.

Epitomes of Suffering and National Identities

Victims’ suffering outlined above has started to play an important role in national myth-making and imaginings since the rise of modern nationalism in the nineteenth century (Clarke 2019, p. 36). Yet until the twentieth century, it was the hero, the soldier, and the general that was glorified, commemorated, and mourned, argues the British historian Philip Towle in his genealogy of victimhood (Towle 2018). The personal sacrifices of soldiers during wars featured prominently in national identity creations. A case in point is the World War I commemorations across the world that have primarily focused on fallen soldiers and their portrayals as young and innocent victims of the total war machine – symbolically represented in cenotaphs of unknown soldiers – rather than on civilian victims suffering (see Mosse 1991, Chapter 3). It was the mass civilian suffering of World War II in particular, combined with a proliferation of mass media, and the subsequent advent of the “humanitarian paradigm of human rights” in the 1970s (Moyn 2014, p. 110) that shifted the attention to victimization and suffering of noncombatants too, leading to what Towle sees as the origins of today’s “Age of Victimhood.” Victimhood – as victims’ social identities and constructions – has thus only gradually become an important aspect of domestic politics in post-conflict (but also post-authoritarian) societies. National as well as individual victimization has proven extremely effective to unite people, denigrate other nations

or individuals, legitimize governments, and justify new policies and political choices.

It was long after World War II that victimhood identities have become closely linked to ethnic, national, or religious identities as religious and ethnic (i.e., Jewishness, Slavic background, etc.) determined one's victimization. Subsequently, especially in more authoritarian societies where singular versions of history are promoted and/or imposed, the willingness of domestic actors to recognize victims and engage them in peace processes has been related to how their victimization corresponds with their political hegemonic narratives of the past and future (Arthur 2011; Barton-Hronešová 2020). This has often resulted in misuses of victims' experiences for political objectives and silencing other victims who could undermine such hegemonies (Meyers 2016, Chapter 5). For example, legitimate Jewish suffering has been clearly used as a political justification for the oppression of Palestinians by the state of Israel. Another good example provides Paul Kagame's regime in Rwanda, which has refused to recognize the victimhood of Hutus killed by his Rwandan Patriotic Front. Their memory is suppressed and only the hegemonic suffering of Tutsi victims is allowed in public manifestations of mourning and memorialization (Ibreck 2012). The resulting victims' roles in peace can thus be passively politicized – i.e., victims are used as objects of politics.

On the more positive side of the spectrum, victims can fulfill important symbolic public functions related to more nuanced interpretations of the past and collective memories. Origins of victims' mnemonic function again date back to the Jewish (and East European) experience of Holocaust; however, the memory of such experience initially did not reach the wider public. An emergence of a more prominent public memory of the Holocaust and its manifestation in popular culture only came in the late 1970s and early 1980s (Bloxham 2001; cf. Moyn 2014, p. 110). Victims' accounts (and those of their children) through books, documentaries, films, and art subsequently became an important aspect of human remembering of the past. Yet victims' storytelling roles have proliferated especially since the emergence of a

new tool of transitional justice – truth commissions in the 1990s – most notably with the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission. This has led to a more meaningful and sensitive inclusion of victims into the process of reckoning that differed from court testimonies discussed next. Unlike tribunals for war crimes prosecutions that expanded in the 1990s as well as the international level, truth commissions have been designed by national authorities as more flexible and victim-centric mechanisms that provide victims with the space to narrate their stories as they remember them, without the impenetrable legal jargon of criminal trials and the painful – and in some cases humiliating – process of cross-examination, which often leads to negative victim experiences and retraumatization (Hayner 2001, 2006). Victims have for the first time assumed an absolutely superior and central role. They have acted as chroniclers of the past and educated nations about their experiences.

While in some cases, recounting past memories has created additional conflicts and tensions (see Payne 2007), in others, truth commissions have had important peace-inducing consequences in terms of society coming to terms with histories of multifaceted conflicts. In Peru, the underappreciated victimization of the Quechua came to the spotlight after the over 15,000 victim testimonies and data-gathering efforts through the 2001–03 Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Laplante and Theidon 2007; de Waardt 2013). The scale of Quechua victimhood (who formed over three quarters of all victims) changed the historical record of the previous conflict and had an impact on newly enacted social policies (Hayner 2001, p. 37). The conflict suddenly came to be understood in a different light – as a conflict that disproportionately affected the poor in rural areas. While some sections of the Peruvian society refused to accept this and discrimination prevailed, the historical account has changed. Victims thus have the potential to act as epitomes of the scale of a wider societal suffering or oppression and they also have the ability to denigrate a past regime or enemy. Another example provides the victimhood identity or the *Opfermythos* (victim myth) of German victims of the Nazi regime who “became

constitutive of the formation of citizenship and belonging in the post-World War II *Bundesrepublik*" (Jensen and Ronsbo 2014, p. 5). In other words, the new German democracy needed victims of their own to prove their own legitimacy to function as a democratic state. (A related phenomenon can be observed in the discussion about Austria's collective victimhood identity, i.e., its national claims to have been the first victim of Adolf Hitler's regime, rather than a puppet Nazi state of the likes of Slovakia and Croatia.)

In contexts with divided interpretations of the past, victims can also become convenient coalition partners for new political regimes. While this may have unifying effects on national identifications of titular nations as outlined in the German case and as many other European cases after World War II seem to suggest, more often than not, victimhood politics destabilizes and endangers peace (see also Druliolle and Brett 2018, p. 9). In divided Bosnia, different victim groups have acted as "memory guardians" (Jouhanneau 2013) as they defended their own narratives of the past, determined by their own experience, memory, and identities – often in direct contradiction to and denial of victims from the "other" side. The new Bosniak (Muslim) identity has been largely established on the basis of the war-time victimization of Bosnian Muslims who had been targeted solely for their religion and identity. The Bosniak "victim identity" has become an important unifying component of the newly reinvented Bosniak identity while at the same time antagonizing Bosnian Serbs and Croats, as well as liberal Bosnians (Bougarel 2009; Hronešová 2012).

Similarly, in Northern Ireland, the "meta-conflict" over the past (McGarry and O'Leary 1993) resulted in various political coalitions and the public portrayal of victims as epitomes of one group's greater suffering over others (see also Jankowitz 2018a). As local definitions of who is a victim predetermines social rights and recognition of "true" and "real" victimhood (de Waard 2018, 135), it has been common to see various domestic manifestations of the so-called "competition of victimhood" (see Chaumont 2000) when different victim groups compete over the extent of

victimization, hierarchies of victimhood, and public worthiness. While material benefits might be important to some victim groups – especially those who live in poverty – for others the objective is wider societal recognition and a greater stake in the peace process (Breen-Smyth 2018; Hronešová 2018). This can result to domestic disputes about falsifications of one's victimhood and ideas of "non-genuine" (Ballinger 2003, p. 135), "guilty," or "bad" (Moffett 2016) victims as those who could be thought of as being part of the causes of their victimization. These various domestic roles also underline some aspects of how victim groups can compete with each other for recognition, resources, and remedies, acting as domestic pressure or interest groups (see also Jankowitz 2018b). On the case of Afghanistan, Saeed recorded how victims fought over who was "more victim" as to them "each had suffered a greater harm" (Saeed 2016, p. 172). Similar findings resulted from programs in Bosnia, Peru, Nepal, and Chile where only selected groups of victims were offered redress (see Robins 2012; Sajjad 2015). The ultimate result of such victimhood contestations is the creation of victim hierarchies, polarization, and tensions, which in divided societies in particular clearly jeopardizes peace and societal reckoning.

Witnesses of Crimes and Universal Moral Beacons

Yet it is the international understanding of victims' roles that has changed most dramatically in the past century. It was especially the new regime of human rights in the late 1970s and later humanitarian intervention of the 1990s that placed victims as important beneficiaries of international criminal justice measures, which were aimed at reconciliation and thus peace (Bonacker and Buckley-Zistel 2013; Strassner 2013). However, victims were initially treated as secondary to legal and forensics processes and integrated only as auxiliary providers of information regarding the circumstances of their victimization, i.e., the original act of harm, in order to make a legal case to prosecute perpetrators. In the aftermath of World

War II, not even victims of the Holocaust were given the platform to speak openly about their suffering in the court in the immediate post-war years. Their testimonies were excluded from the Nuremberg and Tokyo trials. This was not only because Holocaust was not the central crime under review in Nuremberg (crimes against peace dominated, see United Nations 1945, Art. 6) but also because of the worry that victims would misremember and weaken the prosecutorial evidence base (Wilke 2011). Victims' testimonies – as Hannah Arendt famously argued – are indeed fraught with misremembering and lack of detail necessary for the legal-forensic process to establish any resolution and impose punishment (Wilson and Brown 2009, p. 22). It was only at the Adolf Eichmann trial in 1961 that first witnesses were invited to testify, depicting the extent of the brutality, and inhumanity of the Nazi regime and the Holocaust (Loren and Metelmann 2016). It was indeed this trial that ushered in what some called the “era of the witness” and introduced a new role of victims in post-war orders (Annette Wieviorka's term cited in Clarke 2019, p. 2). Yet – like in all criminal trials – it remained to be the perpetrator as the potential peace spoiler that remained in the focus rather than the “harmed party,” i.e., the victim.

The secondary consideration for victims has been the result of the misconstrued understanding of victims as passive beneficiaries (or sufferers) in humanitarianism rather than important stakeholders in peace. There has been an instrumental attitude towards their roles on the part of external actors and domestic policymakers before the 1990s in particular (Humphrey 2003a; Jankowitz 2018a; Rauschenbach and Scalia 2008). Victims continued to be portrayed as innocent and helpless injured parties of a civilian character, which needed to be assisted and guided through the post-war process of societal rebuilding (see Shaw 2010). This rather demeaning approach to victims has been underpinned by simplistic understandings of victimhood and victims' roles in post-war contexts. The general assumptions around victims have been based on their unequivocal moral righteousness and their undisputable need for assistance (see especially Bouris 2007;

Breen-Smyth 2018; Lawther 2015). The consequence has been a skewed approach to their agency. Meyers called the dominant paradigm around victims (especially Holocaust victims) as the “pathetic victim,” i.e., a victim that is innocent of any wrongdoing, helpless, and subjected to unspeakable suffering (Meyers 2016, p. 32). She noted that with most victims of mass human rights violations, it has often seemed as if victimization and agency were “incompatible categories” (Meyers 2016, p. 34). However, this has not only led to moral judgments about victims who have taken a more public and open stance about their suffering (as explained below), but it has also induced idealizations of victims' interpretations of truth and their contributions to societal peace. This is especially true for female victims and children who have been portrayed as pure, ideal, “perfect,” or “clean-hand victims” (Méndez 2016, p. 2) due to their perceived limited responsibility for violence.

This imaginary of moral innocence often prevails after wars when victims are presented as “moral beacons” (Bouris 2007; Breen-Smyth 2018; Brewer et al. 2014). While this has had negative consequences on the local dynamics of social hierarchies and the politics of victimhood, i.e., who is the “true” victim and who suffered more (Druliolle and Brett 2018; Barton-Hronešová 2020), the moral universality of victims mobilized the wider international community to humanitarian interventions and more vigorous peacebuilding engagement by the 1990s. With the proliferation of human rights, advocacy groups and NGOs focusing on reconciliation and peace, victims and their redress became a more important topic. The 1984 Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OHCHR 1984) and the 1985 Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power (UN General Assembly 1985) were some of the first documents that opened a worldwide debate about the rights of victims. The subsequent UN “Agenda for Peace” in 1992 has recognized the need for the inclusion of victims' rights and needs.

Soon thereafter, the purpose of war victims as witnesses was reinvented in the emergence of new

war crime tribunals for the former Yugoslavia in 1993 and Rwanda in 1994. Giving victims platform to face their victimizers and providing evidence was thought to serve a wider societal reckoning – a deeply controversial objective that has later been proven unjustified (Clark 2014; Humphrey 2003b; Nettelfield 2010). Most importantly, victims as beneficiaries of justice and peace were later firmly anchored in the establishment of the permanent International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague through the 1998 Rome Statute where victims were specifically mentioned as key actors and beneficiaries of the new tribunal, whose ultimate objective was not only global justice but also peace (International Criminal Court 2011). The ICC not only provided victims with a key place in terms of providing testimonies but also established a new victims' compensation fund. Although the creation of such courts was justified as fulfilling a global "moral duty" by delivering justice to victims (Orentlicher 1991), within their procedures, the victim maintained its principal role as a supplier of evidence. Yet as evidence from not only the former Yugoslavia but also Rwanda suggests (Stover and Weinstein 2004), the repetition of accusations and painful stories has often driven deeper rifts into fragile communities and rarely directly led to societal peace, as predicted in the "peace vs. justice" dilemma.

However, the notion emerged that victims are an important stakeholder in human security and need to be protected. The norm of Responsibility to Protect (RtP) developed alongside the legal developments in transitional justice in the late 1990s as a reaction to the failures in the former Yugoslavia, Somalia, and Rwanda. The 2005 World Summit of the UN adopted RtP as a principle that fundamentally challenged state sovereignty in order to prevent any potential victimization of nationals. It obliged states to protect their citizens from harm and wars, and declared a global responsibility on the side of the international community to use any diplomatic, humanitarian, and other means to protect citizens and potential victims of their own states (UN General Assembly 2005a). Subsequently, this shift has been reflected in the international human rights

arena where citizens and victims became key beneficiaries of the *Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation* of the United Nations in 2005 (UN General Assembly 2005b). This document anchored victims' rights for wide-ranging reparations as part of responsibilities of states toward their citizens and identified the need for a victim-oriented perspective in post-war justice and peacebuilding. This was part of a wider global transformation in concerns for victims (as the next section documents).

Active Influencers of Justice and Peace

With the growing evidence that legal justice rarely leads to peace and victims' satisfaction and domestic authorities are ill-suited to support victims on their own, the focus of domestic and international peace actors has shifted into the realm of restorative justice that focuses on victims as the prime beneficiary through truth recovery, reparations, memorialization, social care, and various other victim-centric types of redress (Shaw et al. 2010). As Trudy Govier noted, "the aims of restorative justice regarding victims are to give them a larger role, meet their need for information, allow them to be heard, and assist them in getting back the independence and power that the crime may have been taken away from them" (Govier 2015, p. 16). The recent approaches and what some call the "victims turn" (García-Godos 2013) since the mid-2000s have emphasized the need for localized and integrative approaches to justice, peace, and truth-seeking (Mac Ginty 2010; Sharp 2014; Paffenholz 2015). The emphasis on local, grassroots, and hybrid approaches to peace and redress that adopt more deliberative processes has inspired a stronger focus on victims' needs outside of the courtroom or truth commissions. This has provided victims with a framework within which to assume a more active role in post-conflict processes.

The peacebuilding and transitional justice practice have gradually demonstrated that victims can become active shapers of policies that have an impact on peace outcomes such as social welfare, reparations, amnesties, and lustrations, among

others. Through their victim associations, victims have started to function as important pressure and interest groups with direct involvement in politics and policies (Barton-Hronešová 2020; Clarke 2019; Rombouts 2004). In many cases, rather than competing over definitions of who is the “true victim,” they have unified in coalitions to jointly pressure domestic authorities and international peacebuilders to consider their propositions and needs. Such needs have ranged from public recognition and educational reforms to social welfare. Most notably in the Colombian peace process, victim delegations took part in the Havana talks in 2014–15. Their contributions to the design and long-term sustainability of the negotiated peace process were significant. According to Brett (2018), victims assumed the role of active peacebuilders with important consequences for the legitimacy and transparency of the entire process. Their inclusion in the discussions also made the victim delegates appreciate the compromised nature of any peace. In order to appease the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), i.e., one of the main victimizers, and establish long-term peace, certain amnesty provisions had to be made. The invited victims drew a red line at the most egregious human rights violations and crimes and insisted on prosecutions. At the same time, they were behind the details of the proposed Victims’ Law, which included a series of transitional justice and reconciliation mechanisms. Most of their suggestions were accepted in the deliberative peace process. As Brett argues, their inclusion led to a “rehumanization” of both perpetrators and victims, ultimately allowing for a more peaceful outcome in the long run (Brett 2018, p. 297).

Such developments did not happen overnight. Instead, they were affected by the previous global advocacy work of organizations supporting victims and local charities, and the gradual realization that war victims have a significant bearing on how societies come together after violence. In reality, victims as collective agents gathered in associations are often able to effect change via domestic or transnational advocacy efforts (Gready 2004; Keck and Sikkink 1998; Risse et al. 1999). Some previous mobilization work in

Latin America bore witness that victims’ voices can be effective in changing public attitudes to victimhood and corresponding policies. The resonant campaigns of the *Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo* focused on information and truth about the disappearance of their children in Argentina, leading to some path-breaking developments not only in domestic approaches to reconciliation but also forensic investigations (Abreu Hernandez 2002). Similarly, in the Balkans, vigorous efforts of the mainly female survivors of Srebrenica in Bosnia resulted in the creation of the International Commission for the Missing Persons (ICMP) in 1996. ICMP has since become a critical contributing factor to appeasing victims by finding and identifying primary victims’ bodies in over 40 war-torn countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Cameroon, Namibia, and Kosovo (Wagner and Kešetović 2016).

Yet similar to domestic political engagements, victims’ mobilization has the potential to undermine post-war peace in fragile situations. As peacebuilding is still primarily concerned with stability and physical security, considerations for appeasing victims have gradually come to the forefront of peacebuilding. Similar to veterans, who have long been considered as potential key spoilers of peace (and thus groups to pacify), victims have become important war-generated collective groups to consider and integrate in peacebuilding processes. As women generally form the majority of surviving victims, female victims in particular have entered the peacebuilding agenda in a much more prominent fashion than previously. Since the path-breaking 2000 UN Resolution 1325 “Women, Peace, and Security” (UN Security Council 2000), seven additional UN resolutions (1820 in 2009, 1888 in 2009, 1889 in 2010, 1960 in 2011, 2106 in 2013, 2122 in 2013, 2242 in 2015, 2467 in 2019, and 2493 in 2019) were adopted, and a specialized office for women only (UN Women) was created by the UN in 2010. This demonstrated the realization that if left unaddressed, victims grievances can pose serious peace challenges, and that as women tend to be disproportionately targeted in wars, they need to be directly included in peacebuilding processes (McLeod 2019).

Local organizations responded to these developments. From Bosnia to Iraq, new victim associations for victims were set up, demanding a variety of transitional justice tools, a clear say in the peace order, and global developments vis-à-vis victims. For example, in Iraq, the diaspora organization *Yazda* of the persecuted Yazidi community has actively shaped global approaches to war-time sexual violence. One of the survivors Nadia Murad won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2018 for her campaigns to protect victims of rape (BBC 2018). Meyers calls victims such as Murad as “heroic” as they individually stand out and speak on behalf of the wider community of victims with a potential to change victim-centric attitudes and policies (Meyers 2016, p. 36). Such active engagements finally put victims on par with other advocacy groups and as important voices and stakeholders in peacebuilding. While the process of asserting their roles has been troubled, tortuous, and is still finding its ground, it is clear that victims are currently one of the key stakeholders of peacebuilding and conflict management. Their rights and their needs are not only anchored in international law but are vigorously supported by the media and popular culture around the world. Indeed, contemporary peacebuilding is no longer about security and institutions only, it is also about a meaningful integration of key stakeholders, among which victims unequivocally belong.

Summary

The three key roles of victims outlined in this contribution are only the beginning of the currently changing and increasingly more prominent roles of victims in peacebuilding. Victims – i.e., surviving individuals of war crimes and violence as well as those killed – were initially included in post-war reconstruction processes as an afterthought. They were generally perceived through the lens of trauma and passivity instead of empowerment and agency. Their initial key roles were reduced to provisions of information (whereabouts and names of potential perpetrators, recognition of perpetrators on the witness stand, etc.)

and later as collective symbols of wider societal or national suffering. It is only with the rise of individual and collective human rights and transitional justice’s turn toward more restorative approaches to justice negotiations that victims have assumed a much more prominent role in post-war orders. They have become important bearers of not only national collective memories but also active policy influences through their mobilization activities and advocacy campaigns. From Colombia to Iraq, victims have become important interlocutors to peacebuilders such as the UN and global charities and key public opinion shapers. While some of their new roles and activities have been clearly peace-inducing and contributed to wider future societal reckoning, others have especially in the short-run increased fragility, leading to polarization, tensions, and creations of victimhood hierarchies.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Conflict, Memory, and Memory Activism: Dealing with Difficult Pasts](#)
- ▶ [Gender Justice and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Hybrid Courts and Transitional Justice](#)
- ▶ [Memorials and Transitional Justice](#)
- ▶ [Silence and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Socioeconomic Justice and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Transitional Justice and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Women’s Community Peacebuilding in the Occupied Palestinian Territories \(OPT\)](#)
- ▶ [Youth and Peacebuilding](#)

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Rule of Law

► Police Reform and Peacebuilding

Rule of Law as a Component of Peace Operations

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Definition

This chapter provides an overview of the integration of rule of law programming into UN peacekeeping operations, a process that has evolved considerably in the last two decades as UN missions have taken on increasingly sovereignty intrusive tasks such as the protection of civilians.

Introduction

The UN has long supported programs designed to strengthen the rule of law in countries susceptible to or recovering from violent conflict. The question of what exactly is meant by rule of law and where it fits into modern Peace Operations is more complicated, though, and has evolved considerably at a both practical and analytical level.

UN rule of law programming in mission settings has expanded considerably in recent years to address previously neglected areas. It has also sought to move beyond responding to the immediate, operational risks facing UN Peace Operations to tackling underlying causes of conflicts and strengthening conflict prevention.

This process has been largely driven by the experiences of the UN's own field operations. There is little contemporary academic literature analyzing these developments, which can mainly be found in the "grey literature" of mission reports, evaluations, and lesson-learned documents. Given the high turnover of mission staff in UN Peace Operations and other humanitarian emergencies, institutional memory is often weak, and there is a need to discuss and disseminate these developments more widely. This chapter will trace the origins of rule of law programming within the history of UN Peace Operations,

describe its current structure, and highlight some of the challenges that it is likely to face for the future.

Defining the Rule of Law

The rule of law is defined in the World Justice Project Rule of Law Index 2019 as consisting of a framework of laws and institutions that embodies four universal principles: accountability, just laws, open government, and accessible and impartial dispute resolution (World Justice Project 2019). This updates and simplifies a definition from a UN Secretary-General's 2004 report (UN Doc. S/2004/616, 3 August 2004) that it:

refers to a principle of governance in which all persons, institutions and entities, public and private, including the State itself, are accountable to laws that are publicly promulgated, equally enforced and independently adjudicated and which are consistent with international human rights norms and standards. It requires, as well, measures to ensure adherence to principles of supremacy of law, equality before the law, accountability to the law, fairness in the application of law, separation of powers, participation in decision-making, legal uncertainty, avoidance of arbitrariness and procedural and legal transparency.

While other definitions may differ slightly, it is widely agreed that strengthening the rule of law through, for example, ensuring that people have access to courts and that crime is effectively controlled brings both direct and indirect benefits to all societies. It has been described as the "foundation for communities of justice, opportunity, and peace—underpinning development, accountable government, and respect for fundamental rights" (World Justice Project 2019).

This might reasonably be considered a "maximalist" definition of the concept of rule of law programming, including goals such as social justice and community empowerment, which for much of the world remains, at best, work in progress. Such programs did, however, attract significant international donor support with the ending of the Cold War and the triumph of "Western" concepts of rule of law based on international human rights and neoliberal economic

restructurings from the 1990s onward. The UN Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank, and other UN agencies were major recipients of such funding, and UN Country Teams (UNCTs) now have considerable experience implementing rule of law programs in accordance with the above principles. The debates surrounding these definitions around law programming, however, are clearly located within the sphere of those concerning long-term international development.

It is less clear, from a definitional perspective, how rule of law programming fits into UN Peace Operations in post-conflict and crisis situations. Here a more “minimalist” definition focused on the legality of rules and the restoration of order in countries experiencing or emerging from violent conflicts is likely to be seen as a more urgent priority. In one highly critical report, published in 2005, for example, Hurwitz and Studdard criticized the “absence of overarching and coherent strategic frameworks and planning related to the sequencing of rule of law programs within peacebuilding initiatives” (Hurwitz and Studdard 2005). They argued that “measures aimed at longer-term development reforms—through administrative laws and processes, anti-corruption strategies, property, land and housing rights, and natural resource management—are still comparatively neglected in UN approaches.” As will be discussed below, the UN has more recently addressed these criticisms in its programming, which can very much still be seen as work in progress.

The very first UN peacekeeping missions included “rule of law” activities although this was originally done in a rather haphazard manner. The mandate of the UN Emergency Force (UNEF) sent to respond to the Suez crisis in 1956 included “measures to protect civilian life and public and private property” (UN Doc. A/3943, 9 October 1958). UNEF was “authorized to apprehend infiltrators and persons approaching the demarcation line in suspicious circumstances” and to hand them over to the local police “after interrogation.” The first international police officer was deployed to the UN Mission in the Congo (MONUC) in 1960, and civilian police officers

have regularly been deployed on missions after that, mainly to monitor and report on the behavior of the local police (Osland 2019). The UN missions to Namibia (UNTAG) and Cambodia (UNTAC) in 1989 and 1992 explicitly took on rule of law capacity building tasks that included both monitoring and training law enforcement officials, including police, judges, and prison guards. UNTAC even created an office of the Special Prosecutor to try certain crimes and built the first UN “detention facility,” although this will probably not be remembered as a good practice model (Doyle 1995). (Two suspects were detained but flaws in the Cambodian criminal justice system meant the UN was unable to hand them over to local courts, and so they ended up as prisoners of the UN without habeas corpus rights or trial.)

The UN’s first conceptual attempt to define the relationship between rule of law programming and its Peace Operations can be found in the 1992 Secretary-General’s report, *Agenda for Peace* (UN Doc. A/47/277 – S/24111, 17 June 1992). This chronologically sequenced UN efforts to promote peace, beginning with preventive diplomacy, followed by peacemaking (negotiating ceasefires and peace treaties), peacekeeping (monitoring the implementation of these agreements), and then peacebuilding (mine clearance, Demobilization, Disarmament, and Reintegration (DDR), Security Sector Reform (SSR), elections, justice sector capacity building, and good governance reform). Peacekeeping had traditionally been understood as inter-positioning peacekeepers between the parties to a conflict, de-escalating tensions, and building confidence in a ceasefire or peace agreement. Peacebuilding aimed at addressing the root causes of the conflict and removing the reasons why it occurred in the first place. Peacekeepers might, on occasion, act as “early peacebuilders,” but there was, at least in theory, a clear distinction between the two types of activity.

The progress from “war” to “peace,” however, is almost always both nonlinear and complex, and UN missions from the 1990s onward have been forced to respond accordingly. As an ad hoc mechanism for managing crises and conflicts, Peace Operations have constantly had to adapt,

given their limited means and ever more complex environments, which rarely fit into definitional neatness (De Coning 2019). “Peacebuilding” could and often did take place simultaneously with “peacemaking” and “peacekeeping.” Indeed, it is doubtful if there is really any need for the type of analytical distinctions set out between them above. Subjective factors in the field also played a huge part in shaping responses, such as the intensity and duration of the conflict, the leadership of and funding available for UN missions, the presence or absence of non-UN agencies, media interest, donor fatigue, or sudden changes in other international priorities. As de Coning notes (De Coning 2018a):

The kind of peacebuilding activities that were undertaken by peacekeeping operations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Sierra Leone, and Haiti gradually expanded over the last two decades to include: supporting trust- and confidence-building among the parties to a peace or political process; national dialogue initiatives; reviewing or drafting new constitutions; supporting transitional justice and national reconciliation processes; supporting reforms of, and capacity building for, rule of law and security institutions; supporting the development of local mechanisms for conflict resolution and reconciliation; disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR); protecting and promoting international human rights laws and standards; among many other areas.

Many of these types of activities have long been understood as rule of law programming and conducted by UN agencies, coordinated through the UNCTs. Peace Operations, managed by the UN Secretariat, however, can often access funds more easily than UN agencies, who depend on voluntary funding, so there were pragmatic self-interested reasons why more and more of these types of activities were added to peacekeeping mandates over the years. It is now generally accepted that UN Peace Operations will take on a nexus of rule of law issues such as reform of security institutions, the extension of state authority, and the capacity of sub-national authorities to prevent and manage conflict. Typical tasks often include training and capacity building of the police and prison services, monitoring court procedures, inspecting prisons, reviewing criminal laws and procedures and more general

human rights training of public officials, and monitoring of the overall human rights situation. As is discussed in the next section, however, rule of law programming has taken on an increasingly important strategic significance as UN Peace Operations have increasingly had to confront issues surrounding protection, sovereignty, and the use of force.

Sovereignty and Protection

In 1999, the UN established the two most sovereignty-intrusive missions in its history: UNMIK in Kosovo and UNTAET in Timor Leste. (The UN mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) was established by Security Council Resolution 1244 of 10 June 1999; the UN Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) was established by Security Council Resolution 1272 of 25 October 1999.) The Security Council also began explicitly to insert Protection of Civilians (POC) tasks into mission mandates giving them Chapter VII powers to use force in order to do so. Both of these developments had profound implications for the integration of rule of law programming into UN Peace Operations, although these were not perhaps immediately apparent at the time.

Both UNMIK and UNTAET were confronted with the dilemma of administering territories whose ultimate constitutional status was still in flux and so were given executive powers for the transitional period, including full responsibility for enforcing the rule of law. The Security Council resolution creating UNMIK specified that its responsibilities would include “protecting and promoting human rights (UN Security Council Resolution 1244, 10 June 1999, Article 11 (j)),” while one of the earliest regulations of UNTAET stated that “all persons undertaking public duties or holding public office in East Timor shall observe internationally recognized human rights standards (UNTAET Regulation No. 1999/1).” Both missions were also granted immunity in line with the UN’s standard practice (UNMIK promulgated regulation UNMIK/REG/47/2000, 18 August 2000).

Confronted with considerable ongoing discrimination and violence against Kosovo's non-Albanian ethnic minorities and a weak judicial system, widely seen as politically biased and pliant, UNMIK and its accompanying security force (KFOR) frequently resorted to using executive orders to overturn judicial decisions, particularly in relation to detentions (*Saramati v. France, Germany and Norway* (Appl. No. 78166/01), (Grand Chamber) Decision on Admissibility, 2 May 2007). One observer, who served in the mission, noted that its civilian and military components "declared themselves above regulation, overturning even the most basic of human rights laws, that of requiring all detention to be by order of a judge" (Baldwin 2006). Two others commented that "UNMIK's and KFOR's executive actions have clearly contravened human rights standards but remained beyond any legal challenge" (Marshall and Inglis 2003). Amnesty International claims that both UNMIK police and the Kosovo national police, whom they were mentoring, contravened international standards on the use of force by beating and tear-gassing peaceful demonstrators and shooting people dead in circumstances that were not properly investigated (AI Index: EUR 70/015/2006). Both KFOR and UNMIK police failed to protect minority communities, and the Kosovo national police may have participated in some violent attacks against them. On one occasion UNMIK police shot dead two civilians with plastic bullets so hardened with age that they penetrated the skulls of their victims (Benner et al. 2011).

The Security Council resolution which established UNTAET also specified that it was "endowed with overall responsibility for the administration of East Timor and will be empowered to exercise all legislative and executive authority, including the administration of justice (Security Council Resolution 1272 of 25 October 1999, para 1)." Similar concerns were also raised about UNTAET actual rule of law record (Goldstone 2004; Martin and Mayer-Rieckh 2005). An Amnesty International report published in July 2001, for example, noted that:

Detainees have gone for weeks or even months before having access to legal counsel . . . At the same time, the UN Civilian police (Civpol), currently responsible for law enforcement in East Timor, have not always responded effectively where civil disturbances have occurred and in some cases its members have committed violations themselves in their efforts to prevent such disturbances . . . illegal detention and torture . . . have not been effectively addressed. (AI Index: ASA 57/001/2001)

The experience of UNMIK and UNTAET was a chastening one for all concerned and led to a number of safeguards being introduced to try to ensure that the UN itself complied with the rule of law standards set out in international law (See, for example, Kosovo Human Rights Advisory Panel, *N.M. and Others v. UNMIK Case No. 26/08*, Opinion 26 February 2016). Nevertheless, there is a clear problem of subjecting the UN to the four universal rules of law principles described above of accountability, just laws, open government, and accessible and impartial dispute resolution, given the difficulties of judicially reviewing actions of the Security Council or challenging the UN's own immunity (Wood 2006; Matheson 2006; De Wet 2004; Orakhelashvili 2007).

The UN has subsequently opted for a much "lighter footprint" approach in all missions and has never again taken on executive powers and governance functions (Brahimi 2007). (A golden principle for international assistance should be that everyone shall do everything possible to work him or herself out of a job as early as possible. This is, in very simple terms, the principle of a "light footprint.") In the same year that UNMIK and UNTAET were established, however, the Security Council gave its first explicit POC mandate to a UN mission, UNAMSIL, in Sierra Leone. This authorized the use of force by peacekeeping soldiers to protect civilians from grave violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law; a practice was to become increasingly common as the 2000s wore on. POC was not initially considered a significant departure from "traditional peacekeeping" and so has been the subject of very little academic scrutiny. It primarily developed through Security Council resolutions and policy guidance

from the DPKO based on the experiences of its field missions, but these became increasingly detailed in spelling out POC tasks and making it a priority for missions (Foley 2017a).

The inclusion of POC mandates in UN peacekeeping missions was to significantly change how the UN came to regard rule of law issues as fitting into its Peace Operations strategies. At the most basic practical level, peacekeeping soldiers need to know under what circumstances they can legally use lethal force for POC purposes, and the legal regime governing arrest and detention procedures of people who may be threatening the civilians the mission is mandated to protect. When UN Peace Operations are working in support of the host state police and armed forces, they also have a positive obligation to ensure that these fully respect the rule of law norms contained in international law (UN Doc. A/67/775-S/2013/110, 5 March 2013). There are no easy answers to the dilemmas that these issues raise, and the failures of missions to deal with them have been well documented elsewhere (Foley 2010). As POC has been increasingly defined as the main priority of most UN Peace Operations, rule of law programming has become increasingly central to the fulfilment of mission mandates.

Joined-Up Thinking

In December 2005, the UN created a Peacebuilding Commission, with a rule of law unit within its support office in response to recommendations made in two Secretary-General's reports *In Larger Freedom* and *A More Secure World* (UN Doc. A/59/2005). The commission was mandated to "bring together all relevant actors to marshal resources and to advise on and propose integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery" (Security Council Resolution 1645, 20 December 2005; and General Assembly Resolution 60/180, 20 December 2005).

A Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) was established in October 2006. The PBF aims to "provide for a more sustained engagement in support of countries emerging from conflict" and supports

"peacebuilding activities which directly contribute to post-conflict stabilization and strengthen the capacity of Governments, national/local institutions and transitional or other relevant authorities." The PBF was created in response to widespread criticism that existing development finance was often "insufficient, slow and inflexible at critical moments of transition" (UN PBF, no date). Its aims include supporting:

programs and projects in the area of the rule of law in countries where a conflict analysis has identified this sector as an area of continuing tensions or a potential conflict trigger or where the legitimate structures for settling legal disputes need to be restored, following the return to peace. As a result, PBF projects in this area tend to focus on legal reform and on strengthening the national and local judicial institutions and police . . . The objective of this support is to ensure that the targeted legal institutions and entities are effective, inclusive and accountable to laws that are publicly promulgated, equally enforced, independently adjudicated and consistent with international human rights standards. There is a particular emphasis on supporting human rights, including through harmonisation of existing constitutional, legal and policy frameworks; human rights education and training; strengthening capacity of and access to judicial and law enforcement systems; monitoring and protecting human rights; and supporting transitional justice mechanisms. (Rule of Law Homepage)

The PBF aims to provide "impactful, jump start or bridge financing for UN preventive and peacebuilding programmes" and claims that it has developed a comparatively higher risk tolerance to other funds through a "rigorous, proactive approach to risk management." Reform of rule of law institutions is, nevertheless, described as a "long-term endeavour, and one which must be rooted in inclusive political agreements to ensure the popular legitimacy of the reforms."

At the same time, DPO is deploying increasing number of police officers and civilian rule of law experts to its missions, both to build host state capacity in as part of the mission exit strategy but also to directly implement rule of law projects (Hills 2009). There are currently around 11,500 police officers, deployed in 16 out of 23 UN operations and drawn from 87 UN member states (UN Police Homepage). Most of these are deployed in Formed Police Units (FPUs), each

of which consists of approximately 140 police officers, trained and equipped to act as a cohesive unit.

The first FPU's were deployed in UNMIK and UNTAET where, as discussed above, they had full responsibility for enforcing the law. FPU's continue to operate in "high-risk" environments, and their functions include public order management, protection of the UN, and support to national police operations. Along with the FPU's individual police officers are often deployed as advisors on missions and support the reform, restructuring and rebuilding of domestic police and other law enforcement agencies through training and financial support. In some cases, UN police are deployed in specialist teams trained to investigate issues like transnational crime or sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) or to develop community-oriented policing in refugee or internally displaced person camps (Osland 2019). Depending on their mission mandate, UN police officers may have power to arrest, detain, and interrogate criminal suspects. They may also have power to detain UN international civilian and military personnel accused of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) (Foley and Blackmore 2016).

Alongside police officers DPO is also deploying thousands of specialist civilian staff to UN missions, including weapons experts and de-miners, judges, prosecutors and defense lawyers, prison and probation officers, SSR advisers, and DDR specialists. As well as providing advice and support for long-term host state capacity development, these staff are also expected to help missions directly fulfil their POC mandates. As the *Capstone Doctrine*, of 2008, stated:

Most multi-dimensional United Nations peacekeeping operations are now mandated by the Security Council to protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence. The protection of civilians requires concerted and coordinated action among the military, police and civilian components of a United Nations peacekeeping operation and must be mainstreamed into the planning and conduct of its core activities. United Nations humanitarian agencies and NGO partners also undertake a broad range of activities in support of the protection of civilians. Close coordination with these actors is, therefore, essential. (UN Capstone Doctrine 2008)

The assumption in this report that the work of humanitarian agencies, who are bound by principles of independence and neutrality, can be "coordinated" by the UN for POC purposes raises some principled objections (Hodge 2011). There is little doubt, however, that, as the report asserts, the creation of "a secure and stable environment while strengthening the State's ability to provide security, with full respect for the rule of law and human rights" is now considered by the UN to be a part of its "Core Business" (Capstone Doctrine 2008). In their 2005 report, Hurwitz and Studdard argued that the UN is increasingly accepting "International programs to support the rule of law are now regarded as important components of both the security and development agendas." They noted that:

rule of law institutions are indispensable for internal security and law enforcement purposes, and to ensure the transparency, accountability and control of security forces such as the police and the military. While the judiciary is the primary institution concerned with the rule of law, the inclusion of rule of law assistance as part of integrated conflict management approaches has reinforced pre-existing linkages with governance and security institutions, and further justifies the need to situate rule of law reforms and programs within a broader analytical framework. (Hurwitz and Studdard 2005)

One problem they identified was the huge array of actors ranging from private sector consulting firms, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), academic institutions, individual governments and multilateral organizations, the UN, and regional development banks that have all engaged, with differing approaches, in programs that seek to enhance the rule of law and that the "sheer number of disparate projects" being implemented meant that "greater coherence in rule of law programming still remains a distant objective" (ibid). The experiences of UN-mandated operations in countries experiencing violent insurgencies – such as Somalia, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Libya – has also posed acute questions about the way rule of law programming can contribute, or fail to contribute, to the re-establishment of state authority. As the Security Council has become increasingly detailed and ambitious in the POC mandates that it gives to its "traditional" peacekeeping

operations, rule of law programming has also been seen as providing a strategic contribution to the creation of a “protective environment” for civilians.

Since 2010 DPO has produced a variety of policy papers and guidance that stress the need for capacity building of state institutions to enhance the protection of civilians. Its first Operational Concept on POC conceived it as encompassing three “tiers” of activities: (i) protection through political process, (ii) protection from physical violence, and (iii) establishment of a protective environment (Draft Operational Concept 2010; Policy on the Protection of Civilians 2015; Implementing Guidelines for Military Components 2015). In response to criticism from a UN evaluation which stated that “force is almost never used to protect civilians under attack” (UN Doc A/68/787, 7 March 2014), it stated that “the approach of the report over emphasizes one element of military action and devalues the importance of political solutions and other aspects of the comprehensive approach peacekeeping operations take in implementing their protection mandate.”

As UN Peace Operations have been established in increasingly insecure and hostile environments, however, the notion of UN peacekeepers acting as “early peacebuilders” has become increasingly difficult to sustain. As de Coning notes (De Coning 2018b):

In the 1990s and early 2000s, two-thirds of UN peacekeepers were deployed in places like Burundi, Cambodia, and Mozambique that implemented comprehensive peace agreements in the aftermath of civil wars. The focus of these missions, and others at the time such as in Kosovo and East Timor, was on peacebuilding and state-building. Today, in contrast, two thirds of peacekeepers are deployed in missions where the main focus is on the protection of civilians, amidst ongoing violent conflict, in places like the Central African Republic (CAR), DRC, Mali, and South Sudan. UN peacekeeping has experienced a significant shift away from conflict resolution, where peace consolidation and peacebuilding were the main activities, to conflict management, characterized by protection and stabilization activities.

The UN has never definitively explained what it means by the phrase “stabilization,” although four

of its largest missions – MONUSCO, MINUSMA, MINUSCA, and MINUSTAH – have the word in their official titles. There is, however, a vast and growing literature on the concept, which essentially defines it as operations to help states in crisis to restore order and stability in the absence of a peace agreement, by using force as well as political, developmental, and other means (Muggah 2014). Rule of law programming may, therefore, sometimes be implemented in the context of anti-terrorist or counterinsurgency operations in conflict-prone or post-conflict countries where state institutions are weak or inaccessible and the state’s legitimate authority is strongly contested by significant sections of the population (De Coning 2018a). This gives an added complexity to long-standing dilemmas in rule of law programming, such as the relationship between state and customary law, gender equality, minority rights, legal pluralism, and corruption (Foley 2017b).

At the same time, as financial pressures on UN Peace Operations grow, rule of law programming may in some cases be seen as a cheaper alternative to full missions. For example, in 2017, the military component of MINUSTAH was withdrawn, to be replaced with the UN’s first “justice support” mission (MINUJUSTH), composed of up to 7 FPU (980 personnel) and 295 individual police officers (Security Council Report 2017).

Coordinating Rule of Law Programming in UN Peace Operations

It was against this general background that UN Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions (OROLSI) and the Global Focal Point for the Rule of Law (GFP) were created in 2007 and 2012, respectively. The OROLSI supports rule of law components in Peace Operations and special political missions, through expertise and integrated guidance, as they work with national authorities to protect civilians, extend State authority, re-establish law and order, and stabilize conflict and post-conflict situations. It currently includes five components: Police Division; Justice and Corrections Service; UN Mine Action

Service; Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) Section; and Security Sector Reform (SSR) Unit. OROLSI is currently led by Alexandre Zouev, the Assistant Secretary-General for Rule of Law and Security Institutions in the Department of Peace Operations (DPO) (Peacekeeping Homepage/OROLSI 2019).

The GFP was created in 2012 and is co-chaired by DPO and UNDP. It also includes other UN agencies and departments such as the UN Office for Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the UN Officer of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), UN Women, and the Executive Office of the Secretary-General (EOSG). GFP coordinating platforms and working group arrangements are established both at headquarters and in the field to serve as a single entry point for joint up rule of law assistance to host governments and other national actors in conflict-affected countries and to achieve better results and coherence drawing on the expertise of the contributing agencies. Together OROLSI and GFP provide the main coordination of and support for rule of law programming in UN Peace Operations.

In the Secretary-General's report on *Restructuring of the Peace and Security Pillar of the Organization*, which was published in October 2017, the purpose of OROLSI was described as complementing the work currently being done by the GFP. Its task is to “ensure systematic collaboration with all relevant United Nations and non-United Nations actors . . . with the single political-operational structure to support stabilization and help to carry out protection-related tasks in field missions, as well as capacity-building and advisory functions . . . The location of the police and military components in one department would help to maintain the necessary links in planning, force generation, deployment and protection-related activities” (UN Doc A/72/525, 13 October 2017). The restructuring was also designed to “align the peace and security pillar more closely with the development and human rights pillars” and to change the “working culture” to ensure coherence and coordination across the peace and security pillar.

This restructuring came into effect on 1 January 2019 with the creation of DPO, out of the previous Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), and the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) out of the previous Department of Political Affairs (DPA). It was carried out against a background of the wind-down of missions in Haiti and Côte d'Ivoire but with challenges facing large new UN missions in Mali and the Central African Republic renewed conflict in South Sudan and the continuing long simmering conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Darfur. Its context was also shaped by the growing financial pressures facing UN peacekeeping due to big budget cuts imposed by the US administration headed by President Donald Trump (Boutellis and Novosseloff). (The General Assembly's Fifth Committee reduced the peacekeeping budget to \$7.3 billion for 15 peacekeeping missions for the year starting July 1, 2017, from \$7.87 billion the previous year and the all-time high of \$8.27 billion in 2015/2016.) More positively, it provided an opportunity for the UN to respond to three important reviews of its own working practices carried out in 2015: the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO); the review of the UN's women, peace, and security agenda; and the review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Some observers have described the set of reforms that the UN has adopted in response as being likely to “instil some of the most radical changes to the UN peace and security architecture” in its recent history (Cliffe and Novosseloff 2017).

OROLSI is an integrated part of DPO, and its main function is to coordinate the deployment of rule of law specialists in Peace Operations as well as non-mission contexts. It is a system-wide service provider in mission and non-mission settings and deploys approximately 15,000 personnel globally. It has standing in-house capacities with expertise in policing, justice, and corrections that can deploy teams within 7 days to support new operations, in crisis response situations, and to help provide surge capacity to missions. It can also generate other deployable capacities through rosters, rapid reaction teams, and similar standby

arrangements. As well as deploying to “traditional peacekeeping missions,” it aims to increase the capacity of UN Peace Operations in the areas of conflict prevention, prevention of violent extremism, counter terrorism, stabilization and peace sustainment, and local/community dynamics (Peacekeeping Homepage/OROLSI 2019).

OROLSI usually works side-by-side with national authorities and aims to provide a full cycle of related activities, from doctrine development, capacity building, community liaison, training, and generation of personnel to technical expertise, lessons learned, and transition planning. OROLSI can also deploy specialist teams of experts such as one on sexual violence in conflict, which focusses its efforts on strengthening the capacity of national rule of law and justice actors, including in specialized areas such as criminal investigation and prosecution; collection and preservation of evidence; military justice system investigation and prosecution; criminal and procedural law reform; and protection of victims, witnesses, and justice officials.

The GFP was created in 2012 and brings together both UN agencies and departments that deploy during Peace Operations as well as those involved in long-term development. As its lengthy full name indicates, there was significant internal initial debates about its scope and composition. It is jointly convened by DPO and UNDP, and, as discussed in the introduction, its key partners include OHCHR, UN Women, UNODC, and UNHCR. It essentially functions as a forum for cooperation among agencies that retain their own mandates, functions, and reporting lines and it was created on a “cost neutral” basis, given the UN’s overall financial constraints. The idea behind the GFP is to strengthen the UNs’ ability to fill critical civilian capacity gaps in the aftermath of conflict, facilitate collaborative work from the early planning phase onward, leverage resources, draw on external assets, and avoid duplication of efforts aiming at joint implementation of programs and projects.

Given the newness of both organizations and in the context of an ongoing and significant restructuring of the management of the UN’s peace and security pillars, any assessment of

their effectiveness can only be tentative. The GFP has been the subject of two biannual reviews – one in 2014 and one in 2018 – which provide an overall and largely positive account of its activities. The most recent one found that it has “helped to leverage comparative advantage, position the UN to avoid setbacks during peace operation transitions, reduce duplication, and create efficiencies in the field” (Center on International Cooperation 2018). The review noted that the emphasis on “justice sector” reform (police, justice and corrections) failed to include “the close connection between police reform and strengthening other security services (police and military reforms, for example, are almost always closely linked).” It also did not give sufficient attention to “informal systems, broader access to justice/legal and judicial reform programs, and non-discrimination/equality before the law.” The review recommended forging closer links between the GFP and other units working on justice reform in UNDP with OROLSI and DPO. It also suggested reviving “dormant links with the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) and the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF)” as a matter of priority.

Conclusions and Challenges

Rule of law programming in UN Peace Operations has, like many other features of these operations, developed reactively as much as proactively, and this is crucial to understanding the organizational structures that deliver it. What they lack in “organizational neatness” may be compensated for by a responsiveness to the changing needs of field operations. A fair assessment of their effectiveness should be based on what they have dealt with these changing needs rather than an idealized conception of rule of law programming in the long-term development terms discussed above. These needs, and the political pressures surrounding them, will also, ultimately, shape the nature of both the programs themselves and the structures needed to deliver them.

Sometimes rule of law programs are introduced to deal with specific problems, such as land disputes in the context of large-scale refugee

return, where cadastral records are not reliable (see, e.g., Foley 2004). Since such disputes have the potential for sparking violent conflict, they demand responses more urgently than can be generated through long-term development programs. Insurgents often specifically target rule of law institutions – such as police, judges, court houses, and public record offices – specifically to weaken state authority. In some cases – such as Afghanistan and Sri Lanka – insurgent forces have established their own “justice systems” to enhance their own credibility and consolidate their support. (The author of this chapter set up legal aid programmes in both countries which had to deal with this dilemma.) A variety of justice “packages,” “rapid response initiatives,” and “standby deployments” have been developed for these types of situations by the UN and international donors in response, although the effectiveness of these varies considerably.

As discussed above, the UN is legally prohibited from providing support to state security forces that are violating norms contained international law – particularly refugee law, international humanitarian law, and international human rights law. This can present huge challenges for rule of law programming during UN Peace Operations where national forces are accused of such violations. Is it better to continue to provide support, through training and mentoring, to specific police and military units against whom such accusations have been levelled or to withdraw technical cooperation? What should be the limits of such constructive engagement and what alternatives are there to such strategies?

Similar dilemmas confront rule of law programs being implemented in countries where customary law institutions are more accessible and perceived to have more legitimacy than the official state justice sector. Is it better to work with such structures because affected communities consider them more “just” than official state structures, or does this risk legitimizing practices which are often not based on due process procedures and may discriminate against women and ethnic minority groups? A strong case can be made for doing both and working with informal mechanisms to remove

the practices that conflict with international standards while ensuring that their decisions and performance is monitored by state institutions, but donor support for this approach in the field has often been inconsistent and haphazard (Foley 2017b).

While the future of rule of law programming in UN Peace Operations is difficult to predict, some trends appear to be emerging. First of all, growing financial pressures on the UN are likely to keep bearing down on the need to cut the costs of Peace Operations, which makes programs that go beyond the basic, traditionally defined mandates more difficult to justify. Secondly, the growing influence of countries from the Global South, such as India and China, commensurate with their role as major Troop Contributing Countries, will probably make future Peace Operations less normative and sovereignty-intrusive. Concepts surrounding the rule of law and human rights in peacebuilding and state-building strategies that are perceived as “Western,” neoliberal, or simply too expensive to implement are likely to come under increasing pressure.

At the same time, rule of law programming may find it easier to access political and financial support within the UN system and among its external donor where it can be justified in POC or “stabilization” terms. The first obvious danger here is that rule of law programming may find itself increasingly integrated into counterinsurgency and counter-terrorist strategies where the success or failure of individual programs may become increasingly subordinated to the success or failure of these overall strategies.

More fundamentally, as the HIPPO review concluded: “UN peacekeeping missions, due to their composition and character, are not suited to engage in military counter-terrorism operations. They lack the specific equipment, intelligence, logistics, capabilities and specialized military preparation required, among other aspects” (UN Doc. A/70/95–S/2015/446, 17 June 2015). While it is “the prerogative of the Security Council to authorize UN peacekeeping operations to undertake enforcement tasks,” it urged “extreme caution” about them, as they involve a “fundamentally different type of posture that uses

offensive force to degrade, neutralize or defeat an opponent” (ibid).

In this context the debate about rule of law programming in UN Peace Operations cannot be conducted in isolation from the debate about the future of such operations themselves.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Conceptual Evolution of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Human Dignity and Transitional Justice](#)
- ▶ [Liberal Peace in Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Security Sector Reform After Armed Conflict](#)
- ▶ [Stabilization Operations and Their Relationship to Liberal Peacebuilding Missions](#)

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Russia and Frozen Conflicts in the Post-Soviet Space

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Synonyms

Post-Soviet conflict; Protracted conflict process

Definition

There is no unanimity in defining what frozen conflicts are and what distinguishes them from other types of conflictual situations in international politics. However, it has most often been used in academia to indicate international conflictual situations in which active armed conflict has been brought to an end, but no peace treaty has been achieved between the conflictual sides. The opposing parts in frozen conflicts are usually internationally recognized states on the one hand

and de facto states on the other. Hence, territorial issues, minority rights, and the autonomy/independence of ethnic groups constitute the core issues of frozen conflicts.

The notion emerged mainly following the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the birth of several successive states in Eastern Europe in the early 1990s. Since then, the concept of frozen conflict has been almost exclusively applied to protracted ethno-conflicts in contemporary post-Soviet space, in particular the ones in South Ossetia, Abkhazia, Transnistria, Nagorno-Karabakh, Chechnya, and Crimea to some extent. While the word has moved to indicate perennial territorial disputes that are neither regional nor temporal-specific (see, e.g., North Korea), the spatial dimension of frozen conflicts is still so bounded to Russia's role in the regional security architecture that these conflicts are occasionally defined as post-Soviet conflicts. In this sense, frozen conflicts became sensors and indicators of Russia's "intentions" and "strategies" in the security architecture of post-Soviet space. The reason for this connotation is that Russia is the central external actor and mediator in all the peace processes of frozen conflicts in the post-Soviet space, yet at the same time, its military presence and political involvement persuade observers to consider Russia a party to the conflicts. This interpretation has become clear during Ukraine's crisis as Western observers have interpreted Russia's meddling in Ukraine mainly as an attempt to set the scene for another protracted frozen-conflicts situation as part of the Kremlin's "revisionist line" against the European order.

Introduction

The main difficulty in defining frozen conflicts lies exactly in the adjective "frozen." This qualifier has often lead experts and decision-makers to think about frozen conflicts as static since violence was brought to an end and therefore as stable and irrelevant (Broers 2015). Similarly, Svante Cornell (2017) claims that "the concept of frozenness falsely connotes a lack of dynamism, as if the politics of the conflict are frozen

in time and space" (Cornell 2017, p. 2). For this reason, Dov Lynch (2005) has correctly argued that "the metaphor [of frozen] is misleading — the conflicts are not frozen. . . events have developed dynamically, and the situation on the ground today is very different from the context that gave rise to these conflicts in the late 1980s" (Lynch 2005, p. 192). Despite the fact that full-scale fighting had already stopped, the core issues of frozen conflicts have not been fully resolved as "the underlying interests of the formerly warring parties have neither been abated nor addressed" (Perry 2009, p.36); thus, the situation could easily slip back into violence (Shevchuk 2014). This is the case of Nagorno-Karabakh, where violence still erupts sporadically along the OSCE-monitored line of contact (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe 2011) and where a few days war flared up in April 2016 (for overview, see Broers 2016).

Within the semantic critique of the adjective "frozen," it is clear that the term "resolution," which refers to peace processes in general, cannot be used to describe the present study. In attempt to overcome this ambiguity, recent research offers two main trends that describe the scope and consequences of post-Soviet conflicts. On the one hand, scholars have focused on the policy mechanisms of "freezing" the violence. With this aims, Helena Rytövuori-Apunen (2019) recurs to the term "settlement" to indicate the outcome of a frozen conflict. Dispute and conflict settlement, which in Russian is translated as *uregulirovanie*, refer to a wide scope of policies meant to maintain peace and stability; yet, no conflict resolution is reached (Rytövuori-Apunen 2019). Some studies have moved into the direction of substituting frozen conflicts with other concepts. Smetana and Ludvík (2019) have adopted the term like "protracted conflict process" to indicate an independent subtype of international conflict with possibly unique internal logic. Similarly, Broers (2015) applies the "enduring rivalry" framework to the case of Nagorno-Karabakh meant as "a particular kind of interstate conflict known for its longevity and stability" (Broers 2015, p. 556). On the other hand, using the term "failed frozen conflicts," Tudoroiu (2016) looks at domestic

conditions by arguing that tensions mainly are due to local leaders trying to take advantage of the new international situation in order to promote their own group and private interests.

This last interpretation stresses the conflict “management” rather than its “settlement.” In particular, it presumes that the Kremlin, sometimes in cahoots with belligerent sides, has hidden strategies to wear out the enemy, which in this case would be the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU) competing with Russia for influence in the region. Such narrative poses itself with the discourse against the “imperial domain” of Russia, and it implies that Russia, being the patron of the separatist *de facto* states, can control outcomes of events in specific situations (see Caspersen 2009, pp. 47–53; Kolstø 2006, pp. 733–734). Herein, the concept of frozen conflict moved from its initial descriptive scope of a specific kind of international conflict to indicate a foreign policy strategy, especially when addressing Russia’s foreign policy.

This entry traces the main approaches to study Russia and frozen conflicts in the post-Soviet space, and it situates the concept into the broader research agenda of peace and conflict studies. The first subheading briefly presents the frozen conflicts of post-Soviet space, while it examines Russian policies and actions in the peace negotiation process. The second subheading discusses the main approaches used to interpret Russia’s role in settlement/management of frozen conflicts. Finally, the third subheading explores scholars’ attempts to unpack the dynamics of frozen conflicts with the aim to present a wider and sharper perspective of Russia’s role in regional security.

Russia’s Presence in the Frozen Conflicts: Similarity and Difference

During the 1990s the interest of the UN to develop regionally based peacekeeping created a favorable political climate for Russia’s efforts to negotiate the ceasefire agreements after violent ethno-conflicts erupted in several successive states of

the Soviet Union (Lynch 1999, pp. 19–30). At the same time, the ceasefire promoted by Russia remained shaky and needed to be repeatedly established as escalation and militarization occurred (Lynch 2005). The most crucial example of such precarious arrangement remains Georgia, where Russia had a leading role in the ceasefire with South Ossetia in 1992. In fact, the trilateral format for peacekeeping forces including the Georgian government, the delegation of South-Ossetian separatists, and the Russian Federation was officially under Russian command, while the OSCE was monitoring the ceasefire giving legitimacy to the operation (Jonson and Archer 1996). The predominance given to Russia in the peace arrangement was unacceptable for Georgia, and it contributed to the Russo-Georgian war in August 2008. In contrast, the ceasefire in Abkhazia in 1993 was more difficult to negotiate and to legitimate because Russia objected to any clear subordination of its peacekeepers to the UN (Lynch 1998).

In any of the cases, after bilateral treaties were signed in April 2009, Russia has acquired military outposts and has formal control of the borders of the Abkhazia and South Ossetia toward Georgia (Galkina and Popov 2016). In Transnistria, where the ceasefire was set in July 1992, Russia’s ability to maintain control over military issues was facilitated by its close relationship with the separatist region’s peacekeeping contingent. Importantly, the ceasefire is ensured by the presence on the ground of a military contingent of the Russian Federation together with those of Moldova and Transnistria (Kuznetsova 1992). Despite its limited scope, the military presence of Russia allows Tiraspol to maintain a strong position in relation to Chisinau regarding Moldova’s likely membership in NATO and EU (Rogstad 2018). The case of Nagorno-Karabakh differs from the other frozen conflicts because no peacekeeping mission could be established after the ceasefire in May 1992 due to the opposition from both Azerbaijan and the Western actors of giving Russia a dominant role for a likely mission (for overview, see e.g., de Waal 2005). Moreover, unlike South Ossetia, Abkhazia, and Transnistria, Nagorno-Karabakh does not have a close historical and cultural

connection with Russia (Minassian 2008); however, Russia is continuously there through the political, military, and economic support to Armenia (Ademmer 2017).

With the annexation of Crimea in 2014, international observers regarded it as the latest development in a series of events to set another frozen conflict (Burrige 2016; Blank 2016; Fischer 2016; Tudoroiu 2016). While it is true that the annexation of Crimea and the following conflict in Eastern Ukraine resemble dynamics of post-Soviet conflicts, several features make the Ukrainian case as well as exceptional: first, the presence of the Black Sea naval base in Sebastopol is Russia's largest military base outside its own territory and has guaranteed Russia the access to the Black Sea since the late eighteenth century; and second, the majority of people living in Crimea are Russian speakers, who maintain a strong historical and cultural relationship with Moscow (Sasse 2007). This ethnic arrangement had resulted in demands for territorial autonomy already in 1994, a "suspended" issue that eventually culminated in the annexation of 2014 after a referendum to be part of Russia took place (Harris 2020). Differently, before tensions escalated in 2014, issue between Kyiv and Donetsk and Luhansk *oblasti* had revolved not on independence or even autonomy but on the use of Russian as a state language, both locally and nationally, and on the federalization of Ukraine (Wilson 2016). Finally, the case of Chechnya in the 1990s is one of the most protracted of all the post-Soviet conflicts. Like other frozen conflicts, Chechnya involves secession and territorialized ethnicity. However, Chechnya, a mountainous region located in the North Caucasus, is the only among the post-Soviet conflicts to have occurred *within* the Russia Federation and where, being one of the opposing sides, Russia has persistently deployed its military power to resist secessionism (Hughes 2001). Although fights started already in 1999 after a peace treaty was signed by the belligerent sides in May 1997, Russia created the new constitution for Chechnya in 2003 according to which the Chechen Republic is one of federal subjects of the Russian Federation.

Realist and Ideational Interpretations

Russia's foreign policy has been interpreted according to several theories and approaches (see, e.g., Tsygankov 2018). At risk of oversimplification, this entry will focus on the two most popular ones that respectively take power (realist) and ideas (ideational) as Russia's sources of foreign policy. The most common interpretation of Russia's role in frozen conflicts and of its foreign policy in general derives from realist political theory according to which Russian policies are aimed to territorial expansion (Coyle 2018a; Kanet 2012; Blank 2008). Neorealism assumes that because of the inequality of capabilities and the anarchic nature of the world system (see Waltz 1959), powerful countries like Russia increase its relative power by invading their neighbors. Accordingly, the main goal of Russia's policies is, thus, to further its security interests and, subsequently, to decrease the influence of its rivals (Oldberg 2007). This interpretation understands international politics as a fight for survival in an anarchic system where no superior entity to nation-state is in charge. Hence, James Coyle (2018b) in his book *Russia's Border Wars and Frozen Conflicts* argues that the United States and NATO must prevent and counteract the "imperial-like" expansion of Russia's influence regionally and globally (see, e.g., Coyle 2018b, pp. 111–112, 198, 230, 272–273).

Within the realist school, a second component of explanations holds that Russia's agency in frozen conflicts is a function of external threats. In the Russian case, external threats come from neighbors' willingness to build closer ties with Western institutions like the EU, NATO, and even China as well as from political, economic, and military activity of external great powers. Accordingly, the closer the political ties between small neighboring states and external great powers, the more likely Russia will react assertively (Götz 2016; MacFarlane 2003, 2016). This line of reasoning draws on defensive realism, which holds that states tend to balance against dangerous concentration of power near their borders (Walt 1990; Waltz 1979). Thus, although Russia has

applied selectively the card of “invasion,” the Kremlin continues to pursue calculated destabilization of frozen conflicts with the aim of controlling internal and external developments in the affected states in order to prevent them from turning to the West (Fischer 2016).

In general, both interpretations argue that Russia attempts to maintain a sphere of influence in the former territory of USSR (Ferguson and Hast 2018; Ortmann 2018; Sussex 2012). Despite its success among academic scholars of international relations, the realist approach regarding Russia’s foreign policy is often criticized to rely on a selective (if not marginal) approach to history, paying little attention to events between Russia and other post-Soviet republics, which are tackled with superficiality (Kuzio and D’Anieri 2018, Chap. 1). Similarly, when speaking about Russia’s “imperial” in international politics, Mikhail Molchanov (2012) asserts that “while the rhetoric is often reminiscent of great power ambitions, the actual objectives and real achievements of Russian foreign policy are much more modest and limited in scope. [At the same time], it is not quite post-imperialist either [as] Moscow consistently attempts to exploit existing weaknesses of the ‘near abroad’ governments and gain unilateral material advantages for Russian business majors, as well as geopolitical advantages for the Russian state” (Molchanov 2012, pp. 34–35). Moreover, Susan Hast (2014) argues correctly that the notion of “sphere of influence” in Western academic and policy discourse refers especially to Russia’s foreign policy; yet, its meaning is taken for granted, and it remains undertheorized or outside any critical study (Hast 2014; p. 14; see also Costa Buranelli 2017; Leichtova 2014).

In contrast to realist interpretations, notions about Russia’s *idea* of great power status lead to explain Russia’s revisionism in the post-Soviet space as a result derived from state’s cultural dimension (Hopf 2002). Accordingly, Russia acts as a spoiler in regional security of the post-Soviet space in order to defend Russia’s image of great power and its ancient values such as Slavic Brotherhood and Eurasianism that embody a civilization

in its own right opposed to that of the West and the Western system of values (Gould-Davies 2019). The final goal of Russia’s foreign policy is to re-establish its great powerness, which vanished with the “loss” of the Coal War (Smith 2014; Urnov 2014). Therefore, Russia’s intervention in post-Soviet conflicts have been interpreted according to both Russia’s cultural uniqueness (Yanov 2013a, b) and attempts of Russia to obtain great power’s status recognition by peer states (Forsberg 2014; Larson and Shevchenko 2010, 2014) and to gain a seat at the decision table (Ikenberry 2011). After 1989, Russia’s main goal was to engage with the global US-led liberal international order as the co-founders (not a subaltern) of a new political community, what could putatively be called a “Greater West” (for similar arguments, see White and Feklyunina 2014; Smith 2013). However, a number of Western military and political activities in the post-Soviet space perceived as humiliations resulted in Russia’s frustration related to the loss of great power status (Heller 2014) as well as on the emphasis of ideological and cultural superiority of Russia (see, e.g., Laruelle 2017; Tsygankov 2007, p. 7). This argument connects Russia’s *revanche* with its “defeat” in Europe. As Gerard Toal (2017) argues:

Russian geopolitical culture under Vladimir Putin became concertedly *revanchist* in conception and goal. That revanchism did not have a teleological territorial end: it was not about re-creating the territory of the Soviet Union or about expanding the territorial expanse of the Russian Federation. Instead, it was about restoring existing Russian state strength and territorial integrity. Ground zero for this project was Chechnya, Russia’s inner abroad, and it was Putin’s use of force there that launched his political career and gave impetus to the project of “making Russia great again.” (p. 280)

Although ideational factors have provided nuanced explanations for Russia’s foreign policy, they have been criticized for pre-given assumptions on Russia’s historical experience (see, e.g., Katzenstein and Weygandt 2017; Prozorov 2010). Hence, the picture still seems to be incomplete, leaving several questions and doubts about the very nature of Russia’s policies in frozen conflicts and the region.

Critical Approach and Reconceptualization

Tired of “[...]the hasty conclusions that so often accompany observations of Russian policies” which are commonly deduced by “rough historical analogies in order to construct continuity between past events and future,” Helena Rytövuori-Apunen (2019, p. 2) examines the factual and existential experience of Russia’s practices in frozen conflicts without the predominance of a priori theoretical frameworks (2019). Inspired by practice in international relations, this study shares Vincent Pouliot’s (2010) point of departure that focuses on relational issues between agents in international politics rather than on agents’ properties (2010, pp. 49, 96–98). In his study investigating the “missed opportunity” to incorporate Russia within a community of common security interests with the Western States, Pouliot (2010, Chaps. 5 and 6) shows how diplomacy has become a normal, though not self-evident, practice between the two former enemies. However, this fragile relationship is still subjected to ongoing symbolic power struggles: NATO’s Eastern enlargement resulted into a Russia’s “hysteresis” over Western unrecognition of its interests in the region. Within this framework, Rytövuori-Apunen (2019) researches Russia’s response in frozen conflicts across more than two decades through the analytical concept of “deep border,” which is meant as the *habitual practice* for Russia to establish and to consolidate its presence in another state with the argument that it has legitimate reasons – from right to protect to borders security – to handle internal dynamics of the latter. Such claim collides with norms of sovereignty and territorial integrity from the international community resulting an inevitable disaccord with the West over the position that Russia should assume in the post-Soviet space (Rytövuori-Apunen 2019). The importance of this approach relies in its critical posture toward the tendency to impose similarity as a model and in its proposal to use similarities to unfold difference.

With a similar aim to escape the existing biases that burden the concept of frozen conflicts within peace and conflict studies literature, Smetana and

Ludvík (2019) redefine frozen conflicts by outlining “a cyclical understanding” of their dynamics (Smetana and Ludvík 2019, p. 8). Unlike other types of international conflictual situations, a frozen conflict undergoes a periodical resumption of mutual relations between the opposing sides: either toward diplomatic negotiations or re-escalation toward use of armed force, which Smetana and Ludvík call, respectively, “peaceful thawing” and “violent thawing” (2019, p. 8). In the cyclical nature of this conflictual dynamic, external factors such as the interests of powerful third parties may either prevent a successful transformation of frozen conflicts (i.e., stable peace) (Ditrych 2019) or fail to address the interests of local actors (Bláhová 2019). Despite their epistemological differences, the two approaches represent a novelty in the way to look and interpret frozen conflicts as well as power and security in general. The first argues that we can know about agency or actor – Russia in this case – through the regularity of actions that it shows or which relates to it and consequently gives them a pattern (see e.g., Bueger 2018, Chap. 3). The second provides ground for a systematic empirical inquiry into frozen conflicts dynamics. A practice explanation of strategic interaction of actors involved within the cyclical nature of frozen conflict dynamics has important implications for future research on dispute resolution and international security more broadly.

Summary

The term frozen conflict has not a clear connotation both among decision-makers and policy professionals and in the media discourse on international politics. While the term has referred first to a conflictual outcome exclusively of the post-Soviet space and has been later extended to other geographic areas, it has gradually shifted to indicate a distinct foreign policy strategy promoted by great powers to halt others’ influence in the region. Particularly in the case of Russia in the aftermath of Ukraine’s crisis, Western observers have looked at Russia’s policy in the region as an attempt to set the scene for another

protracted frozen-conflicts situation similar to those of the early 1990s.

This entry has discussed the main approaches used to study Russia's foreign policy in the frozen conflicts of the post-Soviet space. While accumulation of power as well as ideas provides valid arguments for explaining Russia's behavior as main external actor in the peace negotiations, these theoretical approaches tend to impose similarity as a model without considering the peculiarities of each frozen conflict. At the same time, in the necessity to overcome spatial and temporal limits of the common understanding of the term, scholars within peace and conflict studies have traced a common cyclical path of frozen conflicts. Drawing on the novelty of these arguments, a future research could investigate the diplomatic practice adopted by both opposing sides and by patron states to explain what happens at the critical junction when the "thawing" results in conflict resolution or instead the process reaches its peak without resolution and the conflict refreezes.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Collective Security and Collective Responsibility in International Interventions](#)
- ▶ [Conflict, Peace, and Ontological Security](#)
- ▶ [Georgian-Abkhaz Conflict](#)
- ▶ [Great Power Involvement in Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Mediation](#)
- ▶ [Moldova-Transnistria Conflict](#)
- ▶ [NATO's Approach to Peace Operations and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Negotiation](#)
- ▶ [R2P and Prevention](#)
- ▶ [Secession and Self-Determination](#)

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Safety Perceptions

- ▶ [Youth Gang Violence in Honduras](#)

Search for Peace, the

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Synonyms

[Arms control](#); [Balance of power](#); [Civil resistance](#) (see [Nonviolence](#)); [Conciliation](#) (see [Reconciliation](#)); [Diplomacy](#); [Nonviolence](#); [Pacifism](#); [Peace](#); [Peace through prosperity](#); [Peace through strength](#); [Peacekeeping](#); [Reconciliation](#); [Restorative justice](#); [Track II diplomacy](#); [Truth commissions](#); [World government](#)

Definition

Thirteen methods that have been proposed or tried as a path to peace, each with its own actual or predicted successes and failures.

Among the methods by which people have searched for peace is the pacifist vision in which the “lion lies down with the lamb,” although it leaves unclear just what the lion eats to survive.

Nonviolence as practiced by Gandhi, King, and others has under some circumstances proven an effective tool for peace. Some put their hopes for peace in arms control, some believe in peace through strength and others in peace through prosperity based on trade. Some envision peace emerging from diplomacy, whether by authorized representatives of nations or arising from the efforts of NGOs and individuals. Others believe it requires a balance of power among nation-states regionally and globally, or world government, or international peacekeepers, or reconciling former enemies and restorative justice. Each of these is discussed in turn below.

Pacifism

Siddhartha (c. 563/480–c. 483/400 BC), the founder of Buddhism, probably is the earliest famous pacifist. Jesus instructed his followers “If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek as well.” Greek poet Euripides (480–406 BC) and his Chinese contemporary Mozi (c. 470–391 BC) were pacifists as were the prolific early Christian writers Tertullian (160–220) and Origen of Alexandria (184–253) and Islamic philosopher Al-Ghazali (1058–1111).

Western and Central Europe degenerated into frequent local wars and Viking raids with the collapse of the Carolingian Empire (888). Trying to reduce the toll, clergy in 989 proclaimed the Peace of God threatening excommunication for

anyone attacking priests and then gradually extended the threat to protect noncombatants, children and women, and finally merchants, then to pillaging churches and burning houses to the prohibited acts. Little changed. The Truce of God followed in 1027, prohibiting war on Sundays in most of France, Germany, Italy, and the Low Countries enforced by penance, exile, and excommunication. It was extended to Saturday in memory of the Resurrection, then to Friday in memory of the Passion, then to Thursday in memory of the Ascension, and then to periods such as Advent through Epiphany and Mardi Gras through Easter, until in theory it left only 80 days scattered throughout the year for war (Thompson and Johnson 1937). Again, little changed.

Centuries later in 1928, 15 initial and 47 later signatories agreed to abandon war as a tool of national policy in the Kellogg-Briand Pact. Three years later, signatory Japan invaded Manchuria. Seven years after signing, Italy invaded Ethiopia, and Germany occupied the Rhineland and annexed Austria. Technically still in effect, it is largely if not universally viewed as well-meaning and ineffectual.

Nonviolence

Nonviolence, also known as civil resistance and civil disobedience, inspired by writers such as Henry David Thoreau (1992) and Leo Tolstoy (2012), has proved a powerful tool (Clark 2009; Homes and Gan 2011). Although marred by occasional violence, Mohandas Gandhi (2002) led a successful decade-long nonviolent struggle that ended in 1947 with India's freedom from Britain. In the United States, the 1960s saw sustained civil resistance to segregation led largely by Martin Luther King resulting in the Civil Rights Act, while Cesar Chavez and Delores Huerta's version improved the lot of farmworkers in California. In 1980, Lech Walesa (later a recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize and president of Poland) founded Solidarity, the first independent trade union in the Soviet bloc, which used the methods of civil resistance to advance workers' rights. The 1986

People Power Revolution ended the 21-year rule of Ferdinand Marcos and restored democracy to the Philippines. In 1989, Vaclav Havel's "Velvet Revolution" led to the overthrow of Czechoslovakia's communist government. In 1998, the UN General Assembly 1998 declared the first decade of the twenty-first century as the International Decade for the Promotion of a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence for the Children of the World. The 2003 nonviolent campaign organized by Leymah Gbowee (who later received the Nobel Peace Prize) ended a 14-year civil war in Liberia. The 2004–2005 Orange Revolution led to Ukrainian elections widely accepted as fair. Early in 2005, the Kyrgyz dictator fell to a peaceful protest.

However, conditions must be favorable for success. George Orwell noted the importance of a free press and right of assembly allowing growth into a mass movement. Martin Luther King, Jr. specified six requirements. First, following Thoreau, individuals must be willing to suffer consequences. Second, following Gandhi, courage and discipline are required. Third, it must seek reconciliation rather than victory. Fourth, it must target evil, not people. Fifth, resisters must not do violence to others or to their own spirits. Sixth, it requires faith that justice will triumph. Outside factors often are important. Gandhi succeeded to a large degree because Britain no longer could afford the costs of its empire in India and elsewhere. Integration had begun in the US Army, professional sports, the schools, and many workplaces over a decade before Martin Luther King began his work and President Johnson proved a powerful ally. Lech Walesa and Vaclav Havel faced a considerably weakened Soviet Union and received significant covert help from the United States. Widespread coverage by the mass media led to widespread sympathy and practical support.

Sharp and Pauson (2005), the first called both the Machiavelli and the Clausewitz of nonviolence, detailed dozens of nonviolent tactics available for integration into a larger strategy that takes political and cultural circumstances into account. They may be classified as one of the three general types:

Nonviolent protests include hunger strikes, petitions, posters, processions, speeches, and use of social media and the like to broaden public awareness of an issue and persuade or influence the public or people affected.

Noncooperation is targeted halting or hindering of an industry, political system, or economic process. Methods include labor strikes, boycotts, withholding of taxes and even of sex (recently in Colombia, Kenya, Liberia, the Philippines, and South Sudan), and general disobedience – such as Rosa Parks' refusal to surrender her bus seat to a white passenger.

Nonviolent intervention can take many forms such as blockades, occupations, sit-ins, and physically interceding between factions (which sometimes has turned violent, even fatal). It can involve third-party mediators, accompaniments (individuals backed by an international support network who provide an on-site international presence), and international publicity for organizations, communities, and individuals under threat (Mahony and Eguren 1997). This often dissuades violence; puts pressure on governments, multinational corporations, and other actors; and focuses on human rights, peacebuilding, and defending local resources and culture.

Arms Control

It is common for a state interested in changing the status quo in its favor to strengthen its military capability, often leading possible opponents to respond in kind, resulting in an arms race, widely believed as alone sufficient to cause wars. Logically, that leads to the idea that arms control is a way to peace. It has precursors in prohibiting specific weapons such as barbed or poisoned arrows in the *Mahabharata* or crossbows by Pope Urban II. The most common example given of an arms race is the 20 or so years leading up to World War I. French and British spending on armaments doubled, and German spending increased tenfold from a much smaller base. Somewhat inconveniently for the theory, non-defense spending increased even faster in all three countries. More importantly, subsequent

publication of its cabinet meeting minutes makes clear that Germany aimed to replace Britain as Europe's hegemon, eliminate France as a world power, dominate Russia, and unite Central Europe under its control. That is, the German arms buildup did not lead to but implemented policy (Fischer 1967).

The potential destructiveness of intercontinental missiles mounting nuclear weapons revived interest in arms control after WWII. Cold War policy makers tried to combine arms control and arms buildup to avert nuclear war. Policy evolved from the idea of a decisive "first strike" capability into "mutually assured destruction" [MAD] – in effect, a mathematical game of prisoners' dilemma which was actually used to calculate force levels so as to reduce the likelihood of nuclear war. The Cold War arms race did not result in a Soviet-US world-destroying nuclear war, despite coming close in 1962 and 1983.

Arms control faces new problems with the end of the Cold War. The willingness of "rogue states" to violate even voluntary agreements, the spread of intercontinental missiles, the increasing number of nuclear powers, the evolution of supersonic into hypersonic missiles, the militarization of space, the weaponization of trade and computer hacking, and the growth of global terrorism – particularly the possibility that terrorists might surreptitiously obtain weapons of mass destruction untraceable to their source – undermine the assumptions on which arms control is based.

Peace Through Strength

The contrary position to achieving peace through arms control or disarmament is that peace requires sufficient strength to discourage attack and to defend successfully if it occurs (Baruch 1952). As Flavius Vegetius Renuus echoing the Emperor Hadrian famously wrote when Rome faced multiple threats of attack, "Let him who desires peace prepare for war."

Writing in the same vein 14 centuries later, Alexander Hamilton (1937) in Federalist No. 24 argued that strong garrisons in the west and a strong navy in the east were necessary to preserve

the newly independent United States from British or Spanish threats. Soon after, in his 1793 State of the Union Address, President George Washington asserted that “There is a rank due to the United States among nations which will be withheld, if not absolutely lost, by the reputation of weakness. If we desire to avoid insult, we must be able to repel it; if we desire to secure peace, one of the most powerful instruments of our rising prosperity, it must be known that we are at all times ready for war.” Ninety years later, in his 1983 State of the Union Address, President Ronald Reagan also linked freedom and prosperity not just for the United States but other nations as well saying, “But our strategy for peace with freedom must also be based on strength—economic strength and military strength. A strong American economy is essential to the well-being and security of our friends and allies.”

Peace Through Prosperity

Reagan’s idea hardly is new or original. Building on it, in 1996, the United States intending to foster economic interdependence and prosperity that it hoped would lead to peace in the Middle East offered Jordan, Egypt, and the Palestinian territories of the West Bank and Gaza Strip unlimited duty-free imports of products that were produced cooperatively with Israel in Qualified Industrial Zones [QIZs]. Only Jordan accepted and only one Jordanian seized the opportunity, but he and the Israeli partner he found soon created 850 new jobs in Jordan at salaries 40% above Jordanian norms. Seeing their success, other Jordanian entrepreneurs followed suit, and by 2002 more than 30,000 Jordanians were employed in QIZs exporting over \$400 million in goods, not just to the United States. In 2005, Egypt followed suit opening a QIZ that proved comparably successful. The QIZs allow US companies to import goods duty-free rather than pay duties up to 31%, savings that can be passed on to the consumer. Although opponents remain and Palestine has not joined, proponents still hope to see the idea behind QIZs spread along with peace (Saif 2006).

Generally, one avoids or at least minimizes wars with one with whom one trades (Lehman and Lehman 2010; Smith 2008; Vernon 2015). In this view, the world consists of countries that are fully integrated into the global trading networks and those that are not. The former resolve disputes by sometimes contentious but largely peaceful means, while most of the world’s wars involve those not part of the system. The more countries can be brought fully into the world’s trading networks, the more prosperity and peace will follow. This suggests a general diplomatic strategy spelled out in some detail by Barnett (2004).

Diplomacy

Diplomacy is at least as old as civilization. We have letters exchanged by rulers of Sumerian city-states arranging trade and settling disputes. We have the widespread diplomatic correspondence a thousand years later in the Amarna Letters from fourteenth-century BC Egypt. The first book on statecraft is from India by Kautilya (1992) in which he advises building alliances to defeat adversaries. Similarly, Nizam al-Mulk’s (1978) eleventh-century *The Book of Government or Rules for Kings* is a guide on all aspects of government including diplomacy. The competing city-states of the Italian Renaissance led in 1532 to Machiavelli’s *The Prince* (2011). In 1716, de Callières (2000) followed with *On the Manner of Negotiating with Princes*, much of it addressing the personal qualities required of the successful diplomat. Modern treatises abound, but Crocker, et. al. (2007), Eban (1983), Kissinger (1994), Morgenthau (2005), and Nicholson (1988) are cited frequently.

Embassies, consulates, the United Nations, and numerous international agencies provide forums for conducting diplomacy on a wide range of concerns. The basic diplomatic tools now include arbitration, confidence-building measures, good offices, mediation, bi- and multinational conferences, negotiation, reconciliation, summits, threats, and ultimatums (Reynolds 2007). It is conducted by exchange of gifts (and

sometimes bribes), at social functions, in informal consultations, and through press releases, official public statements, and diplomatic signals such as recall of an ambassador (Cohen 1987) or the ping-pong games that led to the restoration of US-Chinese relations. It may be supplemented by arms sales, development assistance, sanctions, tariffs, and training of armed forces and police, known as “hard power” ever since Joseph Nye (2004) contrasted it with what he termed “soft power,” the extent to which a state’s culture, institutions, policies, and values attract or repel others. Soft power methods include ongoing and emergency foreign aid, athletic, cultural, and educational exchanges. Significant examples include Pope John Paul II’s visit to Poland in support of the Solidarity Movement and more general long-term programs such as the Radio Free Europe during the Cold War, the US Peace Corps and Fulbright Program, and the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative involving infrastructure development and investments in Africa, Asia, and Europe.

Track II Diplomacy

Joseph Montville (1991) coined the term “Track II diplomacy” to contrast it with traditional diplomacy that evolved from nonprofit organizations such as Rotary International’s efforts dating from World War I (Epstein 2006) and Eisenhower’s “People to People International” program in the 1950s. It now includes an incredible variety of programs by non-state actors such as churches, think tanks, humanitarian organizations, and artistic, entertainment, sport, and student exchanges under programs, some short- and some long-lived (Forward 2016; Hanson 2007) such as Experiment in International Living (experiment.org), Junior Year Abroad (studyabroad.com/worldwide/academic-year), Nonviolent Peaceforce (nonviolentpeaceforce.org), Rotary International (rotarianactiongroup.org), Sister Cities (sistercities.org), Search for the Common Ground (sfcg.org), Transpartisan Dialogue (www.reunitingamerica.org), and Wisdom Councils (Rough 2002).

Chiagas (2003) identifies three main Type II activities. The first involves unofficial actors serving as intermediaries between people and government. The intermediaries often are former government officials, a prominent example being former US President Jimmy Carter. The second occurs when neutrals bring key individuals together in their personal rather than their official capacities, for off-the-record talks focused on trust building. The third occurs when citizens take the initiative in trying to stimulate progress in official negotiations.

Track II targets feelings and so is difficult to assess. At their best, Track II efforts can open channels of communication, reduce stereotyping, strengthen the influence of moderates, and weaken that of the ideologues. To do so, Track II activists often must overcome obstacles such as the opprobrium of their neighbors, the hostility of their media, the propaganda of their educational system, and obstacles to meeting counterparts. Type II activities often employ methods developed by scholars such as Burton (1969) and Fisher (1989). These “engage representative citizens from the conflicting parties in designing steps to be taken in the political arena to change perceptions and stereotypes, to create a sense that peace might be possible, and to involve more and more of their compatriots [in achieving it]” (Saunders 1996). Knowledgeable, skilled, and neutral scholars or practitioners usually act as trainers and facilitators.

Track II is process oriented, often draws idealists with relatively little influence, and often is greeted with enthusiasm by liberals and skepticism by conservatives. Many have a New Age, therapeutic flavor, depend on small-group discussion with ground rules to maintain civility, and tend to paper over differences with “apple pie and motherhood” language on which all can agree until action is required. But, the two forms of diplomacy can and do reinforce one another. Track II can improve relationships and improve public attitudes, leading to a favorable bargaining climate for the Track I diplomats who can then resolve issues such as boundaries, distribution of political power, and economic issues that are beyond the capability of Track II diplomacy.

Balance of Power

In a multistate variation on peace through strength, balance of power theory asserts that national security is enhanced when no state is strong enough to dominate others regionally or globally. A rising power seen as a threat provokes others to form a defensive alliance, strengthen their own defenses, or both to make war risky so as to maintain peace. The idea dates at least to the Greek city-states, was made explicit during the Renaissance, and was formulated as a fundamental diplomatic method in seventeenth-century Europe by writers such as Grotius and Fenelon and in the eighteenth century by von Gentz. Recent analysts of this approach such as Kissinger (1994) and Morgenthau (2005) recognize only about a dozen periods in history of actual balance of power systems, none of them particularly peaceful.

The resulting alliances may not actually be strong enough to balance and dissuade the perceived aggressor partly because of a tendency of some allies to free ride within the balancing coalition, for example, by not meeting obligations to maintain their own military at agreed levels as has been the case within NATO. Worse, such alliances can turn small disputes into large ones through chaining, which occurs when a state deems any attack on an ally the equivalent of an attack on itself, creating a situation in which a weak state could drag states like prisoners in a chain gang into wars they may have no desire to fight. Thus did the assassination of an Austro-Hungarian prince grow into WWI.

In practice, the responses to a hegemon are more varied than the balance of power theory suggests. Instead of joining the power balancing alliance, some states may ally with the aggressor either in hope of sharing in the spoils (climbing on the bandwagon) or of diverting the attack from itself (passing the buck). Alternatively, states may seek good diplomatic relations with the perceived aggressor, chill its relations with its perceived targets, or if antagonistic to the aggressor and the victim encourage and perhaps try to prolong a war between the two, weakening both.

Balance of power periods often coincide with dependence on professional armies and tend toward wars fought not for great causes or national survival but for strategic and political reasons. Korea and Vietnam are Cold War examples fought by the US strategy devised by the Truman administration of “containing” the Soviet empire within its WWII gains to maintain the status quo.

World Government

Many, perhaps most, advocates of a world government assume on the basis of the scourge of war the desirability of a world government that will exercise a benign sovereign authority over the entire world. Just how this might happen and when varies from one thinker to another. Dante (1265–1321) envisioned a universal state modeled on the Roman Empire, Francisco de Vitoria (c. 1483–1546) conceived a “republic of the whole world,” and Hugo Grotius (1583–1645) thought in terms of international law leading to his foundational work, *On the Law of War and Peace*. Others, such as Niebuhr (April 1949), see the idea as delusional.

Immanuel Kant (2003) listed nine requirements for establishing permanent global peace to be accomplished in two phases. The first phase, consisting of six steps, was to be taken immediately and supposedly would end current hostilities, while the second phase consisting of the final three, requiring more time, supposedly would establish permanent peace:

- No secret treaty of peace is valid in which there is tacitly reserved matter for a future war.
- No independent states shall come under the dominion of another by inheritance, exchange, purchase, or donation.
- Standing armies shall in time be totally abolished.
- National debts shall not be contracted with a view to the external friction of states.
- No state shall by force interfere with the constitution or government of another state.

- No state shall, during war, permit such acts of hostility which would make mutual confidence in the subsequent peace impossible, such as the employment of assassins, poisoners, breach of capitulation, and incitement to treason in the opposing state.
- The civil constitution of every state should be republican.
- The law of nations shall be founded on a federation of free states.
- The law of world citizenship shall be limited to conditions of universal hospitality.

Ulysses Grant thought that “the Great Framers of the World will so develop it that it becomes one nation, so that armies and navies are no longer necessary.” He further believed that “at some future day, the nations of the earth will agree on some sort of congress which will take cognizance of international questions of difficulty and whose decisions will be as binding as the decisions of the Supreme Court are upon us.”

Bahá'u'lláh (1817–1892), founder of Bahá'í, identified the establishment of world unity and a global federation of nations as a key principle of the faith and foresaw a world legislature, an international court, and an international executive empowered to carry out the decisions of the judicial and legislative bodies. Bahá'u'lláh called for world reconciliation, reunification, collective security, and peaceful settlement of disputes. His great-grandson, Shoghi Effendi (1938), described it as the “world’s future super state” and Bahá'í as the state religion.

H.G. Wells (1901) envisaged the unification of the English-speaking peoples by the year 2000 in a New Republic that would be the means “by which the final peace of the world may be assured forever.” Its principles would “shape and determine that still ampler future of which the coming hundred years is but the opening phase. The New Republic must ultimately become a ‘World-State’.”

Some view the League of Nations, founded as a result of the Treaty of Versailles, as the first attempt to implement Kant’s vision. Its goals included collective security, dispute resolution through negotiation, and disarmament. It failed

partly because it lacked its own armed forces and so depended on the great powers to enforce its resolutions which they proved reluctant to do, partly because the United States was not a member, partly because the Eurocentric League would not apply its own principles to condemn Italy’s invasion of Ethiopia.

World War II led to the founding of the United Nations, which proponents of world government saw as little more than a forum in which sovereign nations worked primarily if not exclusively to advance their own interests in areas such as economic development, international law, human rights, international peace and security, and social progress. Beyond the Security Council, the UN is largely limited to an advisory role and attempting to foster cooperation between existing governments rather than exerting any authority over them.

The World Federalist Movement, formally founded in 1947, saw the League of Nations and the UN as steps leading to a better organization, the World Federal Government, whose Parliament of Man would make world laws and, which alone, could guarantee world peace. After 1965, sensing the inability to achieve these ambitions, it now concentrates on proposing reforms to make UN institutions more democratic and effective instead of merely making non-binding resolutions. Similarly, Democracy Without Borders, founded in 2007, advocates the addition to the UN system of a United Nations Parliamentary Assembly that would allow for participation of member nations’ legislators and eventually direct election of UN parliament members by citizens worldwide.

Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding

Peacekeeping aims to reduce civilian and battlefield deaths, reduce the risk of warfare, or end a war and establish a lasting peace. Largely but not entirely conducted by the UN, there are four probable missions:

Observation consists of small usually unarmed contingents of military or civilian observers who monitor conditions of a cease-fire agreement such as troop withdrawals. They lack the mandate or

capability to intervene should either side renege on the agreement.

Traditional peacekeeping consists of substantial contingents of lightly armed troops who in the aftermath of a conflict and with the consent of the belligerents provide a buffer between factions to build confidence and monitor any agreements between concerned parties, while diplomats work toward a peace agreement.

Peacemaking by military and police personnel assigned to implement peace settlements. It often faces a multitude of post-conflict tasks such as assisting in institution building, economic development, election monitors, mediation, reconstruction, rumor control, safe passage, security, trainers of indigenous police and security forces; restoring the economic, physical, and political infrastructure; initiating projects to improve relations between former belligerents; and reducing uncertainty and fear.

Peace enforcement may have but does not require the consent of the belligerent parties. It may include both civilian and military personnel. The military forces assigned generally are well-armed and authorized to use force beyond self-defense to enforce a treaty or cease-fire.

UN Peacekeeping started in 1948 with the deployment of unarmed UN observers to monitor the armistice following the Arab-Israeli War. Since then through 2018, the UN has undertaken and completed 57 peacekeeping missions including 23 in Africa, 10 in the Americas, 17 in Asia, 7 in the Middle East, and 8 in Europe. Fifteen current deployments include 8 in Africa, 1 in the Americas, 4 in Asia, 3 in the Middle East, and 2 in Europe. In addition, non-UN peacekeeping missions include 4 by NATO (2 completed), 3 by the African Union (1 completed), 4 completed by the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group, 1 completed by the Indian Peace Keeping Force, and 2 completed by Australian and New Zealand forces.

During the Cold War (1947–1988), UN Peacekeepers were deployed primarily as buffers separating belligerents and ensuring compliance with peace agreements. The largest concern was preventing altercations that might result in a US-USSR nuclear war. Eighteen UN operations

began during this period, of which eight ended during and five ended after the Cold War. Israel-Palestine (since 1948), Kashmir (since 1949), Cyprus (since 1964), Golan (since 1974), and Israel-Lebanon (since 1978) continue to this day.

With the likelihood of general nuclear war reduced by the end of the Cold War, major powers were less concerned with restraining their allies and many long-simmering disputes boiled over. Forty-eight UN operations began in the 14-year period following 1989. The goal gradually shifted from strategic to humanitarian peacemaking under the changed circumstances. The Helsinki Accords provided justification for selective intervention in the internal affairs of states that violate the rights of their own citizens, although any action must be financially, logistically, militarily, and politically feasible. Finally, the shift reflected the study of past successes and failures by governments, NGOs, think tanks, and universities that led to new ideas as to what was possible and desirable.

In the post-Cold War era, with 39 missions deployed so far, the UN has clarified and refined the four types of peacekeeping missions described above and developed a wide range of supporting methods for preventive diplomacy, peace enforcement, peacemaking, peacekeeping, reconciliation (see below), and reconstruction both of infrastructure and institutions. The Peacebuilding Commission [PBC] was established within the UN in 2005 as a subsidiary of both the Security Council and the General Assembly to improve UN ability to prevent state collapse, interstate war, and the transition from war to peace. Composed of 31 member states, the PBC is charged with coordinating available resources from multiple sources and drafting long-term strategies for reconstruction, institution building, and sustainable development. To date it has held discussions on Burundi, Colombia, Kyrgyzstan, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Sierra Leone, Somalia, and Sri Lanka but has concentrated on six countries in the Sahel and Great Lakes regions of Africa.

Each UN authorized mission must find governments willing to commit equipment, money, and personnel and implement a three-phase process to decide whether, when, and how to intervene. The

first phase aims at understanding the background, situation, causes, extent, and dynamics of a conflict and defines options that the UN could take.

The second phase assesses the likely positive and negative outcomes, the tasks such as clearing mines, conducting elections, disarming and demobilizing combatants and refugee, humanitarian care, maintaining public order, patrolling cease-fires, rebuilding economies and civil, and identifying the financial, human, logistical, and political resources each option requires.

In the third phase, the UN draws up a mandate for action; obtains clearances and other operational requirements; assigns UN departments and agencies; identifies and incorporates regional organizations, contact groups, and NGOs that can help; plans for transition to local authorities; and establishes evaluation and exit criteria and data collection mechanisms to measure progress.

This cumbersome but necessary process has proven slow when speed is important. Nor do the problems end there. Sometimes, troops sent prove to be poorly trained or equipped. Commanders often under pressure to avoid casualties may appease the strongest local force, tolerating its abuses. As the strongest local force often varies from place to place within each country, a coherent policy may prove impossible. Refugee camps sometimes intensify resentments. Finally, prostitution and abuse frequently crop up (Renner 2000).

From 1945 to 1989, of 93 civil conflicts, 44 were settled by military victory, and 14 were settled by negotiation. The negotiated settlements lasted in only 7 of the 14 cases (Shearer 1997). According to some critics, UN intervention protects the weaker side from defeat that leads to peace. Knowing there would be no intervention could dissuade the weaker side from risking war. Thus, Luttwak (1999) argues that letting wars run their course could lead to relatively rapid and realistic resolution through surrender and negotiation. In contrast, Fortna (2008) concludes that compared with leaving belligerents to their own devices, peacekeepers reduced the severity of civil war, increased the likelihood of an agreed cease-fire, reduced the risk of renewed warfare,

and were most effective when they also had or were accompanied by staff with conflict management skills to bring belligerents together. Furthermore, there was little difference in effectiveness between consent and enforcement missions *if* the latter proved and sustained their credibility. Finally, civil wars with a clear victor and cease-fire or truce are unlikely to break out again, especially if a mutually agreed peace treaty is reached. Doyle and Sambanis (2006) conclude that in the short run, peace is dependent on a robust UN deployment coupled with low levels of hostility between belligerents. Recognized as early as 1923, Ataturk said “No matter how great they are, political and military victories cannot endure unless they are crowned by economic triumphs.” In the long run, economic capacity matters far more than the level of hostility between belligerents, although given insufficient attention by many peacekeeping missions. The assumption that peacekeeping leads to stability and local governance has not always been realized, leading to essentially permanent peace missions (e.g., Cyprus, Israel).

In response to criticism, the UN has taken steps toward reforming its operations, first in 2000 based on the “Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations,” frequently referred to as the Brahimi Report after its chairman and then in 2008 based on the “United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Principles and Guidelines.” The reports addressed many dysfunctions of UN peace and security operations, including lack of commitment from member states to make peace operation personnel, required resources, improving information collection, processing, and analysis to improve decision-making, speeding deployments, improving the management of peacekeeping operations, and strengthening relationships with other UN bodies.

Since 1948, about 1 million soldiers, police, and civilians from some 130 nations have served in UN peacekeeping operations. Developing nations tend to participate more than developed ones, partly because it is a significant source of revenue, training, and equipment, partly because they are less likely than major European powers to be suspected of colonial motives. On the other

hand, peacekeeping has been criticized for eroding the combat skills of troops involved, for the fact that prostitution, sex abuse, and human trafficking crop up wherever troops are sent and in at least one case, the creation of a military in Fiji powerful enough to stage four *coups d'état* and to rule Fiji as a military dictatorship for over two decades (Diehl and Druckman 2010).

Reconciliation and Restorative Justice

When a civil war ends, reconciliation, sometimes called restorative justice, restitution, or victim-offender mediation, is important to prevent a relapse. Maynard (2000) proposes a five-step model based on her experience in Bosnia. Establishing safety for people and property is the first step because nothing is possible without it. Training an honest police force representative of all the warring populations has high priority. It leads to “communalization,” during which traumatic experiences are shared in a safe environment in conjunctions with a period of mourning over losses. The third step is establishing or reestablishing positive relationships among former adversaries. It starts small – for instance, buying bread from and selling milk to the baker who was on the other side – and leads to more ambitious joint efforts. One possibility is working together to remove disparaging descriptions from educational materials. Another is truth- or fact-finding commissions that take testimony on abuses. Approximately two dozen have been established, and at least a dozen others suggested. One such was the 2-year 30-member Commission for Reception, Truth, and Reconciliation in East Timor, which had 3 assigned tasks. First, it investigated human rights violations committed between April 1974 and October 1999. Second, it facilitated reconciliation and reintegration of individuals who confessed to minor crimes. Third, it recommended measures to prevent future abuses and address the needs of victims (Hayner 2001). Fourth, it initiated “Quick Impact Projects” [QIPs] in which former enemies worked together to restore or build mutually beneficial infrastructure, gradually building trust and even friendships

across sectarian lines. Fifth, it completed full restoration of civil society, including shared governance.

Summary: Is Mankind Becoming More Peaceful?

Pinker (2011), looking at human history across 10,000 years, identifies five major points at which violence declined significantly. The first, starting about 5000 years ago, coincided with the rise of cities, initially concentrated in Egypt, India, and Mesopotamia, primitive warfare almost certainly being much more devastating to small hunter-gatherer tribes than is commonly portrayed (Keeley 1996). The second, during the Late Middle Ages, saw at least a tenfold decline in the rate of homicide attributed to the consolidation of feudal territories into kingdoms with centralized authority and the nationalization of criminal justice, although in Pinker’s formulation the proposed cause seems largely limited to Europe. Third, the Enlightenment saw the widespread abolition of judicial torture and cruel punishment, reduced the list of capital crimes from hundreds to less than a dozen, and abolished blood sports, religious persecution, and slavery – again in Europe. Fourth, the Cold War, which due to nuclear deterrence that prevented the great clash between the Soviet Union and NATO, saw rising valuation of human life. Fifth, the collapse of communism ended the proxy wars of the Cold War while the expansion of peacekeeping has brought the rate of documented direct deaths from political violence to a few hundredths of a percentage point. Looking ahead, Pinker foresees a cascade of “rights revolutions” and a growing revulsion against aggression that will continue to bring the violence down in future.

According to Pinker, the most obvious and important reason for this long-term trend is the monopolization of legitimate force by the state. Second is the growth of trade, which turns enemies into suppliers and customers. Third is the reduction of parochialism due to education and travel. Fourth, technological progress especially including mass media and the Internet makes it

easier and faster to exchange goods and ideas over longer distances. Fifth, democracy increases reliance on nonviolent resolution of conflict.

When one takes account of the many causes and types of war, and the many different means of fighting, it becomes less surprising that peace has proved so elusive. For the most part, the methods probably do little harm and some good, so the best hope probably lies in using however many seem best for each particular circumstance while continuing to innovate and try new ones.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Art and Reconciliation](#)
- ▶ [Assessment of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Conceptual Evolution of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration \(DDR\)](#)
- ▶ [Disarmament](#)
- ▶ [Great Power Involvement in Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [NATO's Approach to Peace Operations and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Nonviolence and Civil Resistance](#)
- ▶ [Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Peace Operations, Principles, and Doctrine](#)
- ▶ [Reconciliation](#)
- ▶ [Unintended Consequences of Peace Operations/Sexual Abuse and Exploitation by Peacekeepers](#)

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Secession and Self-Determination

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Introduction

Nations, defined as groups that share a sense of identity, based on ethnic, religious, or cultural characteristics, tend toward the creation of their own state as a means to achieve full self-determination and to improve their chances of survival in the international system (Mearsheimer 2018). This is particularly relevant for minorities, which live in a state that is dominated by an ethnically, religiously, or culturally different majority. Creating their own state by secession from the existing state and by referring to the right of self-determination as a justification for the secession “offers itself naturally as a way of emerging from the shadow and the threat of the majority” (Welhengama and Pillay 2013).

Secessionist movements are very often resisted by the existing state that relies on the international law principles of state sovereignty and territorial integrity to oppose such secession. The result can be armed conflict or protracted political stalemates in the absence of an agreement between the conflicting parties that may endanger international peace and security (Velasco 2014). Kosovo, Crimea, Catalonia, Somaliland, Abkhazia, and South Ossetia are examples of such contested secessions that have major international implications and which are prone to violent conflict. It is therefore important to understand how secession, as a method of creating a state (Anderson 2013, 2016), relates to the right of self-determination as a fundamental principle of international law and to the impact that self-determination has on the process and outcome of secession.

Secession

- ▶ [Balkanization](#)
- ▶ [Moldova-Transnistria Conflict](#)
- ▶ [Troubles, The: The Northern Ireland Conflict](#)

Definition

Although the term *secession* is widely used in international, political, and legal discourse, there is no authoritative definition of this term in any international agreement or official document. Recourse has, therefore, to be made to definitions provided by academia. Crawford (2006) defines secession as “the creation of a state by the use or threat of force without the consent of the former sovereign.” Anderson (2013) refines this definition by clarifying that secession is about “the withdrawal of territory and sovereignty from part of an existing state to create a new state” without necessarily involving the use or threat of force. The purpose of secession would be the establishment of a new sovereign over a territory so far held by another sovereign (Anderson 2016).

Secession as a process must be distinguished from secession as an outcome (Anderson 2016) as not every process of secession would lead to the establishment of a new state. A state is usually defined by reference to the criteria established in the *Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States* (1933). According to this Convention, for an entity to be a state, it must have (a) a permanent population, (b) a defined territory, (c) a government, and (d) the capacity to enter into relations with other states. The latter criterion reflects “independence” and is the “decisive criterion of statehood” (Crawford 2012). Independence means that the state is the supreme authority in the territory to the exclusion of other states and only subject to international law (Crawford 2012). Independence must be formal and real, i.e., the government must be effectively in control of the territory and be able to have a separate existence from other states (Crawford 2006).

Secession is consensual or unilateral (Anderson 2006). In the event of a consensual secession, the new state is created with the consent of the former sovereign. This can occur through political negotiations and settlements or through constitutional mechanisms and procedures that entitle certain territories to separate (Anderson 2006). This type of secession is not

problematic as the creation of the new state does not collide with the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the former sovereign.

A unilateral secession, i.e., a secession that occurs without the consent of the former sovereign, is a problematic scenario as the state where the secession is occurring still asserts its sovereignty and demands respect for its territorial integrity by opposing the secession. This scenario very often generates violent conflicts and may provoke different reactions by the international community. This scenario also leads to a conflict between international law principles: the state’s claim to sovereignty and territorial integrity, and the right of a people to self-determination, which is usually invoked by the secessionist movement.

A further distinction is made between the secession of a colonial entity and secession outside a colonial context (Crawford 2006) as the impact of the right of self-determination is different in both situations.

In contrast to secession, the *right of a people to self-determination* is addressed in major international documents. The Charter of the United Nations (UN Charter) states that one of the purposes of the United Nations (UN) is “to develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples.”

The UN General Assembly Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (Res. 1514 (XV)) defines the right of self-determination to mean that

All peoples have the right to self-determination; by virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.

The same definition is reiterated in the UN General Assembly Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations (GA Res. 2625 (XXV) of 24 October 1970), which states that

[b]y virtue of the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, all peoples have the right freely to determine, without external interference, their political status and to pursue their economic,

social and cultural development, and every State has the duty to respect this right in accordance with the provisions of the Charter.

It further states that

[t]he establishment of a sovereign and independent State, the free association or integration with an independent State or the emergence into any other political status freely determined by a people constitute modes of implementing the right of self-determination by that people.

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) also provide that all peoples have the right of self-determination that entitles them to “freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.”

The right to self-determination includes “internal self-determination” and “external self-determination.” External self-determination is primarily about achieving an independent state, if necessary through secession (Meester 2010), but can also mean the association with another state. Internal self-determination excludes secession and is about enabling people to effectively participate in the political and constitutional decision-making processes of the state where they live and to effectively enjoy human rights (Meester 2010). This can be achieved through various forms of participation on governance, including autonomy, local self-government, decentralization, and federalization (Weller 2009).

Key Issues and International Perspectives

Secession Under International Law

The creation of states by secession was a common method until the end of World War I (Crawford 2006). If an entity managed to establish effective control over a territory and “there was no real likelihood of the previous sovereign reasserting its position,” that entity qualified as a state and could be recognized as such by other states, even if the state, from which the entity seceded, did

not recognize it (Crawford 2006). International law is neutral as regards the legality of secession (Sterio 2015). According to Crawford (2006), “secession is neither legal nor illegal in international law, but a legally neutral act the consequences of which are regulated internationally.” Although the UN Charter emphasizes state sovereignty and territorial integrity as fundamental principles of international relations and therefore attaches importance to the stability of the state system (Welhengama and Pillay 2013), there is no prohibition of secession as a way of creating a new state. This was also confirmed by the Canadian Supreme Court in *Reference re Secession of Quebec* (1998). In its Advisory Opinion on the *Accordance with International Law of the Unilateral Declaration of Independence in Respect of Kosovo*, the International Court of Justice did not discuss the legality of secession (Christakis 2011). However, it affirmed that a declaration of independence, which is an important part of unilateral secession, would not violate international law, although the declaration itself would not necessarily lead to the creation of a new state (International Court of Justice 2010).

There is a discussion if the seceding entity can be a state if it is created in violation of international law, despite the fact that it meets the requirements of effective government control and independence (Crawford 2006). Rhodesia, Taiwan, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus are referenced as examples of entities that have established effective control but are not recognized as states by the international community. The counterargument is that this discussion conflates questions of recognition and statehood, which are distinct concepts. Denying effective entities statehood also bears the risk of maintaining a legal fiction that does not correspond to the political facts on the ground. This would also allow other states to determine based on their own interpretations of international law if an entity is a state or not. In an anarchic international system, where the interpretation and application of international law are decentralized and exercised primarily by states, this would result in arbitrary confirmations or denials of statehood.

Self-Determination and a Right to Secession

The right of self-determination of peoples, in the form of external self-determination, is usually invoked as a right to secession. The right to self-determination has inspired numerous ethnic groups to pursue nationalist policies to create their own state. As described by Weller (2009), it “often encapsulates the hopes of ethnic peoples and other groups for freedom and independence.” There seems to be no other norm of international law that has been so widely promoted and accepted as the right to self-determination (Hannum 1996). At the same time, it is one of the most unclear and obscure political and legal ideas (Weitz 2015). There are at least five different meanings of a right to self-determination. It can refer to an individual human right; a minority right; a right of indigenous people; a right to territorial change; and a right to secession to create an own state (Seshagiri 2010). Questions about who is entitled to self-determination, what does self-determination entail, and how does it correspond to state sovereignty and territorial integrity are just some of the fundamental questions that have haunted this idea since it has become a principle for ordering international relations and that have still not been resolved.

Self-determination is usually associated with the French and American Revolutions (Seshagiri 2010) and the “principle of nationalities” implied in US President Wilson’s “Fourteen Points” as a new principle for ordering international relations following World War I (Velasco 2014; Brilmayer 1991). In its origins and up to the late eighteenth century, self-determination was not conceived of as an idea related to groups but to individuals (Weitz 2015). The original idea of self-determination is about the emancipation of the individual. As expressed in Kant’s *Selbstbestimmung*, self-determination is the attainment of the individual’s freedom through reason and knowledge, which is the constitutive element of a human being (Weitz 2015). With the emergence of nationalism, self-determination gradually transformed into an idea that applied to peoples struggling for national liberation (Hannum 1996).

Despite its liberal origins, the idea of self-determination was also embraced by Marxists. They conceived of self-determination as the emancipation of the oppressed class. Since nationalism and the state were facts that could not be denied, Marxists supported the idea of self-determination as a means to achieve cultural autonomy and a decentralized state as a necessary step toward communism (Weitz 2015; Hannum 1996). Self-determination was also used as an argument to support colonized people to achieve independence from their “capitalist” oppressors (Weitz 2015). Marxists supported secession as an expression of self-determination when it was useful for the class struggle and when it harmed the bourgeois and capitalist opponents (Hannum 1996).

The idea of self-determination was embraced by US President Wilson as a principle for the design of a new international order following World War I and the disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires (Hannum 1996). As explained by Hannum (1996), “the principle of self-determination became the obvious vehicle for the re-division of Europe by the victorious powers.” Wilson’s idea of self-determination was grounded in “American ideals of democracy, promoting self-determination of peoples as the foreign extension of American norms of political fairness” (Brilmayer 1991). Despite its liberal spirit, self-determination “meant free white men coming together consensually to form a democratic political order” (Weitz 2015). This is why, at that time, self-determination was limited to people who were part of the defeated empires and did not apply to overseas colonies (Hannum 1996).

Despite Wilson’s promotion of the idea of self-determination, it was not included in any of the peace agreements following the end of World War I (Weitz 2015). It was nevertheless the guiding principle for the formation of new states, the redrawing of borders, and the establishment of the League of Nations, including its minority protection system (Weitz 2015), although always subject to the *realpolitik* of the great powers. Even Hitler referred to the

principle of self-determination as a justification for the annexation of Austria and the partition of Czechoslovakia (Kissinger 1994).

During World War II, the Allied Powers included in the *Atlantic Charter* (1941) the idea of self-determination as a principle for guiding their war efforts (Velasco 2014). The *Atlantic Charter* stated that the Allied Powers will

... respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live; and they wish to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them.

In this context, self-determination meant the liberation of peoples occupied and oppressed by the Axis Powers.

Following the end of World War II, the UN Charter explicitly mentioned the “principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples” as a principle for developing friendly relations among nations as one of the purposes of the United Nations. However, this principle was embedded in the overarching purpose to maintain international peace and security and the fundamental principle of sovereign equality of states. Despite its inclusion in the UN Charter, self-determination was not considered a legal right but a political principle (Hannum 1996). The evolution from a political principle to a legal right under international law evolved subsequently through resolutions of the UN General Assembly and the case law of the International Court of Justice.

The UN General Assembly Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (Res. 1514 (XV)) and the UN General Assembly Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations (GA Res. 2625 (XXV) of 24 October 1970) further elaborated the notion of self-determination in the context of the UN Charter by giving it attributes of a right. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) explicitly referred to the right of self-determination as a necessary precondition for human rights.

The main impetus for the development of self-determination into a right came from the International Court of Justice (ICJ). In the Advisory Opinion on the *Legal Consequences for States of the Continued Presence of South Africa in Namibia (South West Africa) notwithstanding Security Council Resolution 276 (1970)* (1971), the ICJ clarified that self-determination applied to all non-self-governing territories, i.e., former colonial territories of the victorious powers (Velasco 2014). It implied that self-determination is limited to former colonial territories which were held as a sacred trust by the UN and which have not yet attained independence.

In the Advisory Opinion on *Western Sahara* (1975), the ICJ described the “principle of self-determination as a right of peoples’ and its application for the purpose of bringing all colonial situations to a speedy end.” External self-determination was therefore instrumental for decolonization. In the 1995 *East Timor (Portugal v. Australia)* case, the ICJ asserted that the principle of self-determination of peoples had evolved into one of the “essential principles of contemporary international law” but applicable to non-self-governing territories. The ICJ Advisory Opinion on the *Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory* (2004) extended self-determination to occupied territories, in this case, the occupied Palestinian territory. The ICJ Advisory Opinion on the *Legal Consequences of the Separation of the Chagos Archipelago from Mauritius in 1965* (2019) referred to the right to self-determination as a fundamental human right but still limited its application to the context of decolonization. It clarified that the right to self-determination of a people is defined in reference to the non-self-governing territory, implying that the right to self-determination is connected to a specific territory which can only be changed “based on the freely expressed and genuine will of the people of the territory concerned.”

A highly controversial question is if the right to external self-determination applies to ethnic minorities outside the context of colonialism, foreign occupation, and racist regimes (Moore 1997). The argument is that

international law would justify a “remedial secession” when a state denies an ethnic group meaningful participation in government and systematically fails to protect fundamental human rights. This interpretation is based on the “safeguard clause” (Principle 5, para. 7) of the *UN General Assembly Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations*. The “safeguard clause” implies that a state represents the whole of the people of its territory without distinction of any kind and complies with the principle of self-determination in respect of all its people and is entitled to the protection of its territorial integrity. A state that does not conform to this standard would forfeit its right to territorial integrity, and the ethnic group would be entitled to secession as a measure of last resort (Meester 2010).

Support for “remedial secession” is drawn from the League of Nations Aaland Island Reports. On the question if the people of the Aaland Island had the right to separate from Finland to join Sweden, the Commission of Jurists appointed by the League of Nations referred to the principle of self-determination but denied that it was a legal principle and that there was a right of national groups to separate from a state (Crawford 2006). However, the Commission of Rapporteurs clarified that the principle of self-determination could be invoked as a last resort “when the State lacks either the will or the power to enact and apply just and effective guarantees” for minority rights (Meester 2010).

Remedial secession reflects “just-cause” theories which claim that it would be morally justified for a “group to secede if and only if the group has suffered a major injustice in the larger state, namely severe human rights violations, wrongful annexation, continual violations of intrastate autonomy, or permanent minority status” (Catala 2013). The “just-cause” theory is liberal in its core as the injustice suffered relates primarily to serious and persistent violations of individual human rights (Freeman 1999). Support for secession outside the colonial and foreign

occupation context is also provided by voluntarist and communitarian theories. Voluntarist theories claim that every group is built on the voluntary association of individuals (Freeman 1999). If members of a group want to leave the group, they would have the right to do so; the same would apply to the secession of any kind of group from a state (Freeman 1999). Communitarian theories focus on group identity and its importance for the individual members of the group. Since the international system is anarchic and there is no centralized enforcement mechanism to ensure the existence of a group and its collective identity, every group would have the right to decide which political form ensures best the preservation of the group and its identity, even if this means the secession from a state (Freeman 1999).

Despite the theoretical support for remedial secession, the predominant view in international law is that the right to external self-determination does not apply outside the context of colonialism and foreign occupation. The case law of the ICJ suggests that the right to external self-determination is limited to people living in colonial territories (mandate and trusteeship system and non-self-governing territories) and territories under foreign occupation (Cassese 2005; Crawford 2006; Brilmayer 1991; Welhengama and Pillay 2013; Hannum 1996), which would imply a presumption against secession outside these contexts (Frankel 1992). While the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007) recognizes a right to self-determination for indigenous peoples, it limits it explicitly to a right to autonomy or self-government in matters relating to their internal and local affairs. Although a number of states supported the idea of “remedial secession” in their submissions to the ICJ for Advisory Opinion on the *Accordance with International Law of the Unilateral Declaration of Independence in Respect of Kosovo* (2010), these were too few to reflect a general international opinion or even customary international law (Meester 2010). In fact, state practice indicates an attitude against secessions outside colonial and foreign occupation contexts for fear of destabilizing the international system and

causing violent conflicts (Bereketeab 2014; Griffiths 2014). As noted by Klabbers (2019), in the Advisory Opinion on the *Legal Consequences of the Separation of the Chagos Archipelago from Mauritius in 1965* (2019), the ICJ has connected the right to self-determination so much to decolonization that “self-determination and the right to decolonization come close to being one and the same thing, with the important corollary that self-determination cannot be invoked in other, non-colonial settings.”

Even when external self-determination is permitted, it could only be exercised within the existing boundaries of the respective territory, as reflected in the *uti possidetis juris* doctrine (Weller 2009). The territorial approach to self-determination is criticized as a too narrow interpretation of the right to self-determination and that national identity, and not territory, should be the constitutive element of this right (Moore 1997; Seshagiri 2010; Lee 2012). The problem with this approach is that there is no uniformly accepted definition of “peoples,” although there are attempts to define peoples by reference to objective criteria, such as culture, language, tradition and history, and subjective identification with a particular group (McCorquodale 2018).

In *Reference re Secession of Quebec* (1998), the Canadian Supreme Court concluded that a state, which enables a people to exercise internal self-determination, whose government represents the whole of the people or peoples resident within its territory, on a basis of equality and without discrimination, would be entitled to the protection under international law of its territorial integrity. There would be certain defined contexts within which the right to the self-determination of peoples would allow that right to be exercised “externally,” i.e., in the form of secession. This would apply to colonial peoples and where a people is subject to alien subjugation, domination, or exploitation outside a colonial context. As for the third context, when a people is denied or blocked from the meaningful exercise of its right to self-determination internally, the Supreme Court expressed doubts if international law would grant a right to secession.

In its Advisory Opinion on the *Accordance with International Law of the Unilateral Declaration of Independence in Respect of Kosovo* (2010), the ICJ confirmed that “[w]hether, outside the context of non-self-governing territories and peoples subject to alien subjugation, domination and exploitation, the international law of self-determination confers upon part of the population of an existing State a right to separate from that State is, however, a subject on which radically different views were expressed by those taking part in the proceedings and expressing a position on the question. Similar differences existed regarding whether international law provides for a right of ‘remedial secession’ and, if so, in what circumstances.” However, the ICJ did not address these questions due to a narrow interpretation of the question addressed to it (Wilde 2011), and so they remain the main controversy surrounding the right to self-determination.

The Principle of “Effectiveness”: Secession as a Political Fact

Whether the right to self-determination entitles to secession or not, secession as a method of creating a state can also be viewed as a matter of political fact rather than law. In *Reference re Secession of Quebec* (1998), the Canadian Supreme Court confirmed that “while international law may not ground a positive right to unilateral secession in the context of Quebec, international law equally does not prohibit secession and, in fact, international recognition would be conferred on such a political reality if it emerged, for example, via effective control of the territory of what is now the province of Quebec.” Effective control of a territory and population by a politically organized power is what matters for a successful secession, and this is reflected in the principle of effectiveness. The principle of effectiveness means that an illegal act may become legal if, as a matter of empirical fact, it is internationally recognized. According to the Supreme Court, international law

would “adapt to recognize a political and/or factual reality, regardless of the legality of the steps leading to its creation.” Legal consequences could flow from political facts, and sovereignty was a political fact for which no purely legal authority could be constituted. The Supreme Court concluded that the “secession of a province from Canada, if successful in the streets, might well lead to the creation of a new state. Although recognition by other states is not, at least as a matter of theory, necessary to achieve statehood, the viability of a would-be state in the international community depends, as a practical matter, upon recognition by other states.”

The Supreme Court raised a number of important and complex issues about the relationship between international law and politics and the legal effects of political realities created by superior power on the ground.

The first issue is the impact of the principle of effectiveness on the creation of a state by secession. The principle of effectiveness is grounded in the idea that a state is a matter of political and historic fact and not of law. German legal scholar Jellinek established the idea that the state was a social fact that resulted from historical developments (Portman 2010). Jellinek claimed that the state could be examined from a sociological and a legal perspective; the sociological perspective would examine the social reality, the relationships, and power arrangements within a state, while the legal perspective would examine its legal organization and structures (Portman 2010). A legal perspective would require the existence of a state as a historic fact and would not determine its existence (Portman 2010). The very idea of international law being constituted by states implies the assumption that the state, as a political and historic fact, predates international law (Portman 2010). With the “principle of effectiveness” in mind, the Badinter Arbitration Committee on the former Yugoslavia described the “existence or disappearance of the state” as a question of fact (Pellet 1992). However, this conception of the state and international law is challenged by authors who claim that the state

itself exists as a category of international law and is constituted by it (Crawford 2006).

There is agreement that effective control is an important prerequisite for a successful secession. According to Frankel (1992), “if a secessionist movement can effectively assert military control over its own territory, or even if it can inflict enough death and destruction on the parent state, it will quickly achieve independence.” Crawford (2006) explains that a seceding territory could be recognized as a state “if it governed its territory effectively and with sufficient stability, such that there was no real likelihood of the previous sovereign reasserting its position.” The right to self-determination would have only an impact on the degree of effective control that the seceding territory would have to display. Where an entity would not be entitled to external self-determination, it would have to demonstrate a high degree of effective control that would make the loss of control by the previous sovereign irreversible. An entity entitled to self-determination could be recognized as a state even with a lesser degree of effective control, as the right to self-determination would operate “in favour of the statehood of the seceding territory, provided that the seceding government can properly be regarded as representative of the people of the territory” (Crawford 2006). However, even in clear self-determination case, it would be the political power of the seceding entity, and not the right to self-determination, that would lead to statehood (Velasco 2014). According to Bereketeab (2014), decolonization in Africa, although justified with reference to external self-determination, was in fact determined by political power considerations, such as the interests of powerful states, the attitude of the central government toward the secessionist movement, the military balance between the secessionist movement and central government, the strategic importance of the seceding region, and external support for the secessionist movement or central government. Although entitled to self-determination, as confirmed by the ICJ, Western Sahara and the Palestine territories, as prominent examples, are still deprived of their

statehood due to lack of political power to enforce their right to self-determination. Bangladesh's secession from Pakistan, although not a self-determination case, was successful due to its political power. Crimea's secession from Ukraine, which is controversial from the perspective of the right to self-determination (Kapustin 2015; Driest 2015), has also created a political reality on the ground that may require a different interpretation if the principle of effectiveness is applied.

The second issue is the role of international recognition for the success or failure of a secession. International law discusses recognition from a declaratory and a constitutive theory perspective. According to the declaratory theory, a recognition does not create a state but merely, as a political act with certain legal consequences, acknowledges its existence (Anderson 2013). According to the constitutive theory, it is recognition by other states that creates the state (Andersen 2013). While the declaratory theory prevails in international law, in reality political recognition of secessionist movements is important for them to achieve statehood (Crawford 2006). According to Frankel (1992), a secessionist movement would gain legitimacy and would be treated as a state only if it manages to convince other states to recognize it.

Crawford observes that since 1945, the international community has been reluctant to accept unilateral secession if the secession was opposed by the government of that state and that no state created by unilateral secession had been admitted to the United Nations against the declared wishes of the government of the predecessor state (Crawford 2006). He implies that this behavior is norm-guided as it would reflect respect for the principle of sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The opposing view is that the decision to recognize or not is political (Velasco 2014), and political considerations, especially the political and military success of the secessionist movement, would outweigh legal arguments (Frankel 1992). Coggins (2011) summarizes the following observations on political motives for recognition:

- States are more likely to recognize those who weaken their enemies.
- States are less likely to recognize those who weaken their friends.
- States beset by secessionist challenges at home are less likely to recognize others.
- Once one Great Power has granted recognition, the others are more likely to do so.

Current international divisions concerning the recognition of Kosovo, Crimea, South Ossetia, Abkhazia, Palestine, although clouded in legal language, therefore reflect political rather than legal considerations.

Recognition by great powers and other powerful states seems to be more important than effective control, and such external legitimacy would be the “fundamental distinguishing feature between states and non-states” (Coggins 2011). Sterio (2010, 2015) observes that all successful secessions were supported by at least one great power (“friends in high places”) that was willing to recognize the seceding entity as a state. Effective control is not necessary where the seceding entity has the support of great powers (Coggins 2011), while effective control is of limited usefulness when there is no such support, as illustrated by the example of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. Membership of the seceding entity in the international community of states, for example, in form of membership in the United Nations, would also require “a quorum of the world’s states to consecrate their legitimacy” that is more than the support by one or more great powers and more than just a few unilateral recognitions (Coggins 2011). Complications and protracted political stalemates with potential for violent conflict would arise when great powers are politically divided on the recognition of a seceding entity, such as in the case of Kosovo (Coggins 2011).

Future Directions

The right to self-determination requires further specification and clarification especially as regards its scope of application and the

controversial question of “remedial secession.” Without such clarification, it might provide many ethnic groups, which do not have the corresponding political power and international support, with a false promise of independent statehood and thus fuel international conflicts. It is also important to examine what role the right to self-determination would have to play in a post-decolonization context characterized by a power shift toward a multipolar international system. Current examples of secessions indicate that the role of political power and fact will increase and that international law might have to adjust to these new circumstances.

Cross-References

► [Kashmir Conflict, The](#)

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Secessionism

- ▶ [Decentralization and Conflict Prevention](#)

Secessionist Conflicts

- ▶ [International Organizations and Statehood Conflicts](#)
- ▶ [Statehood Conflicts](#)

Security

- ▶ [Maoist Conflict in India](#)

Security of Being

- ▶ [Conflict, Peace, and Ontological Security](#)

Security of the Self

- ▶ [Conflict, Peace, and Ontological Security](#)

Security Sector Reform After Armed Conflict

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Synonyms

[DDR](#); [Local security](#); [Peacebuilding](#); [Reforms](#); [SSR](#); [UN](#)

Definition/Description

Security sector reform (SSR) is a central pillar of peace strategies, closely linked to but not interchangeable with state-building and democratization. There is a broad consensus that sustainable post-war peace needs a stable security environment and thus institutions that are able to inhibit non-legal manifestations of violence. The main elements of SSR are reforms in the state security institutions (military and police) as well as in the judiciary. The first generation SSR was characterized by Western blueprints and a lack of context sensitivity, with the empirical record being rather weak. As a consequence, programs moved away from “one size fits all” to a greater attention to local contexts. The need to include local, non-state actors has been acknowledged, but designing and implementing new approaches on the ground is neither easy nor going to happen in the immediate future. A further step in the evolution of post-war SSR can be an approach to decolonize reform aspects: to radically question the origins of knowledge and practice of SSR and to center efforts more in the communities affected by

reform than with ideals of the security sector that resemble more those in the Global North.

Introduction

In transitions out of war and armed conflict, security sector reform (SSR) is a central pillar of peace strategies, closely linked to but not interchangeable with state-building and democratization. There is a broad consensus that sustainable post-war peace needs a stable security environment and thus institutions that are able to inhibit non-legal manifestations of violence. A first step prior but rarely closely integrated to substantial reform is the demobilization, demilitarization, and reintegration (DDR) of former combatants (Giustozzi 2012). This is often followed by reforms in the armed forces (Licklider 2014) and the police (Davis 2009; Neild 2001), which stand at the core of conventional SSR. Reforming the judiciary (Betts et al. 2001; Strohmeyer 2001) is another important element of post-war SSR. Although the judiciary is regarded as a “non-core security institution” by some authors (Wulf 2004), others reason that judicial reform is among the most vital parts of SSR, as without it, the impact of military and police reform would be diminished (Slaby 2003). For instance, high levels of impunity stalled police reform in Guatemala after the end of civil war, also because judicial reform did not occur simultaneously (Kurtenbach 2008, 2010).

Relevant provisions of SSR as well as their implementation vary significantly across the globe. Data from the Peace Accord Matrix shows that in the 34 documented comprehensive peace agreements, 28 include provisions on disarmament, 27 on reintegration, 25 on demobilization, 26 on military reform, 24 on police reform, but only 16 on judiciary reforms. PAM distinguishes between 51 types of provisions and summarizes seven provisions under the heading “security”: demobilization, disarmament, military reform, paramilitary groups, police reform, prisoner release, and reintegration. Under a broader security and justice system perspective, we need

to include provisions on judiciary reform, truth, and reconciliation mechanisms (in PAM both included under institutions) as well as amnesty and reparations (in PAM included in the category of rights). The contrast is even more pronounced when we look at the number of fully implemented provisions. Here demobilization stands at the top with 13 while judiciary reform is lowest with 3 (Joshi et al. 2015, p. 556).

Research on SSR

The academic literature on post-war SSR is divided between two schools of thought regarding the question of how the reform of security institutions is best managed and implemented: a state-centric model and a critical security perspective.

First, a number of studies advocate the need to rebuild formal state security institutions for peace (Giustozzi 2011; Glassmyer and Sambanis 2008; Paris and Sisk 2009). This view on SSR builds on the notion that in the aftermath of war, formal and capable state institutions are often destroyed or have never existed outside the capital (Besley and Persson 2010). In this camp, SSR is considered as main pillar of externally driven state-building strategies.

Second, criticizing this Western-centric model of security provision, the critical security perspective focuses both on the inclusion of domestic models of security governance and on informal security institutions. Rejecting “one size fits all” SSR programs that are based on the example of a Weberian state, this perspective calls for a better understanding of local approaches to security building and for promoting peace, to increase legitimacy, and public acceptance. In post-war societies with a high involvement of international actors, this can mean creating hybrid models of security shaped by a combination of international and domestic models, for instance by the UN and local security actors, or combining formal and informal security institutions (Krause 2012; Mac Ginty 2011; Schroeder et al. 2014). Studies in the critical security tradition hold that informal non-state institutions, such as neighborhood watches, can be more efficient providers of security than

mistrusted or weak state institutions (Mehler 2009). Thus, informal provisions of security should be promoted by SSR as a transitional mechanism or in the long run (Jackson 2018; Sedra 2010, 2018).

A methodological shortcoming of the SSR research is related to the domination of policy-oriented, “lessons learned” formulating best practices guidelines on the one hand (Bryden and Hänggi 2004; Cooper and Pugh 2002; Wulf 2004) and in-depth, often noncomparative case studies on the other. Case studies are also disproportionately oriented towards a small number of recent cases that include Liberia (Bøås and Stig 2010; Loden 2007), Timor-Leste (Hood 2006; Myrntinen 2010), Haiti (Lemay-Hébert 2014; Mendelson-Forman 2006), Afghanistan (Gross 2009), and the countries of the former Yugoslavia (Berg 2014; Stodiek and Zellner 2007). Such lack of comparative analysis implies that few findings of past research on post-war SSR can be generalized across time and cases. More comparative or statistical studies analyzing post-war security institutions, however, do not capture SSR as a whole, but look at very narrow elements of security institutions (Ansorg et al. 2016; Hartzell and Hoddie 2003). These analyses are additionally limited to looking at institutions in relation to intra-state armed conflict on the dependent variable, without attending to other manifestations of post-war violence that security sectors are involved in, such as one-sided violence or violence between non-state actors.

Studies also link SSR closely to post-war democratization (Bernabéu 2007; Cawthra and Luckham 2003), with democratization as an outcome and/or as an intervening factor. First, it is claimed that a fundamental purpose of SSR is the promotion of democratic rule, and that as a result of a completed SSR, security actors and governments become more accountable to a society (Nathan 2007). Second, it is recognized that SSR is not a technical and isolated process but one that is conditioned by functioning democratic institutions (Ansorg et al. 2016). O’Neill, for instance, stresses that police reform needs a “heavy emphasis on police accountability” (O’Neill 2005, p. 9) and a creation of democratic

oversight bodies that prosecute professional misconduct of officers.

Both the state-building perspective to SSR and works in the tradition of critical security studies address the issue of international engagement in SSR (e.g., Vetschera and Damian 2006). Studies using the state-building argument often hold that, in very volatile environments and after serious and long-lasting civil wars, post-war peace is more likely with international engagement, also in reforming the security sector (cf. Doyle and Sambanis 2000; Paris and Sisk 2009). One argument is that international actors come with the financial resources, technical knowledge, and military manpower to force warring parties into compliance. Bajraktari et al. (2006, p. 19), for instance, stress that in extremely weak states, international contribution to security management and SSR becomes necessary. Works in line with the critical security argument thereby strongly argue that peacebuilding is only successful with high degrees of local ownership, referring to the extent by which domestic parties are in control over the design and conduct of SSR, and by preserving local institutions that worked well before and during the war (Ball 2006; Donais 2009; Kurtenbach and Wulf 2012; Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013). One argument against SSR driven by international actors is that the identification with reforms and created institutions is missing, as in Afghanistan (Sedra 2014). Also, while donors bring the needed resources or experience to SSR, a multiplicity of international actors tends to create parallel chains of commands or fights over funds that curb efficiency of SSR (Brzoska and Heinemann-Grüder 2004).

Linking the Elements of SSR

A major challenge in SSR research and practice is that the different elements are rarely systematically linked. While particularly in the state-building perspective to SSR, the DDR element is considered as an indispensable component and necessary first step of post-war SSR, both processes tend to be rarely linked (Giustozzi 2012). Incomplete or even complete absence of DDR in

the aftermath of war can lead to unstable oligopolies of violence and eventually a recurrence of armed conflict (Brzoska and Heinemann-Grüder 2004; Lambach 2007). Scholars suggest that DDR should be introduced early during post-war SSR as it helps to increase trust between warring parties and creates a culture in which the use of weapons becomes unlikely (Muggah 2005; Spear 2002). Having said that, once excombatants are demobilized, recent efforts have often involved their integration into the army. Such integration has, however, been found to not necessarily effectively contribute to peace, mostly because it is often poorly implemented (Glassmyer and Sambanis 2008). Underlying causes of conflict are often not addressed, and demobilized combatants continue to be frustrated, without work, and prone to renewed recruitment (McFate 2010).

Military reform includes the restructuring, reduction, merging, or creation of the state's armed forces, as well as the education and training of recruits; and the separation of the tasks of the police and the military. In contexts of democratization, SSR efforts might also include civilian oversight of the military (Kuehn and Lorenz 2011) as well as changes in the mandate of the military (external security) and the police (public security). Intelligence and secret services are rarely included in the study of SSR due to non-availability of information.

Policing is another important element of SSR that aims at establishing or maintaining public order – with repressive as well as with preventive means. In most countries “the police” is a formal institution organized at different levels (state, region, or community) to prevent, prosecute, and sanction violence in cooperation with the judiciary. Police forces as well as the judiciary are important links between war and post-war contexts as – contrary to the military – the police as the main cornerstone of public security in a country will unlikely be fully dismantled. The police's mandate, organizational structure, and behavior might be reformed or changed, but the institution itself will prevail even if name and personnel are changing. Policing is an important link between security forces and the judiciary as well as

between the prevention of violence and the prosecution of its perpetrators.

Judicial reform is a fourth pillar of comprehensive SSR. The creation of an independent judiciary through legal separation and changes to judicial appointments, and the development of basic foundations of a rule of law and training of judicial personnel is a necessary element of non-violent conflict transformation. The access to and the application of general rules and laws for all are important components as are formal and informal institutions (such as courts, prosecution, defense, and ombudsmen) and a minimum of impartiality and trust in these institutions.

Security Sector Reform on the Ground

The theoretical debate on SSR interacts with changing perspectives of the practice of reform by local and national reform actors as well as international donors. SSR conducted by international donors is still a quite young field. From its inception, mainly by the United Kingdom with its engagement in Sierra Leone from 1997, it has been established as one main pillar of post-conflict peacebuilding (Jackson 2011; Waldman 2014). As more and more aspects of SSR found their way into peacebuilding programs of international donors, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) developed a “Handbook on Security System Reform (SSR),” with the main aim that donor support to SSR programs is both effective and sustainable. The OECD handbook served as one of the guiding documents for the so-called first generation SSR with four core objectives (OECD 2007): the establishment of effective governance, oversight, and accountability in the security system; the improved delivery of security and justice services; the development of local leadership and ownership of the process; and sustainability of justice and security sector delivery.

While the OECD handbook has been considered a useful guideline for practitioners of security sector reform in particular in the first years, this first generation of SSR has been widely criticized. The main criticism was that SSR programs often

end up being technocratic, focused solely on improving the effectiveness of security institutions rather than on the politics that provide the context for security (Jackson 2018). In practice, this had often been translated into short-term stabilization efforts taking priority over longer-term transformations of underlying causes of conflict (Ansorg and Gordon 2019). One reason for this is the immediate setting of SSR, which is often one of urgency. In addition, international or bilateral donors often work according to tight timelines and specific short-term milestones, which then leads to a reduction of the agenda to technical aspects at the cost of long-term normative goals. For example, oversight bodies – and broader efforts to promote governance, accountability, and transparency as outlined by the OECD guidelines – often receive less attention and less resources than the core security sector institutions they are meant to hold accountable. As cases such as Chad, Guinea-Bissau, the DRC, and the CAR show, creating functioning oversight bodies is often only last in line of a long list of technical priorities in SSR. In addition, human rights and gender equality are often reduced to a day's awareness training or a footnote in a report (Ansorg and Haastrup 2018).

In sum, the first generation SSR was characterized by what Jane Chanaa already in 2002 called the “conceptual-contextual divide” (Chanaa 2002). Ultimately, it led to a weak empirical record of the programs: as cases such as DRC or Afghanistan show, the reform of the security sector was often only a technical exercise that led to security forces might have received some training and equipment, but that lacked the consideration of core normative principles such as human rights and democracy.

Practitioners were and are well aware of aforementioned weaknesses in the first generation model of SSR, and hence there has been some adjustment in the last couple of years. The programs moved away from “one size fits all” to a greater attention to local contexts. The need to include local, non-state actors has been acknowledged and studied (Sedra 2018). There have been multiple analyses of hybrid and integrative security models, such as in Liberia or Papua New Guinea (cf. Boege 2016). Equally, there have

been attempts by international donors, in part in response to SSR scholarship, to include into SSR policy and guidelines actors beyond those at the level of the state (UN 2014). While the inclusion of local actors and the attention to local norms is uncontested nowadays, some challenges still persist.

International donors continue to strive for a normative agenda of creating liberal states out of nonliberal ones, while at the same time not recognizing or acknowledging the ongoing resistance to this process in the post-conflict countries (Jackson 2018, p. 5). This tension is only resolved by the donor side claiming to have reached their goals of building a “liberal” state with a functioning security sector, and withdrawing from the country (Jackson 2018; Kurtenbach 2013). Yet, as cases such as Afghanistan, Iraq, or the DRC show, the states left behind are often too fragile or unstable to deal with ongoing challenge by non-state armed actors (Jackson 2018, p. 5). Any meaningful security service is then often only possible by means of a powerful regime (*ibid.*). The danger here is that security providers do not serve to create a secure environment for citizens, but rather focus on the survival of their regime at the costs of political opponents and democratic competition.

SSR continues to be a largely state-centric project, driven by Western ideas of a state – at least partly because of concerns over sovereignty and external interference, but also with regards who funds these programs to a great extent. A lot of government officials would agree that it is rather difficult to dismiss the idea of the state as the reference frame for these kinds of reform.

Yet, considerations of SSR are accompanied by growing uncertainty about its ends, as it becomes increasingly evident that donor-led ideas about SSR and – to say it in the words of the OECD – “strengthening the ability of state institutions to monopolize the means of violence” (OECD 2007) do no longer seem to be realistic in the vast majority of post-conflict states (Jackson 2018, p. 6). The general idea of an improved security governance still holds nowadays; however, donors as well as actors on the ground are not entirely sure what the end product of SSR is

supposed to look like, and how it is reached (Jackson 2018, p. 6).

Context Matters: Decolonizing SSR as a Next Step on the Agenda

Post-war reforms do not happen in a political vacuum, there is no new beginning from scratch. Despite high hopes that the end of war will bring fundamental change and open space for a better future, empirical evidence shows that it is “unlikely to see a clean break from violence to consent, from theft to production, from repression to democracy, or from impunity to accountability” (Keen 2000, p. 10). Even when fundamental reforms are envisioned in peace agreements, they will interact with existing structures and behaviors shaped by history, culture, and the experience of war and widespread violence (Ansorg and Kurtenbach 2017; Arjona 2014; Wood 2008). Hence the end of war is not necessarily a critical juncture where profound change happens in a short period of time (Capoccia 2016) but can also favor path-dependent developments or fortify existing structures. Due to their direct and indirect participation in the war, institutions of the security and justice system (police, military, and judiciary) are extremely important for these complex relations that need to be analyzed in their interaction and not separately.

For security sector reform to be meaningful and in order to create a secure environment for citizens to live in, reform efforts need to go beyond the attention to the often-cited “local ownership.” Two aspects are of importance here: a greater contextualization, and what we consider as “decolonization of SSR.”

Contextualization goes beyond the prescription of norms and guidelines of the security sector. It includes a careful analysis and acknowledgement of local power relations and historical trajectories, simply because reform does not happen from scratch and it is not possible to conduct reform independently of existing power structures (Ansorg and Kurtenbach 2017). Related to that is the regional environment of many post-war countries. As the examples of Sierra Leone or Iraq show, regional interactions influencing the reform

process can be either conducive or nonconductive to the reform efforts (Almohamad 2019). Acknowledgement of context thus needs to be done on different levels – the local, the national, the regional, as well as finally (but not foremost) the international level. In addition, both patterns the patterns of transition (pacts vs. victories) as well as the degree of international interventions shape the outcome of SSR fundamentally.

Lastly, we need to acknowledge that knowledge and practice continue to be informed by epistemological assumptions that are deeply rooted in colonial history and colonial rule (Ansorg 2019). Policies on development and international cooperation in the Global North, particularly when it comes to post-conflict countries, still contemplate an idea of racial and civilizational hierarchy. These epistemological assumptions are inherently problematic, and they transfer a sense of the world that ignores many aspects that are essential to the history, politics, and societies in the Global South. A further step in the evolution of post-war SSR can thus be an approach to decolonize reform aspects: to radically question the origins of knowledge and practice of SSR and to center efforts more in the communities most affected by reform. In detail, this might include a decolonization of knowledge on SSR, and a departure from the idea of “making their security sector look more like our security sector” (Jackson 2018, p. 5) to something completely different from the security sectors of the Global North, but something that might work much better in these different contexts. This might also include a change in practice, and a re-centering of reform towards the Global South, including the way international donors fund programs. And this might include a fundamental reconsideration of foreign policy and a critical discussion of any intended and unintended effects of intervention.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration \(DDR\)](#)
- ▶ [Hybrid Political Orders and Hybrid Peace](#)
- ▶ [Rule of Law](#)

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Security-Development Nexus

► Police Reform and Peacebuilding

Security-Development Nexus in Peacebuilding

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Conceptualizing Security and Development

The policy community frames peacebuilding as the process in which the foundations for sustainable peace are laid. It is widely accepted within the international community that sustainable peace is based on re-establishing basic security and development conditions and that poverty, intrastate conflicts, complex emergencies, and human insecurity are interlocking problems. Dominant policy frameworks therefore present security and development as core pillars of peacebuilding that are inextricably linked: low levels of security and development reinforce each other in a vicious circle, while high levels are expected to influence each other positively. Hence, they have been calling for integrated peacebuilding policies in which all peacebuilding actors, at the international, state, and local level, cooperate and coordinate their activities on the ground to address both challenges in concert (UNDP 2016; WB 2011; DfID 2012; OECD/DAC 2001, 2012; OECD 2009; UN 2005).

Security and development, however, are contested concepts that have, in part as a result of the emergence of peacebuilding as a field of increasing international engagement after the end of the Cold War period, undergone an evolutionary process during which they have become increasingly entangled and overlapping. Shifting their focus from state-centered, top-down, to bottom-up approaches, the individual took center stage in both concepts. Before the 1990s, development strategies mainly focused on poverty

reduction and economic growth in order to enhance the well-being of societies, while security was understood predominantly as the protection of a society from external threat. However, during the early years following the end of the Cold War, and in part as a consequence of the international community's stronger focus on peacebuilding, both concepts were expanded. Today's concept of human development grew out of global discussions on the links between economic growth and development during the second half of the nineteenth century. Going beyond GDP measurements and the expansion of income and wealth, the human development approach focuses at improving peoples' lives rather than the national economy they live in. Human development therefore includes social, economic, and sustainable development, measuring indicators such as education, gender equality, the environment, and human rights rather than macroeconomic indicators. In order to achieve this broader concept of development in societies involved in, or emerging from, conflict, however, security objectives such as crime prevention and conflict resolution had to be included into post-conflict reconstruction plans, thereby establishing an ever-closer link between development and security, particularly in peacebuilding endeavors. Since the 1990s and as a result of the changes in the existing security architecture, a different understanding of security also broadened the concept of national security that had shaped the Cold War period. A number of basic human needs were suggested as indispensable for the survival of the individual. Adding economic, health, political, environmental, community, and food security to physical security, the concept of human security challenged the state-centric security and further linked security with development components (UNDP 1994).

However, this broadening and rapprochement of the security and development concepts also evoked criticism. Questions arose concerning just whose security and whose development international donors intended to strengthen. A general understanding emerged that security is about "us" and development is about "them," creating biopolitical divides between desirable and improvable as opposed to unworthy and intolerable societal actors. Particularly human security was accused of being vague, undefined, and all-inclusive and therefore

prone to become a tool to legitimize imposition and intervention (Spear and Williams 2012; Stepputat 2010; Duffield 2006). With the introduction of the concept of humanitarian intervention in the early 2000s, the human security discourse effectively put humanitarian challenges in developing countries as a security risk for the developed world.

The Evolution of the Security-Development Nexus

Security and development have both been key concepts in global politics since colonial times. Although they were still conceptually separate, the idea of a nexus between both was already an important element in the state policies of colonial as well as postcolonial regimes well before the end of the Cold War, where security concerns largely dictated donors' development policies and counterinsurgency strategies included development activities. The international system that emerged at the end of the Second World War was explicitly created to further both security and development at the global level. The two competing political and economic systems that dominated the bipolar world order of the Cold War divided along the lines of security and development and used both as tools to secure followers (Buur et al. 2007; Tschirgi 2005; Stilhoff-Sörensen and Söderbaum 2012).

The end of the bipolar security architecture brought new challenges and greatly impacted the security-development nexus. Addressing a wave of intrastate conflicts, growing awareness of the development costs of armed conflict and the impact of social and economic development on security levels, and therefore the overlapping nature of security and development challenges, UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali's *An Agenda for Peace* (Boutros-Ghali 1992) underlined the importance of conflict prevention and peacebuilding to address a world that was threatened more by its people's inability to procure livelihoods than by interstate wars. The emergence of the concept of peacebuilding in the early 1990s and a new focus on conflict prevention strategies significantly expanded the scope of the development

and security agendas and firmly established the nexus as an important part of the liberal-international policy arena. Security and development became the heart of a more assertive global liberal peacebuilding agenda which assumed that democratization, free market economies, the rule of law, and the integration of societies into the global community ensured worldwide security and sustainable peace (Hurwitz and Peake 2004; Donais and Knorr 2013; Richmond 2011). Emphasis was placed on so-called fragile states that faced the nexus challenges: severe development problems that were often related to ongoing or previously experienced periods of violence. The failures of UN missions in Somalia, Rwanda, and Bosnia during the 1990s clearly exposed the limitations of conventional military crisis management in a threat environment shaped by domestic conflicts and highlighted the necessity of a comprehensive approach to security that included development components (Trachsler 2008). By the end of the 1990s, the need to include security reforms in development interventions was also widely recognized. Combining security, development, and good governance was regarded as the winning recipe to create modern, democratic, and liberally minded states that were able to reduce conflict and create a broader peaceful political culture (see, for example, OECD/DAC 2007). State-building, the process of building, rebuilding, or consolidating the capacities of a conflict-afflicted state, thus became the predominant tool to break the vicious circle of underdevelopment and conflict by focusing on the creation of strong and legitimate states capable of providing security and facilitating economic growth. The state's capacity to recuperate its monopoly over the use of force after ongoing armed conflict was often prioritized over development objectives and caused considerable tensions in countries where state security actors had been perpetrators.

The attacks of September 11, 2001, however, gave birth to the War on Terror and changed the approach toward the security-development nexus. Large-scale peacekeeping operations and long-term peacebuilding were replaced by shorter-term UN interventions with more modest security and development packages. These stabilization

missions mixed security sector reform with the provision of basic social services, reconstruction tasks, and short-term development projects and engaged non-state actors and development aid agencies in the effort to impose liberal peace. In the years to follow, stabilization missions were used in countries experiencing extreme violence such as Colombia, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Haiti, the DRC, Mali, the Central African Republic, Iraq, Kenya, and Sri Lanka (Muggah 2013). A prime task of international military personnel in their quest to stabilize countries with high levels of violence was to "win hearts and minds" of local populations, reminiscent of the Winning Hearts and Minds (WHAM) project during the Vietnam War, and once again the security-development nexus came of use, this time to fuel counterinsurgency strategies. Thus, eager to secure local support vital to pacifying spaces and populations that were regarded a threat to the international system of liberal states, military personnel transformed into development workers (Kiensherf 2011; Buur et al. 2007).

In 2005, the United Nations World Summit officially finalized the evolution of the nexus into an international truism. Secretary General Kofi Annan summarized the international consensus by underlining that "in an increasingly interconnected world, progress in the areas of development, security and human rights must go hand in hand. There will be no development without security and no security without development" (UN 2005, UN A/59/2005, annex, point 2). Today, the nexus continues to stand strong in international policy frameworks. Conflict prevention work, DDR (disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration), and SSR (security sector reform) are now a fundamental part of global development policy, and international actors make sure that objectives for development cooperation, humanitarian assistance, and international security are mutually reinforcing (OECD 2019; DfID 2012; EC 2016; UNDP 2016; WB 2016). A new structure emerged to address these combined security and development challenges: comprehensive, integrated, "three-D" (defense, diplomacy, and development), or whole-of-government approaches. Those approaches commonly feature a confusing array

of actors, integrating different governmental institutions engaged in security and development work, security actors, and civil society and combining them with local organizations in the peacebuilding environments. As development problems increasingly turned into security risks, international donors also initiated institutional changes. Major international development aid players, such as the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom, have increasingly coordinated their development aid agencies with their foreign policy and military institutions. In the United Kingdom, for example, a new institution, the Conflict Pool, united the Ministry of Defense, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and the Department for International Development (DFID) to facilitate multi-agency assistance and planning (Pugh et al. 2013; McConnon 2016), while the European Union created the European External Action Service (EEAS). However, problems of coordination and battles over funding and responsibilities institutionalized rather than eliminated the division between the EU's development cooperation agenda and the security policy agenda and led to reduced EU involvement in fragile states after 2011 (Smith 2013). Furthermore, nexus thinking has also created major problems when implemented on the ground, both within the international donor community and in the host countries where the nexus was applied. The following sections will discuss those problems in more detail.

Challenges to the Implementation of the Nexus on the Ground

Efforts to implement the security-development nexus in peacebuilding environments have revealed a disconnect between policy documents and activities on the ground. Critics have pointed out that international interventions have so far been characterized by a clear primacy of security over development that has, furthermore, produced little success. They underline that the shift to stabilization after the 9/11 effectively favored the establishment of a controlled environment, stability, and order over profound social change. Development, rather than being a transformation toward greater democracy

and justice, became a process that was expected to create greater stability by managing security risks. In the UN stabilization mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) that began in 2004, for example, nexus thinking linked poverty and criminality. A strong focus on a militarized version of restoring order to eliminate certain security risks limited development engagements to practices of social work, relief assistance, and small-scale reconstruction. The elimination of security risks became a condition for development assistance, deferring long-term development. However, despite that emphasis on security assistance, security was hardly improved, and the top-down focus on state-building essentially rendered the mission a failure (Siman and Santos 2018; Baranyi 2014; Donais and Knorr 2013). The European Union's discourse on the security-development nexus is an example of the commonly held assumption among international donors that re-establishing security represents a necessary precondition for development engagement, an assumption that justifies the primacy of security over development in the implementation of the nexus. European donors are even accused of paying only lip service to the nexus, as the main drivers for their development work are European security interests (Keukeleire and Raube 2013; Furness and Gänzle 2017). This primacy of security over development has, according to critics, even resulted in European donor support for authoritarian regimes, such as in the case of Tajikistan, who effectively used the security-development nexus mantra to solicit development aid in order to counter security threats but in fact blocked any reforms to further development in the country (Boonstra and Shapovalova 2012). The UK's Department for International Development (DFID) is reported to have bolstered state security at the expense of individual security during their intervention in Sierra Leone in 2000 (Abrahamson 2005), and US military solutions to development problems in Africa are accused of having resulted in renewed conflict and increased insecurity (McConnon 2016).

A second critique against the application of the security-development nexus in liberal approaches to peacebuilding underlines that much of the rhetoric of integrated or whole-of-government approaches translated mainly into military-led

Quick Impact Projects (QIPs), short-term development initiatives designed to increase trust in the military rather than further long-term development. Long from being equal partners in these activities, civil society and local organizations only played a supporting role that blurred the boundary between civilians and the military and evoked resistance on both actor sides. The two major international interventions of the past decades, Afghanistan (2001–2014) and Iraq (2003–2011), are good examples. As a natural outgrowth of the adoption of the security-development nexus mantra, both featured so-called Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) that included military and nonmilitary personnel with the aim to win the “hearts and minds” of the local population by providing a modicum of security and development in the most insecure regions. PRTs engaged in a wide variety of activities ranging from humanitarian relief and police training to the collection of intelligence information and the implementation of Quick Impact Projects that lacked local ownership. However, PRT activities were ultimately led by security concerns to combat insurgents and protect military forces rather than long-term needs for recovery. PRT legitimacy was based on the argument that security had to be established before real long-term development work could be attempted and that only security actors could enter those insecure regions, thereby effectively keeping development actors out. Studies have shown that the PRTs disempowered the Afghan population, called forth disengagement rather than cooperation, and even drew the local population further into conflict (Waddell 2006; Ryerson 2012; Beath et al. 2012; Stepputat 2010).

A third characteristic of the difficulties concerning the implementation of the security-development nexus in international stabilization and peacebuilding missions are problems of leadership and coordination in those multi-actor interventions, often featuring an ad hoc and fragmented array of bilateral and multilateral development and security actors. Critics maintain that while the nexus is firmly established at the policy level, there is no coherence of security and development policies in their comprehensive approaches on the ground. Those problems were experienced not

only by multilateral actors such as the United Nations and the European Union but also by traditional donors such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, Sweden, Germany, or Canada and emerging powers such as Brazil, India, China, and South Africa participating in UN missions (Sherman et al. 2011; Furness and Gänzle 2017). The international mission in Afghanistan is, again, a prime example for the difficulty to find a common approach between the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), tailored on the neoliberal state-building model and based on the Common Approach Action Plan, a result of the security-development paradigm, and the US-led counterinsurgency Operation Enduring Freedom-Afghanistan (OEF-A), designed to fight Al-Qaeda and the Taliban. Incompatible and competing national strategies of the participating countries and a lack of a joint framework and decision-making, or even a consensus concerning the long-term goals to be achieved, impeded effective cooperation. While the nexus was followed at the policy level, military and civilian efforts were strictly separated at the tactical level on the ground. Missions, money, and staff earmarked for the security and development domains remained divided. Much more funds were channeled to security than to development projects, and aid often ended up where donors had their own troops instead of contributing to an overall development plan. Poor coordination, communication problems, and a general lack of oversight, evaluation, and mutual understanding between civilian and military actors eventually further destabilized the economy and increased insecurity (Andersen 2016; Kfir 2015; Muggah 2013).

Furthermore, the combination of security and development actors in these multi-actor teams eroded the distinction between them in the eyes of both insurgents and ordinary Afghans, which in turn led to the association of aid agencies with the military and consequently presented greater security risks for the former. While the NGOs debated with the PRTs over the latter’s short-term security focus, the PRT efforts, in turn, clashed with hardcore military strategies that shifted between combat and peacebuilding missions. Overall, Afghanistan represents an excellent example to showcase the differences between military and civilian personnel

in terms of focus, goal, time frame, and ownership questions. Both lacked knowledge about how the other works, felt challenged in their respective identities, and observed different and sometimes incompatible practices (Waddell 2006; Andersen 2016; Alamir 2012).

Studies focusing on the form the nexus assumes in local settings, at the level of national government practices for peacebuilding rather than international peacebuilding missions, revealed even more challenges for the implementation of the security-development nexus on the ground. While the interdependence between security and development has become a truism in international donor policy frameworks, countries that are experiencing security and development challenges still display a rather unilateral security-first understanding at their policy level. Policies designed to either increase security or development often hamper, block, and counteract each other when implemented and often pose a trade-off for the local populations (Nilsson 2018; Jensen 2010). In Colombia, for example, peacebuilding policies to restitute land to their rightful owners increased insecurity levels for peasant communities (Nilsson and Taylor 2017), while in Sri Lanka, security strategies hampered livelihoods for fishermen (Orjuela 2010). The linking of security and development in the form of military actors doing development work in remote areas not controlled by the state often creates further tensions, particularly in countries emerging from protracted armed conflict, as the military is more often than not associated with human rights violations against the populations it now tries to develop (Reitano 2014). Continued violence during peacebuilding further unbalances the nexus, pushing the security agenda ahead of the development agenda, favoring short-term security over long-term development results, and placing obstacles in the way of cooperation between security and development actors.

The Future of the Security-Development Nexus

So far, experiences with implementing the security-development nexus on the ground clearly

show that nexus theory is easier than nexus practice. But even nexus theory is challenged. Critics to the cycle truism abound. They outline an infinite number of possible linkages between security and development that make the definition of one specific nexus impossible (Stern and Öjendal 2010), point out that the nexus is historically and contextually dependent (Spear and Williams 2012), argue that the causal connections between security and development are intermediated through a country's evolving social and political processes and institutions (Tschirgi et al. 2010), and caution against applying the security-development nexus automatically across all policy areas, levels of policy implementation, conflict phases, or contexts (Tschirgi 2005). A first proposition is therefore that international donors move away from "the" security-development nexus and allow for a more context-specific analysis of the relationship between security and development where peacebuilding is required (and desired).

A second thought concerns the question who is ultimately responsible for implementing the nexus, in its different forms, in peacebuilding processes. Criticism abounds that donors are engaging in development interventions predominantly to strengthen their own security at home, as wealthy nations cannot isolate themselves from the effects of poverty, thereby sacrificing long-term development challenges of poor countries on the altar of short-term donor security needs. Others even argue that linking security and development in the discourse about human security presents a new form of domination of the developing world by the developed. Development, it is said, has become securitized, whereby long-term development objectives are subordinated to, and merged with, short-term security concerns (Amer et al. 2012; Chandler 2007; Duffield 2007; Buur et al. 2007).

However, the overall failure of the implementation of the nexus on the ground has also contributed to a shift away from top-down international interventionism to an approach that focuses more on empowering societies to be the agents of their own security and development. The so-called turn to the local (Öjendal and Sivhouch 2015) calls for cultivating resilience, the internal capacity to cope with crisis, of populations in countries that face security

and development challenges. Peacebuilding ownership is transferred from global to local levels, fostering endogenous peacebuilding processes that are facilitated and supported, rather than imposed by the international community (Donais and Knorr 2013). While the belief in the nexus mantra at the global policy level remains strong, responsibility for its implementation has effectively shifted from the donors to the struggling populations. Critics maintain that the security-development nexus is in that sense used as an opportunity to make grand policy statements while at the same time disengaging from serious policy-making and passing the responsibility on to other actors, not least non-governmental organizations (Chandler 2007; Pugh et al. 2013; Duffield 2001; Keukeleire and Raube 2013; Stilhoff-Sørensen and Söderbaum 2012).

Disengagement, however, is not a credible reaction to increasing global security and development challenges. Neither is the shift toward resilience necessarily a move to reject responsibility but could also be regarded as a hopeful trend toward collaboration based on a more equal, interdependent relationship between international and local actors. Donor involvement in the implementation of the security-development nexus (es) can and should not be standardized but needs to be based on a bottom-up, context-specific understanding of individual peacebuilding environments and the needs and priorities of host countries and local communities instead of simply repeating the mantra of the security-development nexus. Just how complex the possible linkages between security and development are has become clear, through research as well as practical implementation efforts. Genuine, long-term, development-centric approaches are required to deal with today's security and development problems, where the securitization of development, security-first approaches, and short-term security policies have clearly failed (Andersen 2016; Tschirgi 2018; Reitano 2014). Security and development will always present prime challenges to societies worldwide. Their relationship to each other will therefore remain a focus of attention for all actors engaged in confronting these challenges. Ending the competitive primacy thinking and

recognizing the long-term importance of both will help to reconcile these two peacebuilding arenas. This will enable all peacebuilding actors, international as well as local, to engage in a comprehensive analysis on how security and development challenges, actors, policies, and opportunities are linked in specific peacebuilding environments and on that basis devise long-term, integral plans that involve international, regional, state, and local actors in a coordinated and collaborative approach.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Assessment of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Conceptual Evolution of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Peace Operations, Principles, and Doctrine](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding: Utopia and Reality](#)
- ▶ [Stabilization Operations and their Relationship to Liberal Peacebuilding Missions](#)

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Self-Defense

- ▶ [Cyber Conflict](#)

Self-Organization

- ▶ [Insights from Complexity Theory for Peace and Conflict Studies](#)

Separation

- ▶ [Balkanization](#)
- ▶ [Troubles, The: The Northern Ireland Conflict](#)

Separatist Conflicts

- ▶ [International Organizations and Statehood Conflicts](#)
- ▶ [Statehood Conflicts](#)

Settlement

- ▶ [Art and Reconciliation](#)

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Shared Sovereignty

- ▶ [Stalled Peacebuilding: Dealing with the Violence of Colonization and Its Legacy](#)

Sierra Leone

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Synonymys

[Lomé accord](#); [Lomé peace accord](#); [Lomé peace agreement](#); [Peace accord](#); [Peace agreement](#); [Peace negotiations](#); [Peace talks](#); [Post-conflict](#); [Postwar](#)

Definition

A broad understanding of peacebuilding in Sierra Leone is vital in dealing with the root causes of the

conflict, including challenges such as poverty and social injustice that individuals and communities on “the margins of the state” in the country face in their everyday life. International peacebuilding in Sierra Leone largely focused on state elites, the state, and its institutions. Despite international attempts at building strong and effective state institutions, “state institutions almost without exception (notable exceptions are Audit and Ombudsman) have returned to the status quo preceding the conflict” (M’cleod and Ganson 2018, p. 26). This broad understanding of peacebuilding “does not limit peacebuilding [in Sierra Leone] to activities aimed at preventing a return to conflict, but also include social justice, welfare provision, reconciliation, equity and humanistic agendas for peace rather than technocratic institutional state-centric agendas for peace” (Tom 2017, p. 50). If international actors had adopted a broad understanding of peacebuilding in Sierra Leone, this would have enabled them from the beginning to design post-conflict peacebuilding strategies and mechanisms not dominated by state-centric approaches since a broad understanding of peacebuilding considers the significant role of non-state actors and institutions in promoting sustainable peace in the country. It is vital to note that this does not mean that in Sierra Leone political participation and prevention of relapse to conflict do not matter but that these can still be addressed within the broader understanding of peacebuilding.

Introduction

The small West African State of Sierra Leone gained political independence from Great Britain on 27 April 1961. In the immediate aftermath of independence, there was considerable optimism that political independence would usher the country into an era of political, social, and economic development (Berewa 2011). However, the independence euphoria started to dissolve as the post-colonial state soon turned into an authoritarian and corrupt one generating grievances among citizens, eventually leading to a brutal civil war which lasted from 1991 until 2002. Sierra Leone’s

civil war began in March 1991 when the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) led by Corporal Foday Sankoh attacked the eastern part of the country from its bases in neighboring Liberia seeking to overthrow the All People's Congress (APC)-led government of President Joseph Momoh. The RUF were supported by the Liberian leader, Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) "special forces" and mercenaries from Burkina Faso. During the war other factions emerged, including the *Kamajors* or civil defense groups who protected rural communities and fought against the RUF in alliance with Sierra Leone army (SLA) and the West Side Boys, a splinter group of the SLA.

The end of the civil war in Sierra Leone saw a wide range of international actors play a significant role in peacebuilding and statebuilding. This entry provides a discussion of the civil war, the torturous peace process, and some of the postwar peacebuilding initiatives by international actors in Sierra Leone. International actors have largely focused on the state and its institutions, and nearly two decades after the end of the civil war in Sierra Leone, peace in the sense of the absence of structural violence and social injustice remains elusive in the country. The entry argues that a broader understanding of post-conflict peacebuilding allows for approaches that may result in promoting sustainable peace in Sierra Leone.

A Brutal Civil War

Although both government forces and the RUF committed atrocities during the war, the RUF committed the majority of atrocities directed against civilians (Human Rights Watch 1999a). The war resulted in the death of more than 50,000 people and the displacement of over 500,000 people (Gberie 2005) as well as the collapse of Sierra Leone's state and its institutions. Furthermore, thousands of civilians were raped and maimed, children including some as young as 8 years were recruited through abduction, diamonds were looted, and the revenue from diamonds helped prolong the war, the rule of law became nonexistent, social capital declined, and

schools, government buildings, and administrative infrastructure were destroyed. As Sengupta (2009) wrote in the *Independent*, "[t]he civil war in Sierra Leone became a byword for savagery. Marauding militias, often using child soldiers, killed and raped across the land." The RUF's targeting of civilians contradicted its claims that it wanted to liberate Sierra Leoneans from state autocracy and introduce multiparty democracy in the country, that it sought to secure inclusion, free education, free healthcare, social justice and equity and to protect Sierra Leone's resources from foreign capitalists. Due to the RUF's brutality against civilians, it failed to win the sympathy and support of the majority of Sierra Leoneans.

Causes of the Crisis

Various scholars have sought to explain the cause of the 11-yearlong civil war in Sierra Leone. Interpreting the origins of the war has proved to be very controversial. A variety of scholars have put forward various theories – from Kaplan's (1994) "new barbarism thesis" to Richards' (1996) "crisis of patrimonialism," to Abdullah's (1998) "lumpen youth culture" and Collier and Hoeffler's (2004) "greed vs grievance" theory – to explain Sierra Leone's descent into one of the most brutal civil wars in the world. Kaplan's 1994 essay published in the *Atlantic Monthly* portrayed West African civil wars including Sierra Leone as primitive and anarchic resulting from "loose family structures," "cultural dysfunction," "communalism and animism," "unchecked spread of disease," and overpopulation. Collier (1999) who have examined the relationship between natural resources and conflict have argued that rebels are motivated by greed, not grievances, that is, they engage in civil wars in order to extract valuable primary commodities such as diamonds and drugs. In the case of Sierra Leone, reference has been made to the role of "blood diamonds" in fuelling conflict. This view is supported by Sengupta (2009) who notes that "[t]he country's natural riches turned to a curse, with predators, both domestic and foreign, engaged in a fierce struggle to control mines producing the highly lucrative 'blood diamonds'." The RUF became associated with "blood diamonds." As such,

the international community's perceptions of the Sierra Leonean were influenced by Collier's (1999) work, interpreting the conflict as primarily an outcome of greed, and Kaplan (1994) and Kaldor's (1999) publications, interpreting the conflict as a good example of "new wars," that is, wars that are primarily emanating from primordial ethnic differences and ancient hatreds and opportunist warlords manipulating ethnic sentiments to further their own self-interest.

The war in Sierra Leone neither had religious nor ethnic dimensions. While it is true that the RUF were involved in the illicit trade in diamonds to finance its war effort, it is too simplistic to argue that greed alone is the chief driver of the Sierra Leone Civil War, since inter-group or "horizontal" socioeconomic inequalities are also significant in the war. As the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission argued, such a view fails to "capture numerous complexities, the reasons for the decay of the state in Sierra Leone and the role minerals played prior to and during the conflict. It also does not reflect what unfolded on the ground in Sierra Leone. There were multiple causes of the conflict and reasons for the involvement of Liberian and other foreign actors" (Truth and Reconciliation Commission 2004a, p. 4). As Francis (2006, p. 160) has pointed out, the conflict is a product of a number of external and domestic causes, including "the patrimonial and clientelistic systems of governance in the post-colonial period, whereby successive civilian and military governments effectively impoverished and excluded the majority of the population from the economic and political processes in the country." Sierra Leone's Truth and Reconciliation Commission largely attributed the civil war to "failures in governance and government institutions" (Truth and Reconciliation Commission 2004b, p. 39). However, Sierra Leone's weak state prior to the civil war also needs to be looked at in the context of globalization. For instance, external pressure on the government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) to adopt the structural adjustment program had a negative effect on its revenue base. On the eve of the civil war, Sierra Leone was on the verge of collapse, economically and politically, and

heavily dependent on loans and foreign aid (Lord 2000).

The Quest for Peace in Sierra Leone

In 1992 a group of disgruntled young officers, led by Captain Valentine Esegrobo Melvin Strasser, staged a coup and overthrew President Joseph Momoh's government forcing Momoh to flee to neighboring Guinea. The soldiers then formed a military junta, the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC). In the early 1990s, the NPRC made half-hearted attempts to engage in dialogue with the RUF as NPRC hardliners preferred a military solution over a political one as they were convinced their troops were capable of defeating the rebels militarily. However, this did not yield any positive results. Protests from citizen groups, donor pressure, and an intractable war forced the NPRC government to announce a democratic transition plan in November 1993 (Kandeh 1998). This democratic transition plan called for the establishment of the "Interim National Electoral Commission (INEC), the promulgation of a new constitution, presidential and parliamentary elections in late 1995, and the swearing-in of a new president and parliament by January 1996" (Kandeh 1998, p. 95).

However, the RUF leader, Sankoh, who mistrusted the NPRC, opposed the holding of elections arguing that "the elections could not be held while the country was under the occupation of foreign troops and mercenaries," the NPRC government was illegitimate in the eyes of Sierra Leones as it came into power unconstitutionally, and the NPRC lacked sincerity in their peace negotiations (Mutwol 2009, p. 229). Despite this, a coalition of citizen groups put pressure on the military government to hold national elections, even though the elections would be conducted against the backdrop of a civil war. The war against the RUF was still continuing. For instance, at the beginning of 1995, the security situation in Sierra Leone had deteriorated to the extent that rebels had gained effective control over much of the countryside and major provincial towns, and the NPRC government only managed to regain control later in the same year after the intervention of external forces,

including South African mercenaries and Nigerian and Ghanaian forces (Riley 1996). Despite this challenge, the Sierra Leone's women movement took a leading role in campaigning for a return to civilian rule, with paramount chiefs, well-known academics, trade unionists, journalists, and local council leaders joining the movement (Hirsch 2001).

In late 1995, the first peace process between the RUF and the NPRC was initiated. The London-based conflict resolution nongovernmental organization, International Alert, is credited for initiating the peace process, and in the summer of 1996, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) took over (Hayner 2007). While there were challenges to implement the timetable for a return to civilian rule, progress was made during 1995, including allowing political parties to reform from June and organizing a National Conference on Elections in August aimed at deciding whether the elections should be held. It was a broadly based consultative conference in which representatives of political parties, traditional leaders, the army, nongovernmental organizations, and religious leaders participated which saw an agreement on the election date of late February 1996 and the mechanics of the transfer of power being reached (Riley 1996).

However, in January 1996, a month before the elections, a palace coup by President Strasser's second-in-command, Brigadier Julius Maada Bio, saw Strasser being forced into exile to neighboring Guinea resulting in fears that the elections would be delayed. Upon taking office, Maada Bio launched a campaign for "Peace before Elections," which called for the postponement of the February 1996 elections as he had initiated talks with the RUF (Bangura 2019). There were fears that the campaign of achieving peace before elections was an attempt by the NPRC to prolong its stay in power, which could also prolong the return to democracy. As such, Sierra Leone's resurgent civil society opposed the "Peace before Elections" campaign pressing for elections, thus launching an "Elections before Peace" campaign (Bangura 2019). On 9 February 1996, an estimated 5,000 demonstrators, most of them women, protested against attempts at postponing

the 26 February elections (Gberie 1996). As Sierra Leone's civil society and the international community stood firm, the NPRC could not postpone the elections. As a result, the presidential and parliamentary elections took place on 26–27 February 1996 as scheduled. Since there was no outright winner after the first round of the presidential election, a second round was held on 15 March. The Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) and its presidential candidate Ahmad Tejan Kabbah won the elections and decided to form a government of national unity with the aim to promote national unity and cohesion. The military handed over power to the civilian government. In his inauguration speech on 29 March, Kabbah, who had been elected on a mandate of ending the war and rebuilding the country's collapsed economy, promised to continue pursuing negotiations to end the war.

As Sierra Leone was preparing for the 1996 elections, Bio with the support of the international community was able to bring the RUF to the negotiating table in Abidjan, the capital of Côte d'Ivoire. Bio's successor, President Kabbah, continued with the peace negotiations leading to the signing of the Abidjan Peace Accord between the Government of President Kabbah and the RUF in November 1996. Moreover, Sierra Leone's international donors, including the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, the European Community, and the United States, exerted pressure on President Kabbah's government insisting "on a comprehensive peace plan with RUF before realising over \$212 million — most of it needed to reconstruct the economy" (Mutwol 2009, p. 237). The Abidjan Peace Agreement (1996) was intended to mark the formal ending of the civil war. It called for the cessation of hostilities, judicial, police, and electoral reform, the disarmament of combatants, the establishment of a Demobilization and Resettlement Committee, the transformation of RUF into a political party, the incorporation of RUF forces into the national army, the withdrawal of the private security firm Executive Outcomes and regional forces, and the protection of human rights. Furthermore, the agreement granted amnesty to the RUF. The agreement was

short-lived as the country returned to full-scale war less than 2 months after its signing.

In May 1997, factions within the army opposed to Kabbah overthrew him and established the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) government under Major Johnny Paul Koroma. Kabbah was forced into exile in neighboring Guinea where he formed a government in exile. AFRC invited the RUF forces to join them in power sharing. The AFRC/RUF government was abusive to its citizens, and furthermore, unruly soldiers who roamed the country engaged in looting and arson (Mutwol 2009; Hayner 2007). The AFRC/RUF government ruled for less than a year as in February 1998, the Nigerian-led Economic Community of West African State Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) ousted them with the support of the civil defense forces and, in March, restored to power the elected civilian government of President Kabbah. ECOMOG's use of force to remove the AFRC/RUF government from power and restoring President Kabbah to power received a lot of international support. The RUF/AFRC forces who had fled to the interior of Sierra Leone continued fighting and deliberately targeted and terrorized civilians worsening human suffering in the country.

The reinstated government of President Kabbah rejected the idea of a negotiated settlement preferring to pursue a military solution against the RUF and ex-AFRC. In January 1999, the RUF/AFRC forces invaded Freetown under an operation code-named "Operation No Living Thing" committing widespread atrocities and looting. The invasion saw Freetown experiencing what O'Flaherty (2004, p. 32) has called "an unprecedented savaging." As the Human Rights Watch reported:

The rebel occupation of Freetown was characterized by the systematic and widespread perpetration of all classes of gross human rights abuses against the civilian population. Civilians were gunned down within their houses, rounded up and massacred on the streets, thrown from the upper floors of buildings, used as human shields, and burned alive in cars and houses. They had their limbs hacked off with machetes, eyes gouged out with knives, hands smashed with hammers, and bodies burned with

boiling water. Women and girls were systematically sexually abused, and children and young people abducted by the hundreds. (1999b)

Government and ECOMOG forces also committed atrocities, including the summary execution of those suspected of sympathizing with rebels and aerial attacks on civilian targets (O'Flaherty 1999 cited in O'Flaherty 2004). The rebels had inflicted great damage in Freetown when ECOMOG forces managed to repel them from the capital and restored order in by mid-February. This rebel offensive on Freetown showed the strength of the rebels and exposed the weakness of the government forces. The perception was that the rebels were strong and resilient, and it was not possible for ECOMOG to have the capacity to completely eradicate them countrywide (O'Flaherty 2004). Furthermore, despite being ejected from Freetown, the RUF/AFRC forces continued to dominate many parts of Sierra Leone. Realizing the vulnerability of the government and the strength of the rebels, as well as under considerable international pressure to resolve the conflict peacefully, President Kabbah's government eventually agreed to peace negotiations. This saw the GoSL and the RUF signing a comprehensive peace agreement, the *Lomé Peace Agreement* on 7 July 1999 in Lomé, Togo. The signing of the agreement officially ended the war between the GoSL and the RUF.

There was a significant national and international participation in the peace negotiations. International organizations and interested governments attended for part or all of the proceedings included the OAU, Ghana, Libya, Liberia, the Commonwealth, the United Kingdom, Mali, Nigeria, the United States, and the UN (Barnes and Polzer 2000; Hayner 2007). The Lomé Peace Accord was a compromise document between the GoSL and the RUF, but it failed to be inclusive as other local actors were excluded. Sectors that were excluded from decision-making role in the peace process included women, civil society organizations and community representatives, other armed groups, "prominent individuals not aligned with President Kabbah, and especially people from regions other than Freetown and the Western area" (Barnes and Polzer 2000, p. 4). Moreover,

the interests of the AFRC/SLA were not considered at the Lomé peace talks, and as such, the international community did not sufficiently recognize the pivotal role of these rogue soldiers throughout most of the conflict, despite the “sobel problem,” soldiers by night, rebels by day, and their January 1999 attack on Freetown (Keen 2005).

The Lomé Peace Agreement's provisions, include the UN involvement, the immediate cessation of hostilities and the creation of a Ceasefire Monitoring Commission, the creation of a government of national unity, blanket amnesty for human rights crimes to all warring parties, demobilization, disarmament, reintegration, constitutional reform, the establishment of truth and reconciliation, and human rights commissions, the transformation of RUF into a political party, human rights, and security sector reform (*Lomé Peace Agreement* 1999). The agreement also provided for the creation of a council of elders and religious leaders to deal with any disputes resulting from differences in the interpretation of the Lomé Peace Agreement and the Commission for the Management of Strategic Resources, National Reconstruction and Development (CMRRD), which would be chaired by the RUF leader, Sankoh, and a Commission for the Consolidation of Peace with a mandate to implement post-conflict program to ensure reconciliation and welfare of all parties to the conflict. The agreement provided for the establishment of a new independent electoral body, the National Electoral Commission, with a mandate of ensuring “a level playing field in the national elections” (*Lomé Peace Agreement* 1999, Article XII).

However, the amnesty provisions of the agreement proved to be very controversial. Human rights groups within and outside Sierra Leone, including the Sierra Leone Human Rights Committee, the Amnesty International, and the Human Rights Watch, strongly opposed the Lomé Accord's amnesty provisions with the Human Rights Watch calling on the UN to clarify its position on the provisions (Human Rights Watch 1999c). In a letter to the UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, Peter Takiramubude, Executive Director of the Africa Division for the

Human Rights Watch, called on Annan to reject the amnesty provisions:

Human Rights Watch believes that the international community, above all the United Nations must emphasize the need for the current negotiations to establish mechanisms to ensure that those who have committed grave abuses will be subject to certain minimum processes of accountability, and that at least those who have committed the worst atrocities, especially those in command positions, are subjected to trial and punishment under national and international laws. We call on you, as secretary-general, to disassociate the U.N. from any peace deal that compromises respect for fundamental standards of human rights and humanitarian law. We also urge you to use your moral authority to speak in favor of accountability. (1999d)

For the Human Rights Watch, the international community needed to show commitment to bring to justice individuals most responsible for war crimes in Africa just as they were doing in the former Yugoslavia. As a result of this pressure, the UN representative at the peace talks, Francis Okello, added a disclaimer to the text of Article IX when he signed the agreement on behalf of the UN as he said he “could not countenance amnesty for those guilty of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity because these are forbidden by international law” (Lewis 1999).

The peace agreement resulted in a new mandate for ECOMOG, the creation of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), and the arrival of a UN peacekeeping force. UNAMSIL had a mandate to assist the GoSL and the parties to implement the Lomé Peace agreement. The Mission, over the course of its mandate, played a significant role in Sierra Leone, including helping to rebuild Sierra Leone's police, disarming tens of thousands of former fighters, monitoring and training Sierra Leoneans in human rights, helping in the holding of national elections, and the rehabilitation of the country's infrastructure. The *Lomé Peace Agreement* also provided an opportunity for both the RUF and the GoSL to gain legitimacy as well as access to economic and political power for the RUF (Tom 2017). Immediately after the signing of the peace accord, the GoSL took steps to implement it. The Parliament of Sierra Leone unanimously ratified the accord on 15 July 1999 with the passage of the *Lomé Peace Agreement*

(Ratification) Act, 1999, thus incorporating its provisions into domestic law.

Despite these efforts by the GoSL, the process could not be sustained largely due to actions by the RUF and AFRC who were unwilling to comply with the treaty provisions, including the RUF's reluctance to disarm, ceasefire violations, and a failure to release civilian abductees. Continued human rights abuses against the civilian population and infighting within rebel ranks also threatened the peace process. In August, a faction of the AFRC kidnapped 42 UN military observers, journalists, religious leaders, ECOMOG soldiers, and aid workers, who had gone to the Okra Hill to try to persuade the rebels to release children who had been abducted earlier in the year (Human Rights Watch 2003). The AFRC resented their exclusion from the Lomé talks. The peace agreement collapsed when in early May 2000 RUF forces held hostage 500 UN peacekeepers resulting in a full-scale fighting between the SLA and the rebels. On 8 May a massive public demonstration outside Foday Sankoh's residence in Freetown denouncing the RUF turned violent when his bodyguards opened fire on the demonstrators killing 19 of them leading to the arrest of Sankoh (Onishi 2000).

The May 2000 crisis brought the conflict to increased international attention with the UK military intervention playing a significant role in ending it. A combination of factors contributed to the eventual stabilization of the situation, an end to the civil war and international actors' involvement in the country's post-conflict reconstruction. These factors include British military intervention; diplomacy; the May 2001 Guinean bombardment of Kambia, a town on the border of Sierra Leone and Guinea that was under RUF control; and the UN Security Council's expansion of the size of UNAMSIL and its mandate, which allowed UN troops to use force against the rebels; civil disobedience; and the imposition of economic and travel sanctions on Charles Taylor's government in Liberia (see Ero 2009; Olonisakin 2008; ICG 2001; Paris 2004). On 18 January 2002, President Kabbah declared the Sierra Leone Civil War officially over. On 2 May, the country successfully held parliamentary and

presidential elections with the assistance of the UN. The elections were considered critical to consolidate peace and democracy. The SLPP and President Kabbah were reelected with an overwhelming majority to serve another 5-year term. Since the end of the civil war, Sierra Leone has successfully held four democratic elections in 2002, 2007, 2012, and 2018 with the All People's Congress winning the 2007 and 2012 elections and the SLPP winning the 2002 and 2018 elections. The 2007 and 2018 elections witnessed smooth transfers of power between incoming and outgoing heads of state. Moreover, Sierra Leone has not relapsed into conflict. However, despite this and heavy international involvement in the country, Sierra Leone continues to face most of the challenges that contributed to the civil war.

International Peacebuilding in Sierra Leone

Given the devastating nature of the Sierra Leonean conflict, it is not surprising that at the end of the war, the country had no financial resources to support the massive postwar reconstruction program which would enable its peace process to hold. As such, it required international assistance to help secure the peace. This witnessed a wide range of international actors, including leading states such as the UK government; inter-governmental organizations like the UN, the European Union (EU), and the World Bank; and bilateral institutions such as the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) intervening. Such leading states and organizations largely emphasized peace and state reconstruction projects that were liberal peace oriented as they sought to promote political and economic liberalization and the building of public institutions in the country – what Newman et al. (2009) have called liberal peacebuilding.

Statebuilding and Peacebuilding Emphasizing the State and Its Institutions

Much international efforts and resources were applied to statebuilding and peacebuilding

initiatives. These initiatives in the early period of post-conflict reconstruction largely focused on issues including development and humanitarian assistance, governance, rule of law, justice and security sector reform, establishing a vibrant and responsive “liberal” civil society, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, market-based economic reform measures, and building strong and effective state institutions. A wide range and comprehensive governance reform measures were undertaken, including the Local Government Act, 2004 [and the Local Government (Amendment Act), 2017]; the Anti-Money Laundering Act, 2004; the Anti-Corruption Act, 2004 (and a new Anti-Corruption Act of 2008), the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone Act, 2004; the Government Budgeting and Accountability Act, 2005; and the Independent Media Commission Act, 2006.

In an attempt to improve governance and accountability, the DFID provided support aimed at strengthening the public financial management systems and civil service reform. Other international actors, including the UN, the United Kingdom, the World Bank, and the EU, provided significant support to the creation and operation of core state institutions for good governance and democracy, including the Independent Media Commission, the National Commission for Democracy (NCD), the Human Rights Commission for Sierra Leone (HRCSL), Political Parties Registration Commission (PPRC), and the National Electoral Commission (NEC). On the economic realm, under the close supervision of international actors such as the World Bank, the GoSL embarked on structural reforms, including reforming the public sector and modernizing the financial sector. Other programs that were introduced include the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and the two DFID-funded programs: Justice Sector Development Program (2005–2011) and the Access to Security and Justice Program (2011–2016).

Prioritizing the Special Court over the TRC

In order to redress gross human rights violations during the civil war, a Special Court for Sierra Leone and a Truth and Reconciliation

Commission (TRC) were simultaneously established. The two institutions operated contemporaneously presenting challenges as the TRC placed emphasis on restorative justice while the special court emphasized retributive justice. The Special Court of Sierra Leone was formally established in January 2002 through an agreement between the UN and the GoSL. It was a hybrid court with a mandate to prosecute individuals who bear the greatest responsibility for committing serious violations of international humanitarian law and Sierra Leonean law in Sierra Leone since 30 November 1996. The Court targeted leaders from the CDF, the RUF, and AFRC while dismissing crimes against humanity that ECOMOG forces and the SLA committed. As such, for some Sierra Leoneans, “Victims of RUF and AFRC had the dignity of a court hearing and a reparations programme, but these victims were never part of that. They have been complete bystanders in every sense of the word” (Lawal 2019).

The Court indicated a total of 13 people, including Charles Taylor, Foday Sankoh, and Samuel Hinga Norman, the CDF leader. Foday Sankoh died before the Court could bring him to trial, while Samuel Hinga Norman died before judgment in his trial. In 2012, the Court found Taylor guilty of five counts of war crimes (outrage upon personal dignity, acts of terrorism, pillage, cruel treatment, and murder); five counts of crimes against humanity (sexual slavery, murder, rape, enslavement, and other inhumane acts); and one count of other serious violation of international humanitarian law (enlisting children under the age of 15 as soldiers) during the Sierra Leone Civil War (The Hague Justice Portal *n.d.*). It completed its mandate in December 2013 after the Court’s Appeals Chamber upheld the its decision to sentence the former Liberian leader, Charles Taylor, for 50 years in prison who had appealed against the sentence handed over to him in April 2012.

While the Special Court was an outcome of an agreement between the GoSL and the UN, the establishment of the TRC was a product of the Lomé Accord. The TRC was required to start operating within 90 days of the signing of the accord. The agreement stated the mandate of the

commission as “[...]to address impunity, break the cycle of violence, provide a forum for both the victims and perpetrators of human rights violations to tell their story, get a clear picture of the past in order to facilitate genuine healing and reconciliation” focusing on violations committed from the beginning of the civil war in 1991 (*Lomé Peace Agreement 1999*, Art. XXVI [1] & [2]). However, the GoSL failed to meet the target of establishing the TRC within 90 days of the signing of the Accord. On 22 February 2000, the Sierra Leone Parliament adopted legislation for the establishment of the TRC – *The Truth and Reconciliation Commission Act 2000*. The Act states the functions of the TRC as:

[...] to create an impartial historical record of violations and abuses of human rights and international humanitarian law related to the armed conflict in Sierra Leone, from the beginning of the Conflict in 1991 to the signing of the Lomé Peace Agreement; to address impunity, to respond to the needs of the victims, to promote healing and reconciliation and to prevent a repetition of the violations and abuses suffered. (*Truth and Reconciliation Commission Act 2000*, Art. 6 [1])

Although the TRC was a creation of the Parliament of Sierra Leone, it had an international dimension since two senior UN officials, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Sierra Leone, participated in its establishment (Schabas 2006). In 1999, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) agreed to play a lead role in organizing and overseeing Sierra Leone’s TRC process. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Sierra Leone were responsible for the appointing of three international commissioners, and funding for the TRC largely came from external donors, with OHCHR having the responsibility for fund raising (Schabas 2006). As such, the TRC consisted of domestic and international commissioners.

However, in terms of funding, international donors privileged the Special Court over the TRC, war victims, and local and customary approaches to peacebuilding (Tom 2017). The initial budget for the TRC was US\$10 million; however, poor donor response resulted in the

budget being reduced to US\$7 million, and in the end, the Commission received US\$4 million (Schabas 2006). By contrast, the Special Court had an initial budget of US\$75 million, however, when it formally closed in 2013, it had spent over US\$300 million to prosecute nine war criminals (Gberie 2014). With such a small budget and short timeframe, the TRC had no capacity and resources to meet its core objective of promoting national reconciliation and consolidating the peace, addressing impunity, attending to the needs of the victims of the war, and preventing a repetition of the violence and abuses experienced during the war. The TRC produced its final report in 2004 with findings and conclusions relating to the causes of war and policy recommendations to facilitate national reconciliation and avoid future violations. The international community’s emphasis on the Court resulted in it paying very little attention on human needs and welfare; structural violence; the indigenous and traditional social, political, and economic structures; and forms of peace and peacebuilding. Yet, the TRC’s focus on the local and its recommendations for long-term peacebuilding through justice for those affected by the war was paramount for a sustainable peace (Cubitt 2012, p. 37).

UNIPSIL and the Prioritization of State Institutions

With UNAMSIL successfully completing its mandate in December 2005, the UN changed its focus from peacekeeping to peacebuilding resulting in the creation of the UN Integrated Office in Sierra Leone to provide support to the GoSL in consolidating peace in the country. In June 2006, Sierra Leone was one of the countries to be on the agenda of the newly established UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) and its Peacebuilding Fund (PBF). In its Sierra Leone Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework, the PBC noted that the country’s engagement with it is “aimed at ensuring sustained attention of the international community in providing additional political, financial and technical support to the country’s peace consolidation efforts” (UN Peacebuilding Commission 2007, p. 3). Between 2007 and 2018, the PBF invested

US\$57.3 million, which it used to support of a wide range of peacebuilding activities in Sierra Leone (UN Peacebuilding Fund 2018). Some of the PBF projects have supported conflict prevention, such as promoting peaceful dialogue and enhancing early warning and response systems. The PBF has also funded the Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative (GYPI), which focuses on improving the participation of women in political processes as ambassadors of peacebuilding. Furthermore, the fund has been used to finance specific expenses of the GoSL that support state institutions vital for peacebuilding such as the Office of National Security (ONS), NCD, PPRC, HRCSL, and NEC, so they function in an effective and efficient manner (Bangura 2019).

In August 2008, the UN Security Council through Resolution 1829 (2008) requested the UN Secretary-General to the UN Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL). The Security Council requested UNIPSIL to assist the GoSL in the following areas:

- (a) Providing political support to national and local efforts for identifying and resolving tensions and threats of potential conflict, whatever the source; (b) Monitoring and promoting human rights, democratic institutions and the rule of law, including efforts to counter transnational organized crime and drug trafficking; (c) Consolidating good governance reforms, with a special focus on anti-corruption instruments such as the Anti-Corruption Commission; (d) Supporting decentralization, reviewing the 1991 Constitution and the enactment of relevant legislation; (e) Closely coordinating with and supporting the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, as well as the implementation of the Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework and projects supported through the Peacebuilding Fund. (UN Security Council 2008)

UNIPSIL coordinated closely with UN programs, agencies, and funds through the “Joint for Sierra Leone of the United Nations Family” framework (UN Secretary-General 2014). UNIPSIL helped the GoSL strengthen key institutions such as NEC and PPRC as well as helped establish the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation. Furthermore, it supported the Sierra Leone police in establishing an Independent Police Complaints Board and the Transnational Organized Crime Unit (TOCU).

Moreover, UNIPSIL placed emphasis on tolerance and dialogue, and it largely focused on providing technical and financial assistance to governmental bodies. However, UNIPSIL had to change to its approach after recognizing that “its focus on government institutions remained incomplete,” which saw it establishing the non-state actors project funded by US\$5 million from the PBF “(in addition to the US\$35 million allocated for working with the government) to engage civil society more broadly in pursuit of non-violent elections” (Lawrence 2014, p. 7). The fact that the non-state actors project was established in 2010, 2 years after the creation of UNIPSIL is evidence of how at the design stage of the program, non-state actors were not fully integrated (Bangura 2019). As various critics of international peacebuilding (that is liberal peace oriented) have noted, international actors have tended to mainly focus on state elites and state institutions in their peacebuilding efforts marginalizing non-state actors (see, e.g., Richmond 2011). This has contributed to the liberal peace’s failure to achieve desired outcomes of creating durable and sustainable peace in societies emerging from violent conflict. Both state and non-state actors play a unique role in the peacebuilding process.

On 31 March 2014, UNIPSIL completed its UN Security Council mandate in Sierra Leone and transferred its responsibilities to the UN Country Team, marking the end of over 15 years of UN peace support operations in the country, which had played a vital role in the country’s transition from violent conflict to peace. The end of the UNIPSIL mandate in Sierra Leone saw the UN shifting from focusing on peacebuilding to focusing development in the country. On 5 March, at a press conference in Sierra Leone, the then UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-Moon remarked: “Sierra Leone represents one of the world’s most successful cases of post-conflict recovery, peacekeeping and peacebuilding” (UNIPSIL 2014, no page number). Yet, this official version of Sierra Leone as a “peacebuilding success story” of the UN and many international organizations is sharply contrasted with the feelings on the ground. The Sierra Leone state

remains fragile nearly two decades after the end of the civil as the country's stability continue to be under threat. This is due to the fact that most of the underlying causes of the civil war have not been fully addressed, including poverty, social injustices, youth unemployment, and marginalization, which continue to generate grievances among those affected. Yet, effective peacebuilding requires addressing such causes, and as such, moving from a peacebuilding stage to a development stage without fully addressing the root causes of the conflict in Sierra Leone is futile.

Summary

Drawing on the case of Sierra Leone, this entry has offered a broad understanding of peacebuilding which does not only prioritize state-centric agendas for peace but equally prioritize issues such as social justice, the provision of welfare, equity, reconciliation, and humanistic agendas for peace. It has argued that for lasting peace to be achieved in postwar Sierra Leone, it is vital for international peacebuilders to adopt this broad understanding of peacebuilding. In the case of Sierra Leone, the entry has shown that international peacebuilders largely supported peacebuilding initiatives that emphasized the state and its institutions giving little attention to human welfare and needs and other peacebuilding initiatives and mechanisms. The end of UNIPSIL mandate saw the then UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon heralding Sierra Leone as success story of post-conflict peacekeeping, recovery, and peacebuilding. This is based on a narrow understanding of peacebuilding as a broad understanding of peacebuilding as provided in this entry would show that structural violence and social injustice persist in postwar Sierra Leone requiring more efforts to address them in order to achieve durable and sustainable peace in the country.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Human Rights](#)
- ▶ [Hybrid Courts and Transitional Justice](#)

- ▶ [Liberal Peace](#)
- ▶ [Liberal Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Statebuilding](#)

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Silence and Peacebuilding

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Synonyms

[Acknowledgement](#); [Co-existence](#); [Denial](#); [Memory](#); [Reconciliation](#); [Transitional Justice](#)

Definition/Description

Silences are common in societies emerging from war and can serve a range of different purposes. Oppressive regimes may impose silence to hide crimes, and victims may keep silent for fear of speaking out. Peacebuilding mechanisms are therefore often focused on breaking silences and facilitating acknowledgment. Yet, at the same time, the practice of silence can open ways for people and societies to approach and handle a difficult past and make coexistence possible. Silence can thus be a sign of respect or a strategy of protection; it can also be a means to making claims in contentious settings. A nuanced understanding of the different roles that silence may play in societies affected by conflict is called for, in order to support the building of a durable and inclusive peace.

Introduction

The relationship between speech and silence is a central theme in research on how to build peaceful societies in transitions from war. When dealing with an atrocious past, societies and individuals necessarily make a selection of what is to be remembered and what is to be forgotten. When new collective memories are forged, certain events and actors are commemorated and others are not. Who has power over the past? Who can decide what and whom should be remembered and spoken about, and what should be forgotten and shrouded in silence?

In post-conflict settings, silence is often connected to denial and impunity and understood as something negative and oppressive (Cohen 2011; Connerton 2011). After war there is usually a need to construct clear victim and perpetrator positions and there is little room for ambiguities. The crimes of one’s own side may be silenced, and so is often the suffering of the enemy. In peacebuilding practices, a connection is therefore often made between reconciliation and the breaking of silences. It is argued that in order to come to terms with the past and be able to “move on”, the

truth must be told, and victims must have acknowledgment of their suffering (cf Hinton 2018). Truth and Reconciliation Commissions are examples of institutions that have been set up with the aim of breaking silences and thus to create more inclusive postwar societies. It is argued that it is through speech and being heard that individual victims can heal (Guthrey 2015). Community peacebuilding projects often have a component of rebuilding trust through dialogue groups. The idea is that through sharing experiences across dividing lines, individuals and communities will be able to heal their wounds.

However, in these local settings, silence holds a broader range of meanings and can open up for other possibilities. It follows that silence does not always have to be an obstruction or serve a destructive purpose but can help to make peace possible, for instance through helping to reforge a sense of community. Research that seeks to understand everyday informal practices of coexistence has shown that certain acts of silence and their interpretations may be an important part of building and maintaining peace among people that live together after atrocity (e.g., Eastmond and Mannergren Selimovic 2012). Thus, depending on the (postwar) social context, silence may be a sign of respect, of enabling cooperation and, in precarious situations, to contest top-down threats or demands, and a necessary strategy to keep safe. Importantly, then, silence as a form of communication is not mute, even in situations where oppression and fear reign and people are frightened or uncomfortable in raising their voices. Strong claims can be made without verbal speech. Relying on ambiguity, such communication can be employed to convey difficult experiences and sensitive messages more effectively than does speech, and also assist in rebuilding trust and restoring relations. A number of “traditional” peacebuilding mechanisms that engage with practices of silence rather than speech therefore question the generalized assumption that “speaking out” is always a constructive way forward.

Silence is thus more than the absence of speech. As a form of tacit communication, it can be employed and interpreted so as to serve different purposes for different actors. In the following,

a number of empirical examples will illustrate the workings of silence in relation to peacebuilding. They also show that there is no clear-cut opposition nor straightforward dividing line between silence and speech; that different types of silence can be enfolded into each other, and that, over time, silence can change into speech and back again. Key questions for peace research thus revolve around what silence in particular contexts of power and influence seeks to communicate, and to what effect. In the following, silences that “disable” or “enable” peace will serve as short-form analytical categories.

Silences That Disable Peace

Oppressive regimes tend to hide their crimes in order to stay in power. In Argentina, many secrets were kept hidden by the military junta that ruled 1976–1983, including the fate of the thousands of oppositionals who were tortured and killed. Chillingly labeled *los desaparecidos* (“the disappeared”), their whereabouts remained shrouded in secrecy for decades. The quest for truth has been driven by a number of civil society groups such as the *Madres de Plaza de Mayo* and the *Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo*. These are women who have gathered weekly for many years in the central square of Buenos Aires, demanding to know what happened to their children and grandchildren who were appropriated by the military, and to break the silence around their disappearance.

Another top-down silence was imposed in Spain in the 1970s after the end of the Franco era that followed the civil war. The “pact of forgetting” was a political agreement between parties on both the right and the left in order to safeguard the fragile democracy that was emerging from autocracy. The crimes of the past should be forgotten in order not to jeopardize the transition toward national reconciliation, it was argued. However, over the last decade, demands for truth to be known have increased, especially in relation to the recent opening of mass graves. Many relatives of the victims feel that the time has come to break the silences that are now understood as

oppressive and a crime against the victims and their families (Kovras 2013; Renshaw 2011).

Moving to one of the worst atrocities of our time, the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, one can note the strong narrative of reconciliation and forgiveness in the country, in which the commemoration of the genocide against the Tutsis is an ongoing activity with recurring public events. Survivors have possibilities to tell their stories and to have their pain acknowledged. Yet the collective narrative about the genocide silences other instances of violence. Burnet (2012) notes that the many thousand Hutus that were killed by the Rwandan Liberation Front (RPF) during and directly following the genocide are left out from the narrative. Many Hutu survivors of the RPF massacres remain silent, fearing imprisonment and assassination. They are afraid of breaking the genocide ideology law, imposed to prevent a new genocide from taking hold in the country; however, the law has also become a tool to maintain the narrative of Tutsis as being the only victims (Otake 2019).

In Bosnia-Herzegovina, conflicting narratives of the past also exist in a frictional relationship. The active and continued denial of crimes by their adversaries is a painful experience for many victims. Despite a large number of investigations and criminal trials that have provided detailed evidence of the genocide in Srebrenica in 1995 against Bosniaks, politicians and other elite actors on the Bosnian Serb side refuse to acknowledge this and other crimes. Individual survivors testify that this silencing is extremely painful and inflicts what has been called “the second wound of silence” which in turn is understood as a major stumbling block on the precarious path to reconciliation.

Silence can also be selective in that some crimes are noted and acknowledged, whereas others are hidden and/or ignored. Sexual violence is such a crime. Gendered relations of power mean that women who have been raped often are subjected to shame and social stigma (Mannergren Selimovic 2018; Parpart and Parashar 2018) as a result, many women themselves often rely on silence, also in their close relations and over many years, and forego seeking assistance with continuing injuries incurred. While rape has been

part of warfare probably for as long as war has existed, it is not until the last couple of decades that silences have been broken more generally around this topic. Crucially, women in Rwanda and in Bosnia-Herzegovina testified about sexual violence in the 1990s, and as a result international law has been changed. The fact that there is now international legislation in place obviously does not mean that conflict-related sexual violence stops, or that it is easily talked about or acknowledged by perpetrators. However, it is now a crime that is noted and addressed in formal processes. The difficulties of breaking silences are exemplified by the fate of Yazidi women who in 2014 were abducted and raped by IS (Islamic State) in northern Iraq on a massive scale. Many of them have testified that not only do they have to deal with the scars from the violence they suffered, but they are also ostracized in their own community and considered to bring shame on their families. A number of suicides have been reported (Amnesty International 2018).

Silences That Enable Peace

While silence can be detrimental, used to uphold divisions and a tool for oppressive regimes, research that takes an interest in more bottom-up approaches to peace have highlighted and explored the enabling effects of silence. Reconciliation discourses and transitional justice mechanisms that favor the breaking of silences are here at odds with local strategies that rather see silence as the appropriate response, and in fact make use of silence as a tactic to make peace durable. Silence appears to be particularly productive in contexts where conflicts remain unsolved and where there is still a need to build trust and cooperate socially and economically. This is especially important in societies that have seen interethnic or interreligious violence and where conflict lines may divide communities and even families. The idea that differences will be overcome by talking and sharing is often regarded in these communities as misguided and detrimental to social relations. Research in these contexts points to the enabling role played by silence, as it is locally

perceived to communicate respect and as such facilitate co-existence and the rebuilding of “normality” in everyday life.

In Sierra Leone, local populations have been skeptical to the linkages between truth and reconciliation as advertised by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission set up to address the consequences of the civil war. Studies have shown that the locally more accepted way to deal with pain and healing was respectful silence, considered to be a constructive way forward, whereas talking about the atrocities openly was seen as damaging (Shaw 2007; Millar 2012). In these communities, interdependence is a vital feature of individuals’ social, economic, political, and religious life. Similar findings from communities in northern Uganda support these claims. Here silence was read as a sign of strength and value enabling victims to reestablish self-worth and to preserve relationships (Akello in Otake 2019).

Linked to this use of silence to uphold relationships is the way memories of violence are selectively reworked and transmitted from one generation to the next. Intergenerational research among Bosnian families suggests that elders tend to feel a responsibility to protect the younger members from stories that might reignite hatred (Eastmond 2016; Palmberger 2016). These findings point to a pragmatic rationality found in local communities, rural as well as urban, to rebuilding lives and social relations after violent conflict.

Societies may also rely on the power of symbolic rituals in order to address the past. Such ritual practices are not centered on speech, but acknowledge that silence holds the potential of social repair. In Timor-Leste rituals and ceremonies have been performed in relation to reinhabiting homesteads that had to be abandoned during the violence, as well as in the recovery and burial of the remains of dead relatives. Kent (2016) observes that these rituals reaffirm and recognize the interdependence between members of a community; as such, they are not dependent on the collection of testimonies in the UN-sponsored truth commission CAVR (Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation) set up in 2002 following the end of Indonesian occupation.

Even in situations of high precarity, when it might be dangerous or socially destructive to “speak up,” there are ways of being silent that can also make a statement and demonstrate a position. In ethnically cleansed areas in Bosnia-Herzegovina, returnees have testified to experiencing the power of their physical but silent presence. Through mundane actions, such as walking in the streets and having coffee in cafés, they make moral claims to the place and their history, thus destabilizing ongoing attempts to collectively erase their historical presence. In the absence of the political space to openly challenge the dominant silence at the state level about ethnic cleansing, these locals use silence to contest the dominant and disabling silence (Stefansson 2010). Such performative silences can be understood as a claim-making strategy replacing confrontational forms of opposition to the postwar political order. They play out at public events as well as in private, informal settings. As such, they refute claims that “nothing has happened.”

Sometimes such silences are ritualized. As a reminder that silence is multifaceted and that enabling silences can exist within and seek to delegitimize disabling silences, it is pertinent to return to Argentina and the work to bring down the top-down culture of silence around the crimes of the junta. The weekly vigils of the Mothers of Plaza de Mayo were held in silence, a chosen strategy that ameliorated the impact of their protest as the loss of their “disappeared” children became all the more poignant through the lack of verbal speech strategies.

Implications for Peacebuilding

These examples from different societies and conflicts show that the relationship between silence and peace is not a straightforward one. There is a need for peacebuilding interventions to understand these variations in order to be able to identify the postwar practices that best support peace.

Peacebuilding takes place in societies where narratives at the macro-political level may silence and marginalize victims, in order to strengthen

and consolidate hegemonic positions. Such dominant and disabling silences need to be broken in order for an inclusive peace to take place that allows for multifaceted stories of the past. At the same time, attention to the practices of silence in everyday life makes us cognizant of the enabling role that silence can play. Silences emerge as an important component of informal interactions between former adversaries, often seen as necessary to make room for the slow rebuilding of trust and a future acceptance of multiple experiences and stories of the past. Importantly, such everyday interactions often take place not as a moral engagement with reconciliation or peace as such, but as part of rebuilding a sense of “normal life” and imagining a possible future. This leads to a questioning of some of the practices of transitional justice and peacebuilding measures; importantly, it undermines unidimensional claims that silence is negative and that “speaking out” is always the best way to address a difficult past to make a shared future possible.

Summary

The practice of silence needs to be taken into consideration as part of transitional processes from war to peace. There is a strong relationship between power and silence. Silence is a form of communication in all human interaction; it can convey a broad range of social meanings and comes with social and political implications for individuals and societies who have experienced war and repression. Practices of silences at the micro level are entangled in larger processes at the level of hegemonic discourses. Depending on the transitional circumstances, silence may be disabling or enabling, or both. The relationship between speaking out and refraining from speech, between acknowledgment and denial, and between disabling and enabling silences, is a dynamic one and unfolds over time. Peacebuilding efforts need to be sensitized to the multiple meanings of silence, instead of only working to disrupt silences as a hoped for straightforward path toward peace and, eventually, reconciliation.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Conflict, Memory, and Memory Activism: Dealing with Difficult Pasts](#)
- ▶ [Everyday Peace](#)

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Slums

► Urban Violence and Crime

Social Capital and Peace

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Definition

Social capital is the term describing the norms, networks, and trust which enable collective action by societies, or groups within a society, to achieve goals which they could not bring about as individuals. It is relevant to conflict analysis and understanding peace processes and peace-building, because it helps to foreground social dynamics which affect how these unfold. Relationships at many levels are fundamental to conflict and its resolution, and social capital is a helpful analytical lens for understanding how relationships are shaped, and how they influence the dynamics at work. One of most important elements in social capital is trust, which of course comes under enormous pressure during violent conflict. Yet it is required in order to engage in dialogue or to negotiate a settlement. Norms are changed and created during conflict, and new ones may be explicitly promoted during a peace process. Networks are also disrupted or formed, and these can have a significant bearing on whether

and how a peace process can progress. Social capital is therefore profoundly affected by conflict, with various forms being destroyed, refashioned, and created. It has an effect in turn on the conflict dynamics. Social capital is not always a constructive factor, and some forms can even deepen divisions and harden identities. But whatever role it plays, it is a useful conceptual tool for understanding conflict and transitions toward peace.

Introduction

Social capital can be used as a conceptual tool for exploring the way relationships are made and transformed by conflict and peace. Like any tool, it is more useful in some situations than others and will not help if it is applied inappropriately, without sensitivity, or as a replacement for the many other useful ways of analyzing conflict. But it does help to move this analysis to the group or social level, where the whole is more than the sum of its parts. It also helps to make visible processes, power dynamics, and roles at local and societal levels which would otherwise be missed. The term is usually most associated closely with Putnam (1993, 1995), who in fact credits others with having mentioned the idea before. But his development of the concept has been used widely by researchers and applied usefully to a broad range of situations. He defines it as “features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions” (1993, p. 167). The question of collective action is also fundamental, as these social dynamics “enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives” (1995, pp. 664–665).

It is important to recognize the implied normative aspects of social capital: It may be described as something which should be fostered, and which will benefit all members of society. This is especially relevant when it comes to trust – one of the essential components of social capital – since it is inherently appealing. But while social capital can facilitate peace processes in very significant ways, it can also enable and promote conflict, othering,

and exclusion. For this reason, it is necessary to explore its different manifestations. It may work with or against a peace process, so it is not a question of advocating or promoting it. It is however important to understand its potency and how it can affect a conflict dynamic.

Types of Social Capital

Besides the question of whether or not social capital can contribute to or undermine a peace process, it is important to distinguish between its different forms. Some of these relate to particular groups, rather than society as a whole. One significant distinction is between bonding and bridging social capital. In the bonding variety, it strengthens the relationships and capacity *within* a particular group, rather than between groups. This can lead to a reinforcement of group cohesion and identity, with varying results. A group which is fragmented, insecure, and includes potential spoilers may be unable to negotiate effectively or deliver on any agreement reached. In this situation, greater social capital could in fact help to build confidence within a group to allow it to “take risks for peace.” However, bonding capital can also harden identities which are defined in contrast to the “other,” or underpin a fixed narrative shared by its members. The conflict may then be understood in terms of “win-lose” or a zero-sum game.

Bridging social capital, on the other hand, strengthens links *between* groups and allows for wider collective action (Putnam 2000). Norms, networks, and trust operate across divisions and enable shared interests and goals to be realized. It therefore has the potential to be inclusive and build solidarity. This can be seen to different degrees at all stages of a conflict, from second track diplomacy and citizen diplomacy through to the difficult and complicated issues of transitional justice, agreeing on coexistence, and finding ways to recognize and acknowledge the past.

This analytical lens is not intended to obscure the power dynamics, structures, and institutions which also affect human relationships. Another useful conceptualization is linking social capital, which takes power asymmetries more explicitly into account. While bridging social capital can

connect groups which may be equal, linking social capital connects those who are in different positions. Szreter and Woolcock (2004) describe it as “norms of respect and networks of trusting relationships between people who are interacting across explicit, formal or institutionalized power or authority gradients in society” (p. 655).

A distinction can also be made between horizontal social capital – describing relationships between people with similar types of power or status – and vertical social capital, where hierarchies or other dynamics are involved. This in fact touches on the related idea of social contract, which is often being questioned or renegotiated in the course of armed conflict. Failure of the social contract between the state and its citizens, or its rejection, may even have contributed to the conflict in the first place. The contract may also be explicitly on the agenda in the course of peacebuilding, where there is a conscious attempt to create new and credible structures with a broader appeal (Knight and Özerdem 2004; Richmond 2011; Themnér and Ohlson 2014).

How Social Capital Interacts with Conflict

Social capital, conflict, and peace interact with each other in nonlinear ways, and looking for simple cause and effect relationships may obscure the complex dynamics at work. Social capital is created, destroyed, and transformed in different ways during the different stages of the conflict cycle. The onset of violence has a profound effect on relationships, but new social capital may emerge within armed groups, civil society, or illicit trading networks. Social capital in turn affects how the conflict unfolds and whether peace agreements can be reached or implemented. The causation does not just go in “both directions” but is part of a dynamic social ecosystem with many feedback loops. (There are limits to the analogy of an ecosystem, however, given that powerful interests are actually an attempt to shape the structures, and agency and ownership are also relevant.) The work on systems thinking and complexity theory brings an important perspective on how these elements interact (Brusset et al. 2016; de Coning 2016; Hughes 2016; Hunt 2015; Leroux-Martin and O’Connor 2017).

It is important to remember that social capital does not simply become relevant once a conflict has begun, or that peacebuilding initiatives which take account of it are drawing on a blank slate. The preexisting social capital, whether recognized or not, may even affect whether a conflict becomes violent or takes a less destructive form. As civil war progresses, new forms of social capital emerge. Cheng refers to “conflict capital” created through the shared experiences of war, describing it as “a form of social capital forged in the intense crucible of violent conflict” (2018, pp. 54–55). There can also be remarkably enduring networks of patronage and interdependency after war, such as those seen for a number of reasons among ex-combatants and former commanders (Themnér 2012; Utas 2012).

There are many examples where social capital is far from benign: organized crime, armed groups, and business elites can all have very high levels of social bonding which helps these groups to engage in collective action (Gilbert 2009; Micolta 2009; Subedi and Jenkins 2017). Social capital for some “may imply social exclusion for others” (Goodhand and Hulme 1999, p. 22). Nussio and Oppenheim (2014, p. 1000) use the term “anti-social capital” when dealing with certain networks of ex-combatants in Colombia, where close bonding within the group can produce distrust of the outside world.

A number of studies have explored how social capital affects the process of peacebuilding in different contexts (for example, Colletta 1999; Cox 2009; Goodhand and Hulme 1999). Paffenholz (2009) suggests a framework for seeing how social capital can contribute through accountability, social cohesion, and inter-group relations. Andrieu (2010) stresses the rebuilding of human relationships is needed as much as institutions or infrastructure, and that this is in fact much harder. It includes creating a healthy civil society, making institutions trustworthy, and redefining relationships.

Social capital also sheds light on some of the important tasks in what might be termed the original conceptions of peacebuilding. The objective is to avoid the relapse into violent conflict which is so often seen after a peace agreement has been

adopted, by addressing underlying causes and also supporting a society’s ability to deal with its conflicts without the use of violence (Cousens 2001; Doyle and Sambanis 2006). It is important to note that this conception sets out the tasks of supporting a peace process, which is distinct from the matter of who controls the process and how it is conducted: The work remains to be done either way. Important critiques of how liberal peacebuilding has been practiced by international actors have of course been made. Questions about ownership, decision-making, and legitimacy are entirely valid and have been explored usefully by many critics of donor-driven interventions carried out in a top-down manner (for example, Mac Ginty and Richmond 2007; Richmond 2011). However, while it is essential to understand these dynamics and consider who is in control, the question remains of how effective support can be provided to a peace process – ideally an inclusive one where those most affected have real ownership and decision-making power over what structures are being built. This is especially important since so many processes go into reverse within a few years and see a return to armed conflict. In this context, social capital allows us to see inside the “black box” of peacebuilding, where relationships are being remade. There is a short window of opportunity when people decide what are the “real” rules of the game, and whether the new dispensation will indeed be inclusive and fair after all the rhetoric is stripped away. Social capital is an important part of what judgements they form. It also helps us to see processes which may be too “local,” interpersonal, or everyday to be visible to an outsider attempting to analyze or influence the situation. It is relevant for both negative peace – the absence of direct violence – and the broader idea of positive peace, where structural violence is addressed.

It is important to include gender when using social capital as one of our analytical tools. Taking a gender-blind approach would make important aspects invisible, since women and men experience war, peace, and social capital in different ways. Many norms are highly gendered, with specific expectations, roles, stigmas, and values for men and women. Networks are also gendered,

with different functions and access to leadership roles prescribed according to gender, and sometimes even separate networks.

One of the aspects analyzed with a social capital lens has been the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) of ex-combatants after war (Bowd 2011; Colletta and Cullen 2000; Leff 2008). These programs aim to facilitate those associated with armed group to make the difficult transition back to civilian life, often with some support for education or vocational training. Social capital can be seen as a means to help the programs and the people to connect to the wider peace process. However, social capital is itself being built or undermined at the same time by the way DDR is carried out and the message this sends to the people involved (Kilroy and Basini 2018). In some ways, reintegration is a microcosm of the difficult transformation which societies attempt at the end of war. Ex-combatants – and to some extent the communities where they return or settle – may be forging new identities, rebuilding livelihoods, adapting to changed governance, overcoming economic and physical destruction, seeking a new role in society, and working out how to deal with trauma and the past. Many of these involve collective action problems and operate at community as well as individual levels. This action can be enabled or undermined by the social capital being built up or weakened by how DDR and the peace process play out. Norms for a post-war society are actively discussed and promoted during demobilization and reintegration training. Networks are also significant in terms of the support offered and the survival strategies adopted by those involved. Trust is very much in question, especially when the training or benefits promised to ex-combatants do not meet their expectations, are seen to be diverted by corrupt actors, or simply do not materialize (Kilroy 2014).

Summary

Peace and conflict are ultimately about the remaking of relationships. Social capital is an important analytical tool to help understand this. It not only exposes some of the microdynamics and

interpersonal dealings, but also explains how this feeds back into a self-sustaining social dynamic, the everyday working assumptions which people have to use, and the social imagination. The whole is more than the sum of its parts. Like any other tool, it can be useful in particular situations, in combination with other ways of analyzing a conflict. If used in the wrong way, in a situation where it is irrelevant, or without sensitivity to the human realities involved, it will not bring us any useful or accurate insights. But if used in the right way, it can help to reveal important dynamics within a peace process, explain the many complexities and nonlinearities, and help to plan more effective and sustainable interventions.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Civil Society Inclusion in Peace Mediation](#)
- ▶ [Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration \(DDR\)](#)
- ▶ [Everyday Peace](#)
- ▶ [Insights from Complexity Theory for Peace and Conflict Studies](#)
- ▶ [Local Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Transitional Justice and Peacebuilding](#)

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Social Cohesion

- ▶ [Reconciliation in Northern Ireland](#)

Social Contract

- ▶ [Civil Wars in Sudan and South Sudan](#)

Socioeconomic Justice and Peacebuilding

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Definition

Socioeconomic justice is a debated and, one may say, controversial concept: its role within the transitional justice practice and literature has been contested, while socioeconomic issues in peacebuilding have also remained marginal and often submitted to free market considerations. Broadly speaking, socioeconomic justice refers to providing redress for socioeconomic forms of violence or the violation of socioeconomic rights. Redress can be pursued through reparations, restitution, and/or redistribution. Especially in critical and most notably feminist scholarship, socioeconomic justice is considered to be an essential part of peacebuilding processes and of sustainable and gender-just peace.

Introduction

Discussions of socioeconomic justice and peacebuilding necessarily require considering how justice is conceptualized and addressed in post-conflict societies, most commonly as part of “transitional justice” programs, and whether and how this kind of justice can be supportive of peacebuilding processes and conducive to sustainable peace. Transitional justice is commonly defined as doing justice “in times of transition” (Teitel 2000) from war or authoritarian rule, and transitional justice programs can include judicial mechanisms (international, hybrid, and domestic courts), truth and reconciliation commissions, reparation programs, lustration and vetting, and other locally-specific mechanisms. Recent debates in the field have interrogated the connections between transitional justice and peacebuilding: whether one is conducive to or subsumed within the other or what kind of “nexus” (Baker and

Obradovic-Wochnik 2016) exists between the two (see Chapter ▶ “Transitional Justice and Peacebuilding”).

This chapter discusses how socioeconomic justice has been defined (and debated), looking first at controversies over its meaning. Following from this, it situates the concept within transitional justice and then within peacebuilding. Lastly, it looks at how socioeconomic justice can be more easily incorporated by critical understandings of peace and peacebuilding, such as feminist ones. The concluding section introduces two examples of how grassroots activism and the practice of peacebuilding have addressed socioeconomic justice issues. Throughout, the section will highlight how the realization of socioeconomic justice after conflict is strictly connected to the pursuit of sustainable peace.

Conceptualizing Socioeconomic Justice

Socioeconomic justice is more and more commonly understood and defined in relation to the socioeconomic nature of injustice or violence suffered, rather than simply as a socioeconomic remedy for direct physical violence. Its understanding among scholars varies based on a number of factors, including disciplinary background and theoretical inclination, and also whether it is seen as pursued within the context of transitional justice or as part of its expansion to more “transformative” projects of post-conflict justice and peacebuilding. As a result, there is no single accepted definition of socioeconomic justice, nor an agreement on what kind of socioeconomic violations or crimes it should redress.

From a legal point of view, it is possible to see socioeconomic justice as the process through which violations of social and economic rights occurred during conflict are redressed. Such an understanding is anchored to international human rights law, where economic, social, and cultural rights are defined and protected in documents such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (especially Articles 22–27) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). These include

rights and protections related to standards of living (such as access to housing, water, and food), education, and employment – among other things – which should be granted without discrimination. The common belief that these rights should be treated as “aspirations” and realized “progressively” (see ICESCR article 2.1) has given them somewhat of a lesser status within human rights practice, something that has been mirrored in the field of transitional justice (Arbour 2007; Sharp 2013), whose central focus has traditionally been on violations of the right to life and basic liberties. While there has been skepticism toward the inclusion of economic and social rights in the remit of transitional justice, it has been recently argued that – at least with respect to reparations – existing mechanisms are already capable of addressing these violations without dramatically altering their conventional way of functioning (Ochoa-Sánchez 2019).

However, there remain challenges to an understanding of socioeconomic justice grounded in the human rights framework, as this leaves out some specifically socioeconomic forms of violence that are part of the nature of the conflict (including some that jeopardize the very subsistence of communities) (Sankey 2014; Schmid and Nolan 2014). For example, the legal acquisition of land and property for a fraction of their value due to ongoing conflict would not necessarily constitute a violation of economic and social rights (Ochoa-Sánchez 2019, p. 523). However, it is clear that such process entails and is built upon violence: civilians are compelled to sell at low prices due to ongoing fighting and the threat this poses to their economic and physical survival in the area.

Therefore, human rights frameworks could be ill-suited to redress structural forms of socioeconomic violence: that is, violence which is perpetrated as part of a system rather than directly and whose effects are also systemic, generalized, and often intergenerational. Such an understanding of socioeconomic violence draws on Galtung’s (1969) famous conceptualization of structural violence and “positive peace.” Based on this, the redress of economic violence can, and in fact should, be understood as a legitimate part of “transitional” justice – if transition is redefined as the

pursuit of “positive peace” (Sharp 2013), rather than toward a “liberal” form of peace.

Structural understandings of socioeconomic violence vary and can imply different types of redress. Some have noted how structural violations of socioeconomic rights are often supported by a system of injustice enshrined in law, as was the case with the Apartheid in South Africa. Because of this, they require mechanisms that differ from the existing, narrowly-focused legalistic or quasi-legalistic mechanisms offered by transitional justice, and that could instead address fundamental claims on land issues and reparations in the South African context (Evans 2016). Others consider economic exploitation to be a crucial element of structural violence, alongside (and closely interlinked with) political exclusion and social marginalization (McGill 2017). As a result, socioeconomic justice entails a commitment to end this kind of exploitation that, in conflict-affected contexts, often becomes systematic and an integral part of the political economy of the war. This is why some scholars see redistribution as the key remedy for socioeconomic violence (Fraser 1995; O’Reilly 2016; Lai 2020). Redistributive efforts are, however, particularly challenging because their cost is likely to provoke resistance on the part of those who benefitted from injustice and violence (Mamdani 1996).

To conclude this section, while some conceptions of socioeconomic justice are devised to fit existing transitional justice mechanisms and further develop their capabilities to address socioeconomic violations, others challenge transitional justice to transform itself and accommodate socioeconomic justice concerns as part of a strive toward more holistic forms of justice and sustainable peace.

Socioeconomic, Transitional, and Transformative Justice

The introduction of socioeconomic justice within transitional justice debates is linked to the pursuit of an expanded, more comprehensive notion of justice and peace after conflict. Such expansion, which is considered a feature of the so-called “fourth wave” transitional justice literature (Sharp 2013), has been considered unrealistic by some, on account of either

the difficulty of transitional justice mechanisms such as courts and truth commissions in dealing with the scale of the violations (Waldorf 2012) or the limitations that domestic politics – not just international models – place on the pursuit of peace and justice understood in this broader sense (McAuliffe 2017). From a practice-based point of view, transitional justice mechanisms around the world have also struggled dealing with socioeconomic issues. To give a few notable examples, the International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda were not equipped to deal with socioeconomic violations by design; truth commissions in Latin America (Argentina, Chile, El Salvador, Uruguay) mostly focused on basic civil and political rights violations (Hayner 2010; Sharp 2013); and the remit of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa encompassed reparations that have, however, remained an unrealized aspiration of many victims of the Apartheid (Mamdani 1996).

Because transitional justice is seen (by many) as inherently narrow and legalistic, the pursuit of socioeconomic justice may thus require a different paradigm: a “transformative justice” model that is more suited to addressing the systemic and collective nature of socioeconomic issues. Transformative justice is a more holistic, multifaceted conception of justice after mass violence, which is broader than – but usually encompasses – socioeconomic justice, and is often defined in direct connection to peacebuilding. Transformative justice prioritizes socioeconomic issues for several reasons: first, because they are often considered to be priorities by conflict-affected communities; second, because addressing them can help tackle the root causes of conflict; and third, following from the previous points, because tackling these root causes and meeting local needs can help prevent future conflict (Gready and Robins 2014). Transformative justice has also been defined as a model intended to support sustainable peacebuilding (Lambourne 2009), of which socioeconomic justice is one of four key elements and defined as relating to “financial or other material compensation, restitution or reparation for past violations or crimes (historical justice) and distributive or socioeconomic justice

in the future (prospective justice)” (Lambourne 2009, p. 41).

Socioeconomic Justice and Peacebuilding

In many respects, transitional justice and peacebuilding share many of the same shortcomings – and they are clearly related to their inability to focus on socioeconomic issues: flawed assumptions about the process of “transition” toward peace, liberal democracy, and market economy (Sriram 2007); problematic representations of the “local” and inadequate engagement with conflict-affected societies (Andrieu 2010); the problematization of local actors as responsible for war and violence while internationals are shielded from responsibility (Nagy 2008); and the aforementioned marginalization of socioeconomic issues and questions and “capital” (economic, social political; see Baker and Obradovic-Wochnik 2016).

If transitional and transformative justice scholars have often seen socioeconomic justice as conducive or supportive of peacebuilding, this does not necessarily mean that peacebuilding has adopted justice categories as crucial to its analysis of socioeconomic issues. In their influential article on the “nexus” of transitional justice and peacebuilding, Baker and Obradovic-Wochnik (2016) note how multidimensional approaches to justice have commonly been used to situate justice in peacebuilding (Mani 2005; Clark 2008; Lambourne 2009), but only the recent “turns” in the peacebuilding literature have opened up the scope for addressing justice (and socioeconomic justice) more explicitly as part of discussions on peace. Among these, the turn to the “local” (Leonardsson and Rudd 2015) and “everyday” (Mac Ginty 2014) have emphasized how socioeconomic issues are commonly part of alternative models, bottom-up processes, and daily experiences of people affected by conflict.

Socioeconomic justice thus fit more easily within critical understandings of peace and peacebuilding and notably feminist ones. The concern for socioeconomic issues emerged from the observation that there has been a tendency – possibly more marked than in the transitional justice field – to promote peacebuilding through international liberal agendas that are seen as

complementary to (or even supportive of) neoliberal reforms and that these reforms can potentially undermine socioeconomic justice in post-conflict countries. Three elements are worth highlighting here.

First, the notion of “liberal peace” is imbued with assumptions on the role of free market exchange in maintaining peaceful relations. However, research has shown that postwar markets are gendered spaces where violence continues after the end of conflict: the Arizona market near Brčko, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, was touted as a place where free exchange and entrepreneurship could lay the basis for peaceful interethnic relations – until it emerged that human beings and weapons were being trafficked there (Haynes 2010). An inclusive and gender-just approach to post-conflict peacebuilding thus requires addressing the role of markets in potentially supporting violence and injustice. Second, post-conflict peacebuilding and its practice have been supported and enabled by the intervention of the International Financial Institutions (such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund), which has promoted privatization, public budget cuts, and more generally standard development models that were not adapted to local contexts, let alone sensitive to the legacies of mass violence (Pugh, Cooper and Turner 2016). Privatizations often led to high levels of unemployment, and foreign direct investment flows remained at disappointing levels, while support for micro-credit or small and medium enterprises failed to generate sustainable development. Last but not least, feminists have highlighted the existence of a continuum linking wartime physical violence, domestic violence, as well as socioeconomic and structural forms of violence that become particularly visible by looking at the experiences of women in conflict and after conflict (True 2012; Rai et al. 2019). IFI policies and other market economy reforms intervene directly onto this continuum, aggravating socioeconomic injustice and undermining the prospects for sustainable peace (Lai 2019). Socioeconomic issues thus cannot be excluded from conceptions of gender-just peace and “sustainable peace.” Thus, the notion of socioeconomic justice is an important corrective to market-driven agendas and the involvement in

peacebuilding of financial institutions with vested interests.

Socioeconomic Justice and Peacebuilding in Practice

A few examples can help illustrate the value of socioeconomic justice for peacebuilding from the perspective of conflict-affected communities and the different ways in which it can be (or has been) pursued by local groups. In the former Yugoslavia, grassroots activism has been critical of international interventions that, far from establishing a “liberal peace,” have contributed to legitimize ethnonationalist elites while enacting a transition to market economy that left weaker groups, women, and minorities marginalized. Waves of protests – most notably in 2014 – have highlighted this discontent (Kurtović 2015). Women’s groups from across the former Yugoslav region, motivated by the shortcomings of transitional justice, also mobilized to conceptualize and practice alternative and more holistic forms of justice at the Women’s Court in Sarajevo in 2015. This was a nonjudicial court, drawing on an established tradition of women’s courts around the world, which heard women’s experiences of war and wartime violence from their own point of view and without trying to fit strict legal categories (O’Reilly 2016). As O’Reilly (2016, p. 427 and pp. 432–434) notes, a whole section of the event was dedicated to socioeconomic violence, which is indicative of the activists’ attempt to do justice through redistribution as a way to achieve a gender-just peace (see Chapter ► “Gender Justice and Peacebuilding”).

If women’s groups in Yugoslavia sought justice through unofficial and participatory popular courts, in Colombia, socioeconomic issues were always at the center of official peace negotiations. Socioeconomic injustice – in the form of land inequality, access to natural resources, and social marginalization – was among the root causes of the conflict, and economic exploitation and trafficking was instrumental to its financing and continuation across decades (Richani 2013). Once the Peace Agreement was signed in 2016, the first chapter was entirely dedicated to land reform and included commitments to creating a “land fund” for the distribution of illicitly acquired land to peasants and a number of

other programs aimed at establishing land rights and promoting the sustainable development of rural areas. The agreement also foresaw reparation and restitution measures and opened the way for including economic actors within the mandate of the newly established Special Jurisdiction for Peace (See ► [“Colombian Peace Agreement 2016”](#)). The Colombian peace process is a clear example of how socioeconomic justice can be seen as integral to peacebuilding. However, this ambitious program has been threatened since its inception by a hostile political environment, funding difficulties, and slow progress on reforms. These challenges are not new, as in other cases such as that of Nepal (Pasipanodya 2008) where there has been a lack of progress on socioeconomic justice following a peace agreement that outlined clear commitments on these issues: still too often, socioeconomic justice issues are perceived as secondary to ending the violence and expensive to tackle. However, continued discontent and instability in the former Yugoslavia and ongoing waves of popular protests in Colombia show that socioeconomic justice is central to meaningful peace.

Summary

Socioeconomic justice has become a central concern for transitional justice and peacebuilding scholarship (especially in critical traditions) and practice. Lively debates on the concept and its relationship to the pursuit of justice and peace after conflict have not led to an agreed-upon definition of socioeconomic justice. For many, such definition can be grounded in social and economic rights, while others emphasize the structural dimensions of wartime violence that would remain unaddressed through a focus on human rights law. The pursuit of socioeconomic justice as part of transitional justice efforts has been dubbed unrealistic by some but strongly advocated, most notably, by scholars subscribing to more holistic definitions of “transformative” justice as conducive to inclusive and sustainable peacebuilding. Peacebuilding is, however, not necessarily well equipped to dealing with socioeconomic justice, especially when pursued in

conjunction with liberalizing economic reforms that do not account for the legacies of mass violence. Ultimately, more critical and feminist conceptions of peace and justice have emerged that highlight the necessity of pursuing socioeconomic justice as integral to peacebuilding processes. The examples provided at the end are not meant to be comprehensive or representative, but illustrate the importance of socioeconomic justice in the pursuit of meaningful peace.

Cross-References

- [Gender Justice and Peacebuilding](#)
- [Transitional Justice and Peacebuilding](#)

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Sources of Peace in a Developing Island State

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Synonyms

Custom; Governance; Hybridity; Land conflict; Melanesia; Pacific Island states; Relationality; Vanuatu

Definition

This entry addresses sources of peace in Vanuatu, a small island state in the Pacific Islands region. Though the region is highly diverse, there is much that is shared regarding social organization, contemporary vulnerabilities, and sources of peace. The discussion’s themes are thus relevant to other regional states and in broad terms beyond the region. Governance is often seen as fundamental to peace, but internationally governance is generally understood in terms of state institutions. The entry argues that governance in Vanuatu rests largely on a mix of state institutions, forms of

customary governance and (to a lesser extent) churches, with customary governance in particular vital to peace and well-being. In Vanuatu, as in many countries, governance could be understood as a hybrid network or interactive web of different modes of governance shaped by unscripted processes of interaction and experimentation.

Customary practices have changed substantially over time. Nevertheless, fundamental elements of custom continue to shape the lives of most ni-Vanuatu. While government and customary institutions and ways of life underpin governance, however, the nature of relations between them is critical to peace. How these relations are mediated and whether these different forms of leadership can together deal with key challenges facing the country will shape the character of Vanuatu's political community. The entry considers customary governance and short examples of interaction with state institutions. Exploring how networks linking different systems of governance operate is vital to understanding sources of peace and of conflict. There is much to learn from Vanuatu's challenges and experience.

Introduction

This entry addresses sources of peace in Vanuatu, one of the independent, small island states of the Pacific Islands region. Though the region is socio-politically and culturally highly diverse, there is also much that is shared regarding ways of life, colonial history, contemporary vulnerabilities, and sources of social stability and peace. The discussion's themes are thus relevant to other regional states and in broad terms beyond the region (see entries ► [“Peace Formation in Bougainville”](#) and ► [“Post-conflict Timor-Leste”](#)).

Governance is widely identified as critical to peace and security. The forms of governance seen as leading to peace, however, are nearly always envisaged in terms of state institutions, particularly liberal democratic institutions (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013; see entry ► [“Local Peacebuilding”](#)). In Vanuatu, however, as in many countries, governance and justice processes derive from a complex mix of state institutions and various forms of customary governance

(Forsyth 2009). Vanuatu strongly identifies as Christian, and what are seen as Christian values and at times Christian religious leaders and organizations are also significant.

In Vanuatu, governance could thus be understood as a hybrid political order or a dynamic, interactive web of different modes of governance shaped by unscripted processes of interaction and experimentation (Boege et al. 2008; see entry ► [“Hybrid Political Orders and Hybrid Peace”](#)). Despite the undoubted significance of state institutions, to frame questions about the provision of peace in Vanuatu solely or even primarily in terms of such institutions would be to overlook fundamental factors that underpin peace and stability. It would also be to miss significant threats.

Two themes shape this discussion. The first is that contemporary expressions of customary ways of life contribute fundamentally to peace and stability within Vanuatu and to adaptability in the face of change and disruption. Customary practices have changed substantially over time and continue to change. Nevertheless, fundamental elements of customary ways of life, including the continuity and centrality of kin, land and place, the significance of the world of the spirit, and principles of reciprocity and respect, continue to shape the lives of most ni-Vanuatu. Customary governance is not reducible to “chiefs” (although leadership roles are important) but could be understood as embedded in these patterns of relations and ways of life.

The second theme is that while government, customary, and (to a lesser extent) church institutions and practices all contribute to governance, the nature of relations among them is critical to questions of peace (see entry ► [“Peace Formation”](#)). While there is enmeshment and cooperation between government and customary governance, there are also substantial gaps, friction, and confusion. There are also systemic tensions between the nature of community (political, economic, and ecological) as conceived by customary world views and those framed by the liberal state and free market. These tensions are clear in profoundly different ways of valuing land, for example, but also in different models of authority. Effective communication and accountability between people in rural Vanuatu, where the

majority of the population lives, and government, which largely takes place in towns, is a significant practical but also systemic challenge. How these tensions are managed is critical to Vanuatu's peace and well-being, to its ability to navigate major challenges and to the character of its political community. Focusing solely on formal state institutions would miss these points of vulnerability, challenge, and potential and overlook the contribution of customary ways of life to peace.

The entry first touches on cross-regional threats. It then explores these two themes – the significance to peace of Vanuatu's contemporary customary ways of life and of the enmeshment of different forms of governance and social organization – through brief discussions of Vanuatu's social economy and socio-political organization and through a series of short examples, including land, gender violence, political crises, and responses to natural disaster.

There is a longstanding tendency in discussing politics and development to overlook societal forms of governance and their contributions to peace or to see them in overwhelmingly negative terms, as corrupting or obstructing government. In Vanuatu's case, however, as in many others, people's well-being rests substantially on such forms of governance and the nature of their relations with state institutions. Ni-Vanuatu grapple with profound challenges of forging reliable, accountable patterns of constructive interaction among different modes of governance and so shaping a statehood grounded in their own society, values, and place (Brown 2007). Greater appreciation of the operation of these webs of governance and how they are navigated is vital to understanding sources of peace in Vanuatu and many other post-colonial states.

The Pacific Islands Region

The Pacific Islands region is made up of many hundreds of islands extending in scattered clusters over a vast ocean (the exact size depends on where regional borders are drawn) and encompassing the subregions of Melanesia (of which Vanuatu is

part), Polynesia, and Micronesia. The profound socio-cultural complexity of the region, and particularly of Melanesia, is reflected in Vanuatu's linguistic diversity. A population of approximately 300,000 people speaks over 100 distinct languages, as well as the vibrant national pidgin (Bislama), English and French (Francois et al. 2015).

The region reaches across the Pacific Ring of Fire, a zone of high volcanic activity, and is very susceptible to natural disasters and their intensification by climate change. Vanuatu itself is an archipelago formed by volcanic activity and volcanoes continue to be active. As touched on later, this can demand evacuation of entire island populations. Vanuatu's geography makes it one of the most vulnerable countries in the world to natural and climate-driven disasters.

Climate change is “the single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security and wellbeing of the peoples of the Pacific” and is gathering pace (Pacific Island Forum 2018, p. 1). Sea level rise, saltwater contamination, increasing incidence and severity of extreme weather events, and disruption of fish stocks and plant species zones have far-reaching consequences for populations around the Pacific where most people depend directly on fishing and food gardens and have deep cultural and spiritual connection with their land (Boege 2018). The pressures of disasters, loss of land and of vital resources, the disruption of sources of meaning and well-being, the need for mass relocations, and resulting overcrowding exacerbate already-existing fractures within and among communities (Boege 2018; see entry ► “Conflicts and Natural Disasters”).

The intense pace of socio-cultural, political, and economic change and the interaction of at times significantly different forms of socio-political organization resulting from colonization and the nature of contemporary globalization also generate friction and insecurity and challenge governance and justice processes (Forsyth 2009). Different ways of valuing land, addressed briefly below, provide one example of these tensions. More broadly, state structures and processes do not always fit easily with the more relational, kin-based forms of socio-political

organization prevailing across the region. Because broadly customary forms of governance have been so under-valued in understanding statehood, there is little available experience to draw from regarding constructive linkages between democratic state processes and prevailing, more relational forms of socio-political order. This, however, is a challenge facing communities and governments across the region (Forsyth 2009; Brown 2007; see entry ► “Hybrid Political Orders and Hybrid Peace”).

After climate change, the main drivers of vulnerability in Vanuatu and across the region are issues of social peace and elite political instability and corruption. While social conflict, political instability, and corruption have a range of causes, they also need to be understood within the context of the friction between modes of social order noted above. Drivers of social conflict include tension over land; increasing inequality, poverty, and the growth of squatter settlements; resistance to changing gender roles amid weakening cultural constraints on violence; social and economic impacts of a fast-growing youth population (approximately one-third of ni-Vanuatu are under 15 years old according to Countrymeters 2020); and communal tensions (e.g., between different Island groups in squatter settlements).

Following the 2001 terrorist attacks in New York, security assessments of the region were preoccupied with the potential for state failure, particularly in view of a series of regional crises. Australia feared that Melanesian states formed an arc of instability, breeding chaos and economic collapse. The subregion’s culture was depicted as “tribal” and “warlike” in the Australian and New Zealand press. This is to misunderstand the dynamics of governance in the region, however, by focusing too narrowly on formal state institutions. Regional states have not failed, and while state institutions are weak, with some exceptions community life is orderly and peaceable. While the region has recurrent problems with elite political instability, there are also examples of strong national leadership as well as a capacity, across the varying networks of governance, to navigate significant challenges.

Social Economy

Approximately two-thirds of Vanuatu’s population live in rural areas in networks of extended families and engage in small-scale mixed farming, fishing, and associated crafts (MALFFB 2020). These activities are the basis of livelihood and food security and the context for the social, political, and cultural life of most ni-Vanuatu. That is, they are the context for most broadly customary ways of life. They are also the basis of the nation’s economy, employing about 75% of the working population to some degree (MALFFB 2020). Small-scale farming nevertheless struggles to absorb the fast-growing population of young people, which contributes to urban drift and unemployment. Tourism (on hold during the pandemic) and some commercial agriculture are additional sources of employment (and foreign currency), alongside small professional and light industrial sectors.

Small-scale food production operates substantially according to an exchange (or custom) economy. The exchange economy is enmeshed with more commercial or “formal” economic interaction and is a significant part of Vanuatu’s economic life. Most people’s participation in the exchange economy exceeds their involvement in the cash economy, which is largely concentrated in the country’s two towns. Much of the cash available in Vanuatu circulates in the towns, generating disparity between urban and rural communities in terms of access to money. Where access to food, housing, community engagement, and standing does not rely on money, however, lack of money does not itself equate to poverty, particularly in areas of good soil fertility. Rural Ni-Vanuatu regularly forgo opportunities to acquire more cash if there is no pressing need for it. Nevertheless, some areas have seen increasing pressure on available land, while lack of money does limit the life options available, for some severely. This encourages urban drift which in turn contributes to squatter settlements, actual poverty, and social problems, such as alcohol and substance abuse, property crime, prostitution, and teenage pregnancies.

The extended family and the patterns of mutual obligation of the kinship system not only provide livelihood but are the main form of social welfare across the country, generally ensuring that people have access to food and shelter and perhaps (because family networks spread wide) to cash. The custom economy works around reciprocity and relationship. Accumulation is not generally regarded as an endpoint. As active, shared community welfare this system has been effective in many respects, responding both to everyday need and (with limitations) to large-scale disaster and crisis. In view of the rapid growth of Vanuatu's population, the ongoing provision of everyday food security is notable, even if it is at times severely stretched.

This safety net supports social well-being and gives Vanuatu significant resilience, even if the economic dynamic that generates it also means that government has a narrow tax base (since much of the economy is not monetized). The government relies on this safety net, for example, advising town dwellers who lost employment during the pandemic to return to their islands. Nevertheless, the kinship safety net is facing complex demands, partly as a result of urban drift, changing expectations around life choices and the ongoing monetization of the economy and partly in the face of the intense disruptions and demands generated by climate change and accelerating natural disasters. Gross domestic product figures or economic indicators that only register the formal economy, however, do not properly capture the state of Vanuatu's economic life. They are not without meaning, however. Significant public goods such as education and health are funded fundamentally through the formal economy (and thus rely substantially on international assistance).

Given its fundamental significance in social and economic life, the health of the exchange economy and a positive enmeshment with the formal economy are vitally important. While the interaction of economic frameworks and the social relations in which they are embedded can operate fluidly, there are also significant points of friction which could lead to serious conflict. The question of land offers an example. The exchange

economy and the social relations in which it is embedded are underpinned by access to land. Land is not an individual possession but is held within the context of the kin network. The tenure systems for land holding and land use are complex and vary among language groups, but land is the basis for family livelihood and underpins both a sense of autonomy and of inter-relationship. Upheld through oral history and closely guarded clan stories, tenure is embedded in custom governance and social norms (Bolton 2003). Land is an ancestral realm, reaching across time and linking people to their forebears and to those not yet born. For most Ni-Vanuatu, it is sacred and part of themselves (and vice versa), woven into a web of life that holds together kin and ancestors, culture, history, the unseen world of the spirit, and sources of meaning (Bolton 2003; see entry ► [“Culture and Conflict Resolution”](#)).

Understanding humans, nature, and the world of the spirit as interwoven is widely shared across the Pacific Islands, and indeed there are variants of this deeply embedded world view underlying ways of life in many places, particularly amongst Indigenous peoples (Boege 2020; see entry ► [“Stalled Peacebuilding: Dealing with the Violence of Colonization and its Legacy”](#)). For many ni-Vanuatu and Pacific Islanders, this world view connects with forms of Christianity (although some Christian denominations reject Indigenous cosmologies). Vanua – the word from which the country is named – encompasses land, people, ancestors, and one's place. Similar words can be found throughout Oceania (Boege 2020; see entry ► [“Conflict, Peace, and Ontological Security”](#)).

Land and access to land through customary land-holding arrangements is thus embedded in shared economic, spiritual, and communal meanings. It is a basis of customary life and politically highly significant. Reclaiming land alienated through colonization or protecting it from alienation was a key issue mobilizing support for independence. As a result, with the exception of land immediately around the major towns, the constitution forbids the outright sale of land to foreign parties. Whereas in some countries the state in the last analysis owns the land, in Vanuatu, the land belongs to customary landholders. Leasing

arrangements, however, have enabled the continuation of plantations and other commercial interests (see entry ► [“Land Politics and Conflict”](#)).

This understanding of land is sharply at odds with the formal economy’s approach to land as property that can be bought or sold. It also offers a very different grasp of the human than the self-possessed individual of liberalism (Bolton 2003; see entry ► [“Peacebuilding and Postcolonial Subject”](#)). Despite the restoration of land to customary landowners following independence in 1980, however, over time there has been considerable long-term leasing of land (up to 75 years) to foreign and cashed-up capital city ni-Vanuatu investors, largely in tourism developments. The lease conditions make the land’s return to original landholders extremely difficult, and the leasing process routinely occurs without meaningful informed consent (given weak understanding of legal English, the formal legal system, and the formal economy). The inherited legal system and mechanisms for implementing it have not been sufficiently oriented towards actual ways of life in the country.

Two-thirds of Efate Island (where the capital is located) and nearly all of its coastline have been leased to investors and land speculation severely affects other islands. As a result, landlessness, previously extremely rare, has been emerging. The attraction of the cash economy, unscrupulous investors, a fragmentary legal system, and (for many years) too much power vested in a single government minister have enabled these developments. Some economists argue that economic development requires the transition to land as a commodity. Customary land holding is integral to the nature of Vanuatu’s social economy and social order, however, a bulwark against real poverty and a key basis of social peace. The creation of landless, unemployed slum dwellers who could reasonably feel cheated of their land would be a fundamental shift in the nature of ni-Vanuatu society and politics and a recipe for violence. Efforts to address land alienation are underway (discussed later) but change is difficult and slow (see entries ► [“Land Politics and Conflict”](#) and ► [“Conflict, Peace, and Ontological Security”](#)).

Kastom, Chiefs, and Community

Vanuatu’s National Security Strategy notes the “impressive level of social cohesion” that characterizes Vanuatu and attributes it to the “traditional values of kastom” and the work of “chiefs and communities” (Government of Vanuatu 2019, p. 19). Having some understanding of kastom, chiefs, and communities, then, is fundamental to understanding sources of peace in Vanuatu. Kastom, the Bislama word for custom, is a multi-layered, context-dependent term. It can refer to specific ancestral practices, materials, and beliefs, grounded in place. But kastom is at the same time understood as living traditions, with varying, place-specific practices that are nevertheless linked through broadly shared ways of life, shaped by tradition and long histories of interaction and capable of responding to prevailing conditions. Articulating this emphasis, Vanuatu’s first Prime Minister Father Walter Lini noted that “custom is part of life, but as our way of life changes, so must custom. Its strength in the future must lie in its flexibility” (quoted by Jolly 1994, p. 256). As a source of collective authenticity, however, kastom can also become something that is competed for, reified, claimed, and mis-used (see entry ► [“Culture and Conflict Resolution”](#)).

Many elements of communities’ ways of life have changed substantially or been lost through the impact of missionization, colonization, the independence struggle, development, or simply through time. Missionaries moved some scattered communities into concentrated coastal villages, for example, while the independence struggle crafted a sense of national identity from particular, gendered elements of custom, heightening the focus on male custom (Bolton 2003). Some practices, polygamy for example, have been rejected. While people will commonly say they are closer to customary values than to those of “modern” consumer society, extensive knowledge of traditional systems seems rare. Some islands have seen a revival of customary practices while the inhabitants of others consider that they have lost touch. Even in these regions, however, what might be regarded as some fundamental elements of kastom remain strong.

Identifying underlying commonalities across customary difference can only be contentious and tentative. Nevertheless, some points stand out. The first is the continuity of land and kin across time, mentioned earlier. This continuity includes livelihood and sustenance as people work together to sustain their collective life, but it also includes the world of nature and spirit (Bolton 2003). The second is reciprocity, mutual-ity, and relationality as a fundamental way of being in the world. Taking time to tend and extend networks and pay appropriate respect is valued and often required behavior. Respect, as the essential way of tending relations, is widely upheld as a fundamental virtue, even while its loss is repeatedly decried (Forsyth 2009). Restorative conflict management approaches that emphasize arriving at harmony and maintaining community are also highly valued and part of the emphasis on relationality (Forsyth 2009).

The third commonality is that authority structures tend to be personalized and relatively flat rather than pyramid-shaped. Leaders can carry great authority, so there is hierarchy, but this authority comes from place and tribe in a direct and material way (see entry ► [“Post-conflict Timor-Leste”](#)). Nevertheless, perhaps because of customary leadership’s legitimacy and gravity, customary chiefs can speak with considerable authority beyond their place and people. These three characteristics produce styles of leadership that can surprise non-Melanesians. Aspects of this style can also extend into the state realm. For example, after joining the Melanesian Spearhead Group’s public censure of Fiji’s military coup (2006), Vanuatu’s Foreign Minister is reported to have visited his Fijian counterpart, approaching him on hands and knees and giving him a ceremonial mat to underscore the respect in which the relationship continued to be held.

The title “chief” has become a catch-all for various kinds of authority. There is no indigenous word for chief – it is an English or a Bislama word (*jif*) which translates a Western simplification of complex systems of authority. In some islands, those with the greatest community stature may be hidden figures, with others taking public roles as community managers. Depending on region, positions of authority might be established

through descent, through rising in a system of ranks, through demonstration of leadership qualities and community service, or (often) through some combination of these. In some regions, customary mechanisms have died away and voting is used. Clan authority is nevertheless significant with both matrilineal and patrilineal descent practiced. In colonial times, missionaries identified “leaders” of newly constructed communities, while colonial district administrators established local “assessors” to assist them. Assessors and church leaders rose to prominence as middlemen between local and colonial actors, becoming “village chiefs.” These roles often continue to operate alongside clan or other customary authorities.

A proliferation of chiefly titles and contest over their power and authority has reduced respect for chiefs. Nevertheless, chiefs continue to provide an ideal model of leadership in a way that national political elites do not, whether or not individual leaders fulfill these ideals. Leaders are seen as ideally on the ground, with and answerable to their communities, responsible for the community’s well-being and peace. The roles can be arduous, full-time and are not salaried. Nor are they singular, however. Customary governance is collective and is not reducible to “chiefs.” Rather, a network of authoritative roles are embedded in patterns of kinship, community, reciprocity, and “respect.”

Customary and community life in Vanuatu is not inherently peaceful. Not all communities function well. Conflict over chieftancy, land disputes, clashes between Christian denominations, and tension around development activities are common. Lack of opportunities for increasing numbers of young people, decreasing availability of land, changing social expectations around gender, poverty, and pressure to gain cash add to friction, uncertainty, and aggression. Despite these pressures and the reality of conflict, with the notable exception of gender violence, communities are largely peaceful and work hard at maintaining good relations (Forsyth 2009).

Violence against women, however, is a significant form of social conflict (GoV 2019; see entry ► [“Gender Justice and Peacebuilding”](#)). It is a problem which is often seen by external observers and some ni-Vanuatu as caused by custom and

hence used to discount customary forms of social order as sources of peace. There is an argument for this. The National Council of Chiefs, for example, an all-male organization, long delayed passage of the bill which criminalizes gender-based violence. The focus on chiefs, now all male, works to underscore male custom and power (Bolton 2003). Nevertheless, it is ultimately misleading and counter-productive to identify gender violence with customary life per se, rather than with broader patterns of structural violence, marginalization, and social stress (Brown 2018; Taylor 2008). Identifying gender violence with customary life implicitly asserts that modernity enables us to move beyond such violence. This has not proved to be the case.

Custom is associated with deeply valued dimensions of life – dimensions repeatedly dismissed or belittled by colonization. To make undoing violence against women conditional on abandoning these things of value creates a serious and unnecessary obstacle to working against gender violence and sidelines customary social order as a source of peace. Customary practices have changed over time and continue to change. Indeed, some traditional practices which enabled women's status and authority or protected against family violence have been abandoned through modernization (Bolton 2003). Custom is not the cause of gender violence, but it has great responsibility and scope regarding such violence, because it plays such a significant role in social relations. Leading organizations (such as the Vanuatu Women's Centre) working against gender violence work with customary authorities and communities not to abandon customary ways of life but to pursue values of respect and mutuality central to their cultures (Brown 2018).

Governance, Justice, Social Peace

The character of governance, social justice, and justice processes are fundamental to peace. While these processes flow from a mixture of state institutional and societal sources in any country, in Vanuatu, societal governance and justice processes are extensive and critically important. The pattern of interaction between state institutional

and societal governance in Vanuatu, however, is still largely ad hoc, fractured and in relatively early phases of taking shape.

Vanuatu became an independent parliamentary democracy in 1980, following colonization by both Britain and France in a chaotic condominium informally known as the “Pandemonium.” Reflecting the independence struggle, the new state's constitution refers to the significance of both chiefs and Christian values. A National Council of Chiefs (the *Malvatumauri*) was established to advise government. The metaphors of a bird with two wings or an outrigger canoe are commonly used to convey an ideal of modes and ethics of governance functioning together, advising and holding each other accountable (Forsyth 2009).

Despite this, government for some decades paid little attention to the *Malvatumauri* and was generally ambivalent about customary authority. This is understandable. Customary authorities could in some respects pose a direct challenge to government, although this direction has not been taken (Forsyth and Batley 2016). Moreover, internationally available discourses of good governance and development have little to offer regarding the experience of different forms of governance working constructively together, while custom and tradition can easily appear (and at times be) parochial and closed. In Vanuatu this overlooking of custom may be changing gradually. The *Malvatumauri* and local customary institutions have been given more active formal roles protecting customary landholding and a commission of eminent persons to consider relations among government, *kastom*, and churches has been proposed (GoV 2019).

In practice, governance is undertaken by both government and customary and community authorities, with churches also players in communities. Customary governance is widely regarded as responsible for peace, including by government. Conflict resolution and conflict prevention is largely the work of customary arrangements, as is much decision-making around community life (Boege and Forsyth 2018; see entry ► “[Grass-roots Organizations and Peacebuilding](#)”). By contrast, formal state institutions have limited outreach beyond major centers. Vanuatu has five

police stations across the country, two of which are in towns. Given difficult terrain, poor infrastructure, and lack of resources, the police are effectively dependent on customary authorities to keep order in rural areas. Moreover, the police suffer from “limited human resources, lack of community trust, poor governance, low levels of discipline, lack of strong leadership . . . and political interference” among other problems (GoV 2019, p. 24).

Despite the practical reality of joint governance, the actual nature of relations between customary governance and state institutions is unclear, with their interaction repeatedly marked by contradiction, confusion, and gaps. Friction as to how far police should liaise with community leaders on police action such as arrests is ongoing, for example, and while chiefs and courts have cooperated at key moments, jurisdictional tensions are common (Forsyth 2009). It would be a mistake to see the relationship as simply a matter of levels or to make the assumption that customary arrangements are concerned only with parochial matters. Conflict resolution and community decision-making includes matters of life and death and of fundamental social well-being that can play out at national levels and beyond. The respect accorded to chiefs and the relational webs nurtured by customary approaches often reach beyond individual communities. Most importantly, forms of customary and community governance underpin the country’s social resilience, food security, social peace, and sense of identity (see entry ► [“Insights from Complexity Theory for Peace and Conflict Studies”](#)).

Some Examples

Towns offer many examples of the enmeshment of government and customary authorities. The towns are small enough for linkages to occur spontaneously, through the bars serving kava (the local intoxicant) or kin relations, or more formally, through the work of the Malvatumauri, the Vanuatu Cultural Centre, which has played a central role in highlighting the significance of custom and gathering and valuing accounts of cultural practices and artifacts, or through an

active government minister, bureaucrat, or policeman seeking assistance.

Police are active in towns, but even here customary authorities play a critical role in social order. This was dramatically illustrated when an armed standoff in the capital between the police and the Vanuatu Mobile Force (Vanuatu’s semi-military force) was defused by customary authorities who were in town at the time (Boege and Forsyth 2018). The crisis developed from a long-running dispute between the forces and could have initiated serious violence. The government did not immediately respond to the crisis, but the Malvatumauri brought the government back in, convincing the police, Mobile Force, and the government to undertake traditional reconciliation activities where “[p]igs were killed and traditional mats and kava exchanged. Tears were shed Hundreds of people witnessed the reconciliation ceremony” (Boege and Forsyth 2018, p. 196). It is notable that the Malvatumauri then supported the matter moving to court, providing authoritative consensus for prosecutions. Moreover, in a characteristically customary gesture, 8 years after the crisis and convictions, a final reconciliation ceremony between the two forces was held to maintain respect and honor the significance of positive relations (see entry ► [“Conflict, Peace, and Ontological Security”](#)).

A breakout of 20 prisoners from the capital’s prison in 2006, protesting poor conditions, offers a further example. The Malvatumauri offered refuge to the prisoners within the space of the traditional meeting house. While challenging the Malvatumauri’s action as illegal, the police did not breach the space. The Malvatumauri negotiated the return of the prisoners to jail, following reconciliation ceremonies between police, prisoners, and government. But it also took up the case of prison conditions with government, leading to the police pledging not to punish the prisoners and to new legislation establishing a separate correctional service which incorporated greater emphasis on reconciliation (Boege and Forsyth 2018).

The 2015 parliamentary corruption case offers an instructive example in which the Malvatumauri played a small but significant role. In 2015 and

2016, 14 members of parliament were tried and convicted of receiving bribes and sentenced to jail. The convictions were unprecedented (although the crime was not) and stand as a powerful example of the legal system operating to hold political corruption to account (Forsyth and Batley 2016). Some of the defendants claimed their corrupt actions were in keeping with *kastom*. The Malvatumauri, however, rejected these claims, so underlining a distinction between gift giving in an exchange economy, which is subject to its own forms of accountability, and bribery. The Malvatumauri also called for calm, “asking people to respect the state judicial system as well as *kastom* authority and not to take the law into their own hands” (Forsyth and Batley 2016, p. 274).

These illustrations show responses to crises, but there are many examples of the interaction of different forms of governance in everyday conflict prevention and management. Vanuatu’s towns are melting pots of people from different islands and informal settlements can be sites of particular friction. Senior figures living in town are recognized as responsible for their own Island groups and liaise with police on this basis. These chiefs also work together to maintain good relations across groups. Towns also have growing numbers of young unemployed people with little affiliation with custom, church, or state. Some consider that those without Island ties are beyond the scope of custom, but others believe that custom’s task is to work towards peace and so seek to engage people living in new circumstances. *Kastom* festivals (such as the Namakura Festival) or traditional meeting houses specifically for young people are some of the ways of engaging urban youth in the languages and ways of life of their broader culture.

The Malvatumauri also engages more widely with questions of conflict. It maintains pressure on government to take a strong position on West Papua, has held ceremonies to honor the traditional owners of the land upon which the capital now stands (learning from the conflict in the Solomon Islands), and has worked with police against organized crime becoming entrenched in certain island groups. These are evolving

mechanisms, responding to particular crises and dependent on those involved.

The Challenge of Linking Across Modes of Governance

While towns offer many examples of the enmeshment of state institutional and customary authority, the challenges nationally are greater. There are systemic tensions between the nature of political and economic community conceived by *kastom* and by the liberal state, despite the elasticity of both (see entry ► “Hybrid Political Orders and Hybrid Peace”). The conflict between fundamentally different ways of valuing land noted earlier exemplifies these challenges. While this conflict points to exploitation and corruption, it also raises difficult questions about the nature of the development that people seek and how to balance competing needs. While not suggesting these conflicts cannot be creatively managed over time, the challenges are significant.

Another of these challenges is how authority is seen to flow. While *kastom* has national significance, customary governance works substantially on a face to face basis. State institutions and government are more abstract hierarchies. People in rural Vanuatu make a substantial commitment to their governance. Government, however, is experienced as distant, geographically, and in other ways. Communities increasingly expect and need a range of services, but government’s capacity to provide services is low. Voting, often as a block, has become a way to secure elusive services or just cash, setting up a vicious electoral cycle that neither meets the needs of communities nor of political communication and representation. This negative cycle does not support accountability and encourages corruption but is difficult for either candidates or communities to break. Government represents independence and is seen as broadly legitimate, but politicians are not held in high regard. There is little meaningful flow of communication or accountability between rural communities and government.

The Malvatumauri, established at the intersection of customary and state forms of governance,

could be understood as an effort to link localized models of authority with the national arena and to represent community values and concerns within national debates. The Malvatumauri itself relies on a pyramid model, however, where chiefs are elected up a series of geographical tiers. While the Malvatumauri has some weight and effect in the capital and undertakes a range of often creative functions, it too struggles to link successfully with communities.

There are nevertheless examples of linkage across forms of governance and across the country. Two of the most significant might be the effort to restrain land leasing and the national response to the Ambae earthquake in 2017. In 2006, the Malvatumauri initiated a national summit to focus national attention on the seriousness of land alienation and propose solutions. With government support, the summit provided an opportunity for the Malvatumauri and rural customary actors, government, women's groups, business, and others to collectively frame recommendations to shape a new national land policy aimed at returning control to custom landholders. This summit enabled new thinking, political action, and coalitions around land. Seven years later it was followed by a second government-initiated summit which led to legislation based on the earlier recommendations and gave the Malvatumauri and Island customary institutions greater control. There continue to be problems with land alienation and with the operation of the mechanisms instituted but there is a basis for further development (see entry ► [“Land Politics and Conflict”](#)). How government and customary bodies together mediate and manage these challenges is vitally important to Vanuatu's peace and well-being and will shape the character of its political community (see entry ► [“Peace Formation”](#)).

In 2017 the Ambae volcano erupted, raining ash and acid rain over many months. The government decided that the island's entire population of more than 11,600 people had to be evacuated. Although many have now returned home, at the time it was thought the resettlement might last decades. Finding alternative land where entire communities could rebuild lives and livelihoods

in a country with limited arable land is challenging. The government, with local and Island Councils of Chiefs, negotiated a “second home” for evacuees on a neighboring island. Many evacuees, working through social networks, chose to settle on a third island. A network of government, customary actors, church organizations, kin, and NGOs facilitated the settlement of thousands of people to rural and urban sites through rolling negotiations and the provision of transport, accommodation, and community support. International assistance provided significant logistical support but the accommodation of thousands without serious conflict in essentially already occupied land is an achievement. As climate change intensifies, it is an achievement that will need to be learnt from and built upon.

Conclusion

Two themes have guided this discussion. The first is that contemporary expressions of customary ways of life contribute fundamentally to peace and stability within Vanuatu and to adaptability in the face of change and disruption. While customary organization is in many respects intrinsically conservative, it also has strong dynamic and adaptive elements (Forsyth 2009). This is not to idealize customary practices, or to suggest that they are without violence, but to recognize their significance. Customary forms underpin ways of life across the country for most people and are rooted in family, livelihood, and sources of meaning.

The second theme is that while customary, government, and religious institutions all contribute to governance, the nature of relations among them and among the people engaged in them is at least as relevant to questions of peace. There is a great deal of attention given to how formal state institutions and processes should ideally operate, but much less to the operation of networks of governance, or how different modes of governance might be working together, constructively or otherwise, or how the friction between different social, economic, political, and ontological systems is being navigated in the contexts of

countries' varying histories and circumstances. Yet this is a pressing challenge and a source of vulnerability and potentially also of strength for many states. People are working across different institutional modes in efforts to resolve complex problems, such as land alienation, gender violence, and political accountability. These experiences and experiments will shape the nature of socio-political community in Vanuatu and are worth learning from (see entries ► [“Hybrid Political Orders and Hybrid Peace”](#) and ► [“Peace Formation”](#)).

Customary ways of life have been the focus of this entry both because of the significant role they play and because they are often overlooked or cast as obstacles to government. *Kastom* can be reified and manipulated. Its contemporary habits, dominated by older men, often marginalize women and young people, although these habits may be no more common to custom than to many other contemporary ways of life. *Kastom* also seeks dialogue and respectful relations. In the effort to build webs of governance that support peace, this emphasis provides a fundamental direction.

Summary

This chapter addresses sources of peace in Vanuatu, one of the small island states of the Pacific Islands region. Though the region is highly diverse, there is much that is shared regarding social organization, colonial history, contemporary vulnerabilities, and sources of social stability and peace. The discussion's themes are thus relevant to other regional states and in broad terms beyond the region. Governance is often seen as fundamental to peace and social stability, but governance is generally understood in terms of state institutions. The chapter argues that governance in Vanuatu rests largely on a mix of state institutions and customary governance. Vanuatu is strongly Christian and various Churches also play a role in governance. In Vanuatu, as in many countries, governance could be understood as a hybrid network or interactive web of different modes of governance that is being shaped by unscripted processes of interaction and experimentation.

Customary practices have changed substantially over time, including through the processes of state formation and development, interaction with the cash economy, the influence of Christian churches, and simply the passage of time. They will continue to change. Nevertheless, fundamental elements of custom and customary governance, including the continuity and centrality of kin and land, the significance of the world of the spirit, and principles of reciprocity and respect continue to shape the lives of much of the population. Customary ways of life enable food security and social welfare across the country. They contribute fundamentally to peace and stability and to adaptability in the face of intense pressures of rapid social, political, and economic change. They also contribute to responding to climate change, which is the most pressing threat to lives and livelihoods across the region.

While customary and government institutions and (to some extent) churches all contribute to governance, however, the nature of relations among them is critical to questions of peace. There is enmeshment and cooperation between government and customary governance but there are also substantial gaps, friction, and confusion. There are also systemic tensions between the nature of political and economic community conceived by custom and by the liberal state and free market, despite the elasticity of both. The conflict between fundamentally different ways of valuing land, as a foundation of life or as a commodity, exemplifies these tensions.

Another pressing challenge is how authority is seen to operate. People are close to customary governance and authority is understood to flow from the ground. By contrast, while central government is seen as legitimate, it is also largely experienced as remote and unaccountable. Linking people and ways of life in rural Vanuatu, where the majority of the population lives, to government, which essentially takes place in towns, is a significant practical but also systemic challenge. How both government and customary bodies mediate and manage these challenges is critical to Vanuatu's peace and well-being and to the character of its political community.

The chapter follows these questions through a series of short examples and issues, including land, gender violence, political crises, and responses to natural disaster that indicate the significance of customary governance in both crises and everyday conflict management and the importance of constructive relations between customary and state institutional governance. While there is much international attention given to how formal state institutions should operate, there is much less focus on understanding the operation of networks of governance, or on how tensions between different social, economic, political, and ontological systems are being navigated. Yet this is a pressing challenge and potentially also a source of strength for many states. There is much to be learnt from Vanuatu's ongoing efforts and experience.

Cross-References

- ▶ Conflict, Peace, and Ontological Security
- ▶ Conflicts and Natural Disasters
- ▶ Culture and Conflict Resolution
- ▶ Decentralization and Conflict Prevention
- ▶ Everyday Peace
- ▶ Gender Justice and Peacebuilding
- ▶ Grassroots Organizations and Peacebuilding
- ▶ Hybrid Political Orders and Hybrid Peace
- ▶ Insights from Complexity Theory for Peace and Conflict Studies
- ▶ Land Politics and Conflict
- ▶ Local Peacebuilding
- ▶ Peace Formation
- ▶ Peace Formation in Bougainville
- ▶ Peacebuilding and Postcolonial Subject
- ▶ Post-conflict Timor-Leste
- ▶ Stalled Peacebuilding: Dealing with the Violence of Colonization and Its Legacy

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South Africa

- ▶ [Armed Conflicts in Africa and Indigenous Conflict Resolution](#)

South Sudan

- ▶ [Civil Wars in Sudan and South Sudan](#)

Southeast Europe

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Stabilization Operations and Their Relationship to Liberal Peacebuilding Missions

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Introduction

The concept of stabilization was first employed by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in Bosnia-Herzegovina (1996–2004), where the organization focused on the effort to sustain the transition from a peace operation to long-term development. Stabilization required mobile and flexible forces ready for quick deployment and trained to confront both armed attacks and civilian demonstrators. Military experience in Afghanistan and Iraq since the early 2000s reinforced a view of stabilization among Western states as requiring small and flexible units engaging in unconventional warfare, either “asymmetric,” “irregular,” or involving an insurgency. At roughly the same time, the popularity of the term “stabilization” began to increase exponentially. The total number of times that “stabilization” is mentioned in United Nations (UN) Security Council meetings rose from 59 times in 2001 to 671 times in 2014 (Curran and Holtom 2015, p. 8). The attractiveness of the term was confirmed by the UN launch of at least four

operations, which will be briefly discussed below, with “stability” as their main mission.

Despite its popularity, stabilization has not been defined. This chapter begins with a discussion of the different usages of the term by the United States (US), the United Kingdom, and France which, more than any other state, have contributed to “upload” their understanding of stabilization in UN Security Council resolutions. Second, the chapter examines conceptual aspects. Stabilization is often associated to, or used as a synonymous of, other terms like peacekeeping, peace enforcement, counterterrorism, counterinsurgency, and peacebuilding. Indeed, stabilization involves all of these aspects but does not coincide with any of them. Finally, key empirical examples of UN-led stabilization operations are briefly reviewed. They reveal the importance of a “robust posture” in stabilization operations, as well as of a number of contradictions and antinomies emerging in the process of implementation of stabilization’s activities. As a whole, stabilization reflects the disappointment with earlier large-scale, transformative peacebuilding interventions and the related downgrading among the list of international priorities of normative issues such as the promotion of democracy and the protection of human rights.

Definitional Issues

While in the 1990s and early 2000s most UN peace operations were deployed in post-settlement implementation missions, currently more than two-thirds of these operations are deployed amidst ongoing conflicts. The use of force in this type of situations has increasingly been endorsed by the UN, which throughout the 1990s had been accused of passivity in front of widespread atrocities. As a result, in order to enable measures for facing spoilers, protecting civilians, and restoring state authorities, which have emerged as key elements in the mandates of UN missions, most operations have been authorized under Chapter VII of the UN Charter and, following the disappointment with large-scale US-led intervention in both Afghanistan and Iraq, have been mandated to

use force in more targeted and selective ways (De Coning 2018; De Coning and Peter 2019; Hunt 2017).

While increasing referring to stabilization for this type of operations, the UN has left its understanding of the term mostly implicit, thus creating the conditions for different interpretations. The mandates of the four missions deployed by the UN Security Council with a stabilization component offer a profusion of meanings of the term, involving activities as disparate as the use of force, the protection of civilians, the strengthening of host state's authority, the development of democratic institutions and the rule of law, the demobilization of combatants, and the implementation of quick impact projects (Gilder 2019). Not only each of these elements has been given a different weight in each mission, but their relative importance also changed overtime. In general, headquarters in New York tend to view the term as involving offensive military force, while field staff understands it as civilian-led and development-driven work (Gorur 2016). Unsurprisingly, the High-Level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations suggested the need for the UN to clarify the meaning of stabilization, since the term "has a wide range of interpretations" (HIPPO 2015, p. 30).

From the UN Security Council perspective, there is value in leaving the concept undefined, since vagueness and constructive ambiguity allow for flexibility in its interpretation and application. Because of the lack of a clear definition, stabilization can be used as a discursive tool to engage with a wide range of stakeholders within and beyond UN circles and to refer to a broad range of unrelated activities gathered under the same broad category. While this lack of conceptual clarity has been effective in soliciting funds and support from UN member states, it has also meant that peacekeepers are trained based on wrong assumptions and out-of-date concepts. In such a context, missions are less effective, and unintended consequences become almost inevitable, as further discussed below.

In the absence of an agreed-upon definition, the meaning of the term can be inferred by examining the doctrines of those states which have

endorsed it. The "P3" Security Council member states – the United States, the United Kingdom, and France – exercise a significant influence on the content of peacekeeping mandates. Through the practice of being penholders of most UN Security Council resolutions, the P3 "upload" (Curran and Holtom 2015, p. 1) their understandings of stabilization into UN interventions. Above all, American and British definitions of stabilization have informed the UN's current use of the term, while France has been particularly influential in those cases where it maintains a strong strategic interest, such as Mali and the Sahel region. For all of them – the United States, the United Kingdom, and France – stabilization experiences in Afghanistan and Iraq, where the line between peacekeeping and peace enforcement was erased (Peter 2015), have contributed decisively to their understanding of what stabilization involves and how missions under this rubric should be carried out.

The US military doctrine has traditionally focused on conventional, high-intensity warfare, but it evolved significantly as a result of large-scale military experience in Afghanistan and Iraq. In 2006 the US Department of Defense issued a directive which declared that stability operations were, along with combat, part of the US military's core mission. As a result, US-led stability operations currently operate in at least 50 fragile states, particularly in the Americas, Africa, and the Middle East. The Joint Chiefs of Staff (2016, p. ix) defined stabilization as "the process by which military and nonmilitary actors collectively apply various instruments of national power to address drivers of conflict, foster host-nation resiliencies, and create conditions that enable sustainable peace and security." In practice, the rise of stabilization testifies to a shift in emphasis from warfare to population-centered intervention. Large counterinsurgency and peacebuilding operations (in US jargon frequently defined as "nation-building" campaigns) have been replaced by targeted missions involving drone strikes, special forces, and the increasing reliance on local troops, combined with the delivery of quick impact projects to alleviate the suffering of the population involved in areas of combat.

Similarly, recent British military doctrine was developed in the context of the campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan. The UK Stabilization Unit (2014) defined the term as “one of the approaches used in situations of violent conflict which is designed to protect and promote legitimate political authority, using a combination of integrated civilian and military actions to reduce violence, re-establish security and prepare for longer-term recovery by building an enabling environment for structural stability.” While this definition replicates in part the US understanding of the term, the United Kingdom has placed greater emphasis on civilian rather than military tasks. It has focused on a “comprehensive approach” to stabilization which should be led by civilian priorities and actors supported by the military.

Finally, for France a proactive foreign policy is one of the constitutive elements of its political culture and national identity. In recent years, France engaged in the fight against terrorism by supporting American efforts against the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria in the Middle East and by launching a large-scale military intervention in West Africa. These experiences demonstrate France’s “warrior” approach to stabilization (and, more broadly, to UN peacekeeping operations), whereby military force is greatly valued as a tool for intervention. In particular France developed the concept of “peace restoration” operations, whereby the notion of “active impartiality” is introduced to fill the gap created by peace operations which receive a peacekeeping mandate but at the same time engage in “limited war” (Tardy 2014). France has strongly supported robust and even enforcement mandates for UN missions, in particular in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Mali.

In general, the P3 refer to stabilization as a way to respond to intrastate conflict. Stabilization is understood broadly as involving a wide range of coordinated military and civilian activities designed to impact on different conflict drivers. Its main objective is to support the maintenance of security and the delivery of basic services when national authorities do not possess the legitimacy and/or the resources to exercise effective control over their territory or provide basic services. In its

narrow meaning, stabilization is applied to situations where there is no political settlement in place (De Coning et al. 2017) and thus where peacekeeping (as well as peacebuilding) principles appear to be irrelevant. In its broader meaning, it refers to situations of insecurity and instability in weak and fragile states that require a comprehensive and integrated approach to achieving stability (Muggah 2014).

The UN has leaned towards the narrow understanding of the term, in particular with regard to the deployment of “robust peacekeeping” operations during ongoing conflicts tasked with protecting civilians and supporting state authorities from armed elements. UN stabilization missions have been deployed alongside host state forces with the aim of creating a stable and legitimate state. Stabilization entails a significant level of force against perceived “spoilers,” that is, non-state actors who enjoy no international legitimacy because of their often abysmal human rights record. Similar to the cases of Afghanistan and Iraq, the UN has been confronting extremist non-state actors (such as Al-Shabaab, the 23 March Movement, Boko Haram, and other Islamist formations in the Maghreb) but on a smaller scale and with the primary objective of containing the spillover effects of these conflicts (Peter 2015, p. 354). The forceful approach to pacifying unruly areas reflects the preference and approach of not only the UN but also Western states and regional organizations such as the African Union (AU).

These missions are also mandated to support the reaching of an agreed-upon political outcome between the fighting parties. However, in practice the adoption of a strong counterterrorist and counterinsurgency rhetoric and the related need to neutralize spoilers has made UN mediation efforts hard to pursue. Rather than favoring the signing of a peace settlement, UN’s understanding of stabilization has been decidedly partial and focused on supporting state authorities. Indeed, according to Gorur (2016), the defining characteristic of stabilization is precisely the transfer of territorial control from spoilers to legitimate authorities. As a result, stabilization missions have displayed a strong military focus – leaning towards peace enforcement and counterterrorism – while

governance and development challenges have received less attention. “Stable” authoritarian or semi-authoritarian solutions may be preferred by international actors to imperfect democracies (Belloni and Moro 2019).

Although the use of force in support of a party to the conflict – usually the host-state government – is a defining characteristic of stabilization (de Coning et al. 2017; Hunt 2017) even narrow, military-centered approaches include a minimal component of both humanitarian intervention and peace- and state-building efforts (Belloni and Moro 2019). In particular, a range of early peacebuilding activities in socioeconomic, health, sanitation, and education areas are widely conceived of as critical components in winning a population’s “hearts and minds” and in delivering security benefits (Gordon 2010, p. 369). These activities do not have transformative ambitions, but, rather, they operate on a restorative logic designed to improve the provision of basic services to the population, including water, electricity, and health services. Quick fixes and pragmatic solutions aim at buying time to enable local actors to take responsibility for reconstruction and development. Ultimately, quick impact projects, the provision of essential services, and some iconic reconstruction schemes help strengthen the military gains and develop the host state’s legitimacy and core capabilities.

As further discussed below, the UN has embarked in stabilization operations with some degree of hesitation, above all for fear of crossing the Rubicon of peacekeeping into peace enforcement. For this reason, when enforcement actions are required, the UN Security Council has mandated regional arrangements, coalitions, or pivotal states (such as France in Côte d’Ivoire, Mali, and the Central African Republic – CAR) to adopt robust posture and use force. These arrangements have allowed a rapid response when intervention was deemed unpalatable for the UN (Bellamy and Hunt 2015, p. 1289). For example, missions mandated under Chapter 7 in the DRC and Mali have been deployed in close cooperation with both the AU and African states, signaling the emergence of a “Chapter Seven and a Half” practice combining strong mandates and the close cooperation with

regional actors (Karlsrud 2018). As a result of this practice, a complimentary model has developed, whereby the AU acts as the first responder to situations of violent conflict and, once a minimal level of stability has been restored, the UN is expected to assume responsibility for the peace consolidation phase (De Coning 2017). Alongside the AU, many European states have assisted in or conducted military action against terrorist groups in sub-Saharan Africa. In general, however, international organizations, ad hoc coalitions of the willing and states have struggled to link stabilization interventions to a long-term political strategy (Berdal and Ucko 2014).

Conceptual and Theoretical Aspects

Often the term “stabilization” has merged with other ones adopted in discussions related to peacekeeping, peace enforcement, counterterrorism, counterinsurgency, peacebuilding, and the like. Indeed, as noted above, the term’s ambiguous nature has made it increasingly popular to a number of UN member states, regional organizations, and bilateral donors who have been willing to support operations deployed under this rubric. In the absence of a set of clearly defined guidelines, diverging understandings of the term are bound to persist. In practice, stabilization may assume from time to time characteristics commonly associated to other doctrines.

To begin with, the UN has authorized stabilization interventions attempting to maintain them within the confines of peacekeeping doctrine – which prescribe the deployment of an impartial lightly armed force overseeing a peace agreement with the consent of the warring parties. Significantly, impartiality does not necessarily involve neutrality, since peace operations can use force in defense of their mandate (UN 2008, pp. 31–35). However, despite UN’s efforts, stabilization missions challenge drastically the peacekeeping’ principles of consent, impartiality, and limited use of force. Indeed, these missions are deployed in contexts of active conflict with the consent of the government but not of other main parties. They often involve the use of force well

beyond self-defense and the protection of civilians against organized armed groups – which are typically seen as criminals rather than the expression of a political conflict to be mediated (Rhoads 2016). As a result, while both stabilization and peacekeeping allow for the use of force, they do so with different purposes. Within peacekeeping the use of force is permitted to achieve or protect peace. Force is allowed at the tactical level with the consent of the host authorities and/or the main parties to the conflict in order to “defend its mandate against spoilers whose activities pose a threat to civilians or risk undermining the peace process” (UN 2008, p. 98). By contrast, stabilization involves an understanding of force that is closer to a peace enforcement notion involving violence deployed at the strategic or international level (UN 2008, p. 19).

Not only stabilization operations challenge the principle of the limited use of force but also that of impartiality. These missions are self-consciously partial, since they do not treat all parties alike but support the state if necessary to defeat spoilers (Bellamy and Hunt 2015; Karlsrud 2018). In some cases, such as Somalia, Côte d’Ivoire, and the DRC, UN forces have become directly involved in regular armed clashes with local groups. Most notably, in 2013 the Security Council authorized a Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) to carry out combat operations against the 23 March Movement (M23) – an armed group in the DRC. Thus, while UN intervention initially appeared to be closer to a peacebuilding mission, the introduction of an enforcement mandate turned UN troops into an offensive combat force and made the mission increasingly more military-centered. The FIB defeated M23 in November 2013 and created “islands of stability” to consolidate military gains through the provision of humanitarian assistance. In practice, the FIB epitomized the growing importance of counterinsurgency (COIN) type operations – further discussed below – which involve taking sides against identified aggressors (Tull 2018). While the UN Assistant Secretary-General for Legal Affairs, Stephen Mathias (2017), has argued that support for the host states and clashes with spoilers do not necessarily make the UN party to a conflict, nonetheless these

missions make the UN likely to be perceived as such by both armed groups and the local population. In addition, not only stabilization missions typically side with the host government to confront domestic non-state actors but also frequently involve neighboring states with significant interests in the way the conflicts they engage in are managed and solved – undermining impartiality further (Karlsrud 2019b).

Because of these characteristics, stabilization is closer to peace enforcement, defined as “the application, with the authorization of the Security Council, of a range of coercive measures, including the use of military force” (UN 2008, p. 17), rather than peacekeeping. The UN recognizes that it is not well suited to undertake peace enforcement operations (HIPPO 2015) and that such missions should be undertaken by the host government, a capable regional force, or an ad hoc coalition authorized by the Security Council (UN 2008, p. 31). Accordingly, the UN claims that, despite their robust posture, stabilization remains within the boundaries of peacekeeping and the use of force in defense of the mandate does not qualitatively change the character of peacekeeping operations. This claim is intended to allow for the use of force while retaining the principles of classical peacekeeping, thus appeasing generally risk-averse troop-contributing countries.

Despite UN’s efforts to keep peacekeeping and peace enforcement distinct, doctrinal differences are often blurred in practice. Since the use of force in defense of the mandate permits the use of offensive force (Gilder 2019, p. 56), stabilization efforts involve elements of peace enforcement. In Haiti, the DRC, Mali, and CAR, the UN Security Council authorized the use of military force for a variety of purposes, including the defeat of spoilers, the protection of civilians, and the implementation of the mission mandate. The assertive execution of these tasks has led commentators to suggest that these operations may constitute the forerunner of a new era of UN peace enforcement operations (Karlsrud 2018, pp. 41–43). However, while developing alongside each other and increasingly overlapping, peace enforcement and stabilization remain conceptually different, since the latter recognizes that

the military effort alone cannot achieve its objectives but needs to be combined with political, economic, governance, and development efforts (Muggah 2014).

Stabilization also shares elements with counterterrorism and counterinsurgency (COIN). Indeed, both are frequently mentioned together within the context of stabilization operations, even though counterterrorism and counterinsurgency are based on different assumptions. To begin with, the use of force can be ruthless in counterterrorism but needs to be contained in counterinsurgency not to alienate the local population. More precisely, while counterterrorism is premised upon the willingness to apply massive force against terrorists, counterinsurgency strategy is driven by the slogan “clear, hold, and build,” which was developed in 2007 by the *US Army and Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual (FM 3-24)* and which involves the instrumental use of violence to reach political objectives.

In stabilization operations, military-led counterinsurgency and stabilization discourses are merged (Gordon 2010, p. 372). For example, in the DRC the UN implemented an International Security and Stabilization Support Strategy based on the “clear, hold, and build” credo typical of US-led counterinsurgency operations (De Vries 2015, pp. 47–55). This type of operation recognizes that there is no military solution to an insurgency. Rather, the focus is on shifting the loyalty of people from the insurgents to the domestic authorities. The military’s goal is to clear an area of insurgents (sometimes defined as “spoilers” or even “terrorists”) and then keep it safe for civilian actors tasked with providing the population with essential services. Through this process local authorities should be able to extend their authority and legitimacy to areas previously controlled by the insurgents. Thus, counterinsurgency aims at building the political capital of the local government by shifting population’s loyalty away from extremist groups and towards domestic institutions (Boyle 2010). Within this framework, the protection of civilians is not a moral imperative grounded on human rights values, as within peacekeeping operations, but a means to reduce

popular support for insurgents (Friis 2010). In addition, civilian activities are subordinated and instrumental to military priorities and considered as an added minor tactical tool following combat in order to win the “hearts and minds” of the local population.

By contrast, counterterrorism relies on the political capital of the government to authorize and justify often unpopular missions. The UN has approached counterterrorist activities with caution. In 2014 the UN Security Council condemned violent extremism and terrorism, in 2016 the Secretary-General has presented a Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, and in 2017 the General Assembly established an Office of Counter-Terrorism – revealing the UN’s willingness to contribute to the evolving counterterrorist agenda (Karlsrud 2019b). At the same time, many UN member states, think tanks, and policy analysts doubt that the UN could, or even should, involve itself in these activities. To begin with, not only the use of violence against “terrorists” restricts nonmilitary alternatives but also the fluidity of local allegiances can make it very difficult to distinguish between “terrorist” and “non-terrorist” groups. The binary distinction between legitimate and terrorist groups may prevent the identification of those political problems that need to be addressed in order to reach an agreed-upon settlement and risks threatening the possibility of pursuing a peace operation’s other priorities. In particular, the possibility that the UN could act as an impartial arbitrator is diminished by being an active part of the conflict, and thus the pursuit of an inclusive peace and national reconciliation is undermined (Gilder 2019).

Most importantly from the UN perspective, the organization lacks unity of command and the necessary means to conduct counterterrorist activities. Thus, the HIPPO report argued on practical grounds that the UN should not be involved in counterterrorist operations and where the UN intervenes alongside other counterterrorist forces, the role and responsibilities of each actor should be clearly delineated (HIPPO 2015, p. 34). Nonetheless, the emerging consensus among Western states on the need to give the UN a greater role in countering terrorism, as

well as the American administration's threat to reduce its financial contribution to the organization, contributed to motivate the Security Council to raise the UN's profile in this area.

As a result, counterterrorism has become an increasingly important component of stabilization missions. In Mali, the UN stabilization operation uneasily oscillated between civilian peacebuilding activities and military counterterrorism. UN member states (most notably France, in addition to the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and Mali's neighboring countries) were motivated to contribute to a robust operation involving the use of force because of their assessment of the terrorist threat spreading in the north of the country (Karlsrud 2019a). In 2016 the UN Security Council authorized the use of robust force under Chapter VII of the Charter and supported the host government (and other actors such as French troops) in its fight against terrorism, including by sharing intelligence (Centre FrancoPaix 2018). In Iraq, the UN has delegated counterterrorist activities to the *Global Coalition against Daesh*, while counterinsurgency tasks were assigned to local authorities. This approach presupposed the presence of a solid and effective Iraqi government – a problematic assumption, which contributes to explain the difficulties in defeating the internal insurgency and thus “stabilize” the country. Similar to other stabilization cases, the *Global Coalition* did not extend its mandate to governance objectives, such as building viable institutions, or economic ones, including the reactivation of local economic activities (Belloni and Costantini 2019).

In sum, stabilization involves a variety of different components and draws from doctrines as diverse as peacekeeping, peace enforcement, counterinsurgency, and counterterrorism. In addition, humanitarian, developmental, and governance elements are also implicated in stabilization operations, even though they are generally secondary and instrumental to military activities. These elements involve early peacebuilding activities, and thus they may be associated to the liberal peacebuilding framework that guided intervention in fragile states since the 1990s onwards. However, as further explained

below, despite some similarities the two approaches not only stand in stark contrast to each other but also they appear to be alternatives – with stabilization actually considered as the most widely endorsed substitute to liberal peacebuilding among UN member states and international organizations.

Stabilization and Peacebuilding

Unlike stabilization missions, peacebuilding interventions require relatively permissive environments and are focused on long-term civilian intervention tools, rather than military ones.

Moreover, while liberal peace interventions adhere rather closely to a standard recipe involving democratization and liberalization tools, and thus take as their point of departure the supply side of intervention, stabilization emphasizes the demand side, relegating outsiders to important but secondary roles. Indeed, “the contribution made by external actors is often characterized in very limited terms, reflecting a perceived inability to impose a political settlement or generate public confidence in a government” (Gordon 2010, p. 372).

Stabilization assesses external actions not on the grounds of their respect of liberal principles but on the basis of their practical consequences. This pragmatic approach suggests that those universal liberal values which informed liberal peacebuilding must be adapted to the circumstances of each case. Accordingly, while peacebuilding develops from a general template, stabilization is situation-specific. It moves beyond the liberal peace template in order to focus on the local context, and its operationalization changes from one case to another. Stabilization emphasizes flexibility, awareness of the peculiarities of each particular situation, and pragmatism in identifying what may be the most appropriate intervention instrument for each case – all elements entailing a shift from the liberal peacebuilding template involving intrusive and (relatively) long-term strategies to address the root causes of conflict to a more limited, short-term approach with less transformative ambitions.

While democracy and human rights continue to inform international involvement in fragile states, liberal interventionist goals and values are pursued on a case-by-case basis, and, if needed to reach broader strategic goals such as suppressing terrorist groups, fighting an insurgency or strengthening domestic authorities, they may be downgraded in the list of international priorities (Belloni and Moro 2019).

The growing emphasis on stabilization within the UN, its member states, as well as bilateral donors and other international organizations reflects a profound disappointment with the type of large-scale peacebuilding interventions which characterized external involvement within fragile states since the mid-1990s onwards. While in the immediate aftermath of the 2003 invasion of Iraq, American President George W. Bush argued that “stability cannot be purchased at the expense of liberty” (Bush 2003), since the early mid-2010s belief in the transformative potential of external intervention, and the related assumption that liberal and economic reforms will contribute to stability, is increasingly considered as illusory. Not only does stabilization provides an alternative to peacebuilding, but also it reverses the peacebuilding logic: while peacebuilding considered ever greater levels of democratization and liberalization as indispensable to achieve stability, stabilization is premised upon the opposite idea, that is, that democracy and a market economy can only follow stability (Belloni and Costantini 2019).

On balance, the popularity of stabilization arises from a set of conditions all related to disappointment with liberal peacebuilding. First, such a popularity reveals an awareness of the limits of the neoliberal hubris that characterized interventions in countries like Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Iraq, and Afghanistan. The limits apparent in the imposition of external frameworks (and/or conditions) as a way to pursue liberal internationalist goals have advised the adoption of a more modest approach. The real or perceived failures of international intervention in unruly parts of the world throughout the 1990s and 2000s have led to a move away from the liberal peacebuilding framework involving a fairly standardized

political and economic intervention tools to a more limited, short-term approach focused on developing resilience and internal capacities to deal with state fragility (Chandler 2012). The post-2008 global financial crisis also contributed to make long-term, extremely expensive involvement in fragile states difficult to sustain.

Second, the rise and competition for influence of non-Western states such as China, Russia, and, regionally, Saudi Arabia and Iran have further counselled a reconsideration of Western interventionism based on the liberal peacebuilding agenda. These states pose a challenge to Western intervention because they are scarcely interested, if at all, in democratic conditionalities and human rights issues. For example, China is increasingly intent in participating to the creation of “common goods” by contributing to peacekeeping missions, but this interest involves clear preferences over what good governance and economic reconstruction imply. Similarly, Russian influence in Afghanistan and Iranian influence in Iraq have frequently frustrated the attempt to sustain the development of democratic institutions, the rule of law, and individual and group rights. As a result, because Western states possess less leverage to influence the governments of fragile states (Levitsky and Way 2005, pp. 21–22), they have further lowered their transformative ambitions.

Third, in addition to disappointment with large-scale peacebuilding interventions, the failure of the so-called Arab Springs testifies to the difficulties with moving undemocratic states towards representative institutions and market economies even when demands for change are generated domestically. The spillover effects which emerged from these failures on (mainly) European states included terrorist attacks and migration waves and heightened the perception among Western policy-makers of the interdependence between external and internal security. This perception contributed to the re-evaluation of Western involvement in fragile states, moving to the top of international concerns the fight against terrorism, the control of migration, the curbing of human trafficking, and the dismantling of criminal syndicates – rather than the implantation of liberal norms and institutions.

In states as diverse as Afghanistan, Iraq, and Mali, counterterrorism appears to be a priority – framed within a stabilization discourse.

In sum, no longer do multilateral organizations and Western states pursue the type of radical restructuring which motivated peacebuilding interventions but, more modestly, while maintaining their rhetoric on promoting democratization and human rights, they have, in fact, greatly lowered their ambitions. Ever more common references to the importance of taking into account the local context express the endorsement of lower benchmarks and standards as appropriate for fragile states. Accordingly, expressions such as “good enough governance” (Grindle 2004), which has been embraced by the UK Stabilization Unit, indicate the lower and decreasing expectations associated to international intervention. Accordingly, stabilization reflects the ethos of a post-interventionary age which has abandoned grandiose transformative ambitions in favor of pragmatic involvement in fragile states in unruly parts of the world (McGinty 2012).

The Antinomies of Stabilization

Since the early 2000s, the number of UN stabilization missions has been increasing. The missions to Haiti (2004), DRC (2010–), Mali (2013–), and CAR (2014–) all have “stabilization” in their title. In addition, many other missions have included stabilization goals: in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Timor-Leste, Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, and South Sudan, stabilization has been an important concern for all external interveners – including the UN, as well as other international organizations such as the NATO, the AU, and the EU. In several of these cases, the UN has deployed its mission in a context where a political solution to persisting domestic violence is still missing. Under these conditions, the UN’s goal is not only that of achieving strategic stability by supporting an inclusive peace process and the reaching of a peace agreement between the parties but also that of sustaining the development of a legitimate state authority and its monopoly over the use of force.

Often these missions include an explicit reference and mandate to proactively protect civilians. Starting with the UN Mission in Sierra Leone (1999), the Security Council routinely passed resolutions authorizing the use of “all means necessary” to protect civilians from harm. Technological advances enable remote surveillance, data collection, and potentially more effective ways of conducting timely intervention on behalf of endangered populations (Karlsrud 2018, pp. 59–82) even though, in practice, despite the authorization of “robust mandates” external actors have generally been reluctant to intervene with force when civilians are under attack (Rudolf 2017, p. 164). In sum, in recent years UN operations have been deployed in the midst of ongoing conflicts, mandated to protect civilians and to restore and maintain stability by supporting the government to extend its authority throughout the territory. Despite the fact that they are allowed to use force proactively, UN missions not only try to achieve a military solution to a conflict, but also they aim at supporting the search for political solutions by helping to shape the security environment (Muggah 2014).

This type of stabilization is contentious and has come under close scrutiny. The problematic aspects of these operations can be understood as predictable side effects, rather than unintended consequences (Hunt 2017). First, greater militarization may actually endanger civilians who find themselves in the crossfire or may be targeted during revenge attacks if they are perceived to be on the side of the UN (or that of its partners). Thus, rather than providing security to civilians, UN’s involvement in a protracted conflict can further harm to them. Furthermore, an offensive posture may make the UN party to an armed conflict. If peacekeepers use force, the distinction between combatants and noncombatants becomes blurred, and UN personnel could lose the protection given to civilians under international humanitarian law. Peacekeepers themselves may be considered a legitimate military target and become more vulnerable. For example, in Mali UN forces have been identified as the enemy alongside the government, and armed and terrorist groups have targeted them for retaliation – leading

to a very high number of casualties and fatalities. The dangerousness of these missions is likely to make it ever more difficult for the UN to recruit the forces it needs.

Second, humanitarian actors are concerned about the possible costs of stabilization, including less humanitarian access and greater insecurity for their workers. Security-focused stabilization efforts may endanger the “humanitarian space” – understood as the wider political, social, or geographical space within which individuals implement coping and survival strategies in the midst of conflict (Attree et al. 2018). As a result, the range of activities carried out by civilian actors, such as humanitarian and development NGOs, is greatly constrained due to issues of security. The cases of Afghanistan, Iraq, the DRC, Mali, and the CAR confirm these difficulties. In some cases, the military even identifies and manages quick impact projects and engages in aid delivery, leading to the militarization and securitization of assistance. This type of service provision transforms needs-based priorities into political or military ones (Gordon 2010, p. 380). Accordingly, the attitude of the international humanitarian community ranges from diffident and defensive to openly hostile to much of what has been advanced under the stabilization rubric.

While these problems are frequently noted, less debated are the difficulties raised by stabilization in relation to the link between the use of military force and the political process. First, the UN’s ability to engage in political negotiations is damaged if international forces are used to achieve a particular political reality on the ground. It is hard to act as an impartial broker in the peace process while simultaneously attempting to defeat one of the parties militarily. Thus, several policy analysts have argued that more attention should be given to strategically link UN activities to political processes aimed at bringing violent conflict to an end (see, e.g., Berdal and Ucko 2014). Most worrisome, the host government may interpret the UN war-fighting attitude as support in the attempt to defeat a non-state actor militarily and thus may feel little pressure to negotiate a political settlement with those associated with the aggressor. For

instance, in the DRC the neutralization of M23 not only did not eliminated armed threats, since other groups continued to operate, but also it changed adversely the incentives of the government, which quickly lost interest in the objectives of building institutions and enhancing inclusive politics (Tull 2018). In addition, in some cases non-state actors targeted militarily by external intervention enjoy significant popular support from the local population, such as Al-Shabaab in Somalia. Accordingly, even if the insurgency is defeated the government that emerges as victorious may still be seen as illegitimate in the eyes of its citizens.

Second, the expansion of the state’s authority is frequently part of a mission’s mandate, as in Mali and CAR. In practice, not only UN operations may preclude particular political solutions by siding with contested governments, but also they may boost illiberal, autocratic, and authoritarian governments. The attempt at strengthening the capacity and legitimacy of state institutions may ultimately lead to the empowerment of predatory and corrupt regimes. Several fragile states have experienced the phenomenon of “state capture.” The development of a highly corrupt, client state in situations as diverse as Bosnia-Herzegovina, Afghanistan, Iraq, and South Sudan clashes with the stabilization’s objective of creating legitimate, accountable, and sustainable institutions. In addition, the strengthening of the state security sector can contribute to the government’s ability to inflict damage on the civilian population and even lead to a rise in terrorist group recruitment. Indeed, dissatisfaction with government and incidents such as the killing of a family member or a friend are drivers of violent extremist recruitment, particularly in Africa (UNDP 2017).

Third, the human rights agenda may suffer from the closeness between international interveners and state authorities. The UN is committed to support a government on the basis of its respect of human rights and humanitarian law. In practice, however, stabilization activities have involved the UN in human rights abuses (Gilder 2019, p. 67). In addition, other international actors, such as the

United States and France, have downplayed human rights violations in order to gain the host government's counterterrorism support. More generally, Western governments have been willing to set aside humanitarian efforts when dealing with a particular state authority considered to be an ally in the fight against terrorism. In this type of cases, the structural relationship between external actors and the host government hinders engagement with non-state actors and civil society, particularly at the local level, and thus limits the possibility of contributing to sustainable peace (Attree et al. 2018).

In sum, stabilization presents difficult conceptual and practical challenges. The lack of an established doctrine complicates the assessment of stabilization activities. Stabilization's added value appears to be its pragmatic, case-by-case effort to address situations of instability through a range of tools, tailoring intervention to the peculiarities of each case. In practice, however, stabilization prioritizes security achievements over governance, with a range of potentially negative consequences, including the militarization of conflicts, the closing of the humanitarian space, the strengthening of illiberal governments, and, perhaps most problematically for the long-term prospects, the marginalization of diplomatic, political solutions to instability and conflict.

Conclusions

It has become increasingly apparent that the type of peacekeeping based on consent, impartiality, and the limited use of force which predominated during the Cold War does not fit the current characteristics of conflict. Peace operations have to confront insurgents, terrorists, spoilers, criminals, and proxy armies, while future ones will likely continue to do so. The prospect that additional operations in states like Libya, Syria, and Yemen can be mandated to "stabilize" these states confirms the need to assess the UN's role in this type of theaters. Thus far, the gap between peacekeeping principles and the evolution of operations on the grounds has been widening, with the UN authorizing "robust mandates" and operating

alongside regional partners and pivotal states struggling to enforce a range of stabilization tasks (De Coning et al. 2017; Karlsrud 2018).

In the absence of an official stabilization doctrine, these tasks have greatly varied across different operations. In general, security objectives associated with the support to central authorities have been prioritized over developmental and human rights concerns. UN practice suggests that stabilization is linked to the authorization to use "robust" force, the protection of civilians, counterterrorism, cooperation with the host-state government, and the adoption of humanitarian and development projects aimed at reinforcing political gains against domestic spoilers. Stabilization's state-centered bias has come with considerable costs, above all the risk of legitimizing unpalatable governments in the name of "stability," while retarding the search for a political solution to violent conflict. Above all, the robustness of stabilization may give the false impression that there are military solutions to complex political problems, even though the strong emphasis on counterterrorist and counterinsurgency activities has both failed to resolve violent conflicts and marginalized non-violent conflict management and mediation options. Rather than supporting negotiated settlements, robust mandates carry the risk of offering a disincentive to governments to address the roots of violence and seek a dialogue and/or a compromise.

As a whole, stabilization has provided Western states with a short-term, security-based alternative to controversial, large-scale peacebuilding operations. In theory, stabilization could be conceived of as a first step towards longer-term interventions involving governance and development activities designed to tackle the roots of instability. In practice, however, stabilization has been both short-term and not organically connected to a political process. It is perhaps unsurprising that these operations remain controversial. Ultimately, as the HIPPO (2015) report argues, long-term, sustainable solutions must be rooted in a political and peacebuilding process. Stabilization operations confirm that the often-repeated need to link the use of force to a broader political strategy remains as compelling as ever.

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Stalled Peacebuilding: Dealing with the Violence of Colonization and Its Legacy

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Synonyms

Colonization; Hybridity; Peacebuilding; Relationality; Shared sovereignty; Structural violence; Treaty

Definition

Relations between Australia's First Peoples and its non-Indigenous government and peoples provide an example of stalled peacebuilding. Peacebuilding is rarely considered in relation to Australia, but Australia is a colonial-settler state. When colonization began, Australia was already governed by an extensive network of Indigenous political communities. The modern Australian state was built upon denial of these sovereign First Peoples and of the profound protracted violence of dispossessing them. As a consequence of this denial, essentially colonial relations continue, resulting in First Peoples facing significant

ongoing systemic violence and profound distortion of Australian political community.

Despite the language of Indigenous self-determination, there is little self-determination in practice. A treaty with government is one way in which Indigenous people are seeking to move away from the violence of colonial relations and establish recognition as sovereign First Peoples, coexistent with the state. Greater trust, mutuality, and practical self-determination are needed to enable a meaningful treaty, however, while any treaty needs to incorporate First Nation values, concepts, and processes. This would shape more nuanced ways of being a state. Protracted systemic violence in Australia underlines the failure of a well-resourced liberal state to deal nonviolently with key forms of difference and resolve embedded conflict at the heart of the state. This case demonstrates how liberal governance can entrench violence with significant implications for liberal peacebuilding. Studies of peace and conflict have valuable insights to offer efforts to move past the violence of colonial relations, including emphasizing the importance of relationship and mutuality.

Introduction

This chapter addresses peacebuilding between Australia's First Nations and its non-Indigenous government and peoples. The discussion touches on the need for peacemaking, obstacles to it, and what the transformation of relations it seeks might entail. A treaty or treaties is one of the mechanisms being pursued to navigate that transformation and is a focus of this discussion. The chapter emphasizes the stalled nature of peacebuilding in Australia, but also points to the profound benefit that exploring a different pattern of relations between First Nations and non-Indigenous peoples offers the country – that is, exploring relations that turn around acknowledging First Nations people and engaging with the scope and complexity of the country's history through deep time and the modern era.

Peacebuilding is not a term commonly applied to Australia. It is more often associated with

images of international missions carrying often *pret-a-porter* development agendas in the aftermath of open fighting. Australia presents a different case, but one that has something important to say to understandings of peace and peacebuilding. International peacebuilding missions often seek to restrain violent conflict through introducing or strengthening selected liberal governance institutions, or some semblance of them (Richmond 2007; see Chapter ► “[Liberal Peacebuilding](#)”). As discussed later, the need for peacebuilding within what is widely regarded as a stable, well-functioning liberal democracy underlines serious misconceptions with this approach. Experiences from violent conflict and efforts to build peace elsewhere also offer insights and points of comparison to Australia.

The modern state of Australia was founded as a colonial-settler state. In fundamental dimensions of society and polity, it remains so, despite legislative, policy, and sociocultural shifts over the past two centuries. Australia demonstrates the challenges of peacebuilding where the violence of colonization and the persistence of structural and direct violence and intergenerational trauma flowing from that history have been obscured (Reynolds 2013). More fundamentally, as part of the “not-seeing” of colonialism, the presence and significance of First Nations peoples as those whose country was colonized, and as interlocutors with whom colonial-settler Australia must deal is effectively, even aggressively, overlooked in mainstream Australian life and political exchange. Indigenous disadvantage is often noted, but there is little recognition and active erasure of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as First Peoples in their own country (see Chapter ► “[Conflict, Peace, and Ontological Security](#)”). Despite the language of self-determination, Indigenous Australians continue to be governed overwhelmingly through the categories, decisions, and structures of others (Nakata 2007). Fundamental questions of sovereignty and what it means for First Nations and non-Indigenous people and governance to share the country are yet to be explored.

What appears to be stability, then, is in part the arrested development that comes from an erasure

of history and the systemic “overlooking” of whole peoples and their Law that is central to colonization in Australia. This chosen amnesia and the violence it obscures distorts and damages Australia’s political and sociocultural life and places heavy burdens on Indigenous lives. It is clear, however, that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have not been eradicated or assimilated and do not live as one of a number of minority groups. Indigenous Australians make up 3.3 per cent of the overall population according to the 2016 census, but the questions raised by their presence speak to the heart of the state. While papered over, the questions posed by the violence of colonization and its aftermath do not go away, but emerge repeatedly, through Indigenous voices, government inquiries, social movements, and occasional outbursts of popular disquiet. Far from fading away, Indigenous peoples have consistently asserted their sovereignty and understanding of sovereignty as coexistent with the state and sought to arrive at an agreement or a means of dealing which encompasses not only non-Indigenous but also First Nation values, concepts, and structures (see Chapter ► “[Participatory Constitution-Making and Peacebuilding](#)”).

This discussion is the work of two voices, from First Nations and non-Indigenous contexts. These voices are at times melded together and at times distinct and separate (although not explicitly identified). It is not clear whether, how and when settler-colonial Australia might break out of denial and into the work of crafting ways of being together not distorted by structural violence. However a transformation of relations away from systemic violence might take place, mutuality, exchange, and the development of what Mary Graham calls autonomous regard (touched on later) are fundamental to the process. This writing is an effort to enact those practices.

A Short Account of First Nations History and Social and Political Philosophy

Indigenous civilization on the Australian continent is 65,000 years old on conservative estimates, but perhaps almost twice that, so

Australia's First Peoples practiced political functions long before the emergence of European conceptions of politics and hold a sense of history that reaches into deep time. Over millennia Indigenous politics, society and philosophy have been shaped by land and by practices of nurturing land, supporting a continuity of coexistence with land and living things, and an ordered cohabitation among human groups in the face of far-reaching ecological change (see Chapter ► [“Human Geography and Peacebuilding”](#)). The sociopolitical, philosophical, and ethical order that emerged from this extraordinary continuity and adaptability in turn enabled a high degree of social stability within and among groups (Pascoe 2018).

For most of this long history, numerous distinct Australian Aboriginal nations (approximately 500 at the time of British colonization) lived in relative isolation from the wider world, but in webs of exchange with each other. “The songlines of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people connected language groups and clans from one side of the country to another. The cultural, economic, genetic, and artistic conduits of the songlines brought goods, art, news, ideas, technology, and marriage partners to centres of exchange” (Pascoe 2018, p. 274). Contrary to popular mythology, Indigenous peoples did not simply wander the continent in an opportunistic search for game or edible plants. Language groups were associated with clearly defined areas of the continent and economic life was underpinned by “subtle but comprehensive management of the land and its productivity” (Pascoe 2018, p. 271). The processes of managing land and the “economic foundations of traditional society were inseparable from the philosophic and religious beliefs” (Pascoe 2018, p. 266). Careful management of Australia's often fragile soils and ecosystems enabled Indigenous people to care for and draw sustenance from areas out of reach of contemporary farming and to survive and thrive in often extremely challenging environments.

Relationship with land is the foundation of Indigenous political, social, economic, and philosophical life. The Law comes from the land. Land is generative and sentient – all life forms come from it. (Various accounts of this process appear

as the Dreaming of different nations). It has thrown human beings up into the world and into the imaginative ability to create society and culture. It continuously helps us to form society and keeps us alive and creative through its resources, its changes, and enabling capacities. In this way, land becomes Country, a force that participates in a reciprocal relationship with human beings. We are ultimately, inextricably, and forever obliged to Land-as-Country for our existence. These relations of obligation are the basis of social and political order and ethics, of how we are and act with each other, including human and other-than-human-beings. “The land, and how we treat it, is what determines our human-ness. Because land is sacred and must be looked after, the relation between people and land becomes the template for society and social relations” (Graham 2008, pp. 181–182). The primary relationship is between people and land while other relations, among people and with other-than-human relatives, are contingent on this primary relationship (see Chapter ► [“Human Geography and Peacebuilding”](#)).

People are thus embedded within a sentient landscape, with each other and with other-than-human beings in a system of coexistence or a non-anthropocentric ecology of relations (Bawaka et al. 2016; Graham and Brigg 2020). The forms of sociopolitical order and ethics that emerged from this relational grasp of life are flexible and stable, adaptive, and enduring. They turn around reciprocal social and cultural arrangements in which human collectives – clan and language groups – “look after” Land-as-Country within particular regions recognized by other groups, somewhat like a network of interlinked but autonomous local governments. A complex systematization, the Law, became embedded within and between groups, providing a poetic ordering system for guiding behaviors and relations among people. The Law orders the world through cultural narratives, kinship systems, and languages; through ceremony in which meaning, relationship and duty are enacted; and through organizational structures. Organizational structures are largely nonhierarchical. Elders exercise authority that is relatively constrained and contingent on their

abilities. Practical injunctions help inculcate and guide behaviors, while models of conduct emphasize self-regulation, non-competitiveness, harmonious relations, cooperation, and the pursuit of balance (see Chapter ► [“Culture and Conflict Resolution”](#)).

This is a relational and custodial ethic that ensures care for family, kin, and Country and offers a way of securing entwined human and other-than-human existence. It is also an ethic of autonomous regard, which emerges from and guides relations with land and with human and nonhuman living beings. Human beings are at once autonomous and operating within an ecology of relations. We are watching the living world and the living world is looking at us. How do we weigh our behavior and ourselves in the sight of the Country, the ground itself, in relation to others in and outside the group, to the ancestors and to spirit beings in the overall register of Dreaming and Law? How do we conduct ourselves to find and ensure a good fit? This ethic serves the valuable purpose of suspending social and political judgmentalism, including between groups, while making each individual part of, and therefore responsible for, the continuation of sociopolitical order. Within this political and ethical context, invasion is meaningless. While there was (and is) conflict between clan or language groups, the power of this ethic and the relationship between land and people meant that there was no invasion of other’s country. As Bruce Pascoe notes, the absence of imperial warfare “demands respect, and the skills employed to bring about the longest pan-continental stability that the world has known must be investigated, because they might become Australia’s greatest export” (Pascoe 2018, p. 276; Graham and Brigg 2020).

Australian First Peoples practiced this relational ethic as owners and runners of Country on the Australian continent for tens of thousands of years. This is a civilizational history. Many First Peoples continue to be active owners and runners of Country or are reclaiming this role. “Colonial destruction has badly damaged relations with Country . . . But Country and its processes persist, whether in active practices or as patterns etched in the landscape by tens of thousands of years of

human occupation that are available for recovery and revival in face of colonisation” (Graham and Brigg 2020, p. 5). As Bruce Pascoe comments, “there are elements of agriculture, conservation, culture, and government that, having been tested against the nature of Aboriginal society for a minimum of 60,000 years, hold profitable messages for the nation” (Pascoe 2018, p. 273; see Chapter ► [“Hybrid Peace”](#)).

Colonization

Britain began colonization in Australia in 1788 with the process extending gradually across the continent. In the mainstream Australian imaginary, the history of colonization is an account of gradual settlement, difficult and varied migrations, challenging landscapes, and the struggle to overcome adversity. These accounts form only a small part of the story, however. Colonization in Australia focused on acquisition and settlement of land. This was resisted, and the dispossession of those whose land it was involved significant violence, described by an early traveler in frontier regions as a process of extermination (Treaty Working Group 2020). In the state of Queensland alone, the frontier conflicts are estimated to have led to more than 65,000 deaths while at least 311 massacres across the country have been documented, with nearly all deaths Indigenous (Ryan et al. 2019; Treaty Working Group 2020).

Land was central to colonization in ways that have proved extraordinarily potent (see Chapter ► [“Land Politics and Conflict”](#)). Following Locke and other early theorists of the state, the country was legally classified as *terra nullius*, or empty land. This classification formed the international legal basis for asserting the legitimacy of British occupation. The land was not “empty” because no people were observed, however, but because the European arrivals identified no system of fixed agriculture and land ownership that they recognized. In a profoundly narrow definition of what it is to be human, such systems were taken as the essential defining feature of social and political order. Indigenous peoples in Australia were placed in the imaginary “state of nature,” seen to

occupy but not own the land where possession could only be achieved by fixed agriculture. First Peoples were seen as the chrysalis stage of humankind and their extinction was considered to be inevitable (Stanner 1969). Despite Indigenous societies' complex governance and land management they were not regarded as constituting political communities with systems of governance, agriculture, or law. *Terra nullius* meant First Nations were not recognized as peoples with whom the colonial powers needed to negotiate or deal (see Chapter ► [“Culture and Conflict Resolution”](#)). Without *terra nullius*, a treaty would have been required, as it was across the British Empire of the time. Meanwhile, on the land, Indigenous dispossession was followed by rapid deterioration of the soil (Pascoe 2018).

The Colonial Legacy

The modern Australia that took shape on the basis of *terra nullius* has operated according to what anthropologist W. E. H. Stanner called the “great Australian silence,” “a view from a window which has been carefully placed to exclude a whole quadrant of the landscape” (Stanner 1969, p. 64). This erasure is itself an act of violence, and a denial of that violence. It is systemic, rooted in the character of the sovereignty claimed by the state – based significantly on the dispossession of those who were classified as not fully human – and the lack of regard that mode of sovereignty offers to different ways of being in the world (Tully 1995; Nakata 2007). Erasure is also practical and concrete, evident in the lack of information regarding First Nations peoples in much school curricula, media, and public discourse, and in the profound ignorance of and often aggressive disregard for Indigenous people's values, priorities, contexts, and lives.

The institutional structures and practices founded on this erasure have entrenched and normalized wide-ranging forms of violence. Over decades following colonization, these struck at every dimension of First Peoples' lives, forcing people from their lands, taking children forcibly from families and disrupting emotional, cultural,

and psychic continuities, fracturing clans and compelling fragments of different groups to live together in patrolled settlements, forbidding the use of vernacular, stripping autonomy, and ruling over lives in minute detail, demanding work without pay and so undermining intergenerational wealth (Kidd 2000). These forms of violent control were often undertaken in the name of a protecting and civilizing mission. They have left a deep, intergenerational legacy of trauma.

The twentieth and twenty-first centuries have been marked by persistent Indigenous activism, social movements supporting Indigenous causes and changes in government policy and legal frameworks regarding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. Policies of assimilation, themselves a denial of Indigenous ways of being, were introduced in the 1930s and repudiated in the 1970s. *Terra nullius* was overturned by the Australian High Court in the Mabo Decision in 1992, with significant effects for land rights. Despite this, *terra nullius* and assimilation continue to exert powerful social, cultural, and political effects. The disregard for and pursuit of control over Indigenous lives is evident in continuing patterns of violence – extraordinary rates of incarceration, youth detention and deaths in custody, disproportionately high rates of early death and youth suicide, and intergenerational impoverishment (Australian Human Rights Commission 2020). Investigations repeatedly point to dispossession, the colonial legacy, and lack of effective self-determination as fundamental causes (Australian Law Reform Commission 2018; Royal Commission 1991). Yet neither the far-reaching change necessary to enable genuine self-determination nor the work to shift mainstream societal attitudes (through schools for example) have been undertaken.

To give one example, in 1991, the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody released a damning report into the high rate of Indigenous incarceration and deaths in custody. The government accepted the report, but as of 2020, approximately 30 years since its release, there have been 433 additional Aboriginal deaths in custody with no convictions in relation to these deaths. Moreover, rates of Indigenous

incarceration have increased, from one in seven adults in prison in 1992, to one in four in 2020 – drawn from approximately 3 per cent of the population (Creative Spirits 2020). Many of the Royal Commission’s wide-ranging recommendations have yet to be implemented.

Despite the language of self-determination, Indigenous peoples are repeatedly excluded from fundamental decisions bearing on their communities and well-being. The 2020 destruction by a mining company of Juukan Gorge is a starkly violent example of this exclusion, of a brutal indifference towards Indigenous people, and of the weakness of legislation designed to protect Indigenous interests. Juukan Gorge was a 46,000-year-old site sacred to local clans with artwork and evidence of human habitation reaching back 28,000 years (see Chapter ► “Land Politics and Conflict”). It was destroyed despite being part of Indigenous owners’ native title and in the face of their strong opposition. Similarly, state government approval for a large liquor store to be sited close to three Indigenous communities, one intentionally alcohol free, in the face of opposition from Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities and from liquor licensing authorities, entirely contradicts government’s supposed commitment to principles of Indigenous self-determination and well-being.

First Peoples are repeatedly defined through lack and portrayed as “problems,” welfare “hard cases,” victims, or threats. This continues a polarizing, objectifying relationship that allows no scope for self-determination. Even when approached as citizens, the model of citizenship rests on exclusionary notions of competitive liberal individualism and operates in practice around welfare and service delivery which positions recipients as passive. A model of citizenship that is blind to the injustice of its own practice and to ways of being other than those of liberal subjectivity cannot enable self-determination or engagement across difference. For Indigenous Australians, citizenship has not enabled participation in shaping political community or even in making decisions concerning matters directly affecting them. Not surprisingly then, it has not worked to overcome disadvantage. Successive

Australian governments have approached systemic injustice and political marginalization as a service delivery issue, with the nature of both need and service largely determined by state institutions, and the importance of delivering the service often ranked well below commercial and other interests (see Chapter ► “Human Rights”).

Peacebuilding and the Colonial Relationship

Experiences of violent conflict and its aftermath elsewhere have insights to offer the Australian situation. One is that violent conflict often does not end with the cessation of direct hostilities but continues in other forms, while the nature of the “peace” reflects dominant power relations, often entrenching systemic marginalization (Richmond 2007). Australia demonstrates one form of this dynamic. The Australian case highlights the profound limitations of liberal peacebuilding (Richmond 2007; see Chapter ► “Liberal Peacebuilding”). Liberal peacebuilding promotes the view that liberal governance institutions enable difference and division to be managed without violence and so represent the fundamental response to violent conflict within states. Australia offers a clear example where broadly effective, resourced liberal governance has over many decades not enabled resolution of the conflict and violence of colonial relations but has in many respects veiled its continuation. Nor has citizenship protected Indigenous peoples from systemic marginalization. Calls for reconciliation have become prominent. In the face of continuing deaths in custody, however, “reconciliation” rings empty.

Liberal political orders articulate powerful goals of participation and accountability and offer an array of governance mechanisms. But they also assume universal validity for models of the person and the state as centralized, unitary sovereigns (Brigg 2016). The claim to universality only further excludes those whose ways of being are not recognized by liberal models of personhood and political community, undermining the scope for actual participation

and accountability (Tully 1995). While various categories of people are excluded to varying degrees, in a colonial context, the very foundation of the state turns upon dispossession of Indigenous people. Liberal governance in Australia has not “seen” its own act of dispossession and so has not entered into genuine coexistence with First Nations peoples. It has not included Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through their own categories and forms of engagement. To do so would be to fashion a more complex, nuanced, or hybrid model of sovereignty and governance, shaped by the practice of mutual recognition or of autonomous regard (Tully 1995; see Chapter ▶ “Peacebuilding and Postcolonial Subject”). Australia’s experience makes clear how liberal governance can embed violence (Graham and Brigg 2020; see Chapter ▶ “Liberal Peacebuilding”).

While the nature of the “peace” reflects prevailing power relations, struggles to build relations that do not entrench violence play out over generations. A “realist” account of Australia might consider that First Peoples “lost” the war of colonization and take this as the end of the story. Yet this is not the case. First Nations have persisted as peoples with living cultures that weave through and connect diverse ways of life. They have continued to assert their standing and sovereignty and the tie to the land that is its basis, and from that place have repeatedly invited non-Indigenous Australians into a different relationship. This is not to suggest that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of life have not undergone far-reaching change and disruption, that there is any essential way of life that is Indigenous, or that Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians are not already deeply enmeshed. It is rather to say that in the face of this dispossession, disruption, and violence, there is a profound endurance – “[t]hat peoples possessed a land for sixty millennia and this sacred link disappears from world history in merely the last two hundred years” (Referendum Council 2017:1). From this endurance emerge dynamic, diverse forms of cultural and political expression, and an ongoing preparedness to engage non-Indigenous Australians. This active, creative endurance counters

the narratives of lack. It is itself a form of power that resists and confronts colonial structures and builds new connections across communities. The conflict has not ceased, but nor has the struggle for peace (see Chapter ▶ “Local Peacebuilding”).

Studies of conflict also highlight both the critical significance of feeling, emotion, and trauma in driving violence and division and in efforts to undo them and the centrality of relationships to peacebuilding (Lederach 2005). Conflict undermines trust and polarizes people, perspectives, and identities. The process of overcoming violence, then, involves a reordering of feeling and calls for some realization of all parties being part of the same interdependent web of living relations. First Nations peoples can carry a burden of intergenerational trauma and confront daily discriminations and vulnerabilities to violence that most non-Indigenous people neither experience nor comprehend. They face decades of unfulfilled government promises and disregard. Indigenous people in Australia have no reason to trust non-Indigenous authorities or society. While not on the same scale as Indigenous trauma, for non-Indigenous Australians, facing historical and contemporary violence is painful, challenging them to grapple with racism, come to terms with difference and confront fear of loss. While truth-telling is not about blame, it is difficult to avoid feelings of guilt, distress, and resentment. These feelings can become obstacles to change (see Chapter ▶ “Conflict, Memory, and Memory Activism: Dealing with Difficult Pasts”). For Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, being aware of and prepared to work with difficult emotions is part of shaping new relations. For non-Indigenous Australians in particular, recognizing First Peoples also involves the realization of being part of a web of relational mutuality.

Makarrata and Treaty

Calls to recognize Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia’s First Nations and so move beyond colonial relations has long been expressed in terms of the need for some form of accord (ANTaR 2019). Most recently, in 2017, the

Indigenous National Constitutional Convention put out the Uluru Statement from the Heart, calling for a voice to national parliament enshrined in the Constitution, a *makarrata* (a “coming together after a struggle”) and a Makarrata Commission “to supervise a process of agreement-making between governments and First Nations and truth-telling about our history” (Referendum Council 2017; see Chapter ▶ “Participatory Constitution-Making and Peacebuilding”). This call has so far been rejected by the national government, but tentative processes towards treaties are underway in some states.

In principle, an accord is a symbol and a promise of the complete overturn of *terra nullius*, rejecting it not only as a legal construct but also as a pervasive political and cultural world view embedded in the daily practice of Australia’s institutions. Ideally, the process of coming to an accord would entail recognizing the ancient, living roots of First Nations peoples and the civilizational insight they bring to the exchange and grasping a more accurate account of colonization and Australia’s modern history. A genuine process of treaty-making would enable and enact the coming together of different parties in mutual recognition to move beyond systemic violence (see Chapter ▶ “Negotiation”). This process would thus directly address the character and quality of participation and accountability in Australia, while unpicking *terra nullius* from institutional practice would open the way for genuine Indigenous self-determination, openness to Indigenous modes of governance, and more consultative and participatory models of governance more broadly. A treaty would symbolize and articulate these goals, and provide a strategic pathway for pursuing them, but in itself, in the context of systemic violence, a treaty cannot make these things. It would rather express and guide an ongoing process that was already underway.

Progress towards some form of accord requires an extended process that engages over time with all dimensions of policy and practice affecting Indigenous peoples. Treaty as a legal document or elite agreement that left everyday practice largely untouched would merely be a cover for continuing marginalization. Preparing the ground

for a treaty may be more important than the accord itself, although a well-prepared treaty would provide an important legal basis for future relations between First Nations and non-Indigenous forms of governance and authority.

Preparing the ground for a treaty needs to begin with at least three steps, upon which other steps would be built (see Chapter ▶ “Negotiation”). The first step would be to come to agreement on a method and process for negotiating an accord. This method would need to reflect Indigenous values and approaches. It would identify actions and goals to build trust (outlined below) and towards which progress would be needed in preparation for a formal agreement, and it would agree on processes and “rules of engagement” to ensure appropriate authority and inclusion. Indigenous social organization constructs agreements from the bottom or the local up. Grounding discussion in concrete communities, sectors, and issues from the beginning, while still orienting them towards shared goals and broader networks of exchange, would also have considerable practical and political value. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander approaches to decision-making, emphasizing consensus rather than voting and allowing talks to take the time they need for participants to be heard, need to guide discussion (see Chapter ▶ “Local Peacebuilding”).

The second step concerns building trust. Government (in its various different forms), non-Indigenous and Indigenous peoples have to “grow relationality” and work at improving their relations. Growing relationality and building trust require the different parts of government to together provide evidence of genuine commitment to a different kind of relationship, based on justice and recognition, with First Nations peoples. Taking concrete action to undo the violent legacy of colonialism would constitute such evidence of commitment and is urgently needed across a range of key areas. This would include progress on rates of incarceration and deaths in custody, and fully implementing the Royal Commission’s recommendations. First Nations people would need to be meaningfully included in policy-making processes involving their communities while efforts to address Indigenous

disadvantage (in health, housing, education, etc.) should be led or informed by Indigenous community knowledge, leadership, and forms of organization.

Well-informed material on Indigenous cultures, languages, knowledges, and history, as well as more accurate accounts of colonization should be included as part of regular curriculum in education systems across the country, moving to counter non-Indigenous ignorance and emphasize inclusion. “Decolonisation projects” or activities that worked to build relationships across communities and organizations would be encouraged. The annual reconciliation processes undertaken by Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities at Myall Creek, commemorating a nineteenth century massacre of local Aboriginal tribespeople, is just one example of such a project but many kinds of activities, around caring for land, for example, are possible. Undertaking these changes would be slow and exploratory, but there are already examples of all of them in action in particular organizations or localities, in health centers, schools, and police stations. They need to become normal, countrywide, and required rather than exceptional and optional (see Chapter ► [“Local Peacebuilding”](#)).

The third, concurrent step, considers the question of who speaks for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Given the long experience of disruption, First Nation clans need time and resources to gather and consolidate their own authority and stance. Full agreement cannot be reached by self-appointed groups that lack authentic political authority to speak on behalf of the polity. While they may have valuable advice to offer, no nongovernment organization, government, or corporate entity can speak with authority for First Nations. First Nation polities also need to talk with each other and establish agreements among themselves before discussions with local or state governments regarding treaties. From these processes, First Nations authorities able to negotiate with state authorities can become clear. These three steps are needed to establish mutual relationality and basic trust between Indigenous and non-Indigenous parties, and authority within First Nations communities. Building on these

steps, other phases of discussion, activity, and agreement would be needed before decisive accords could be reached.

Negotiating a treaty is to move away from highly centralized to shared models of sovereignty. There are different ways of understanding this – for the Uluru Statement, “sovereignty is a spiritual concept” that is nevertheless a practical orientation guiding decision-making and governance as it bears on First Nations (Referendum Council 2017: 1). For an agreement to be more than a continuation of the “peace of the powerful,” it has to encompass First Nation values and approaches. Principles of relationality and reciprocity, of autonomous regard and the custodial ethic of looking after Country and kin are fundamental to such a treaty. These principles recognize First Nations’ authority and sovereignty within the country, but this is not to pose competing sovereignties. It is rather to recognize difference within the context of mutuality and relationship, and autonomy and self-governance within the context of mutual respect and obligation. In the context of particular areas of policy and practice, such principles are practical and concrete. At the minimum, they begin with understanding the crucial difference between people managing their own affairs and having government manage their affairs for them. They speak also to care for land. Accepting real difference within webs of interconnection counters polarization and is fundamental to peacebuilding (see Chapter ► [“Peace Formation”](#), and Chapter ► [“Insights from Complexity Theory for Peace and Conflict Studies”](#)).

Conclusion

Australia is marked by a conflict that goes to the heart of its constitution as a state and a political community. Though characterized by significant violence, this conflict has been made invisible to the extent much of the population seems hardly aware of it. While the proportion of First Nations peoples to the general population is small, demography is not the cause of this “overlooking.” This erasure is politically entrenched and the consequence of colonization. There have been areas of

progress in sectors and localities, but while sites of progress are important and to be valued, there has not been improvement in fundamental patterns of violence – deaths in custody, youth suicide, and so on, and the lack of self-determination and sovereignty and the acts of barbarous indifference which drive these traumas. This “is the tragedy of our powerlessness” that is stalled peacebuilding (Referendum Council 2017: 1).

It is not clear how non-Indigenous government and society might come to recognize First Nations as peoples who governed the country for millennia, who have not ceded that role and who have deep insight into it, or as partners in how we live together. A treaty is one path on the table. Some form of treaty or charter of agreements, guided by values and processes rooted in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of being but not altogether alien to other traditions, grounded in local discussion and accords but also in federal recognition and authority, that worked gradually through areas of legislation, institutional policy and practice, could reweave relations and undo the violence rooted in them. This would enable the positive lessons learnt from community and other efforts, in reconciliation, education or policing for example, to serve as guides for the rest of the country. First Nations people and political philosophy have much to offer about living with this land, and about engaging with difference (see Chapter ► “Hybrid Political Orders and Hybrid Peace”).

This is a slow model of treaty and of peacebuilding, where peacebuilding is understood as the ongoing work of undoing systemic violence (see Chapter ► “Peace Formation”). Treaty-making touches on and challenges many things – entrenched power relations, sovereignty, national identity, everyday institutional practice, and collective emotions. It will be difficult and slow. Building peace that moved beyond the violence of colonial relations, however, would require more nuanced ways of being a state, with hybrid, shared models of sovereignty, more participatory forms of governance and greater openness to difference (see Chapter ► “Participatory Constitution-Making and Peacebuilding”). Some consider a treaty would emphasize the divisions

in Australian life. In reality, the divisions exist and some suffer them through incarceration, burdens of disease, mental health, and suicide. Treaty-making, as the form of peacebuilding tentatively underway, is rather the challenge of recognizing the enduring reality of First Peoples and exploring what it means to truly coexist and share country.

Summary

Relations between Australia’s First Peoples and its non-Indigenous government and peoples can be understood as a case of stalled peacebuilding. Peacebuilding is rarely considered in relation to Australia, but Australia is a colonial-settler state, colonized by Britain from 1788, and this process involved protracted violent conflict. When colonizers arrived, the continent of Australia was already governed by an extensive network of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander political communities, with rich, complex systems of social order focused on caring for land. The modern Australian state was built upon denial of these sovereign First Peoples and of the protracted violence of dispossessing them. As a consequence of this double denial, essentially colonial relations continue. This results in First Peoples facing significant, ongoing systemic violence as structural marginalization and trauma are overlooked, and the continuing distortion of Australian political community. Despite the language of Indigenous self-determination, there is little scope for self-determination in practice. Indigenous disadvantage is addressed as a service delivery issue, rather than systemic political marginalization and violence, and consequently continues to grow. Calls for reconciliation ring hollow when systemic violence continues unabated. The double denial also means that, despite signs of growing public support for Indigenous peoples, there is relatively little understanding of Australia’s history or of the patterns of Indigenous/non-Indigenous relations in the wider Australian society.

A treaty or treaties with government is one way in which Indigenous people are seeking to move away from the violence of colonial relations and establish recognition as sovereign First Peoples,

in a form of sovereignty coexistent with the state. While this direction has so far been rejected by the national government, some state governments are tentatively exploring it. A formal agreement that did not change everyday practice, however, would merely be a cover for continuing marginalization. Preparing the ground, by building trust between First Peoples and all levels of government, enabling practical self-determination, and increasing mainstream knowledge of First Peoples, is necessary if a treaty is to enact and enable genuine recognition and exchange. A treaty or treaties needs to draw from First Nation values, concepts, and processes. This requires a slow, challenging process of exchange between Indigenous communities, government, and other bodies around matters of practical governance across the country.

Protracted systemic violence in Australia underlines the failure of a well-resourced liberal state to deal nonviolently with key forms of difference and resolve embedded conflict at the heart of the state. This case demonstrates how systemic violence can continue under the guise of “peace” and how liberal governance can entrench violence. It thus highlights some of the significant limitations of liberal peacebuilding. Building peace that moved beyond the violence of colonial relations would require more nuanced ways of being a state, with hybrid, shared models of sovereignty, more participatory forms of governance, and greater openness to difference. A slow process of working towards a treaty or treaties in ways that grow mutual relationship may enable progress towards these goals.

Cross-References

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- ▶ [Conflict, Peace, and Ontological Security](#)
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Statebuilding in Afghanistan: Inertia and Ambiguity

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Introduction

The terrorist attacks of 9/11 triggered one of the most comprehensive intervention missions to remove the Taliban de-facto government and hunt down members of Al Qaida in Afghanistan. While there was little doubt that the US government acted in self-defense, the international community was keenly aware that removing a de-facto government was not sufficient to prevent violence and human suffering to occur anew in the country (Johnson and Leslie 2004; Finlan 2014). Afghanistan had seen a period of over 20 years of war, which had started with the Soviet intervention in 1979 which, after the Geneva Accords of 1988, led to even worse infighting during the 1990s between the mujaheddin/warlords who had successfully fought and worn down the Soviet military. The death toll and human suffering, but also damage to infrastructure and social relations, during this time was arguably more devastating than communist rule.

Consequently, Afghanistan was viewed as a country without a state in 2001 (Noelle-Karimi et al. 2002). A sequenced plan was pushed for in international diplomacy which fed into the Petersberg Accords of 2001 which, after consultations with different Afghan groups, provided the “road map” to reconstruction of political rule. Reconciliation was meant to be one of the cornerstones of this envisioned process, while the institutions built during the process would mediate factional interests and mold national unity. The Accords envisioned several steps to establish “proper” Afghan state institutions: An emergency government was agreed on which ought to hold an “Emergency Loya Jirga,” a national assembly of elders and appointed representatives. This Loya Jirga was tasked with finding and defining the terms of an Interim Administration which, on the basis of a newly to be scripted constitution (agreed upon by another, “Constitutional” Loya Jirga to be held at a later stage), ought to be replaced by a regular government after national elections. Afghanistan in this process embodied the very notion of statebuilding – a state the legal notion of which did exist, thanks to the international system of states, but which had little to no practical institutional, administrative, or social relevance on its territory. As a result, far-fetched fantasies of building proper statehood from scratch dominated, and positive results seemed easily to be achieved (Kühn 2010).

While the political process was unfolding, the so-called War against Terror swept across Afghanistan. The fighting shaped the international involvement in a twofold way: on the one hand, the political process was contingent upon the military intervention, while the international engagement was trapped in the duality of delivering civilian political support and humanitarian aid to legitimize the anti-terrorist invasion (Suhrke 2016). The statebuilding effort was to be militarily supported by a Security Council-mandated mission called International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), initially limited to Kabul and tasked with assisting “the Afghan Interim Authority in the maintenance of security in Kabul and its surrounding areas, so that the Afghan Interim Authority as well as the personnel of the United

Nations can operate in a secure environment” (UN SC Resolution 1386, S/RES/1386 (2001), 20 December).

ISAF’s mandate was prolonged by Security Council decisions, while the US-led Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) remained outside of this legitimization procedure and continued to be waged as US “self-defense” (authorized by the UN Charter itself); eventually both missions were merged into a hybrid (stabilizing and war-waging) ISAF. ISAF was not a UN-mission but a multinational one mandated by the Security Council; the UN established the United Nations Assistance Mission Afghanistan (UNAMA). The process of establishing statehood after the toppling of the Taliban, as a result, was accompanied by the dynamics of military fighting and resistance. On a political level, statebuilding was hence always tainted by the impression held by many Afghans that the institutions built and the policies implemented existed mostly in service of external, namely US-interests. In this, statebuilding after 2001 resembled the intervention of the Soviets in support of the communist Afghan government two decades earlier. Over time, Afghan elites took over epistemic leadership and guided the intervention to mostly serve their particularistic interests rather than serve a majority of the people (Goodhand and Sedra 2013). While the internationally guided process took care to refer to earlier Afghan state institutions such as the Constitution of 1964, strained state-society relations which had characterized the establishment of an Afghan state in the international system were never fully taken into account. The next section will briefly sketch the cornerstones of Afghanistan’s history as a state and explain its problems permeating society. In the following, this will be connected to the problematic dynamics of statebuilding under military intervention until (and beyond) 2014.

A Brief History of the Afghan State

Afghanistan provides an illustrative example of state formation in colonial times. Shifting empires and local rule characterized what later was to

become Afghanistan. Ahmad Shah Durrani, ending the Persian Saffawid dynasty, was still a military ruler but established a center of dependent tribes in the area of Kabul and Kandahar. British colonialism taking hold in what is now Pakistan forced Afghanistan to establish state rule as its Western neighbor. Because territoriality had been of minor importance earlier, no defined border existed at this time; to the day, for many, the border is of little social relevance. However, British interest in Afghanistan grew in the nineteenth century among rivalry with the expanding Russian empire. In what was called the “Great Game,” Russia was assumed to be aspiring to take over Afghanistan to gain access to the warm Indian Ocean. Incursions by the British to counter that and to preserve and expand its influence led to Anglo-Afghan wars (1839–1842 and 1878–1881).

While rulers’ control over Afghan populations was limited, external influences pressured Afghanistan into its territorial form. Its eastern frontier was dictated by the British at a time when Afghanistan was weak; consequently, the Durand line which demarcates the border is still contested. It was established shortly after the Second Anglo-Afghan War, and only intended to demarcate where respective spheres of influence began, not necessarily as an international border. Never fully colonized, Afghanistan gained full independence in 1919 ahead of many colonies, when the protectorate status ended with the Anglo-Afghan Treaty. While during these years Afghanistan had already been rent-dependent (collecting resources from outside rather than able to fund its spending through internal revenue, such as customs or taxes), the dependency on external financial support increased with attempts to establish state institutions.

State institutions in this period emulated those of other states but hardly replaced other modes of social regulation. Since full independence until the 1970s, Afghanistan followed a self-proclaimed neutrality principle which, during World War II and the subsequently ensuing Cold War, allowed to cooperate with different countries to attract funding. After a short democratic honeymoon in the 1960s, the economic situation

deteriorated while ideological radicalization increased, mostly between Islamist and communist urban educated young people. Several attempted or successful coups d’état eventually brought to power a communist government, resistance against which became pronounced when a policy for land reform and for co-education were vehemently implemented (Dorransoro 2005).

As violence escalated, and at risk of losing their proxy partners, the Soviet politburo, consisting of an old elite detached from outside world developments, rather without proper evaluation of risks and benefits stumbled into an intervention to keep the communist government in place (Feifer 2009). While the violence employed by the Soviet military, and more so by their Afghan communist partners, was fierce, so was the resistance. It was only after 1985, after the resistance had already held out in dire circumstances without “proxy” support for several years, that US support in money and weapons channelled through Pakistan’s intelligence service increased massively. By the time, the Soviet leadership under Gorbachev had already concluded that the war was no longer worth fighting (Rubin 2002, p. 181). He still, upon coming to power, escalated by giving the Red Army free reign to wage war as they deemed necessary to turn their fortunes around; in turn, as the Red Army laid waste to large parts of the rural areas, the Soviets sought to find a diplomatic way out of their Afghan trap (Braithwaite 2011). Statebuilding the communists had pursued thus was able to improve the lives of many in the cities, mainly Kabul, inadvertently deepening the rift between educated urban elites and largely poor, often illiterate, rural traditional leaders.

The compromise Najibullah government held out remarkably long, based on its ability to allocate funding; once the funding disappeared following the demise of the Soviet Union – the SU disappeared as funder, while the US saw no further reason to fund their former allies – unity disappeared and infighting between mujaheddin factions broke out. The ensuing chaos, lawlessness, and human rights abuses are well remembered by most Afghans, and many welcomed the Taliban when they, from the mid-1990s onwards

started establishing their violent order. By that time, most Soviet-built institutions had been plundered or literally shot to rubble. The Taliban governed locally, mostly against bandits controlling street checkpoints, and as they conquered checkpoint upon checkpoint, their ranks grew. Even when they controlled most of Afghanistan, their state was single-issue oriented: implementation of political decisions was limited to fatwas (religious decrees) oriented toward restoring the virtue lost during the civil war – and based on the Taliban’s particular interpretation of sharia which often contradicted Afghan traditional practice. Their law-and-order approach at the beginning brought them popular support, while their Islamist ideology only was enforced when they were established more solidly (Barfield 2010, p. 257). Beyond that, for example, in terms of economic development, education, or international relations, the Taliban demonstrated remarkably little political aspiration. Rather, they refused to become a proper government (and most likely lacked the skill to become one, had they wanted to be one) and remained diplomatically recognized only by their sponsors in Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.

When in 2001 the Western intervention began, the Taliban had been controlling most of the country except a few pockets of resistance in the North. The so-called Northern Alliance, new partners of CIA and the other intervention agencies, consisted of formerly infighting mujaheddin warlords and was born out of necessity against the Taliban’s success (Rashid 2010); it had, however, limited political vision or common ground to work from when taking power thanks to the opportunity created by the overwhelming force of the US military. In fact, intense and persistent, ethnically coded rivalry, over funds and ideological interpretation dated back to the period of the “unified” fight against the Soviets (Schetter 2003).

Statebuilding After 2001

Statebuilding continued after 2001, and the 1964 constitution was agreed to be valid until the Constitutional Loya Jirga would have agreed on a new

one. However, given the devastation of the wars, no institutions were functional. This underscored the Western impression that no state existed and that Afghanistan was blank slate where state function had to be introduced and built from zero. Hence, statebuilding efforts became heavily foreign-dictated and funded, and followed scripts derived from Western state experience. There was, however, deep understanding in Afghanistan of how institutions of the state worked, particularly those providing services to the population. At the same time, keeping the centralized state at bay, to keep local and regional autonomy, was the main balancing game Afghan politics continued to engage in. During Soviet times, negotiating social benefits had been used to win over the urban classes in particular; during the civil war, however, other societal institutions had evolved, which continued to shape people’s lives while being overlooked by the interveners (Kühn 2011a, 64–65). Thus, modern state institutions came to compete with local, often “traditional” ways of organizing social life (albeit in many cases invented out of necessity during the violent periods). In fact, the Western can-do approach of social engineering aimed at replacing these institutions, undermining their legitimacy and functionality, or simply criminalizing them as “terrorist” (Bliesemann de Guevara 2012).

Western statebuilding, in its modernizing impetus, at the same time did not fall very short of the communist’s enforced re-education. Despite paying lip service to Islamic principles, the heavy-handed US-led restructuring of Afghan politics was suspected to be against Islam and of attempting to unroot Afghan cultural values, triggering the same instincts for resistance that the Soviets had encountered two decades earlier. What was narrated as a war of liberation for civil society, and particularly, women, from Taliban extremist rule to Western audiences, resulted in an easy win for religious elites whose (often hypocritical) claim to embody Islamic and Afghan values allowed them to remain very influential as conservative keepers of true faith and its interpretation. Simultaneously, “development [was] used as an incentive to acquiesce to ruptures in the social, political, cultural and religious life”

(Kühn 2011a, 65). Statebuilding, which the US-government of George W. Bush never wanted to get engaged in the first place, thus gradually replaced the security mission to oust Taliban and Al Qaida remnants and prevent their return to “ungoverned spaces.” The shift to institutions, with money coming in to buy over Afghan clients, allowed corruption to grow.

Politics, however, became increasingly militarized. The Afghan government under the leadership of Hamid Karzai, portrayed as an American stooge by his Taliban enemies, despite its dependence on US military support, persistently claimed that it should not be kept in the dark about military objectives and lamented civilian victims, night raids to suspects’ homes, and a general perception of being sidelined. As a consequence, it countered talks with the Taliban with a narrative of an international, particularly US-Pakistani, conspiracy to undermine Afghanistan’s sovereignty. Barack Obama’s attempt to end the war was increasingly hampered by his military’s advice not to leave without a decisive victory and a peace deal. The military mission aimed at creating a situation it could be claimed to have won the war; this led to increasing tensions over the interpretation of what was going on. General Stanley McChrystal, one of the staunchest advocates of Counter-Insurgency (COIN), who once was able to lure Obama into increasing the mission deploying additional 30,000 troops, was forced to resign from his position (and shortly thereafter from the military) in an attempt to restore civilian oversight and political authority over the military. McChrystal and his inner circle had mocked and called into question the authority and expertise of a number of Obama’s top-diplomats, as reported in a *Rolling Stone* article (Hastings 2010).

The COIN doctrine represents the militarization of statebuilding. Presenting it as desirable solution was an acknowledgement that there was no political process to begin with. The steps of the Bonn Agreement had been taken, but the limited idea of merely backing up the political process was long gone. With US interest moving to Iraq shortly after the invasion of Afghanistan, there was for too long a time next to no political engagement with the opponents of the political

reconstruction efforts, no peace process to speak of. The Taliban and other insurgent groups had regrouped in Pakistan with the help of military intelligence (Shahzad 2011), and by the time they had re-emerged as a violent force and certainly a political voice (with many affiliated candidates in parliament and other public office); they spoke for a number of disenfranchised Afghans who saw a lot of money pouring into the country but little effect in terms of development and economic upswing. Rather, old elites known to have been ruthlessly pushing for their version of Islamicized tribal politics during the civil war were now in influential positions guarded by their Western backers – and amply funded through their statebuilding efforts. COIN did not change that: in an attempt to win over “hearts and minds,” the Western intervention poured even more money into Afghanistan, creating plenty of opportunities for bribery and embezzlement. These opportunities were widely used, by Afghans and internationals alike, to siphon off funds for private gain.

COIN was a last-ditch attempt at “turning around” what had been going wrong with regard to building a politically institutionalized, liberal state in Afghanistan. While institutions were established and services (partly) delivered, the classical features of stateness (Nettl 1968) such as control of the territory, monopolization of the means of violence, and setting of unitary rules continued to be only partly in place. This is not to say that institutions did not exist and that politics did not take place: in fact, many social, political, and economic exchanges took place for many years outside state structures and in informal ways adaptive to ruptures caused by outbreaks of violence, sudden shifts in alliances, or economic opportunities. Barack Obama, already reluctant to invest in the project “Afghanistan” as it was seen in Washington’s policy circles, decided to pull out when COIN showed not to be improving the military situation. The decision recognized that the Afghan state was a while away from being established sufficiently to hold the ground that COIN had tried to create. NATO, in turn, relieved of its longest and politically damaging mission, decided to continue training of security forces following 2014 but to otherwise officially

adopt a very low profile – a position officially unrecognized but rather realistic even during the period NATO was formally in command of ISAF. In the meanwhile, intensifying violence influenced the detachment of humanitarian and development aid from most people, letting it appear as elitist and exclusive (Andersson and Weigand 2015). The next section will analyze the reasons why the intervention did not achieve its (changing) aims and systematically argue why the statebuilding endeavor in Afghanistan was unrelated to building peace from the beginning.

Problems and Pitfalls of the Statebuilding Project

The problems and pitfalls of the Western intervention's policy in Afghanistan after 2001 are many. Some blame lack of military engagement, as troops were sent to Iraq (a war of choice) instead of increasing their number right away in Afghanistan. Others have blamed lack of coordination of the civilian activities, leading to inefficient use of funds and project-based thinking rather than full economic recovery and associated benefits for the population. Neighboring countries' meddling, clan and nepotist practices, misogynist and minority-discriminating norms, decreasing interest of international politics and diplomacy over the period of intervention, as well as unequal distribution of social and economic capital, among others, have been blamed for the "failures." All play their part, but the main reasons for intervention inertia circle around the order(s) of violence, state finance, and legitimacy (see Bliesemann de Guevara and Kühn 2010). These will be described in turn.

Orders of Violence

When the intervention began, with few troops on the ground and overwhelming air (bombing) power, the Taliban left Afghanistan and seemingly disappeared. The weak and diminished troops of regional commanders, who as "Northern Alliance" suddenly came to be the USA's allies, took their place. While for the Western intervention they were useful aides in pursuing remnants

of Taliban and al Qaida, they were well known to the population for their grave human rights violations, banditry, and disregard for the suffering their sectarian fighting caused. However, they not only came to control their respective regions, officially representing the state. Their military clout and local knowledge along with their ability to play the tune of the US military also allowed them to direct their US partners to fight or eliminate contenders. Hence, in the first phase of the intervention, they established predominance and henceforth showed little inclination to let go of the military means and associated political influence. (In a similar process, drug dealers aligned with the opponents of the statebuilding project were targeted and systematically fought out of business while those with ties to the government and holding strategic value for the interveners could escape such pressures. As a result, the number of big mid-level traders diminished by two-thirds, down to about a dozen from just under 40 (Interview, UNODC official, Kabul 2006; Kühn 2011b).)

As the Bonn Process unfolded, they were able to turn their military dominance into political positions. This guaranteed that they were never truly bothered to disarm or integrate in the Afghan National Army and be controlled by the government. Rather, many turned the state into their own asset, establishing firm networks of international (ized) clientelism (Hönke 2018). The Taliban, and other "insurgents" – as had been the case for most of Afghanistan's modern history – tried to fight these forces for shares of (local/regional) control or to force their way into political positions from which they would be able to further their economic and ideological interests. This locally inspired fighting was overshadowed by the zealous Global War on Terror doctrine, which falsely identified anyone involved in fighting as genuine Taliban or al-Qaida member (Strick van Linschoten and Kuehn 2012). The violence employed in service of global "security" often contradicted the interests of the Afghan government; its own security policy was, simultaneously, fragmented and regionally diverse depending which local military strongmen controlled an area. Interlacing dynamics of violence, from the very local fight for control and resources to the

global scope of deterring supporters of “terrorism” in the West, prevented the state from developing a security identity. As a result, many in Afghanistan’s population view the security forces as a personal threat rather than an institution to turn to for protection (Sedra 2013). In effect, the order of violence in Afghanistan still lacks a dominant space for the state, as “pragmatic” security choices prevented establishing a recognizable and legal-based security regime in which non-state or external violent actors would become seen as deviation from the standard.

State Finance

One reason for the fragmented security landscape continues to be the way the Afghan state is financed. Unlike a taxation state, where citizens by paying their share of what is to be spent, acquire a say in how the funds are allocated, a rentier state like Afghanistan fails to develop close ties between tax-paying voters and decision makers. Afghanistan as a rentier state, financed mainly by foreign funding for military but also the state’s budget, became the source of funding for citizens rather than a collector of taxes (Kühn 2008). In search of jobs and absent alternative options, getting into state positions became attractive for the educated urban middle-class. Over the years of the intervention a lucrative, and often externally sponsored economy of training, courses and certificates developed, of course without being able to fill the lack of motivated and well-educated administrators and entrepreneurs required to relaunch Afghanistan’s economy beyond narcotics.

Another factor was that positions came to be traded. Those in charge of appointing ministry and other administrative positions would either stick to their own kin or appoint the highest bidder with the best connections, bypassing candidates with merits. As a result, political connections were strengthened vertically as lower ranks were connected to influential decision makers higher up in a clientelist network, who in turn often invested heavily in good relations with external donors. Horizontal cooperation or even dissemination of important information between institutions remained scarce. This in turn strengthened

the center, by elevating the position of the already over-centralized political influence of the president; needless to say that having even questions of minor importance decreed by the president did not add to efficiency or decisions’ wisdom (Kühn 2010, 317–318).

Counterintuitively, the Afghan government became more independent the longer the intervention lasted. While most state activity was funded externally, the leverage of donors over political decisions was increasingly limited. This included external control of Rule of Law (RoL) programs, which formulated grandiose reform targets, only to never adhere to them. Because of (fears of) corruption, many projects bypassed state channels anyway, while the state’s institutions could pick-and-choose from several donors. Afghan institutions, with a long legacy of organizing rentier income, were able to play their Western (and other) protectors against each other. Political pressure to spend allocated money in the donor countries as well as the potent argument that, should funding cease to flow, terrorists would regroup in Afghanistan, proved sufficient to keep the cash flowing (Bliesemann de Guevara and Kühn 2013). At the time of writing, funding for Afghanistan’s security apparatus, according to conventional wisdom the only remedy to keep terrorists and Taliban at bay, continues to flow.

Legitimacy

Because Afghanistan’s security and political landscape was so fragmented when the statebuilding path was drafted, a heavily centralized state was envisioned with a strong president at its center. The parliament has a constitutionally weak place. This misbalance of power proved to be a serious burden of state politics, particularly as elections were largely irregular and, in many parts of the country, outright rigged. While in Western donor capitals the democratic façade was deemed more important than contesting the election results, over time the legitimacy of the Afghan government suffered even in the eyes of its most faithful supporters. At the same time, the intervention was ill-equipped to initiate, nourish, and navigate a peace process which, as the emphasis on Afghan

sovereignty dictated, was contingent upon Afghan decisions and leadership (Semple 2009).

With its procedural legitimacy on the weaker end of the spectrum, output legitimacy remained even lower. Many externally funded development, education or humanitarian projects, bypassing state structures, did little to strengthen a positive vision of state activity for the population. Orienting people's expectations for services towards international organization, foundations or trust funds as well as towards traditional problem-solvers such as strongmen who would act as a remedy for unexpected emergencies, diluted political engagement as well as orientation towards the state to concentrate its services on the population. That poverty was not reduced visibly and that the risks of life were not mitigated better over time was blamed on the dire security situation and, tautologically, on levels of poverty.

The ideological aspect of legitimacy, that a government is accepted at all and as representing the country rather than foreign interests remains of course the sore spot of the Afghan government. As the Taliban were not part of the negotiations in Bonn which led to the process of sequenced installation of government institutions, they were continuously opposed to anything that might look like recognizing the government. In places where traditional forces were influential, among others the Taliban, the Western-tainted central government's legitimacy was always hardly noticeable. The intervention, which focused predominantly on legitimacy such as UN Security Council mandates, was unable to influence the structures which decisively shape how legitimacy is perceived (Barfield 2010). The Western intervention's discourse about legitimacy was largely directed at an audience in the intervening countries, while the intervened were – if at all – relegated to secondary relevance. The agreement between the US government and the Taliban, which essentially recognizes the latter as the military and political force it is, seems not to have altered that situation: predominantly Western interests were guiding the negotiations, while it

remains to be seen if a 'peace process' of sorts could be developed between Taliban and the government, involving and honouring the interests of the population.

Summary

The intervention, obsessed with Western security, did nothing to achieve peace in Afghanistan. Existing long-standing conflictual fault lines which were suppressed by the Taliban came to the open with full force during the intervention while little was done to address them. The new rulers, former mujaheddin fighters, were divided and politically unexperienced, and kept their distance to the "state," true to their rentier socialization. The state was seen as a source of income which needed to be kept weak in case it should one day be controlled by a competing faction. The divisions between poor, uneducated, and deeply religious countryside on one, and urban, partly westernized, and affluent strata of society on the other hand have become more pronounced. Sectarian and ideological rifts have become deeper, as the distinctions between followers of the faith and infidels sturdily prevent political dialogue. Likewise, ethnic boundaries, hypostasized and essentialized, are reinforced by the clientelist networks, being part of which decides over access to economic opportunities and political power. Instead of creating an environment in which politics as an exchange of conflicting views and eventual settlement could take place, politics was reduced to exclusionary elite pacts attracting massive resentment (Zyck 2012). The violence employed by the intervention continues to undermine claims to the moral and functional superiority of the liberal system of the interveners, ostensibly fitted to honor individual and human rights, to empower citizens politically and, as a result, to create wealth and distribute it fairly. As it looks, the USA's eagerness to leave Afghanistan seems to have given up on many of the institutional gains made during the statebuilding years (Kühn 2019). Thus, positive peace has not materialized and conditions

for its belated coming are being squandered. But neither has negative peace been supported which would allow to settle conflicts without the use or threat of violence.

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Statehood Conflict

► Kashmir Conflict, The

Statehood Conflicts

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Synonyms

[Conflicts of de facto states](#); [Conflicts of unrecognized states](#); [Secessionist conflicts](#); [Separatist conflicts](#); [Sovereignty conflicts](#); [Territorial conflicts](#)

Definition/Description

Statehood conflicts are those emanating from incompatible claims to and substantial efforts at statehood over the same territory. The main parts to the conflict are the different claimants to statehood, often but not always a recognized state and a group that is seeking secession from it. A variety of other regional or global actors, like states or international organizations, are also involved to a greater or lesser degree. While often defined by intractability, typical solutions of such conflicts include forceful or peaceful (re)integration to the state from which secession is attempted or, more rarely, independent statehood.

Introduction

The process of state creation lies at the heart of the modern international system. It is also most often a violent process with secession, the default way in which new states emerge, being responsible for some of the world's most complex conflicts and great human and material cost. This entry reflects on statehood conflicts, i.e., conflicts between different actors who pursue statehood over the same territory – as they happen, these are mostly secessionist conflicts but, as explained later, not only. Rather than a probably impossible holistic account of the topic, this entry instead elaborates on some of the main statehood issues at the heart of these disputes, namely, control over territory

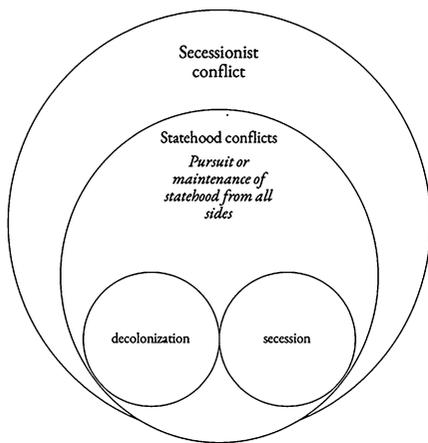
and population (internal statehood) and international recognition (external statehood) – this is done after the next section on definitional issues of the phenomenon. Finally, a series of ideas for further avenues for researching statehood conflicts are highlighted, including more research into variations of both internal and external aspects to statehood and their relation to conflict, a more nuanced understanding of so-called patron actors of state-seeking groups, studies more inclusive of historical cases, and a greater reflection on methodological challenges of researching statehood conflict.

Secession and Conflict over Statehood

Secession, the process of withdrawing a territory and population from a state in order to establish an independent state in the same area (e.g., Pavković and Radan 2011, 2), has often been the source of conflict, mostly in cases where this process is not agreed by the parent state from which withdrawal is attempted (often known as unilateral secession, see also Pavković 2020). Such conflicts are at the very heart of international relations because they relate to secession – the default way in which states are born. The focus of this entry on “statehood” suggests a rather sustained effort at building a state, which is not the case with all secessionist movements, and also highlights issues of statehood that are at the very heart of these conflicts. As such, statehood conflicts are different to interstate conflicts in that they relate to attempts at independent statehood, rather than a conflict between two recognized and independent states.

The main actors involved in these conflicts are the different claimants to statehood, and these are usually two: on the one hand stands the parent state or more rarely referred to as metropolitan state (e.g., Berg and Toomla 2009) or metropolis (Griffiths 2016) and on the other hand stands the group that seeks statehood. There are, however, instances in which conflict occurs between a group that seeks statehood and a claimant to the same territories that cannot be seen as a parent state facing a secession challenge from this group.

These are often conflicts that have emerged during decolonization. While some scholars distinguish these instances from secession (Ker-Lindsay 2012), there are broader definitions that treat, as Dugard puts it (2013, 154), “decolonization as a species of secession” (e.g., Coggins 2014). Crucially, however, the definition of statehood conflict proposed here does not seek to include conflicts between the colonizers and the colonized, which are considered as substantially different. Rather, it mostly concerns cases where the process of decolonization has given birth to conflicts between two different statehood claimants to the territory previously held by a colonizer (Fig. 1). For example, although the Palestinian struggle for self-determination was first waged against the Ottomans and the British, the more recent statehood conflict Palestinians are engaged in is with Israel. As a result, in some of these cases, sides to the conflict are often seen as occupiers to the territory, such as Israel in the conflict with Palestine or Indonesia in the case of East Timor. In this spirit, Fernández-Molina (2020) offers a useful categorization that groups parent and what she calls “annexing” states together.



Examples

decolonization Israel and Palestine, Timor-Leste

Secession Nagorno Karabakh, Serbia Krajina

Statehood Conflicts, Fig. 1 Statehood conflicts

Here, therefore, the term “statehood conflicts” allows us to bridge terminological disagreements, for example, the aforementioned disagreement between those who see decolonization-related cases as secession and those that don’t (see also Fig. 1): while cases of decolonization are hereby treated as substantially different, it is recognized that there are some former colonial territories that host or have hosted statehood conflicts, along the lines this entry defines them.

What is more, there exist conflicts where the statehood claimants are more than two and/or no part to the conflict neatly fits definitions of a parent state. For example, the early phase of the conflict in Western Sahara involved the Polisario Front, Morocco, and Mauritania claiming the territories and none of them can be seen as a parent state facing a secession challenge. Finally, these conflicts are rarely local only. They involve a variety of regional and international actors – take, for example, the conflict in Eastern Ukraine which involves the unrecognized states of Donetsk and Luhansk and the Ukrainian government locally, Russia and the European Union (EU) more regionally, and the USA and NATO more internationally (for a discussion of local, regional, and international levels of conflict, see Cordell and Wolff 2009).

The international involvement in those types of conflicts is covered elsewhere (see chapter ▶ “International Organizations and Statehood Conflicts”), but here attention must be paid on a specific, usually regional, actor involved extensively on the ground and often consider as a part to the dispute, what has been mostly called a “patron state” (for examples, see Table 1, and for a listing of cases, see Geldenhuys 2009). This is an actor that “patronizes” aspiring states, and especially their governance, in many different ways and degrees, including financial, economic, political, and/or military assistance. Time and

Statehood Conflicts, Table 1 Actors in statehood conflicts

| Statehood claimants | Patrons |
|--|----------------------------|
| Polisario Front, Morocco, Mauritania (<i>until 1979</i>) | Algeria to Polisario Front |
| Cyprus (parent state), TRNC | Turkey to TRNC |

again, unrecognized states might also seek further integration, even annexation, with this state too (see also later). Heraclides (1991, 48) offers an early account of patrons in secessionist movements and talks of tangible support in material terms (various forms of aid, including transactional involvement, humanitarian, military and nonmilitary involvement) and political-diplomatic or moral support (e.g., support of peace talks, recognition of a right to self-determination and to statehood). Though concerned with postcolonial states rather than secessionists, Sorensen (1999, 601) has also reflected on how the lack of substantial sovereignty might bring reliance on the international community for performing certain state tasks, such as protection from intervention. More recently, the discussion on patrons has mostly focused on the role of Russia in statehood conflicts of the post-Soviet space (Bakke et al. 2018; Ganohariti 2020; Gerrits and Bader 2017), but other examples include Turkey, which plays an important role in the unrecognized state of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC, e.g. Dayioğlu et al. 2019), Algeria or Armenia for the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR), and Nagorno Karabakh, respectively, while Kolstø (2006) argues for a similar understanding of the US role vis a vis Taiwan. In historical cases, Heraclides (1991) sees Belgium as a patron to Katanga and France toward Biafra, while China has also been seen as a patron to East Timor (Southgate 2019).

Unpacking the Concept of Statehood Conflicts

The main conceptual blocks here are conflict and statehood. By conflict here is meant the pursuit of incompatible aims by different actors (see, e.g., Cordell and Wolff 2009, 4) whereby the aim is statehood over the same territory, clearly illustrated in the words of PM, Ben Gurion: “We and they (Arabs) want the same thing. we both want Palestine” (Teveth in Dowty 2017, 77). In this regard, these conflicts relate to wishes to control territory via establishing statehood, the typical

way in which people organize their societies in the modern era. Such conflicts include those displaying ongoing war or violence but also those where disagreement persists despite a general lack of hostilities – these have often been referred to as “frozen conflicts” (e.g., Lynch 2005; Bebler 2015; Dembinska and Campana 2017). In terms of statehood, this will be discussed with regard to two tenants of the concept that are the heart of these conflicts: the ability to control and govern a territory with a population (schematically referred to here as internal statehood) and the recognition of this as statehood by international actors (external statehood).

Indicative of the importance of these two tenants of statehood is that a growing number of researchers focus on conflicts that relate to sustained efforts at building states (internal statehood) despite their lack of recognition (external statehood). Works on this type of entities have steadily increased, looking at a range of different issues, including overviews of the phenomenon (e.g., Pegg 1998; Kolstø 2006; Geldenhuys 2009; Caspersen 2012; Florea 2017), the impact of those entities on the conflict (King 2001) and how these conflicts are accommodated or not in the international system (Anderson 2011), the way in which international actors have reacted to these entities (e.g., Pegg 1998; Lynch 2004; Newman and Visoka 2018), and their internal dynamics (e.g., Ó Beacháin et al. 2016; Berg and Mölder 2012; Kolstø and Blakkisrud 2008), also with reference to democratization (e.g., Caspersen 2011; Voller 2013).

Different concepts have been proposed to discuss this phenomenon. Recently “de facto states” is gaining popularity as a term to define entities that look like states but which do not enjoy international recognition (e.g., Ker-Lindsay and Berg 2018). The term “de facto states” implies the presence of effective government and territorial control and statehood as an achieved reality. More recent terms such as “emerging states” (Visoka 2019) or “territorial contenders” (Lemke and Crabtree 2019) follow a similar logic. And yet, many of these works also discuss cases such as SADR or Palestine whose de facto statehood might be questioned, because of their incomplete

control over the territories they claim and/or institutional development. This might be a testament to the fact that studying these cases alongside others with more developed internal statehood allows us to make interesting comparisons, not least observe a variation in the extent to which state builders are successful in attaining territorial control and governance. It is probably in this spirit that Caspersen (2017) recommends looking at de facto states as part of a broader spectrum of rebel governance as suggested by Arjona (2016).

Variation can also be seen in external statehood, i.e., the recognition of the claims to independence, and this has not been problematized as much either. Literature tends to concentrate on the binary of recognized vs. unrecognized states. This might be a result of the fact that the majority of independence efforts are either recognized or completely unrecognized/only minimally recognized. And yet, there are a few examples that are recognized by a minority of United Nations (UN) members (e.g., SADR, Taiwan, Abkhazia) or a small or a big majority (Kosovo and Palestine, respectively).

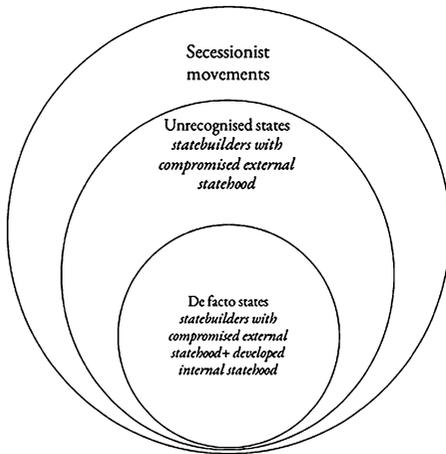
Such variations relate to both sides of the conflict, since statehood is a zero-sum game. An increase in controlling territory from one side only happens at the expense of the other's side control, given that there can be no two supreme rulers over an area (for a recent example study of the complexity of de facto sovereignty in contested areas, see Knotter 2018). Bartelson (2014, 38), in fact, suggests that this indivisibility of sovereignty makes conflicts intractable. This also applies to external dimensions of statehood, since there can be no recognition of two different states over the same territory (rare examples of attempts at dual recognition include France in the 1960s and South Africa in the nineties that tried to recognize Taiwan alongside China but abandoned once the latter raised opposition). This can be very clearly illustrated in cases where there is *some* degree of recognition in each side – for example, the states that recognize Taiwan do not recognize China's sovereignty over the island, and, indeed, there are quite a few cases of switching recognition from one side of the conflict to the other also in other cases (e.g., Serbia and Kosovo) – this

relates to the phenomenon of derecognition (see, e.g., Visoka 2020).

In this regard, there are many dilemmas a researcher is confronted with. For example, how much territorial control and/or state capacity is enough in order to define an entity as a state? How severe the lack of recognition should be for approaching a case as an unrecognized state? The best way to solve such conceptual issues depends a lot on the questions at the microscope of the given study program. In order to help with some of the dilemmas just outlined and to account for and better understanding of variation in statehood and its relevance to conflict, perhaps a constructive way is to think of sub-/categories. In this way, unrecognized states can be seen as a sub-category of secessionist movements united in their effort at (rather than the achievement/presence of) statehood and their lack of general recognition, which allows to account for variation both in terms of internal and external statehood. It follows from that that de facto states can be a further subcategory of unrecognized states where internal statehood is rather developed (see also Fig. 2).

Birth and Death of Conflict

There is a tendency to view statehood conflicts as a result of these acts by the state-seeking group. However, looking at statehood conflicts as emanating from disagreements over statehood (rather than specifically the effort of a side to pursue statehood) captures better the complexity of the phenomenon. Indeed, the relationship between actions of secessionists and the parent state is far less linear than it might seem. For example, a few secession attempts can be seen or have been framed as an attempt to curtail the power of that group by what was to become the parent state. For example, the effort of the Greek Cypriots to modify the constitution and the power-sharing arrangements with consequences for the rights of the Turkish Cypriots in the bicomunal state led to conflict during the sixties and the start of the gradual territorial and administrative division of the two groups, which culminated in the declaration of a separate state by the Turkish Cypriots in 1975 and again in 1983. The failure of the Sri Lanka government to implement power-sharing



Examples

| | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Secessionist movement | Kashmir |
| Unrecognised state | Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic |
| De Facto State | Abkhazia |

Statehood Conflicts, Fig. 2 Efforts at secession and statehood

arrangements that catered for the Tamils also harbored the secessionist movement in the island. In this context, the switch to independence aspirations can also be seen as a process of radicalization of the conflict, whereby calls to statehood and recognition are a way for a group to make a clear mark of their grievances – this is in line with views of sovereignty as an expression of identity, a way to say “here we are” (Wallenstein 2014, 45). In Transnistria as well as elsewhere, the dissolution of the former Soviet Union alarmed certain groups for their place in the new state of affairs and became a main narrative for their unilateral declaration of independence later. This also highlights how claims to statehood, including those that remain unrecognized, emerge more frequently during political transitions (e.g., decolonization, dissolution of Soviet Union or of Yugoslavia). During such political transformations, the phenomenon of “recursive secession” (Pavkovic 2000) can also be observed, i.e., secession from a state that is itself in the process of

seceding – it is along these lines that Bahceli et al. (2004, 21) talk of ‘matryoshka dolls’ to discuss secessions efforts within the states that came out of the dissolution of the Soviet Union, like with Abkhazia (for more see chapter ▶ “Georgian-Abkhaz Conflict”) and South Ossetia in Georgia or Transnistria in Moldova. In some cases, secession did not occur immediately during the transition but was a more gradual process (e.g., Palestine) or came years after, as a result of dissatisfaction with the state of affairs that replaced the previous political order (e.g., Cyprus, Somaliland, Donetsk, and Lugansk). In a way, therefore, the curtailing of internal self-determination for minority groups can sometimes be seen as fostering claims for external self-determination, and this also relates to remedial secession (e.g., Seymour 2007), i.e., secession justified in the name of injustices inflicted upon the group that seeks independent statehood.

Statehood conflicts rarely result in the secessionists becoming a recognized state, and, instead, most unrecognized states die. Often this can be seen as a result of the fact that the international community follows the parent state in not recognizing secession (e.g., Griffiths 2016). This might also relate to the fact that the act of unilateral secession is seen as undermining central principles of international relations, notably the respect of sovereignty and territorial integrity. In the words of the UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros Ghali: “If every ethnic, religious or linguistic group claimed statehood, there will be no limit to fragmentation, and peace, security and economic well-being for all would become even more difficult to achieve.” More instrumental reasons for states or other international actors to oppose unilateral secession are the fear of setting a precedent. For example, Visoka (2019) documents a large number of states that do not recognize Kosovo facing secession challenges in their territories.

If not independent statehood, then what? Anderson (2011) identifies a few other outcomes to the conflict: reintegration into the parent state, via force or peacefully through a negotiated agreement, or both (see also Csergo et al. 2017). However, there are two more possibilities less

explored in the literature (see also Table 1): one is that unrecognized states are somehow re-incarnated – one can read this way the fact that Kosovo (declared in 2008) replaced the Republic of Kosova (1991). Eritrea’s lifetime as an unrecognized state can also be divided into a first iteration of the independence effort until 1991 and a second one after the agreement between the Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front and the Eritrean People’s Liberation Front for a referendum on independence, which commenced a short period of internationally supported efforts at independence which were completed when in 1993 it was fully recognized as an independent state. Finally, there are rare cases where secession has resulted into integration to a third state, e.g., the 2014 secession of Crimea from Ukraine to join Russia (see also Wydra 2014) (Table 2).

Such different outcomes are sometimes reflected in strategies of secessionists, and there are also cases in which seeking statehood might be an intermediate step toward a different objective. For example, Heraclides (1991) refers to “secessionist-merger” movements, whose ultimate aim is to integrate with a different state. Contemporary examples that might be relevant here are Nagorno Karabakh and South Ossetia, where union with Armenia and Russia, respectively, has been from time to time a popular option (see, e.g., Bakke et al. 2018). Historical cases also exist: Anjouan contemplated joining France; the 1991 declaration of independence of the Republic of Kosova was accompanied by a political declaration that listed unification with Albania alongside secession as potential options (Prifti 1999, 205). Interestingly, there are also instances in

which secessionism might be, or portrayed as, a step toward a peaceful resolution of the dispute under a different arrangement. A typical example here is the TRNC. When Turkish Cypriots declared themselves independent first in 1975 and then in 1983, they argued that by establishing a separate state they facilitate a resolution based on a federation between this newly declared state and a Greek Cypriot state – tellingly, the name of the 1975 state was Turkish *Federate* (my emphasis) Republic of Cyprus, and the second declaration in 1983 noted that

The proclamation of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus will not hinder but facilitate the re-establishment of the partnership between the two Peoples within a federal framework and will also facilitate the settlement of the problems between them.

Where Next for the Study of Statehood Conflicts

This last part of the contribution will summarize some of the themes presented so far and suggest some areas that merit further attention from the research community. The first point to highlight is that central elements to statehood, and particularly the ability to govern territories and state recognition, might be better understood as spectrums. In order to do so, it might be better to look at statehood as an objective and/or a process rather than just an outcome, which, among else, will allow us to study aspiring states beyond those that have achieved de facto statehood – rebel governance is rightly seen as a neighboring literature that scholars of statehood conflicts should engage with because it allows to capture different degrees of internal statehood. Furthermore, research will benefit by a greater discussion of the variation in state recognition, which was discussed earlier. Looking at both internal and external statehood as spectrums allows us to appreciate its non-static character too. State-building is often discussed as a process, testifying to its dynamic nature, but there is more room to explore changes in external dimensions of statehood and state recognition, for example, cases like Taiwan or SADR in Western

Statehood Conflicts, Table 2 Statehood conflict outcomes

| Outcome | Example |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Recognized statehood | Timor-Leste (2003) |
| Reintegration | |
| Peaceful | Gaugazia (1994) |
| Forceful | Katanga (1963) |
| Integration with a third state | Crimea (2014) |
| Reincarnation of statehood efforts | Kosovo (2008) |

Sahara have seen great fluctuation in their recognition. Tracing these changes over time also encourages us to historicize and contextualize the way in which statehood is achieved or granted and the extent to which conflict is triggered as a result.

Although there are many works that conceptually distinguish internal and external aspects of statehood (e.g., James 1999; Kurtulus 2005), there is still room to discuss the interrelation between them. Maybe as a result of the fact that each aspect of statehood sometimes speaks to different audiences (e.g., territorial control being more at the focus of political geographers vs. state recognition being influenced by international law perspectives), there is still a lot of room for exploring if and how these two might link. For example, there is some work on how state-building is used to gain recognition (Richards and Smith 2015), also along the lines of “earned sovereignty” (Berg and Mölder 2012; Bolton and Visoka 2010; Caspersen 2008), but there is not much discussion on how recognition might inform international state-building, although there is some preliminary evidence that they might be related (Kyrus 2018). Elsewhere, some emerging research on diaspora matters (e.g., Koinova 2018) and its importance for fuzzing internal and external dimensions of statehood efforts needs to be expanded upon, especially given that there are signs diaspora has been instrumental in many attempts at independence (e.g., Kosovo secession supported financially by diaspora, Somaliland National Movement established in London).

A related issue that has troubled scholars is that of the permanence of entities that seek recognized statehood – how long should a group persist with state-building so as it is regarded as an unrecognized state? Lemke and Crabtree (2019) offer interesting insights about the relationship between the duration of what they call “territorial contenders” and their survival and conflict density, but the study does not seek to resolve the question of what should the minimum duration criterion be for studying sustained but unrecognized efforts at statehood. In this regard, a lot depends on the question one is asking. For example, scholars (e.g., Pegg 1998; Kolstø 2006;

Caspersen 2012) have defined unrecognized states as those existing for no less than 2 years. This has been adopted by many studies, most likely in order to ensure the production of a meaningful definitional population that will not include ephemeral political configurations. Though a somehow arbitrary threshold, a focus on permanence for such questions is not misguided. Existing literature, including international law, that suggests permanence as a criterion of statehood (see Grant 1999, 31; Knight 1992) and an indication of what differentiates statehood to state government (Crawford 2006, 32) lends support to such an approach. A few examples from international practice further justify such a decision: reservation toward the newness of institutions played a role in the admission of Mongolia to the UN (Grant 2009, 59). In 1920, the USA withheld recognition of the Baltic states so as to avoid recognizing territorial changes while the Russian civil war was still unravelling. Chen (1951, 59–60) uses the example of the US recognition policy toward the Baltic states in 1920 to highlight that the continuation of a war suggests that a state has not “ripened” yet so as to be accorded recognition. With reference to secession in particular, Crawford (2006, 90) suggests that permanence can be of a high significance as a continuous existence might be evidence for the existence of statehood, even if more specific criteria are not fully present. Summarizing these arguments, permanence seems as not a necessary criterion of statehood but, nevertheless, a highly relevant matter for cases that might be in flux, such as with statehood conflicts. The question of how much permanence should be expected remains open, but this might be a sign that a blanket threshold is not constructive and that each researcher might also need to exercise a certain degree of more qualitative assessment of greyer cases. But, instead of focusing on the duration of statehood efforts, perhaps a more constructive approach will be to focus on their quality. Rather than trying to come up with a time-related criterion, perhaps a less futile choice will be to move on to a more meticulous discussion of what permanence is, for example, a distinction between permanence in institutions (more conducive for the study of

institutional capacity variance across state-builders) and permanence in the *objective* and *effort* to pursue and build statehood (the latter might be more conducive for exploring, e.g., secession rhetoric and justifications).

Besides, independent statehood as a clearly articulated and genuine objective of a secessionist movement is another aspect of conflicts over statehood that merits further attention. The literature on groups that seek to be recognized as states has been skeptical from the start about this – seminal works highlight that paying too much attention to formal declarations of independence is potentially deceiving because political aims of secessionist movements change (Pegg 1998). Indeed, there are cases where secession was used toward different aims or disguised under different pretences, but there might also be cases where secession could be seen as a result of a gradual organic process related to a complex network of causes, including, for example, violence, territorial division, assistance of the patron actors, or the ongoing inability of the conflicting parties to agree to a different arrangement. Bradbury's study of Somaliland (2008) is a good example of secession seen as such an incremental process. Therefore, the relationship between rhetoric, strategies, and un/intended consequences of statehood conflicts should be problematized more.

There is also a need for a greater dialogue between studies on elements of statehood presented so far and studies on conflict-this entry represents an effort toward this direction. A group of scholars is increasingly preoccupied with questions of state-becoming, both in terms of internal statehood and of its recognition. There are recent works important for understanding how efforts at statehood succeed or fail (e.g., Florea 2017; Griffiths 2016), but there is room for more research specifically into statehood outcomes that mean something for conflict resolution (e.g., reintegration as an outcome related to a peaceful resolution of the dispute). There are some works that have already tried to combine these two themes of statehood and conflict resolution (e.g., Caspersen 2017; Csergo et al. 2017) and which have contributed to a better understanding of statehood conflicts. More research is needed in this direction.

Moving on to the more specific actors in statehood conflicts, the role of patrons has been explored to a good degree but more research is welcome toward a few directions. First, more empirical research is needed into some of the less investigated cases (e.g., Turkey and TRNC, Algeria and SADR, USA, and Taiwan) and, most importantly, comparisons between different cases that can help refining the concept of patronage. More research is also needed into the power balance between aspiring states and their patron states. Parent states often treat patrons as the main actors they need to resolve the conflict with. This might be problematic for many reasons, not least because it leads to a neglect of the group with which the parent state will need to co-exist in a reintegration scenario. There are works on the matter of agency of unrecognized states (e.g., Fernández-Molina 2020; Berg and Vits 2020) that can pave the way for more research. Finally, literature will benefit by moving beyond state-centricity to explore whether there are other international actors that undertake similar patronage activities – can, for example, the UN and the EU at the height of their state-building activities in Kosovo or Palestine be seen as patrons? Indeed, there are sporadic references to patronage by actors other than states that research can expand on, for example, Anderson (2011) acknowledges in passing the possibility of international actors such as NATO acting as “protectors,” while Biermann (2020) writes of patrons more generally and includes non-state actors too, like NGOs.

More generally about methods, a greater reflexivity in terms of conducting research on statehood conflicts is welcome. The conceptual challenges outlined earlier have obvious methodological implications. For example, more reflection is needed on what are the appropriate methods for arriving at rigorous definitions that can produce meaningful populations within which findings can travel (see also Beach and Pedersen 2016, 103). This is especially important for allowing theory building and extracting lessons from case studies that can be relevant for other cases as well. Such methodological advances could be particularly beneficial for some sub-sections of the literature, such as on unrecognized states that

are characterized by a large number of case-specific studies. This is not to disregard the value of case studies but more to highlight their potential for generation of more general knowledge (see also Gerring 2016).

One way in which concept and theory development can be facilitated is by allowing for a more extensive study of historical cases, i.e., statehood conflicts that have been one way or the other resolved. One can assume a range of reasons why contemporary cases have attracted the attention of the scholarly community, such as the wish to produce findings with better public and policy relevance or easier access to data (e.g., to interviewees or policy documents). However, looking at historical cases comes with important benefits. For example, studies that look at a number of cases can include historical cases in order to provide a greater population, more extensive data and therefore stronger falsification of claims (see also King et al. 1994, 22) and better conceptualization. There is also evidence to suggest that looking at historical cases might also open up new areas of research, such as exploring how state-builders die (Florea 2017) also via conflict resolution (Csgero et al. 2017).

At the same time, while challenges in conducting research in conflict-ridden areas have been discussed (e.g., Rivas and Browne 2018; chapter “► [Conflict Fieldwork](#)”), there is still room to reflect on researching statehood conflicts in particular. In such conflicts, more specific challenges might relate to the sensitivity of the subjects researched, for example, with reference to the contestation of legitimacy or recognition of statehood claims and how these impact research – what are the specific challenges when conducting fieldwork in contested territories? Do issues of recognition impact the conduct of research, perhaps in a similar way to how they impact the role of international organizations? What are the particular problems of physically accessing territories that are contested in order to conduct on-site research? Those and other related questions are important for enabling a better investigation and, ultimately, understanding of statehood conflicts.

Summary

Statehood conflicts are hereby seen as those appearing where different groups lay claim over the same territories, and which also see the involvement of various other local, regional, and international actors. This entry reflected on how issues of control over territory and population (internal statehood) and international recognition (external statehood) affect these kinds of conflicts and their management or resolution. Not only groups see their despite for independence fulfilled through achieving statehood, but solutions to these conflicts (e.g., forceful or peaceful integration of secessionists to the state which they try separating from, or, more rarely, independent statehood) also reflect the dominance of state sovereignty as an organizing principle. As such, statehood conflicts testify to the ongoing and multifaceted significance of sovereignty for world politics. More research is welcome into these type of conflicts, including, for example, variations of both internal and external aspects to statehood, and what they mean for how we understand sovereignty and conflicts over it. Finally, a greater reflection on methodological opportunities and challenges surrounding the study of statehood conflicts will undoubtedly contribute to a better understanding of some of the world’s most intractable disputes.

Cross-References

- [Conflict Fieldwork](#)
- [Georgian-Abkhaz Conflict](#)

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Strategic Peacebuilding

► Peacebuilding and Korean Civil Society

Street Art and Peace

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Synonyms

Aesthetics; Bottom-up peace; Critical peace research; Graffiti; Peacebuilding; Street-art

Definition

This chapter looks at street art and its relationship to peace efforts. Specifically, it examines how street art is used as a medium to express the

concerns, needs, and wants of societal groups whose everyday lives are affected by decisions made at (and by) higher political levels, but whose voices remain marginalized and/or silenced. The fact that this type of artistic intervention takes place in the street means that its message is by definition accessible by a large audience. Depending on the circumstances of each case and the severity of the situation faced by everyday actors, street art interventions may not only manifest instances of injustice or mistreatment but may also lead to the transformation of the situation through collective action (mobilization, protest, manifestation). The chapter looks at a few examples where street art has had this type of effect.

Introduction

The turn of the century has seen the establishment of the Critical Peace Research agenda, whose approach to the study and practice of peace is diametrically antithetical to the problem-solving approaches of earlier times. Peace is not (and should not be) merely the victor's dominance and the absence of violence that comes with it, as implied in realist frameworks, nor is it only the product of international collaboration facilitated by institutions, norms, and ethical prerogatives, as argued by liberal theories. Instead, peace should be looked at and understood for what it is: a messy (Perera 2017) and cacophonous (Shinko 2008) process precisely because it involves a plethora of actors, active at multiple levels, and with diverse interests, agendas, and needs. This plurality has led scholars to shift their focus from governmental and/or international contexts that constitute the privileged status quo and to begin examining the role and agency of the "everyday," often through interdisciplinary frameworks such as the aesthetics (Bleiker 2001, 2009; Rancière 2010; Frost 2010).

Due to its character (unsolicited; public, thus accessible; in many cases illegal, thus ephemeral), street art is one form of aesthetics that acts as a vehicle for the voices of those

marginalized. Although "graffiti" is but one type of street art, the two terms have been conflated in the past decades and are now used interchangeably (see McAuliffe 2012) – this chapter will also follow this path. What is interesting with all street art in general, and graffiti in particular, is that the space(s) and place(s) where it occurs, as its name suggests, are at the core of everyday life (the streets). It is also true that macro-level issues (such as peace, economic inequality, social justice) and micro-level concerns (demands to free political prisoners or prosecute corrupt officials) often coexist in street artworks (Majid 2018: 211). During the Arab Spring protests in Egypt, for example, "choices of location, symbolism, and artistic form constitute[d] particular responses to general economic, political, and social configurations of the Egyptian state" (ibid.).

Examining street art as an integral part of the everyday allows us to evaluate the ways in which it is used and utilized in order to vocalize marginalized actors and promote alternative, non-traditional ways of thinking and doing peace and security. The following section looks at four cases of communities and individuals affected by war and violence and how they have utilized street art to make their view(s) (or situation, more broadly) known to the rest of the world. These cases are not offered here as examples of successful conflict transformation or even peacebuilding. Instead, they serve to demonstrate that the "everyday" is not as voiceless or, indeed, as weak as dominant theories assume it to be and that street art interventions do have the potential to alter policies and decisions at the macro-level. As such, the below may offer some insights for the methodological, ontological, and epistemological agenda of Critical Peace Research. Using these cases as a vehicle, the chapter will then contextualize the concept of the everyday and examine the ways in which it carries its agency and its potential to affect international situations. Finally, this will then be followed by an analysis of the street as the space and the place where art happens and the implications that this has for critical approaches to peace research.

Street Art and Peace

Yemen

In September 2012, Yemeni graffiti artist Murad Subay began painting stencils of the faces of the people who were forcibly disappeared by the country's security agencies since the 1970s (Hammond 2012; Alviso-Marino 2017) – a campaign he called “The Walls Remember Their Faces.” The portraits were accompanied by the person's name and the date it happened, with some of them also containing the words “enforced disappearance.” This is perhaps the most impactful case of street art as it led to “[t]he creation of a special committee to investigate cases of enforced disappearance, the discussion over the elaboration of a transitional justice law, and the attention of the Human Rights Minister to promote debate at the institutional level” (Alviso-Marino 2017: 127). More importantly, thanks to the massive participation it generated, it resulted in locating alive some of those individuals that were forcibly disappeared.

Pakistan

Spurred by Rolling Stone magazine's revelation in 2012 that US drone operators refer to the killing of their targets as “bug splats,” an artists' collective decided to challenge this insensitivity and raise awareness of civilian casualties (“collateral damage” in the military's desensitizing terminology) (NotABugSplat 2014). To this end, and with the collaboration of locals, the group installed a gigantic picture of an unnamed girl whose parents and two younger siblings were allegedly killed in a US drone operation in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Benedictus 2014). The aim was for drone operators to be reminded of the effect of their actions and to remove any illusions that this is just another electronic game.

Palestine

In what is perhaps the most famous activist intervention, English graffiti artist Banksy and 14 other street artists used the wall that separates Jerusalem from the West Bank as a canvas for their projects, mainly oriented at oppositional protest art and local resistance (Parry 2010). While

many Palestinian residents agree that the initiative is indeed a form of resistance (Larkin 2014: 134, 143), others are skeptical and even antithetical to it. For example, as Banksy himself made known, he thanked an old Palestinian man who told him that his paintings made the wall look beautiful. The Palestinian man's reply, however, was not what Banksy may have hoped for: “We don't want it to be beautiful, we hate this wall. Go home” (Jones 2005). Others have also commented that it did not matter how much you paint the wall – it and its implications for everyday life will continue to exist unaltered (Larkin 2014: 143). Others, still, have tried to make this point by using the very language and/or tools that Banksy and the other artists used: one of the stencils on the wall that depicted a window view of a beautiful countryside was stencilled over with bricks. This is perhaps the most appropriate case to denote the cacophony and messiness of peace, but also how activists may not always get it right when it comes to speaking on behalf of others. For despite Banksy's and other international artists' intentions, it seems more plausible that their works targeted international audiences about the situation in Palestine (international indifference, inaction, and apathy) rather than local understandings, experiences, and needs.

Colombia

Before serious efforts to establish peace began taking shape in 2016 with the negotiations between the government and the Armed Revolutionary Forces of Colombia (FARC), 50 years of conflict in the country meant that violence became systemic and all-encompassing. As one of the country's most famous street artists, DJ Lu, explained, “[my] work is born of my experiences, of a life immersed in a state of violence at every level: from the government, guerrillas, paramilitaries, not forgetting of course street violence and even violence inside the family” (Morgan 2011). These, along with women's rights, rights of the indigenous peoples, and calls to memory of the Colombian conflict (Rolston and Ospina 2017: 34), are widespread not only in the capital, Bogotá, but also in other urban settings. For instance, the district of San Javier, in Medellín,

was once famous as Pablo Escobar's neighborhood and one of the most dangerous places on earth, but is now referred to as "Comuna 13" and is attracting international visitors taking graffiti tours (See <https://www.medellingraffititour.com/>).

Everyday, Street, and Art

The "everyday" is as messy as the concept and practice of peace, consisting of a wide variety of actors, from the most extremist to the more moderate and even apathetic. Equally undeniably, however, it is also laden with agency and not as indifferent or as inactive as traditional theories assume. Despite its marginalization by dominant analyses, theories, and agendas, the agency of the everyday is constantly present either through its compliance with these agendas or, particularly so, through its resistance (Solomon and Steele 2017). This points to the fact that the agency of the everyday is political, for resistance and compliance imply an engagement with power – its alteration and continuation, respectively. The Occupy movement, the Arab Spring, and the Indignant Movement in Greece and Spain following the financial crisis of 2008 – these are all examples of the everyday being visible, agentive, and resisting. As such, the everyday should also be understood as a level of analysis because its vision (s), needs, and wants link directly to, and may indeed affect, the higher levels where decisions are being taken and policies are formulated. Consider as an example that the current humanitarian catastrophe in Syria and its international repercussions – be it the involvement (or noninvolvement) of international actors or the mass refugee waves that led to an increase in xenophobia in Europe – began when 15 adolescent boys painted an anti-Assad graffiti in Daraa (Tellidis, with Glomm 2019).

Unlike private spaces where art objects are exhibited to a select few (either invited or paying) members of the public, the street is what brings art and the everyday together. Critically, the visibility of the artist's message and its interpretation by a large, unrestricted audience means that the street is no longer simply a place (a material dimension)

but a space (an immaterial dimension) (Björkdahl and Kappler 2017: 3) where the artist's agency (the message or idea of his/her art) meets the agency of the audience (its opposition to or support of said message). The street is also of agentive capacity because it functions as both the content and the method of analysis (Nayak 2017: 202). Spatial agency "entails a commitment to social change with the aim of altering the behaviour of others, changing policies and politics and transforming ideational structures" (Björkdahl and Mannergren Selimovic 2015: 170–171). This coincides precisely with street art's agency, if one considers street art to be "a device used to express issues that become considered as worthy of collectively being shared and denounced, and the potential capacity of mobilization that this use of painting on public spaces can have in the short or long term" (Alviso-Marino 2017: 122). Finally, it must also be borne in mind that, through the ages, the street has also been the space where dominant and privileged agents, such as the state, either displayed or reasserted their power and/or dominance: military parades, public executions, and royal weddings are, among others, manifestations of that (Cohen-Cruz 2013: 4).

The aforementioned discussion highlights that artistic agency can be political, in which instance it demarginalizes the unvoiced and the unheard by transcending the orientalist views bestowed upon them by "established oppressive situations" (Murphy and Omar 2013: 352). The conjuring of street art and political agency becomes even more clearer by "artivism," a concept and a practice that "confronts, interrogates or even shrugs off the status quo" (Artivism Network, quoted in Diverlus 2016: 191). Much like Critical Peace Research's intentions, street art aims at highlighting instances of injustice and disequilibrium. To be clear, the terms "unvoiced," "marginalized," "sidelined," etc. may also refer to extreme, pro-violent actors who also seek "justice" and "peace" but in their own, exclusionary, and violent terms. As seen on the walls of Belfast, Northern Ireland (Sluka 1992); Dili, East Timor (Parkinson 2010); and various towns of the Basque Country, Spain (Chaffee 1988), to mention a few examples, street

art has also been used and utilized by such actors to make their presence visible, to raise their profile, or to resonate with those individuals/groups who feel they need to take action.

Summary

The arts have long been known to be a suitable vehicle for healing trauma (Cohen and Yalen 2006) as well as create the conditions necessary for inclusive and pluralist narratives to emerge (Premaratna and Bleiker 2010). To that effect, their potential to contribute to peacebuilding efforts is greater than what is often assumed, particularly if they are used in a coordinated fashion “for specific tasks that measurably contribute to peacebuilding” rather than when they are used as a “feel-good” attempt (Shank and Shirch 2008: 218).

Street art and graffiti can be found virtually in every region that has experienced violent conflict – whether as tags, as stencils, or more elaborate as the ones in Colombia or Palestine. As such, it is perhaps the most political of all genres of aesthetics by virtue of the fact that it is unsolicited, it materializes in the street, and its messages in conflict settings are usually about protesting and/or resisting a situation of domination that leads to imposition of injustices – as Rolston and Ospina (2017: 31) put it, “mural painting represents the meeting between victims’ agency and activist art.” Coincidentally, this is also the core of the CPR agenda when it comes to adopting alternative methodologies that will help unpack alternative understandings and existences that have so far been left hidden or marginalized. In turn, these latter will help understand peace not only as the absence of violence or even the mere coexistence of adversary communities but as the product of conscious interdependence, trust, and respect for difference. The four cases briefly explored above (and many more present elsewhere but unexplored here) show that, even when street art does not explicitly call for trust, respect, and an understanding of interdependence, at least it alludes to their lacking. More than that, street art

resonates with and vocalizes the everyday because the artists themselves are part of it.

The links between street art’s and CPR’s objectives notwithstanding, it must be stressed that street art is only the medium that may generate the agency to transform violent or unjust situations. That agency itself comes from the audience that is/has been exposed to the murals and the images. CPR’s intention, therefore, must be to decode how street art expresses the people’s desires and feelings for peace and, on the other hand, how can street art be deployed in a manner that will facilitate the transformation of violent and/or unjust situations in ways that will facilitate peace efforts.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Divided Cities](#)
- ▶ [Everyday Peace](#)
- ▶ [Human Geography and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Nonviolence and Civil Resistance](#)
- ▶ [Photography and Peace](#)
- ▶ [Urban Peacebuilding](#)

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Street-Art

- ▶ [Street Art and Peace](#)

Structural Violence

- ▶ [Stalled Peacebuilding: Dealing with the Violence of Colonization and Its Legacy](#)

Successful Peacekeeping Outcome – Political Solution to Conflicts

- ▶ [Evolution of Practice in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations](#)

Sudan

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System Thinking

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T

Technology and Peace

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Synonyms

[Bottom-up peace](#); [Grassroots mobilisation](#); [Non-violence](#); [Peacetech](#)

Definition

This chapter aims to examine the ways in which technology has been used in bottom-up ways that seek to resist and/or transform violent and oppressive contexts in order to build peace. At the same time, the chapter also highlights those instances by which international actors (organizations and states) seek to co-opt technological advances that debilitate traditional, top-down hierarchies of power and order because they perceive them as a tool that facilitates the erosion of their control. The chapter's main argument is that technological advances hold great potential for the future of peacebuilding's praxis and research by including marginalized voices, but it must be born in mind that they are nothing but a tool – meaning that they can be used to promote peace as much as they can be used to foment divisions or instigate and sustain violence. Nonetheless, any future research

agenda on peace must unavoidably take into consideration the variety of technological tools and platforms utilized by grassroots actors.

Introduction

While history has its fair share of cases of technologically ill- or under-equipped Davids beating technologically supreme Goliaths, it is also true that – more often than not – technological superiority has been a key factor in deciding the outcome of warfare. As such, technology has featured more prominently in war and/or strategic studies than it has in peace studies. One exception to that would be in cases where “peace” denotes the kind of victor's peace and therefore one group's domination over another. In that case, technology may be used as a tool of discipline and control, much like Jeremy Bentham's *Panopticon* explored by Foucault (1978). Recently, however, the emergence of social media (due to technological advances in network speeds; ever-smaller and simultaneously powerful processors; cryptography, and others) has facilitated more horizontal connections between users (as opposed to the vertical model referred to earlier, in the domination example). This has led to the organization and mobilization of civil society actors who, among other things, have given voice to marginalized and neglected groups; have opposed and overturned illiberal practices of governance; have prevented violence from taking

place and/or spreading; have facilitated reconciliation and coexistence; and have established and promoted peace education programs.

At the same time, international actors like the United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU), or bodies involved in international aid have also jumped on the technological train (as it were), finding recourse in a variety of technological tools and platforms in order to promote or strengthen their approaches to peacebuilding. Nevertheless, rather than reconcile with the fact that new technologies debilitate vertical relations and hierarchies, said organizations' use of ICTs demonstrates an almost desperate attempt to maintain control. To a large extent, this is because of the traditional, power-oriented ways in which these organizations (were built to) operate, and these mentalities are distilled into their understanding(s) of how new technologies should be used. Moreover, it should be born in mind that ICTs are simply a tool that can be used for whichever objective their user intended. As such, they may be (and indeed, have been) used to foment exclusion and authoritarianism (Morozov 2011; Rød and Weidmann 2015), as well as to instigate or sustain violence (Bailard 2015; Warren 2015). Finally, the largest part of those in need of peace do not have access to ICTs, which renders them "digitally invisible" (Mac Ginty 2017).

This short chapter provides a few examples that showcase how technology has been used in participatory and inclusionary ways that seek to build peace and/or resist oppressive and violent contexts, as well as cases in which international actors are utilizing ICTs for the purposes of peace but without "letting go of control" (Puig-Larrauri 2013).

Bottom-Up Uses of ICTs for Peace

Mobile phones have been the primary tool for the mobilization of nonstate actors and peace initiatives. In Kenya, Nigeria, Uganda, and Zimbabwe, for example, rudimentary messaging systems were implemented to anticipate the outbreak of electoral violence (Tellidis and Kappler 2016, p. 78; Gagliardone et al. 2015, p. 7; Welch et al.

2014, p. 64; Coyle and Meier 2009, p. 42). Notwithstanding, as mobile phone technology has advanced considerably, most Internet platforms explored below are now designed to operate on mobile phones too ("smartphones"). As such, rather than treat mobile phones as a distinct category, this section summarizes ICT platforms and tools that have been used for peace purposes in two broad categories: crowdsourcing and social media.

Crowdsourcing

Crowdsourcing is one of the earliest methods that took advantage of mobile phone technologies for the purposes of better coordinating preventative or relief activities. Although there exist various definitions, crowdsourcing "entails the collection of vast amounts of data to be processed at high-speed" (Hunt and Specht 2019, p. 2). Crowdsourcing platforms can use information sent by mobile phones, emails, or the web to create online maps depicting where and how a crisis is developing, and the type of reaction and/or assistance that is needed. Their use took off in the aftermath of Haiti's earthquake in 2010 and they have proved tremendously valuable for emergency humanitarian responses as well as for preventing the outbreak of violence. For instance, Ushahidi and OpenStreetMap (OSM), the most known crowdsourcing platforms, have been used to improve the severity of the situation (and better coordinate action) in Niger's and Kenya's elections in 2011 and 2013, respectively; in Somalia's Afgooye corridor, home to "the world's largest concentration of internally displaced people" (Beaumont 2010); in the Philippines during hurricane Haiyan; in Nepal's earthquake; in monitoring violence in Syria and the Central African Republic; and elsewhere (Hunt and Specht 2019, p. 2).

Due to the magnitude of data collected, however, crowdsourcing is facing some serious challenges, chief among which is the reliability of the information transmitted (Coyle and Meier 2009, p. 17). For example, only around 780 out of 230,000 tweets sent during the first two days of hurricane Haiyan were deemed useful to the emergency response teams (Moore and Verity 2014,

p. 3). The efficiency of the response is also compounded by the organizational politics and operating procedures of international humanitarian actors. In the aftermath of Nepal's earthquake, for example, Ramalingam noted an inability to focus on the role of local organizations and instead concentrate on the needs of stakeholders (2016, p. 31).

Social Media

Prevalent among these are platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube that have been used in a variety of contexts. In Israel, during one of the periods of heightened tensions with Iran, Ronny Edry, an Israeli teacher, posted on Facebook how Israel's official warmongering policies against Iran did not represent him or his friends and neighbors. His message was quickly picked up by others, in both Israel and Iran, and a peace-movement of sorts called "Israel-loves-Iran" was born on Facebook. What is particularly interesting in this case, as Edry himself puts it, "[i]t has been disappointing no Israeli politician has contacted us. Not a single one. And it's not like they don't know it is going on, it's been on every Israeli channel, on Al Jazeera, on CNN. They call themselves leaders but they don't lead" (quoted in Elgot 2012).

In Bosnia, politics based on strengthening ethnic divisions led to a law that prevented newborns from being given an identification number. This meant that they could also not be issued with travel documents, healthcare. The death of a newborn that needed immediate treatment abroad but could not travel because of said law led to mass protests throughout the country. These protests, dubbed "Babylution," were organized mainly on Facebook and they attracted people from across ethnic divides for the first time since the end of the war (Gocmanac 2013).

In Cyprus, all of these platforms are utilized by bi-communal grassroot activist movements like "Occupy the buffer zone" and "Mahallae" to engage members of both communities. In Egypt, during the Arab Spring, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube were widely used but in a more strategic fashion: "Facebook was used to schedule the protests, Twitter to coordinate the activities, and

YouTube to inform the world" (Baytiyeh 2019, p. 76).

Newer platforms that increase anonymity and that have been developed as a response to the authorities' mass surveillance schemes should also be taken into consideration, for they too are becoming increasingly popular. The Telegram app is one such example used recently for the purposes of organizing the mass protest movement in Hong Kong against the Chinese central government's dictats.

Top-Down Uses of ICTs for Peace

The increasing use of ICTs in peacebuilding efforts has also attracted the attention of international governmental organizations, with the UN noting their importance for its missions as well for the populations whose lives it seeks to improve (United Nations 2015). Nevertheless, the cumbersome nature, interest-driven agendas, and statist focus of international governmental organizations means that they are five times less likely to adopt new technologies to design more inclusionary approaches to peacebuilding than nongovernmental organizations (Gaskell et al. 2016, p. 6).

Although international organizations do have a digital presence through the most popular social media platforms (such as the ones described above), their use of these is often to advertise their actions and/or initiatives, rather than to facilitate some kind of bottom-up action. This is understandable if one considers the interests of the member-states of these organizations, and how letting go of control would undermine said interests. Nevertheless, there are other technologies that international organizations are currently that are very effective in providing protection from or alleviation of suffering. Two of these that are currently in use are blockchain and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), or more commonly known, "drones."

Blockchain

Blockchain is the newest type of technology that is perhaps most famous because of its association with electronic currencies (cryptocurrencies),

most notably Bitcoin. Its innovation and potential lies in the fact that it does away with the need of middlemen or third parties. Instead, its operation is based on trustless, transparent (and thus verifiable by anyone), decentralized, unfalsifiable, and public contracts between two parties. The UN appears to have fallen in love with the technology so much so that it has set up a dedicated website (UN-blockchain.org). Indeed, a number of UN agencies have already adjusted it to their needs, while others are exploring further uses for humanitarian purposes. For example, the World Food Programme (WFP) is using the technology to authenticate and record food and cash donations to vulnerable populations in Jordan and Pakistan (World Food Programme 2018). Other agencies, like the UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and the Office of Information and Communication Technologies (UN-OICT), are planning to utilize the technology to combat child trafficking by providing identities to undocumented children (World Identity Network 2017). Others have even expressed the thought that blockchain technology may be used to finance the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, without relying on charities (Brunnhuber 2018).

Drones

At the turn of the century, technological advances in satellite imaging, image processing capabilities, and surveillance technologies meant that there was great potential for the UN's core peace and security missions to benefit directly. The UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) was the first instance where a Security Council Resolution (1706) explicitly called for "aerial means" and "aerial reconnaissance" to be used in order to help protect civilian populations (United Nations 2006). The organization also used drones for the protection of refugees and internally displaced populations (IDPs) in Chad in 2009. In 2013, the UN officially adopted the use of drones for its mission in Congo (MONUSCO) (BBC News 2013), not only as a means to respond to violence but also as a tool of deterrence (UN News Centre 2013).

Besides politically-driven humanitarian crises, the UN-operated drones were used in Haiti in 2010 to support the International Organisation of

Migration in its efforts to map sites of IDPs in 2012 (Karlsruud and Rosén 2013, p. 2). Drone and satellite imagery is also used by the UNDP to support the activities of humanitarian and development actors in Mali, and disaster preparedness and response in the Maldives and Tanzania (UNDP 2017). Like blockchain, the potential of drone technology seems to complement the organizations missions very well. So much so, in fact, that DPKO's Expert Panel on Technology and Innovation in Peacekeeping recommended its use as "an immediate measure" (Lute 2014, p. 55).

There are important questions here still unanswered, however. Who owns or leases the technology, and who has access to it and the data it generates, as well as the nature of the subcontractual relations it often depends upon are some of these questions. Furthermore, as Larauri and Meier (2015, p. 12) have noted, records of this information will most likely outlast the life of the mission, in which case no guarantees can be provided about the extension of "do-no-harm" policies. Indeed, considering the digital gap between developed and developing or underdeveloped countries, it might well be the case that new dependencies are emerging with the adoption of such technologies, which increasingly look like older power relations.

Summary

This chapter set out to present cases in which technology can aid peace efforts, especially when these help address and vocalize issues and needs faced by marginalized and/or neglected groups and communities. Nevertheless, it almost goes without saying that technology is simply a tool that can put at the service of all sorts of objectives. As such, it can be (and indeed it has been) used for the promotion of violence and the recruitment of extremists as much as it can be used for the mobilization of rescuers and volunteers.

ICTs should also be evaluated within their overall information context, that is a broader "system of people, practices, values, and technologies in a particular local environment" (Nardi and O'Day 1999, p. 49). Doing otherwise would run the risk of presenting technology as panacea rather than

uncovering the fact that it may reinforce already existing cleavages and divisions. For example, the penetration of technology in the underdeveloped world is virtually always a privilege of the elites. This implies that people living in abject poverty and/or without access to education or electricity face extreme difficulty in affording the equipment or having the necessary knowledge to fully benefit from its operation. As a result, their marginalization and subalternity remain intact.

Furthermore, although some top-down approaches to peace that rely heavily on technology may have positively tangible effects, they also help reinforce the controlling agenda of the dominant powers that unroll such technologies. The very decentralized character of blockchain technology, for example, may be viewed as a threat to established norms and practices unless it is deployed by dominant actors, thus allowing some degree of regulation and control. Related to that is the flow of technological aid and assistance from the developed to the developing and underdeveloped regions: although commendable with regards to bridging the technological gap, it is also the case that developed actors require their partners to focus on (and counter) threats and risks that are of more concern to the former than to the latter (Hurwitz 2014, p. 330).

With all that in mind, technology can certainly help uncover instances of injustice and disequilibrium (and help address them, so long as there is sufficient political will to do so), but it can also help those who want to expand their control and/or domination. As such, any discussion about whether technology can help promote peace is seemingly deceptive – not because it can, as I hope to have demonstrated, but because of the political efforts to control and co-opt it as well as the extremist and deadly objectives it is used for (which, in turn, become an excuse for the aforementioned controlling efforts).

Cross-References

- ▶ [Hybrid Political Orders and Hybrid Peace](#)
- ▶ [Nonviolence and Civil Resistance](#)
- ▶ [Search for Peace, the](#)

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Territorial Conflicts

- ▶ International Organizations and Statehood Conflicts
- ▶ Statehood Conflicts

Terrorism

- ▶ Different Layers of the Afghan Conflict
- ▶ Kenya's War on Terror

Textile-Making as Research Method

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Synonyms

Art; Arts-based research; Craft; Needlework; Participatory research; Peace and conflict textiles; Ways of knowing

Definition

Textile-making – broadly defined as a practice based on crafts such as sewing, embroidering, appliquéing, knitting, quilting, and weaving – is

an arts-based method, which is increasingly used in participatory qualitative research but so far under-explored as an approach in peace and conflict studies. Textile-making is particularly suited for impactful peace and conflict research, as it offers innovative ways to combine fieldwork-based qualitative data generation with the emancipatory, transformative, and therapeutic benefits of art in general and needlework more specifically. Textile-making shares arts-based methods' ability to explore experiential and practical knowledge by offering nonlinguistic ways of expression. As a visual method, images expressed through needlework diversify the iconographic and iconological analyses of other visual approaches. Additionally, textiles' materiality and the process of making have been shown to generate trust, care, and healing, with the fabric and needlework processes also being powerful metaphors that allude to the repair of damage and the healing of wounds. As a participatory and relational method, textile-making can be used at any stage of qualitative peace and conflict research and, depending on the research methodology into which it is embedded, serve different purposes in the research design including social-transformative aims.

Introduction

This chapter discusses textile-making as a method for peace and conflict research. Textile genres used as qualitative social-scientific research methods include, for example, narrative quilts, (autobiographical) dolls, embroideries, appliquéd wall hangings (*arpilleras*), story or memory cloths, knitted objects, and crocheted blankets (e.g., Arias López 2015; Arias López et al. 2019; Cohen 2013; Garlock 2016; Lawton 2010; Shercliff and Holroyd 2020). Textile-making is a particularly suited qualitative method for participatory, bottom-up peace and conflict research: it expands what counts as knowledge from a narrow propositional-conceptual focus to include people's practical and experiential knowledge (Julian et al. 2019) and combines the academic aim of data generation with the potential to make a positive contribution to transformative social

processes from war to peace – be it as part of the research impact agenda or out of researchers' social-transformative commitments. The insights in this chapter are mainly taken from the Latin-American context, where textile-making constitutes an important part of the culture and which therefore provides powerful examples of the relational, participatory, and transformative research as well as the feminist and decolonial potential enabled by textile-making as a method.

The chapter first discusses textile-making as an arts-based research method, highlighting both commonalities and specifics. It then illustrates textile-making's potential roles at different stages of the research process through the example of the authors' research with former combatants of the Colombian guerrilla group FARC and their peasant neighbors, which combined textile-making with the methodology of narrative practices. As a versatile method, textile-making can be employed to generate visual and textual data that can serve as the main corpus or complement other research processes and data; to support the dissemination of research findings; to generate dialogue and resonances with wider audiences that in turn may constitute additional data; and to facilitate researcher reflexivity. The chapter concludes with a summary of the benefits, challenges, and limits of textile-making as a research method.

Textile-Making as Specific Arts-Based Research Method

Textile-making as a method can be understood as a form of arts-based research (ABR). However, while much ABR literature sees art mainly as a set of technical skills that can be employed for research purposes (see, e.g., Savin-Baden and Wimpenny 2014, p. 1), a wider understanding suggests that art is more: it is a specific way of seeing, asking, thinking, and relating to the world (Fernández 2019). This wider understanding allows for an important move from a vertical to a horizontal relation between research and art, which has two implications. First, it situates arts-based research within an inter- rather than trans-disciplinary field: art is not subsumed under

research but recognized as a different but equally valid way of knowing – calling for interdisciplinary teams involving researchers and artists (Arias López and Coral Velásquez 2017; cf. Fernández and Dias 2016 on the fluidity of roles). Second, art is understood not as an object but as an aesthetic relationship, which creates knowledge and holds decolonial and feminist potentials (Fernández 2019; Springgay 2010). Increasingly collaborating with qualitative social-scientific research, art thereby not only generates epistemological turns in conventional forms of knowing, but it also dynamizes entrenched research procedures and methodologies (Arias López and Coral Velásquez 2017; Knowles and Cole 2008; Mannay 2016).

In the ABR literature, textile-making is clearly underrepresented, illustrating the historical relegation of needlework to the realm of popular and indigenous craft and of women's private domestic activity (Parker 2010). This contrasts with the elevated status, presumed cosmopolitanism, and public functions attributed to art. Pushing back against this marginalization, textile-making has been highlighted both as a form of political activism and as art in its own right (Alario Trigueros 2008; Andrä 2020; Fry 2014; Sánchez Aldana et al. 2019). In a move to invert the idea of art at the service of activism, some authors hold that activism using activities such as knitting *is* art, in the sense of “‘an aesthetic of civic engagement’, whereby art is based on social relationships that make culture and creativity a central part of civic life” (Springgay 2010, p. 113). Textile-making shares with other arts-based methods the aim to include nonlinguistic dimensions of knowing, especially the experiential and practical knowledge held by participant-subjects, into the research (Liamputtong and Rumbold 2008). It offers ways to explore and create tacit, embodied, and practical knowledges (Bello Tocancipá and Aranguren Romero 2020, pp. 193–198; Estrella and Forinash 2007, p. 379) and to share traumatic, silent/silenced or tabooed experiences (Cohen 2013; Gameiro et al. 2018; Garlock 2016), which are hard to be expressed in words and therefore difficult to capture with standard social-scientific methods (interviews, focus groups, surveys) with their focus on linguistic

expression (Bagnoli 2009, pp. 547–548; Shercliff and Holroyd 2020, p. 12). Used as part of wider feminist, decolonial, or interpretive methodologies, textile-making and other arts-based methods are also particularly suited to amplify the voice of groups which are marginalized by dominant discursive and material structures, as they allow for participant-subjects' self-definition, agenda-setting, and meaning-making in the research process. They thereby hold the potential to work against patriarchal, colonial, western-centric, and other entrenched power differentials inherent in many conventional research methods and designs (Arias López et al. 2019; Huss 2007, p. 985).

Since arts-based research is “rooted in aesthetic considerations” (Barone and Eisner 2012, p. 1) and produces not just research data but also works of art, its products are particularly well suited to disseminate research findings to wider nonacademic audiences, enable dialogue and induce resonances among and between different societal groups, and generate empathy and solidarity (Bello Tocancipá and Aranguren Romero 2020; Milton 2014, p. 23). Consequently, arts-based methods hold a transformative potential for the research participants (e.g., empowerment or the acquisition of new skills), for their artworks' audiences (e.g., change in attitudes or behavior), and for the researchers themselves (e.g., enhanced reflexivity on their positionality) (Rydzik et al. 2013; Arias López et al. [forthcoming](#)). Due to this transformative potential, some authors specifically highlight the activist role ABR methods can play in participatory, critical, action-oriented research that is committed to deep interactions between researchers and participants, aims to improve participants' lives, and works towards a visionary perspective of a better future (Finley 2003).

Textile-making is particularly suited for peace and conflict researchers, who seek to combine fieldwork-based qualitative data generation with this nourishing and social-transformative potential of collaborating with the arts. In addition to the characteristics it shares with arts-based research, textile-making as a method contains some qualities specific to the materiality of fabric and to activities such as sewing, embroidering,

knitting, and crocheting. Textile-making is “a language that can only be transmitted from and received with the body. [...] It is an embodied writing in threads, made with the materials that accompany us from birth to death: textiles [...] and that frees us with an intimate scream when it becomes our voice” (textile artist Mercy Rojas, authors’ interview, Medellín, 2018).

In the context of Colombian survivors’ memory work after violent conflict and related loss (e.g., killed or forcefully disappeared relatives), the embodied, relational, therapeutic, and material effects of textile-making have been studied in some detail. These studies show that needlework – often carried out in groups – creates spaces and relations of trust, affect, and mutual care, which allow individuals to express and resignify their suffering and collectives to establish or resignify relations (Bello Tocancipá and Aranguren Romero 2020, p. 189; Pérez-Bustos and Chocontá Piraquive 2018, pp. 5–7). The materials of which the textiles are made often carry symbolic meaning, e.g., representing the absence of lost loved ones by using scraps of their clothes (Andrä et al. 2019, p. 8). The materiality of textiles thereby contributes to a “pedagogy of touch” based on the sensuousness of fabric and thread (Springgay 2010). The “making” aspect (Ingold 2013) – i.e., the slow practice of needlework – furthermore revolves around notions of mending, unraveling, and recomposing, not only materially but also emotionally, which gives their makers the possibility to resignify events and to heal. Textile-making is consequently often described as generating strength and energy or to contribute to heightened self-esteem and empowerment (Bello Tocancipá and Aranguren Romero 2020, p. 194; Cohen 2013, p. 165).

Yet, as an artwork, textiles also have agency independently of their makers (Belalcazar Valencia and Molina Valencia 2017). Not only do narrative textiles carry their makers’ resisting stories – documenting events, preserving memories, denouncing violations and injustices, or expressing wishes, hopes, and fears – and thereby liberate their makers from the burden of retelling

Aranguren Romero 2020, p. 198–200; Pérez-Bustos and Chocontá Piraquive 2018, pp. 7–10); the textiles also take on a social life, for example, when interacting with different audiences and generating resonances in exhibitions and workshops, and thereby bear the potential to create relations between subjects who are unlikely to meet in person (Andrä et al. 2019, pp. 12–13). These specific effects of textile-making suggest that needlework can be particularly useful as a method in peace and conflict research with marginalized or vulnerable groups and that its benefits may consist in the resignification of participants’ and audiences’ collective meaning-making in a way that contributes to reconciliation and peace.

Embroidering with Ex-Guerrillas in Colombia: A Research Example

While textile-making as a method for peace and conflict studies has mostly been used in research with participant-subjects categorized as “victims” of violent conflict (e.g., Arias López 2015, 2017; Arias López et al. 2019), the method is not limited to any particular participant group. In the following, the authors’ project with former guerrilla fighters and their post-conflict peasant neighbors in Colombia is discussed, to illustrate how textile-making as a method may nourish the research process at different stages and for a number of purposes (Figs. 1, 2, and 3).



Textile-Making as Research Method, Fig. 1 Ex-combatant embroidering the FARC’s party logo, a rose. San José de León, May 2019. (Photo: Laura Coral Velásquez)

Textile-Making as Research Method,

Fig. 2 Textile workshop. San José de León, May 2019. (Photo: Laura Coral Velásquez)



Textile-Making as Research Method, Fig. 3 Female ex-combatant embroidering. San José de León, May 2019. (Photo: Laura Coral Velásquez)

The project: The project “(Un-)Stitching the Subjects of Colombia’s reconciliation process” was jointly supported by Minciencias (project reference FP44842-282-2018) and the Newton Fund (project reference AH/R01373X/1) and hosted by Aberystwyth University, the University of Antioquia, and the Association of Victims and Survivors of Northeast Antioquia. The research team explored the changing subjectivities of former fighters of the Colombian guerrilla group FARC (*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia*), who are in a process of reincorporation into civilian society. Despite the signing of a peace agreement between the FARC and the Colombian government in December

2016, mainstream political and media discourses in Colombia remain dominated by antagonizing portrayals of ex-FARC combatants as enemies or criminals, thereby undermining the reconciliation process. The project set out to explore how ex-combatants, their relatives, and their new peasant neighbors narrate themselves and their situation in the transformation process and to bring their stories into conversation with other members of Colombian society – thereby studying, and making a social intervention into, the ongoing but increasingly precarious peace process. The team worked in two communities in the department of Antioquia: San José de León in the Mutatá region, a self-organized, economically thriving village built by a former fighting unit of the FARC, and Llano Grande in Dabeiba, a state-organized reintegration zone for former fighters whose socioeconomic sustainability is as yet uncertain (Figs. 4, 5, and 6).

Methodology and methods: The functions that methods take on in a research process depend on the methodology into which they are embedded. This project chose narrative practices (White and Epston 1990; White 2007) as an overarching qualitative-interpretive methodology guiding the research. This originally psychotherapeutic approach understands individuals’ subjectivities as composed of stories: persons make sense of their lives and the world around them by putting

**Textile-Making as
Research Method,**

Fig. 4 Three exhibitions – three contexts – three gazes. San José de León, October 2019. (Photo: Laura Coral Velásquez)



**Textile-Making as
Research Method,**

Fig. 5 Three exhibitions – three contexts – three gazes. Apartadó, October 2019. (Photo: Laura Coral Velásquez)



some of their experiences into a particular temporal and causal order to create and perform meaning (White and Epston 1990, pp. 10–12). Since subjectivities are multistoried, people have the possibility to re-author their lives, for example, when adapting to changed circumstances (White and Epston 1990, pp. 13, 16–17). At the same time, the approach also acknowledges that people's (self-)narratives are embedded in wider sociocultural discourses, which limit the repertoires of meanings and performances that are

socially acceptable and which often preclude or silence alternative narratives (White and Epston 1990, pp. 27–28). The research employed biographical interviews to determine dominant and alternative narratives of its different types of participant-subjects (former combatants, their relatives, and their new peasant neighbors), ethnographic observation to explore silent/silenced narratives, and textile-making to elicit participants' preferred narratives (i.e., stories they wanted other Colombians to know) and to

Textile-Making as Research Method,

Fig. 6 Three exhibitions – three contexts – three gazes. Medellín, November 2019. (Photo: Laura Coral Velásquez)



Textile-Making as Research Method, Fig. 7 Embroidered stories: Shaking hands. San José de León, June 2019. (Photo: Laura Coral Velásquez)



Textile-Making as Research Method, Fig. 8 Embroidered stories: El Nacional football club. San José de León, June 2019. (Photo: Laura Coral Velásquez)

create resonances between the textile artworks and wider Colombian society through exhibitions and workshops (Figs. 7, 8, and 9).

Participants: The research was open to all community members in San José de León and Llano Grande. Initial embroidery workshops ensured that everyone had the opportunity to learn basic techniques and participate in textile-making. Also, some basic embroidery and sewing skills were present among ex-FARC participants of all genders, due to wartime practices and necessities of labeling and mending clothes and bodies. Nonetheless, the textile-making activities mainly attracted female participants, although some male members of the former combatant and local peasant communities took part and produced powerful textiles. The main reason for this gendered turnout

is entrenched gender stereotypes, which have structured the fighters' reincorporation process more generally, despite far-reaching gender provisions in the peace agreement. The textile-making component also attracted fewer community members in formal positions of decision-making and more members at the communities' margins (although some participants were women social leaders), emphasizing its potential of amplifying voice (Figs. 10, 11, and 12).

Data generation: Over the course of 12 months, over 80 participants in the two communities engaged in 31 textile-making workshops or sessions and produced around 120 textile pieces, which the project team coded thematically, grouping them into 12 textile books (for impressions of the research process, see Proyecto (Des)



Textile-Making as Research Method, Fig. 9 Embroidered stories: Our children, our great loves. San José de León, June 2019. (Photo: Laura Coral Velásquez)



Textile-Making as Research Method, Fig. 10 The participants enjoy the embroidery workshop. San José de León, April 2019. (Photo: Laura Coral Velásquez)

tejiendo miradas 2019a). The themes of these preferred stories included nostalgias of life in the guerrilla; the shared rural roots of ex-combatant and civilian participants; family reunions between ex-combatants, their children, and other relatives made possible through the peace agreement; trust-building between ex-combatants and local peasant communities (often victims of the previous violence); diverse transformation processes; ex-combatants' commitment to the peace process; and hopes for, as well as uncertainties about, the future (Arias López et al. 2020). Participants were invited to

explain their embroideries in conversational interviews, in order to include their own interpretation of their artwork. Taken together, the artworks and conversations give insights into the everyday peace and reconciliation processes in Colombia's state-neglected rural areas. Within the wider project, these data complemented the data generated through narrative biographical interviews and ethnographic observation, which allowed to gauge dominant and alternative narratives as well as silences in ex-combatants meaning-making and (re-)signification of the past, present, and future (Figs. 13 and 14).

Participant feedback: Participants' reflections on the textile method largely confirmed the assumptions and experiences of textile-making as a method discussed above. Participants felt that they had been given an opportunity to express some of the feelings, memories, and thoughts that normally remain silent/silenced. They appreciated learning new skills, which have been turned by some into artisanal income-generating activities. Core participants among female ex-combatants and civilians also came together more closely as a group in which relations were established, trust was built, and stories were shared – constituting important steps towards the difficult task of creating a horizontal community structure after years of hierarchical organization in the guerrilla. Exhibitions in the project communities furthermore helped render the voices and skills of some of the more marginalized community members publicly audible/visible and highlighted the value of memory and cultural work in communities so far focused almost exclusively on income-generating projects. Finally, the textile-making activities also built more horizontal relationships between participant-subjects and researcher-subjects, with the latter's textile reflections becoming part of the research data and dissemination.

Data dissemination and resonances among audiences: By exhibiting the textiles created by participants, the project aimed to enable dialogue between different parts of Colombian society and thereby to contribute positively to the fragile peace and reconciliation process (for impressions of the exhibitions in San José de León and Apartadó, see Proyecto (des)tejiendo miradas

Textile-Making as Research Method,

Fig. 11 Immersed in the needlework. San José de León, April 2019. (Photo: Laura Coral Velásquez)



Textile-Making as Research Method,

Fig. 12 After-work embroidery session. San José de León, April 2019. (Photo: Laura Coral Velásquez)



Textile-Making as Research Method, Fig. 13 Nostalgias of life in the bush: Gun. San José de León, May and July 2019. (Photo: Laura Coral Velásquez)

2019b). The thematically grouped textile books formed the basis for exhibitions in the two project communities, as well as the town of Apartadó and the departmental capital Medellín, visited by c.600 persons, as well as for workshops with different society groups including victims of the violent conflict. Exhibition visitors and workshop participants were invited to reflect in embroidered and verbal forms what the exhibition had inspired them to un-stitch and/or re-stitch, e.g., with regard to ex-combatants or the Colombian peace process. This process of textile resonances, which took inspiration from narrative practices techniques such as problem externalization and definitional

ceremonies (White 2007, Chaps. 1 and 4), not only resulted in textiles which have formed part of future exhibitions and generated additional data about the state of post-conflict reconciliation and peacebuilding in Colombia; it also contributed to transformations in collective meaning-making about the violent conflict in Colombia (Arias López et al. 2020, chapter “Fabric of Resonances”) (Figs. 15, 16, and 17).

Researcher reflexivity: The heterogeneous project team, consisting of 10 women from different national, generational, disciplinary, and life backgrounds, also used textile-making for the purpose of ongoing individual and collective reflexivity

(Arias López et al. forthcoming). Through techniques of narrative practice and textile-making, team members reflected at the outset of the project what had led them to participate in a research with former combatants. Later, embroidery and narrative resonances were used to continuously reflect on what the researchers had un- or re-stitched in the research process. The resulting textiles formed part of the project exhibitions, reflecting the relations built between researchers and participants in the process of joint needlework and making the researchers visible as part of the world they study.

Summary

This chapter has discussed the use of textile-making as a productive method for peace and conflict research. As a versatile arts-based method, textile-making is conceivable in a range of participatory qualitative research designs and will benefit research by excavating experiential and practical knowledge and providing researchers with engaging outputs for dissemination and impact activities. Textile-making can also be applied at the (co-) designing stage of a project. In the case of the Colombian research discussed in detail here, the method was embedded into the qualitative-interpretive methodology of narrative practices, which co-determined how art and research interacted



Textile-Making as Research Method, Fig. 14 Nostalgias of life in the bush: Designing a textile memory. San José de León, May and July 2019. (Photo: Laura Coral Velásquez)

Textile-Making as Research Method, Fig. 15 Resonances. Apartadó, November 2019. (Photo: Laura Coral Velásquez)



regarding data generation, research dissemination and impact, and researcher reflexivity.

Textile-making as a method is especially useful in projects which seek to contribute to positive social transformation. As part of critical, activist, and/or transformative research designs, textile-making can be a method to help change participants' lives for the better. It starts from their experiences and stimulates them to generate embodied knowledge, that is, knowledge which emerges as it passes through the body and is experienced and felt, producing not only cognitive but also affective and emotional transformations within participants and between them. People's everyday closeness to textiles and textiles' material associations with protection and

intimacy render textile-making also a particularly suited means to generate relations. Finally, textile artworks make the research publicly accessible and help generate social impact, not least because art is the very expression of the vitality that war cannot destroy in its entirety, and which in post-conflict processes provides avenues for understanding and reconciliation.

These benefits notwithstanding, there are some challenges which need to be thought through when considering the use of textile-making as a research method. First, while the method is relatively inexpensive in terms of materials needed, two major challenges lie in the necessity for the researcher to learn needlework skills themselves and in the time needed to teach those skills to participants, especially since this practical knowledge is only obtainable through trial, error, and repetition. The method may thus work best in projects involving a longer fieldwork period or reiterative visits to the same research location/group.

Second, textile-making as a method also finds its limits where participants are unable or unwilling to engage in textile-making, be it due to a lack of prior skills or to (resistance against) gender norms. Due to its image as feminized labor, needlework has remained at the margins of both research and the arts (Parker 2010; Pérez-Bustos and Márquez Gutiérrez 2015), and the process of



Textile-Making as Research Method, Fig. 16 Visitors un-stitching and re-stitching gazes. Apartadó, November 2019. (Photo: Laura Coral Velásquez)

Textile-Making as Research Method, Fig. 17 Resonances. Dabeiba, December 2019. (Photo: Laura Coral Velásquez)



politicizing textile narratives has been as slow and complex as the process of politicizing that which is deemed feminine. This may have implications for whether and how research findings generated through textile-making are valued by academic peers.

Third, like any arts-based method, the assumed openness of textile-making and its participatory character also depend on the wider methodology and research design into which they are embedded. Specific instructions of what or how to embroider, for instance, will narrow the general openness of creative methods. In the Colombian example, method closure was avoided through the narrative practice methodology, which is interested in participants' dominant, silent/silenced, alternative, and preferred stories, without presupposing what these stories consist in.

Fourth, in the arts-based research literature, there is also a lively debate about the extent to which artistic products should be interpreted by their maker, the researcher, or both and according to which criteria – aesthetic or social-scientific (e.g., Guillemin 2004). The answer to this will to some extent depend on the overall research aims and methodology (Hernández Salgar 2014). From an art perspective, object and subject, research and artistic process are inseparable, highlighting the need for and importance of continuous reflexive interpretation as a major feature of an arts-based research that takes the arts seriously (Borgdorff 2006; cf. Arias López et al. forthcoming).

Finally, there are also ethical questions to be taken into account when using textile-making as a research method. In addition to general ethical concerns around research with human participants, especially if these are marginalized or vulnerable, the transformative potentials inherent in arts-based methods warrant specific consideration, not least a participatory approach to deciding what constitutes “positive social change.” Here, the wider methodology is essential: embedded in critical, participatory methodologies, textile-making as a method holds a great potential to contribute to both a deepened experiential understanding of violent conflict and its active transformation.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Art and Reconciliation](#)
- ▶ [Perpetrator Research](#)
- ▶ [Photography and Peace](#)
- ▶ [Street Art and Peace](#)
- ▶ [Textiles Making Peace](#)

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Textiles Making Peace

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Synonyms

Art = peace; Crafts = politics; Memory activism; Peace activism; Truth and reconciliation commissions

Definition

To examine what textiles and textile-making can contribute to peace efforts, this chapter asks: In what sense can it be said that textiles make peace? In answering this question, broad conceptions of textiles, peace, and making are used. *Textiles* are flexible material structures made of spun fibers such as thread or yarn and produced through techniques including appliqué, crochet, embroidery, knitting, knotting, quilting, sewing, and weaving. *Peace* is understood both negatively as the absence of physical, structural, cultural, and other violences and positively as the existence of human cooperation and social integration (Galtung 1964), both as a process and an outcome and as an endeavor situated both in high politics and in the everyday. *Making* is intended in both a

literal and a figurative sense: it connotes manual practices of crafting, constructing, or otherwise bringing into being material objects and artifacts as well as activities that contribute to the achievement – the making – of peace. Using these broad understandings of textiles, peace and making, the chapter interrogates their interrelationship from different theoretical angles and through empirical examples drawn from the Global South and North.

Introduction

What is the relationship between textiles and peace, and in how far can textile-making constitute a hands-on kind of peace-making? Due to textiles' soft and flexible materiality and to the association of needlework with women's work, textiles are customarily thought of as inherently peaceful, yet politically inconsequential. For much the same reasons, needlework tends to be "considered at odds with intellectual life" (Parker 2010, p. 214; cf. St Clair 2019, p. xii) and overlooked as a research topic in the social sciences. Yet none of these assumptions holds up to closer scrutiny.

Textiles are far from naturally peaceful: flags and uniforms play a prominent role in war and military operations (Guillaume et al. 2015), and textile-making at the home front supports violent practices abroad in material and ideational ways (Bryan-Wilson 2017: 10 f.; Tidy 2019). Therefore, the capacity of textiles to further peace cannot simply be assumed, but needs to be unpacked and analyzed. In fact, there are many different ways in which textiles – banners, blankets, embroideries, guerrilla knits, quilts, ribbons, rugs, story cloths, textile artworks, wall hangings, and weavings – have effectively challenged different violences and proposed nonviolent alternatives (Andrä 2020). Textiles are often used to protest against and resist all kinds of state-sponsored and other violences (Figs. 1 and 2). As records documenting war-time massacres, torture, and enforced disappearance, textiles are also media for storing and conveying information about these events (Andrä et al. 2019). Textile-

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Textiles Making Peace,

Fig. 1 Paz - Justicia - Libertad/Peace - Justice - Freedom: An *arpillera* (textile wall hanging) by an anonymous maker showing the ongoing protests against the Pinochet military dictatorship, Chile, 1970s (Photo: C. Peck, (c) Conflict Textiles)

**Textiles Making Peace,**

Fig. 2 An embroidered handkerchief by *Bordando por la Paz* protesting the enforced disappearance of Cispín Frías Guardado, Mexico, 2016 (Photo: D. House (2019: 139))



making can constitute an artistic, artisanal, economic, mnemonic, or therapeutic praxis of working toward peace. In particular, textile-making can be a way of reconstructing communities and individual and collective identities after conflict.

To think through the relationship between textiles and peace, and to argue for textiles' potential to make peace in both a literal and a metaphorical sense, this chapter first discusses different theoretical approaches to textiles and politics. It then examines historical and contemporaneous examples of textiles contributing to efforts for peace in the Global South and North. In conclusion, the

chapter suggests that making sense of the relationship between textiles and peace requires an engagement not only with multiple theoretical perspectives and empirical examples but also with practices of making.

Textiles and Peace: Theoretical Approaches

In peace and conflict research and neighboring disciplines such as anthropology, political science, and sociology, the potential of textiles to

contribute to peace has received little attention thus far. Existing analyses bespeak the power of textiles in activism for peace and social justice (e.g., Adams 2012; Agosin 2008; Wedderburn 2019) but are conceived around individual examples and mostly do not offer a systematization – let alone a theorization – of the potency of textiles in peace efforts. Motivated by the idea that textile images and narratives of conflict and war can help advance the cause of peace, a few studies also examine how “weavings of war” (Zeltin Cooke and MacDowell 2005), “stitches of war” (Deacon and Calvin 2014), and “conflict textiles” (Andrä et al. 2019) depict, speak of, and address different violences from a comparative perspective. Yet their starting point for conceptualizing the power of textiles is a focus on violence rather than on peace, and they generally assume rather than scrutinize the practical efficacy of textiles in peace-making. In light of this relative dearth of knowledge about textiles in peace and conflict research, this section sketches possible theoretical roads ahead.

The literature on textiles and textile-making in cultural studies and art history provides some starting points for thinking about the relationship between textiles and peace. On the one hand, this literature emphasizes the specific nature of textiles, including their “specially tensile qualities” and their “capacity to be pulled, stressed and to withstand tension” (Bryan-Wilson 2017, p. 5); the fact that our bodies are constantly touched by or enshrouded in textiles such as garments and linen (St Clair 2019); and the particular processes and techniques through which fibers and fabrics are produced and textiles are made (Parker 2010; St Clair 2019). On the other hand, this literature is wary of generalizing from textiles’ material and sociocultural nature to their role within political and social endeavors. Rather, textile scholars point to what Rozsika Parker calls textiles’ “dual face” (Parker 2010, p. xix). Historically, textiles and textile-making have been harnessed for both conservative and progressive projects and “claimed [...] as at once hegemonic and counterhegemonic” (Bryan-Wilson 2017, p. 3; cf. Adamson 2013). Theorizations of the relationship between textiles and peace thus need to account for textiles’ materially specific character

and for their socially and politically constituted double-sidedness.

One way of thinking about the relationship between textiles and peace in light of this double-sidedness is to conceive of textiles as representational. Textile-making is meaning-making: needleworkers “transform materials to produce sense – whole ranges of meanings” (Parker 2010, p. 6). Textiles are narrative, visual, and tactile “forms of communication” (Bryan-Wilson 2017, p. 4) or “bearers of knowledge” (Andrä et al. 2019). As representational artifacts, textiles such as the *arpillera* (wall hanging) and the embroidered handkerchief pictured above depict experiences of violence and hopes for peace. Textiles communicate in various “documentary, visual, and sensory registers” simultaneously (Andrä et al. 2019, p. 3) and are “dense with multiple meanings and [...] available for a range of readings and conflicting interpretations” (Bryan-Wilson 2017, p. 4). The twofold question of how peace can be represented and of how representations can contribute to peace is at the core of visual peace research (Möller 2020), which stipulates theoretically that because visualizations “are broader, less direct, and less confrontational than text,” they “can help retrieve and process traumatic memories more easily than oral or written art” and “provide an alternative means of engaging with society” (Engelkamp et al. 2020, p. 13 f.). Empirically, visual peace research has found that visualizations of peace in paintings, photography, and films overwhelmingly conjure up negative rather than positive visions of peace (Engelkamp et al. 2020). The representational multiplicity of textiles pushes these theoretical and empirical findings. Textiles challenge visual peace research to expand the range of artefacts and contexts it considers. Moreover, textiles’ multiple registers mean that they might look “lovely” but be made of rough materials and depict violent events (Andrä et al. 2019, p. 6; cf. Becker 2004, p. 119; Hemmings 2011, p. 42). By triggering “sensory recall” (Hunter 2019, p. 94), textiles might also help with processing traumatic memories. Finally, taking advantage of needlework’s multivocality and its seemingly humble lineage, textile representations can surprise their viewers in ways not open to

more conventional visual media and thus have a special capacity to induce (peaceful) changes in thinking and action (Andrä et al. 2019, p. 12).

Feminism constitutes another theoretical resource for grappling with the implications of textiles' double-sidedness for their ability to contribute to peace. Textile scholar and psychoanalyst Parker originally developed her conclusions about textiles' "dual face" by analyzing how embroidery had historically "provided both a weapon of resistance for women and functioned as a source of constraint. It has promoted submission to the norms of feminine obedience and offered both psychological and practical means to independence" (Parker 2010, p. xix). Textile-making is not only time-consuming, but usually also undervalued and trivialized, and it has often been employed to keep women down. However, it can also be empowering and subversive of oppressive gender relations. Therefore, textiles have the potential to reproduce but importantly also to undo static, binary, and hierarchical orderings of gender (Bryan-Wilson 2017, p. 19). Insofar as peace needs to be practiced in terms of gender, too (Confortini 2006), textiles can contribute to efforts for peace by speaking out against sexual and gender-based violence, unequal gender relations, and gendered discourses of war and by offering alternative forms of agency, conviviality, and resistance (Cole 2019; Garlock 2016). Yet to be explored more fully, theoretical affinities between feminist peace research and feminist perspectives on textiles also include the refusal to take women's presumably inherent peacefulness as an analytical point of departure (Confortini 2006) and the focus on the (de-) construction of gendered identities and relations (Wibben et al. 2019).

A theorization of textiles making peace could also benefit from intersectional and decolonial analyses. Art historical studies have focused on the intersectional formation of textiles within the categorical divide between publicly made, economically valuable "art" usually produced by men and domestically made, economically worthless "craft" undertaken mostly by women. When this hierarchy was first instituted in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Britain, it led to the

marginalization of the "working-class [...] or disadvantaged middle-class women" who made up the majority of the country's textile workforce (Parker 2010, p. 5). For contemporary textile work, while the art/craft binary may have "more or less eroded, there persist classed, raced, and gendered distinctions between 'high craft' meant for institutional display [...] and the 'low craft' of hobbyists" (Bryan-Wilson 2017, p. 13 f.). As peace research is increasingly interested in art as a "bottom-up" approach to peacebuilding (Premaratna and Bleiker 2016), it might seem straightforward to subsume textiles under this emerging research program by conceiving of them as art in the service of peace (e.g., Adams 2013; Wedderburn 2019). Highlighting how intersections of class, gender, race, and sexuality come to matter in art as an approach to peace, a conceptualization of textiles as art/craft offers a helpful counterweight.

A decolonial perspective on textiles and peace could start from how textiles' "differing histories of production, use, and meaning" have played out within colonialism and coloniality (Hemmings 2011, p. 42). Textiles "conditioned the relations between colonizer and colonized" not only in a material and economic sense but also through a racialized framing of textile-making as craft and hence "as static, trapped within tradition" and in need of enlightened improvement (Adamson 2013, p. xvii; cf. Bryan-Wilson 2017, p. 10). Yet textiles, as the "subalterns of the art world," can also assume "an unexpected location of power" (Hemmings 2011, p. 41 f.). In the context of the violences of colonialism and coloniality, textiles' double-sidedness means that they can be employed to make or break colonial framings and relations. An example of this are the uniforms and "long dresses" of the Ovaherero *Otruppe* movement in Namibia: through their use of colors and symbolism, these garments assimilated textile forms and practices first introduced by Rhenish missionaries in the nineteenth century and asserted Ovaherero identity in the wake of German colonial rule and the German genocide of the Ovaherero and Nama in 1904 (Hendrickson 1996; Naughten 2013). Future research could consider how textiles and textile-making can contribute to

a decolonial peace by constituting a “postcolonial archive” (McEwan 2003), helping to transpose the “paradigm of war and difference” (Ndlovu-Gatsveni 2015), or strengthening the agency of the actual subjects of peace against the universalizing rationalities of external interventions (Jabri 2013).

Within the kind of everyday peace-making that this last point suggests (MacGinty 2014), textiles can also come to matter in terms of their materiality. This includes “what they are made of and how they are designed” and also “the specific contexts of their use” (Woodward 2020, p. 19). Within these contexts, textiles’ materiality can be made sense of in terms of entanglements or assemblages or also by considering textiles’ social lives (Hendrickson 1996). In particular, research on the materiality of textiles focuses on their embodied and affective relations. Along these lines, collective textile-making among victims of violent conflict has been shown to encourage, through the textured and tempered materiality of thread, cloth and needle, embodied and affective ways of sharing, listening to, and sometimes even overcoming painful and debilitating emotions (Bello Tocancipá and Aranguren Romero 2019). Yet while their “[m]aterial specificities” might suggest that textiles are generally prone to promote peace, their material relationalities always depend upon how they are “used and received” (Bryan-Wilson 2017, p. 28 f.). In this way, textiles can add a complexifying dimension to research on the role of embodiment, affect and lived experience in peacebuilding (Berents 2015; Väyrynen 2019).

Finally, textile-making can be a creative and hands-on kind of peace-making. Generally, making constitutes a nonintellectual way of relating to and engaging with the world, others, and the self. As sociologist David Gauntlett (2018) argues, “making is connecting”: to create any new artefact or object, we have to connect existing materials and ideas, connect with people, and connect with our environments. From a psychoanalytical perspective, making also “affirms the self as a being with agency, acceptability and potency” (Parker 2010, p. xx; cf. Hunter 2019, p. 49). Not only can textile-making be a means for “the finding of form

for thought” (Parker 2010, p. xx), but it can also constitute a way of thinking in its own right: “once we are tacitly familiar with the practice, the movement [of needle and thread] itself becomes a way of thinking” (Bello Tocancipá and Aranguren Romero 2019, p. 194). As a way of relating and engaging, textile-making is also political: taking “*textile* as a transitive verb,” “[t]o textile politics is to refuse easy binaries, to acknowledge complications: textured as in uneven, but also [...] as in tangibly worked and retaining some of the grain of that labor” (Bryan-Wilson 2017, p. 7). However, “textile-based techniques, like any others, have no immanent politics” (Bryan-Wilson 2017, p. 31). Textile-making has often been employed in the service of war (Tidy 2019), but as the suffragette movement in the 1900s and 1910s, the peace activists of the 1970s and 1980s, and contemporary craftivists show, it can also be engaged as a different, more peaceful practice of politics (Greer 2014; Parker 2010). In post-conflict situations, needlework can serve to remake individuals’ sense of self and the social fabric of communities (Bello Tocancipá and Aranguren Romero 2019; Garlock 2016). Therefore, not only can peace and conflict studies analyze textiles as textual, visual, and material primary sources (Adams 2018; Andrä et al. 2019; Doolan 2019; McEwan 2003), but it can also use textile-making as a method of participatory research, working not on but with victims and perpetrators of violence (Andrä and Bliesemann de Guevara 2019; Bliesemann de Guevara and Arias Lopez 2019; Bello Tocancipá and Aranguren Romero 2019).

Peace Through Textiles: Empirical Examples

Of the many textiles making peace, this section discusses a few examples to illustrate some of the theoretical threads outlined above: textiles that have played a role within official post-conflict mechanisms; traditional forms of textiles that were adapted and employed in struggles for peace; collective, transnational examples of textile-making for peace; and textile interpretations of a famous piece of anti-war art.

Textiles have sometimes played a part in official post-violence mechanisms. In Canada, the *Living Healing Quilt Project* was initiated in response to the Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission and later gained the sponsorship of the commission. Consisting of individual quilt blocks produced by survivors of the residential schools that sought to assimilate indigenous children to Canadian culture, the project put together three quilts – “Schools of Shame,” “Child Prisoners,” and “Crimes Against Humanity” – which then traveled with the commission as it collected oral testimonies (Robertson 2009). In Peru, the indigenous women of the *Asociación Kuyanaky* collective gave testimony to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission by means of the *arpillera* (appliquéd wall hanging) “Ayer-Hoy” (“Yesterday-Today”). Documenting its makers’ experiences of the armed conflict between the military and the *Sendero Luminoso*, “Ayer-Hoy” was presented before the commission

and later also used in a “vigil in front of the law court’s gate” (Franger 2014, p. 113f.) (Fig. 3). In South Africa, the *Amazwi Abesifazane* (Voices of Women) project responded to the limits and exclusions of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, whose process was focused on certain kinds of violence only, by documenting indigenous women’s experiences of apartheid violences in thousands of embroidered memory cloths that were later exhibited in South Africa and abroad (Becker 2004). As these examples show, for survivors whose experiences of violence would otherwise not be heard within official post-violence mechanisms – for women, indigenous, and other marginalized groups – textiles can offer an alternative language in which to bear testimony and make their voices heard.

Beyond official mechanisms, people have adapted traditional textile forms and practices to struggle for peace. In Chile, *arpilleras* – appliquéd and embroidered wall hangings



Textiles Making Peace, Fig. 3 Women of the *Asociación Kuyanaky* display the *arpillera* “Ayer-Hoy” in front of the building in Pamplona Alta in which the Truth

and Reconciliation Commission held one of its official hearings, Peru, 2002 (Photo: G. Franger)

Textiles Making Peace,

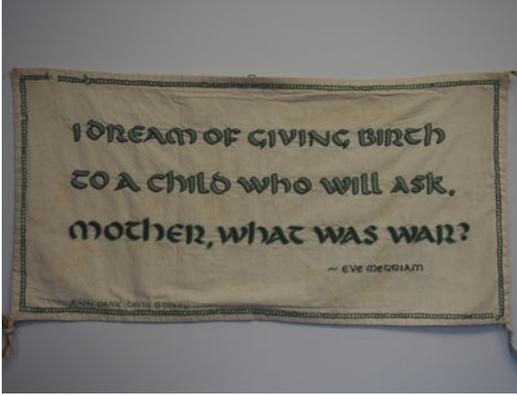
Fig. 4 Hay Golpe de Estado/There is a Coup d'Etat: An *arpillera* by an anonymous maker depicting the bombing of *La Moneda*, the Chilean seat of government, on 11 September 1973, Chile, 1989 (Photo: M. Melaugh, (c) Conflict Textiles)



depicting mundane rural scenes, usually made by women – are a “traditional” textile craft that, during the Pinochet regime, was turned into a “dissident” one (Voionmaa Tanner 2012, p. 9) (Fig. 4). Relatives of the military dictatorship’s victims sewed *arpilleras* to record and denounce abductions, torture, murder, and economic deprivation. Smuggled out of the country and sold by international solidarity groups, some of these *arpilleras* also carried their messages to international audiences and created a modest income for their makers (Adams 2013; Agosin 2008). In Southeast Asia, the Hmong’s *phra pra vet* are intricately embroidered story cloths that depict not only “traditional tales” and “Hmong daily and ceremonial life” but also the Hmong’s “experiences of war, migration, and resettlement” (MacDowell 1991). An ethnic group from China, the Hmong were displaced to Vietnam, Laos, and Thailand during the nineteenth century and again faced displacement in the aftermath of the Vietnam War and the Laotian Civil War (Hamilton 2019, p. 577). Originally, Hmong women embroidered abstract decorative adornments for clothing and costumes (*paj ntaub*). Following the second wave of displacement, however, Hmong women and men in refugee camps in Thailand and the United States began to embroider pictorial story cloths to capture their experiences and share them with others (Craig 2010; Hassell 1984). Today, *arpilleras* and *phra*

pra vet continue their struggle for peace. As part of public or private collections, they feature in exhibitions around the world and teach ever-new audiences about the misery that war and other violences cause (Andrä et al. 2019; Doolan 2019), and new generations of activists use *arpillera*-style textiles as visual and tactile means to communicate and protest new violences in Chile, Mexico, and elsewhere (Nowell 2020; Pardo 2017).

Textile-making can amount to a collective, transnational project of working toward peace. In August 1985, thousands of individually embroidered, appliquéd, quilted, woven, and painted panels were tied together to form a *Peace Ribbon* that spanned 15 miles from the United States Capitol along the National Mall and once around the Pentagon (Figs. 5 and 6). The ribbon was a “mode of communication” through which its makers, mostly women from the United States and around the world, protested against the nuclear arms race (Pershing 1996, p. 3). The *Peace Ribbon* exemplifies textiles’ “dual face”: the gendered connotations of the ribbon’s textile medium meant that it seemed “nonthreatening” to its makers and audience, which “made it possible for participants to make a public statement about nuclear arms policy” but which “[u]ltimately [. . .] had the effect of limiting the immediate impact of the event on the governmental level” (Pershing 1996, p. 3; cf. Hunter



Textiles Making Peace, Fig. 5 Panel from the Peace Ribbon (Photo: L. Cole)



Textiles Making Peace, Fig. 6 Panel from the Peace Ribbon (Photo: L. Cole)

2019, p. 141). Another example of collective and transnational textile-making for peace is the ongoing (since 2011) *Bordando por la Paz y la Memoria* (Embroidering for Peace and Memory) project (Fig. 7). Consisting of white cotton handkerchiefs onto which the personal details of people disappeared and killed in the context of the Mexican “war on drugs” have been stitched, the project seeks “to register every single person who had been killed,” “to rouse indignation” among the general public, and “to create a citizen memorial” (House 2019, p. 138). As handkerchiefs are embroidered in public settings in Mexico and elsewhere, the project is an example of how textile-making can be a way of remaking connections, communities, and social worlds (House 2019, p. 146 f.).

One of the most iconic anti-war paintings of the twentieth century, Pablo Picasso’s *Guernica* has been reworked in textile multiple times. A woven tapestry version made by artists Jacqueline and René de la Baume Dürrbach in 1955 and sanctioned by Picasso himself hangs just outside the chamber of the United Nations Security Council; it gained global attention when it was covered for the 2003 press conference in which Colin Powell argued for the necessity of the US-led war in Iraq (Ashmore 2017). Other textile replicas of *Guernica* were made collectively by activists and community organizations. A tapestry produced by the *Keiskamma Art Project* in 2009 and 2010 adapts *Guernica*’s imagery to articulate the impact of HIV/AIDS on rural South Africans as well as its makers’ resistance to the South African government’s inaction in the matter (Ashmore 2017, p. 390; cf. Wedderburn 2019). Other textile remakings of *Guernica* include a protest banner made by British activists (Ashmore 2017), an *arpillera* sewn by the daughter of parents who lived through the bombardment of the Basque town of Gernika in 1937 (Conflict Textiles 2020), and a 3D installation crocheted by Italian guerrilla crochet group *Sul Filo dell’Arte*. Collectively, these textile remakings complicate binary understandings of art/craft in the service of peace and bespeak the power of textiles “to convey a statement of opposition to those in power who prioritize their own agendas to the detriment of civilians” (Ashmore 2017, p. 379f.).

Summary

This chapter has offered theoretical and empirical starting points for peace and conflict research to begin to think about the relationship between textiles and peace. A thread running through the chapter has been the idea that textiles can, figuratively and literally, help to make peace. Textile-making – as meaning-making; as a material, affective, and embodied practice; and as creative and hands-on doing – can be a way of peace-making. Ultimately, thinking about the relationship between textiles and peace in terms of theoretical approaches and empirical examples will therefore only go so far.



Textiles Making Peace, Fig. 7 *Bordando por la Paz y la Memoria* embroidering handkerchiefs in public, Mexico, 2016 (Photo: D. House (2019: 141))

What is needed is not only an appreciation of textiles and peace as a research topic in its own right but a practical engagement in textile-making as a different way of thinking.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Art and Reconciliation](#)
- ▶ [Conflict, Memory, and Memory Activism: Dealing with Difficult Pasts](#)
- ▶ [Memorials and Transitional Justice](#)
- ▶ [Nonviolence and Civil Resistance](#)
- ▶ [Photography and Peace](#)
- ▶ [Street Art and Peace](#)

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The Balkans

- ▶ [Balkan as a Concept](#)
- ▶ [Balkanization](#)

The Korean Peace Process

- ▶ [Peacebuilding and Korean Civil Society](#)

Theatre

- ▶ [Art and Reconciliation](#)
- ▶ [Theatre and Peacebuilding](#)

Theatre and Peacebuilding

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Synonyms

[Art](#); [Conflict transformation](#); [Peacebuilding](#); [Theatre](#)

Description

Theatre for peacebuilding is increasingly gaining scholarly and practitioner interest as an approach for peacebuilding. Often found within critical and developing agendas in peace and conflict studies, it is seen to offer a possible platform to creatively engage with conflict narratives and emotional cultures of conflict. The range of theatre forms used for peacebuilding that encompass professional and participatory theatre aimed at personal healing, relationship building, dialogue, peace education, coexistence, and resistance illustrate the versatility of theatre as an approach. Prevailing peacebuilding can benefit from the broader repertoires of communication, representation, and participation offered within the theatre space. The entry provides a discussion of theatre forms used for peacebuilding and the contributions theatre can offer to peacebuilding. In conclusion, it identifies areas for further research.

Introduction

Theatre has historically been noted for its political relevance. Plato perceives the stage to be capable of disrupting established structures and hierarchies in the polis. People's movements across the world provide evidence for theatre's capacity to rearticulate politics. Attempts at legislative

This entry draws from two previous works: Premaratna and Bleiker (2016) and Premaratna (2018).

control of theatre in colonial India such as the Dramatic Performances Act of 1876 and the role of theatre as a space for expressing dissent during an oppressive regime in Sri Lanka during the 1980s (Obeyesekere 1999) are examples. Thus, while not being necessarily peaceful nor violent in and of itself, theatre has historically been an avenue to engage with and shape politics at ground level.

The scholarly interest in the study of theatre for peacebuilding is relatively recent. It is often found within critical and developing agendas in peace and conflict studies where peacebuilding is understood as a nuanced nonlinear process. Discussions on everyday peace, agonistic peace, and feminist peace research that take peacebuilding beyond state-centric conceptualizations are of particular relevance here. Their shared emphasis on inclusion, representation, and participation of multiple voices provide an appropriate ground where theatre can locate itself as an accessible, versatile approach for peacebuilding.

Organized in two sections and supported by empirical evidence where relevant, this entry provides an overview of theatre's role in peacebuilding: firstly, it reviews literature on theatre forms used for peacebuilding. Secondly, it analyzes key contributions theatre can offer to peacebuilding.

Theatre Forms

Two overarching vantage points can be identified among various theatre forms developed and used for peacebuilding: theatre forms with a therapeutic take that focus on personal healing and reconciliation and theatre forms that adopt a broader, explicitly socio-political, and/or didactic lens. While these categories overlap and are by no means comprehensive, they provide an introductory grasp of the subfield.

Theatre forms developed for therapeutic purposes work for healing and reconciliation at the individual or small group level. Expression and reflexivity are prioritized over didactic goals. Depending on the issues processed, effective peacebuilding through these theatre forms call for qualified, trained practitioners. Psychodrama, drama therapy, and playback theatre are popular examples. Playback theatre where a small group

of actors enact personal stories volunteered from the audience is especially noted for its capacity to facilitate individual and small group reconciliation (Fox 2006; Hutt and Hosking 2004). Expression and empathy that could occur through the process can result in mutual healing and closer relationships (Cohen 2005; Salas 2009).

Theatre forms that are developed or used for political engagement, in comparison, focus on issues at a broader societal level. Socio-political critique and educating play a primary role and the emphasis on shared issues and mobilization for transformation are other possible common features. Theatre of the Oppressed where the key focus is empowerment (Boal 2006) and Applied Theatre which gathers together a broad range of theatre forms produced to initiate change through a process of participation (Balme 2008; Nicholson 2014; Hughes and Nicholson 2016; Prentki and Preston 2009) are cases in point. Verbatim theatre and documentary theatre that perform testimonies and documented stories can be of particular relevance to engage with postwar memory and transitional justice (Simić 2017). The performance space and formats in theatre forms developed for political engagement can vary from street theatre to proscenium stage and community theatre to professional theatre. Often there is space during or immediately after the performance to discuss the play or the issues raised therein in public. Such theatre forms are commonly used for peacebuilding at a practitioner level given their broader applicability.

Contributions to Peacebuilding

Theatre can contribute to peacebuilding by broadening the parameters of prevailing approaches. Literature points in three directions: theatre can expand boundaries of communication for peacebuilding, offer a context-specific approach for peacebuilding, and encourage multivocality in place of seemingly definitive binary answers (Premaratna and Bleiker 2016).

Theatre allows us to go beyond the largely rational discourse within which prevailing approaches to peacebuilding operate, by offering alternative means of communication and the possibility to engage with emotions. Conflict dynamics insinuate into our regular language and

conversational habits and create a lingering obstacle to peacebuilding (Cohen 2003; Diamond and McDonald 1996). Feminist peace research consistently highlights the need to take into account the corporeal aspects of peacebuilding (Väyrynen 2019; McLeod and O'Reilly 2019). Theatre as an embodied approach offers a wide repertoire of communication beyond that of the verbal and thereby opens up the possibility of overcoming or sidestepping some challenges with the mainstream approaches. The space for imagination and creativity to be exercised through a range of art forms can allow theatre an artistic freedom that can transcend boundaries of regular discourse. Thus, using theatre, practitioners can choose whether to avoid confronting divisive issues or delve into inevitable ambivalences in conflict narratives as appropriate. Doing so could provide alternative lenses into political strife (Bleiker 2009) and encourage people to engage in novel ways with each other. Such reinterpretations as Cobb (2003) argues can be of particular relevance to transform authoritarian narratives in identity conflicts.

Engaging with emotional cultures of trauma is another prerequisite for conflict transformation. Scholars highlight the role emotions play in civil life and conflict (Bleiker and Hutchison 2008; Nussbaum 2013) and critique peacebuilding for its inability to adequately address emotional cultures of conflict (Hutchison and Bleiker 2008, 2013). Here too, theatre with its ability to engage with emotions makes a significant contribution to the predominantly rational discourse on peacebuilding. Theatre as immediate, embodied interactive performance art can humanize conflict dynamics. Personalization and subsequent emotional engagement with the performance can open us up to relating to and empathizing with the other. Feelings evoked in performances and participant responses can go beyond rational cognition (Gallagher and Service 2010). Both qualitative and quantitative studies suggest that performances motivated by social change effectively changes audience attitudes and perceptions (Hawes 2007). By utilizing a range of communication that goes beyond the rational discourse, theatre can highlight alternative narratives or reshape existing one to be more conducive to peacebuilding.

An empirical example for how theatre seeks to go beyond the dominant political discourse on peacebuilding is the Nepalese theatre group *Sarwanam*. *Sarwanam*'s minimalistic theatre style is characterized by limited dialogue and amplified body movement. These features enhance the accessibility of the group's plays across a range of ethno-linguistic groups in Nepal. Plays such as *Remaining Pages of History* capture and highlight emotional costs of the conflict and legacies of unresolved trauma from a grassroots perspective. Performed feelings of pain, fear, loss, and despair in the play are highly evocative and intense due to the particular theatre style and encourage the audience to empathize at a level difficult to reach through rational political discourse.

Theatre also contributes to broaden boundaries of prevailing peacebuilding through its capacity to engage with local context. Prevalent peacebuilding is critiqued for largely remaining within international and local elite networks and top-down frameworks, resulting in a disregard of local specificities (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013; Paffenholz 2015; Richmond 2012). When it is in tune with local culture, theatre being an art form can offer socio-culturally appropriate ways to engage with and transform local politics and everyday life. Theatre for peacebuilding can consequently draw from ground level resources such as culture and people's lived experience to offer alternative perspectives into conflict dynamics and peace processes. Theatre is also an accessible, collaborative, public activity that can physically bring people together. As such, it can become a platform where relationships are repaired or formed anew across conflict divides. These narratives integrate into the meaning-making process of communities. When used in conjunction with a peace process, theatre for peacebuilding can therefore act as a conduit between the grassroots and a formal political process, to elicit context-appropriate solutions.

Jana Karaliya is an example for a case that draws from local insights and culture to develop a tailored, context-specific peacebuilding approach through theatre. Initiated in 2002 during the cease-fire agreement between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and the Sri Lankan government,

Jana Karaliya brings together youth from Sinhala and Tamil communities to form a multiethnic, bilingual mobile theatre group. Being multiethnic and bilingual addresses conflict polarities. The group enacts peaceful coexistence through the mobile theatre element and plays. Performances incorporate both Sinhala and Tamil music, theatre, and dance styles. The narrative of coexistence the group performs is therefore rooted within local cultures and traditions. Adopting theatre as an approach enabled the group to tailor their peacebuilding to the local context, resulting in offering a resilient strand of peacebuilding that survived challenging phases in the Sri Lankan conflict.

Theatre can make a significant contribution to peacebuilding by facilitating the expression and inclusion of multiple voices. Prevailing emphasis on liberal peacebuilding is critiqued for its inability to incorporate the diverse—often minority—voices from the ground (McLeod and O'Reilly 2019; Wibben et al. 2019), as introducing democratic procedures early on in postwar transition can negatively affect heterogeneity at ground (Fisher 2000; Franks and Richmond 2008; Jarstad 2016). Adequately listening to and incorporating minority voices is central for sustaining peace. Theatre has capacity for both. As an inclusive approach, it can bring out multiple and at times contradictory voices within the same platform. The medium's versatility and adaptability allow theatre to facilitate dialogue among and between such diverse and peripheral voices. Scholars highlight Greek tragedy as particularly relevant here for the democratic potential of the genre (Chou 2012; Mastrorarde 2010). Tragedy portrays the inherent disjuncture and contradictions in the world and reveals multiple coexisting realities and actions. Others perceive theatre as "one of the most powerful mediums for creating live contact between individuals from opposing sides of a conflict" (Cohen et al. 2011, p. 42). If integrated into the public discourse on peacebuilding, these multiple voices can open up the discussion beyond conflict polarities and metanarratives. Creative engagement with each other and the exercise of "moral imagination" as offered through art-based approaches such as theatre can

result in experiences of collaboration and coexistence upon which alternative, hopefully peaceful futures can be envisioned (Lederach 2005). Theatre's ability to communicate in ways that go beyond everyday verbal language, liminality, and the transient nature of the performance all work to make the space safer and more appropriate for expressing what may be risky to express or censored elsewhere. When appropriately designed and utilized, theatre can thrive in and elicit dissent even in sensitive political situations.

Jana Sanskriti from India is an example for theatre's multivocality. The group works with communities in rural West Bengal and uses forum theatre to engage with conflicts and issues of structural violence (Ganguly 2010). *Jana Sanskriti*'s core group is mostly made up of members that live and perform in their village level theatre groups. Storylines for scripts drawing from everyday realities are developed and fine-tuned through an inclusive, consultative process between the core group and village groups, tailored to reflect local contexts (Ganguly 2017; Premaratna 2018). Space for different voices to emerge is built into the process at each stage. The forum theatre format takes the multivocality further by allowing the audience to interrupt the play if they see an opportunity to change the narrative for the better at any point. The creative imaginary of theatre provides a platform where members can rehearse what may seem insurmountable in real life, in preparation for everyday activism and transformation. *Jana Sanskriti*'s use of theatre therefore allows the expression of multiple, often silenced voices within a public platform and the integration of these into possible real-life solutions.

Summary and Conclusion

Despite a longstanding recognition of theatre's political relevance, scholarly interest in theatre for peacebuilding emerges with relatively recent calls for a nondualistic, nuanced understanding of peace and peacebuilding (Aggestam et al. 2015; Björkdahl and Mannergren Selimovic 2016; Mac Ginty and Firchow 2016; Söderström et al. 2019;

McLeod and O'Reilly 2019). The local turn in peacebuilding, feminist peace research, and the more recent focus on the role of affect and emotions in politics significantly contribute to establish theatre's relevance. The range of theatre forms used for peacebuilding that encompass both personal and public engagement illustrate the versatility of theatre as an approach. Prevailing peacebuilding can benefit from the broader repertoires of communication, representation, and participation offered within the theatre space. It is important to reiterate two points here: theatre itself is neither peaceful nor violent and theatre's impact depends on its use and interpretation. While theatre for peacebuilding can facilitate eliciting voices from and conveying a peace process to the ground and vice versa, there needs to be an overarching political process and frameworks in place that can adequately utilize this potential. Challenges for future research come in three directions: empirical studies, conceptualization, and application. In-depth empirical studies on theatre for peacebuilding initiatives in various situations are needed to facilitate further conceptualization of how theatre works for peacebuilding, and both of these are prerequisites to develop tools for the effective designing, implementation, and impact assessment of the application of theatre for peacebuilding.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Art and Reconciliation](#)
- ▶ [Culture and Conflict Resolution](#)
- ▶ [Divided Cities](#)
- ▶ [Everyday Peace](#)
- ▶ [Street Art and Peace](#)
- ▶ [Women's International League for Peace and Freedom \(WILPF\)](#)

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Third-Party Intervention

► UN Missions in Sudan and South Sudan

Thomas Aquinas

► Just War Theory Across Time and Culture

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► Post-Conflict Timor-Leste

Track II Diplomacy

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Traditional Peace Approaches

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- ▶ [Liberal Peacebuilding in a Transitional International Order](#)

Transitional Justice

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Transitional Justice and Peacebuilding

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Definition

Societies transitioning away from conflict or repression will often initiate processes of transitional justice for holding perpetrators of violence to account and providing redress for victims. The core transitional justice mechanisms include criminal trials, truth commissions, and reparations, which have been applied mainly in Global South settings and under the broad mission of addressing violent pasts and laying the foundations for future peace and stability. Post-conflict peacebuilding on the other hand refers to work designed to prevent the recurrence of violence, addressing the underlying causes of conflict and helping people resolve their differences peacefully. In practice, it includes work around conflict transformation, rule of law promotion, and economic development, and involves a wide range of activities such as DDR, institution building, and community dialogue. It is distinct from transitional justice as a field of practice and scholarship, although transitional justice is often described as a component of peacebuilding. Like transitional justice, it is concerned to support the development of more peaceful societies.

Introduction

Transitional justice and peacebuilding are two traditions that deal in different ways with violence in post-conflict settings and laying the groundwork for peace. The origins of contemporary transitional justice are traced back to the so-called “third wave” of democratization in Latin America and Eastern Europe in the 1980s and 1990s, when

new governments sought ways of responding to abuses under the former regimes (Mihir 2016; Arthur 2009). Truth commissions, which perhaps most symbolize transitional justice, were developed during the Latin American transitions for examining and documenting human rights violations under the military dictatorships and for making recommendations about redress and preventing future violations. Around the same time, an expansion in the range of legal mechanisms and regimes available to transitional justice for prosecuting perpetrators of violence (Lawther and Moffett 2017) paved the way for the creation of the International Criminal Court, which began functioning in 2002 for dealing with international crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes. Increasingly, transitional justice has become applied in post-conflict settings and unfolds through a range of judicial and non-judicial instruments and mechanisms, including reparations, memorials, and security sector reform alongside criminal trials and truth commissions. The United Nations identifies four pillars of transitional justice: truth, justice, reparation, and guarantees of nonrecurrence. Transitional justice processes are initiated by governments in post-conflict settings and are backed by intergovernmental organizations, NGOs, and supported through large-scale funding from Western donors.

Post-conflict peacebuilding emerged and developed around this same period, reflecting new expectations at the end of the Cold War around the role of international actors in addressing civil conflicts and new beliefs about the conditional nature of state sovereignty (see “► [Peacebuilding: Utopia and Reality](#)” in the chapter by Chandler, this volume). The UN secretary general’s *Agenda for Peace* report in 1992 defined peacebuilding as efforts to “identify and support structures which will tend to consolidate peace and advance a sense of confidence and wellbeing among people.” Over the next few decades, peacebuilding activities came to incorporate a broad range of interventions in the political, economic, and social spheres of post-conflict societies. These would include the monitoring of elections, penal and judicial reform, tackling corruption, and promoting conflict resolution

and reconciliation (UN 1992, 2000). A “statebuilding” agenda under a good governance framework became central in the 2000s, and prioritized activities for creating and strengthening state institutions as a prerequisite for building towards democracy and economic reform.

Transitional justice and peacebuilding may appear to share a great deal in common. Transitional justice has become included in mandates of a number of UN peacekeeping operations and it is often described as a component of peacebuilding. At the same time, these traditions have “not always been seen as part of the same enterprise and linkages between them have not generally received a great deal of attention by scholars” (Sharp 2013, p. 167; Baker and Obradovic-Wochnik 2016). This entry discusses the underexamined relationship between the two traditions and work that has sought to close this gap. The entry also reflects on the transitional justice–peacebuilding “nexus” in light of several developments within, and critiques of, mainstream scholarship and practice in each tradition. These include the liberal peace assumptions that underpin both traditions; a lack of attention to socioeconomic issues, such as inequality and marginalization; the imported and top-down approaches to justice and peace; and a number of “local turns” that seek to refocus transitional justice and peacebuilding around communities and local justice and peace initiatives. Emerging through these critiques are agendas for more transformative and emancipatory modes of practice in both traditions that share a common emphasis on local priorities and resources and the transformation of relationships and structures. The entry suggests there is a more radical nexus at the intersection of “transformative justice” and “emancipatory peacebuilding” and it identifies several potential points of connection.

From “Peace Versus Justice” to Integration and Coordination

The relationship between transitional justice and peacebuilding remains underexamined, even though both traditions have been in regular

contact over the recent two decades. The “peace versus justice” debate which began in the late 1990s brought both together, but in a relationship characterized by tension rather than synergy. Those prioritizing justice point to the importance of accountability for strengthening the legitimacy of new governments and enhancing a belief in the rule of law among national populations. Advocates of peace on the other hand take a pragmatic approach that considers the political context in which prosecutions and other accountability initiatives take place. Retributive justice is viewed as frequently at odds with peacebuilding activities such as where transitional justice processes divert resources away from securing peace, provoke negative responses from perpetrators, prologue wars, and risk destabilizing fragile peace settlements.

Disagreements over this question seem to reflect the different objectives, strategies, roles, desired outcomes, and principles guiding the work of practitioners and academics in these traditions (Parlevliet 2010; Simpson 2017). The emergence of a “peace with justice” understanding attempted to solve the dilemma by acknowledging the multidimensional nature of justice, and by shifting attention towards how peace and justice could be pursued together and in terms of challenges “that need to be addressed on a case by case basis, taking into consideration a range of factors including context, time frame and developing international standards” (Parlevliet 2010, p. 4). The 2004 UN secretary general’s report on transitional justice contributed to this reframing, describing justice, peace, and democracy “not [as] mutually exclusive objectives, but rather mutually reinforcing imperatives” (UN 2004, p. 1). Though some have raised doubts about whether this reorientation resolved the debate, it nevertheless repositioned justice promotion and peacebuilding on more favorable terms with the potential for cross-fertilization of ideas and synergies in policy and practice. The emergence of a “positive peace” commitment in peacebuilding would later move the debate in similar directions by shifting away from the “negative peace” parameters that have defined the justice versus peace dilemma (Sharp 2014). “Positive peace”

expands the “negative peace” understanding, that connote the absence of direct violence, in favor of a perspective on peace as absence of indirect and structural violence and by conditions of social justice that alleviate or remove the underlying causes of conflict.

In terms of this reorientation, a number of contributions have examined what role transitional justice might play in post-conflict peacebuilding and how transitional justice might be better integrated or coordinated with peacebuilding activities on the ground. Areas for enhancing integration or coordination have included SSR and DDR, for example, which are often viewed as in tension with transitional justice. For instance, the focus of transitional justice and DDR on different constituencies has been suggested as the main source of tension between the two: the former focusing on victims and the pursuit of justice, and the latter on ex-combatants and preventing the return to violence. One risk with accountability initiatives is that they might dissuade combatants from demobilizing, such as happened during negotiations with the Lord’s Resistance Army in Uganda, or that they may lead perpetrators to seek guarantees of non-prosecution. On the other hand, truth commissions have been suggested as having the potential to support reintegration, for example, by facilitating discussions of the past that result in communities beginning to acknowledge and accept the return of combatants who were also perpetrators (Sriram and Herman 2009). In addition, reparations may result in victims feeling less aggrieved about ex-combatants receiving DDR benefits (Bryden et al. 2005; Waldorf 2009, 2013; Sriram and Herman 2009; Sriram et al. 2013). Support for local-level justice processes are also suggested as potentially significant, such as happened in Sierra Leone where local cleansing and healing rituals were part of the reintegration of large numbers of former child soldiers or accompanying personnel (Sriram 2013).

Tensions between peace and justice also characterize the transitional justice–SSR relationship in some settings. In El Salvador for instance, reform efforts were put in jeopardy by a report from the truth commission which threatened to

name perpetrators (Sriram 2004). Security sector institutions may also be destabilized by having expertise removed and spoilers placed in wider society, such as happened in Iraq (Sedra 2007). In other settings there may be synergies, however. Reform may comprise a form of reparations with the purpose of guaranteeing the nonrepetition of human rights violations. Prosecuting leaders of security forces or armed groups may assist with the departure of perpetrators acting as obstacles to reform (Bryden et al. 2005). Truth commissions might be another way of facilitating reform. In South Africa, for example, the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission led to abuses coming to light and the subsequent departure of many senior officers (van Zyl 2005; Mobekk 2006; Barr 2011). Transitional justice may also support rule of law assistance as part of larger peacebuilding initiatives, such as by restoring confidence in the justice sector, enhancing trust (Herman et al. 2012), and by facilitating a procedural respect for the rule of law (McAuliffe 2013).

Commonalities and Critiques

In setting out a framework for linking transitional justice and peacebuilding, Sharp (2013, p. 169) warned of the dangers of overlooking the critiques that have been leveled against each and the risk of transitional justice coming “to be seen as yet one more box to tick on the ‘post-conflict checklist,’ a routine part of the template deployed in the context of post-conflict peace operations.” Recent efforts to examine the nexus between transitional justice and peacebuilding have drawn on critical studies to identify the commonalities between the two traditions, with the overall aim of improving policy and practice (Sharp 2013) and enhancing understanding of both fields (Baker and Obradovic-Wochnik 2016). In terms of the academic interchange between both traditions, Millar and Lecy’s (2016) examination of the academic literature revealed a large gap. According to the authors, each tradition “march[es] along largely engaged with their own conceptions of the needs and demands of post-conflict societies and individuals, but rarely taking proper note of what the

other is saying” (Millar and Lecy 2016, p. 316). This gap is also reflected in practice, where transitional justice and peacebuilding practitioners remain underexposed to each other’s issues, opportunities, and disciplines (Simpson 2017). For McAuliffe (2017), peacebuilding’s lack of engagement with transitional justice should not be all that surprising, however, as it reflects the multidimensional nature of liberal peacebuilding where transitional justice is marginal to its core focus.

Four main overlaps or similarities between transitional justice and peacebuilding are identified: a rootedness of each in liberal peace assumptions; a common blindness to social and economic issues; the imported and top-down nature of transitional justice and peacebuilding activities; and “local turns” and a concern for enhancing participation in both traditions.

Liberal Peace Assumptions

In the first instance, transitional justice and peacebuilding are suggested as sharing a common rootedness in liberal peace assumptions. These critiques emerged through an interrogation of the “liberal peacebuilding” project, whose core assumption is “that the surest foundation for peace, both within and between states, is market democracy, that is, a liberal democratic polity and a market-oriented economy” (Paris 1997, p. 56). The critique of liberal peacebuilding maintains that its emphasis on free markets and developing democratic institutions in post-conflict interventions risks destabilizing societies and returning them to situations of conflict. Vulnerabilities can include social inequalities, weak state capacity, and heterogeneity, which become more volatile and polarized as political and economic systems liberalize (Newman 2009). For instance, elites may resist change where they stand to lose from democratization. Electoral politics may also exacerbate social tensions between groups. In contexts where inequalities and social grievances are high, privatization and reductions in public expenditure may run contrary to the urgent need for poverty alleviation and employment generation.

Applying the liberal peace critique to transitional justice, Sriram (2007, p. 579) suggests

transitional justice processes “are increasingly part of broader peacebuilding strategies, and share a faith that other key goods—democracy, ‘justice’—can essentially stand in for, and necessarily create, peace.” As an integral part of peacebuilding, these “goods” can be destabilizing however, such as where new governance structures are too weak to deal with instability arising from resistance to domestic accountability processes. The transitional justice focus on civil and political issues reflects a liberal focus on rights and an approach to dealing with the past that ignores or neglects economic, social, and cultural concerns. While transitional justice has not directly challenged economic liberalization, there remain links to the economy such as the high costs associated with transitional justice processes may put developing economies under strain. Addressing social and economic issues through transitional justice may be made more difficult by having it more deeply embedded in peacebuilding (Sriram 2014).

Socioeconomic Issues

Second, the practice of peacebuilding and transitional justice has generally given scant attention to socioeconomic issues, such as income inequality, socioeconomic marginalization, and unemployment, that are linked to the effects of conflict (Baker and Obradovic-Wochnik 2016; Richmond 2014). While material deprivation, inequality, and competition over resources are all recognized as playing a role in conflict formation, the focus in peacebuilding on free markets and “economic growth” may mean past grievances over resource distribution are left unaddressed (see “► [Socioeconomic Justice and Peacebuilding](#)” in the chapter by Lai, this volume; Sriram 2014). Processes of liberalization may see new grievances emerge and old ones revived. In Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala, for example, rapid marketization has been suggested as reproducing some of the socioeconomic conditions that fueled unrest in these societies in the first place (Paris 2004). In transitional justice, economic and social rights (ES) violations have been generally ignored. Its core focus has remained on civil and political rights violations despite it being a long-

accepted principle in international law that ES rights are indivisible from civil and political ones. Where ES rights are acknowledged, such as in the reports of truth commissions, it is usually as “background information [...] which is setting the context for what are perceived as more serious violations of civil and political rights” (Cahill-Ripley 2014, p. 184). A failure in practice to treat these rights indivisibly reflects perhaps some of the ambivalence towards ES rights within the international human rights movement during the tradition’s formative years and lingering questions about their justiciability (Sharp 2014).

Imported and Top-Down Approaches to Peace and Justice

Third, traditions have been charged with being insensitive to context and ignoring local voice. Interventions may also lack local legitimacy. In peacebuilding, these problems have reflected the tradition’s “emphasis on top-down institution building, external trusteeship and administration, and the importation of liberal values, as well as political, social, economic and development models by an epistemic community of peacebuilders who focus on blue-print institutions” (Richmond 2009, p. 153). In transitional justice, preferences among Western governments and associated institutions has been for “precisely the type of legalised accountability familiar to Western court systems” which may not be appropriate to political, legal, and cultural contexts (Sriram 2007, p. 589). Transitional justice has been criticized for being dominated by legal professionals with a particular legal discourse and practice that widens the gap between practitioners and communities (e.g., Robins 2012). Other transitional justice initiatives and mechanisms have been criticized for being implemented as part of a toolkit or template (Duthie and Seils 2017; Lundy and McGovern 2008).

Critics suggest the tendency towards blueprint institutions and top-down institution building is rendered through a presentation of peacebuilding and transitional justice initiatives as technical and politically neutral affairs. Local context and voice are backgrounded through a conception of free markets, elections, and other peacebuilding

elements as nonnegotiable and as “principles true in every country” (Mitchell 2002, cited in Sending 2009, p. 5). For critics, the representation of both traditions as technical and politically neutral obfuscates the difficult trade-offs that need to be made for advancing post-conflict objectives (Sharp 2013) and shuts out questions of welfare, social justice, and other ways of organizing post-conflict societies and economies (Sharp 2013; Franzki and Olarte 2014). As discussed below, recognition of these problems has driven agendas in both traditions towards cultivating local, bottom-up, and hybrid processes of peace and approaches to justice that encompass communities and victims and their needs and priorities, and local knowledges, institutions, and norms.

Local Turns and Participation

Finally, both traditions have seen the emergence of agendas for local peace and justice initiatives over the recent two decades. In peacebuilding, which has gone further than transitional justice in investigating and critiquing ideas such as hybridity, the local turn has signified a departure from the liberal peacebuilding project, in particular from the imported and top-down nature of its interventions. The first “local turn” in peacebuilding began in the 1990s in the context of failed international efforts to support sustainable peace in places like Somalia and Rwanda. These failures showed that, alongside the occasional lack of political will among the international community, “the UN’s peace intervention toolbox – including diplomacy, peace-making, peacekeeping and peacebuilding strategies – was ill-equipped for managing intrastate conflicts” (Leonardsson and Rudd 2015). At the same time, the recently established conflict transformation school was emphasizing the importance of empowering local people as the main architects of peace (Rupesinghe 1995). It suggested the role of external peacebuilders should become more limited and focused instead on supporting local processes of peacebuilding while respecting local traditions and cultural practices.

A second “local turn” arose in the 2000s in response to the disappointing or ambiguous results of the first. Despite the uptake of a local

agenda, “the core of international programmes remains the same [...] the local is securitised and modernised in Western liberal and neoliberal terms, rather than supported in its local struggle for peace” (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013, p. 776; also Mac Ginty 2015). Located within critiques of the universalist ideas of peace, the second local turn emphasizes local, everyday experiences of violence and community understandings of how to respond to these. Peacebuilding initiatives may be contested or resisted locally, where the “local” refers to “locally based agencies present within a conflict and post-conflict environment, some of which are aimed at identifying and creating the necessary processes for peace, perhaps with or without international help, and framed in a way in which legitimacy in local and international terms converges” (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013, p. 769). Community-based peace initiatives are prioritized in practice, such as local dispute and conflict resolution mechanisms, local dialogue and education initiatives, and advocacy work that seeks to bring about policy changes. The fostering of hybrid political orders has also been advocated as an alternative to liberal templates, where state institutions and customary institutions, and new notions of citizenship and civil society are combined “in networks of governance that are not introduced from the outside, but embedded in the societal structures on the ground (Boege et al. 2009, p. 20).”

Transitional justice’s “local turn” (Kochanski 2018), meanwhile, has been driven by concerns about the lack of local legitimacy and “ownership,” and by practitioner concerns about the limited ways participation has been operationalized in transitional justice mechanisms. The ad hoc tribunals in the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda for instance garnered criticism for being distant and isolated. Nationals in both regions were excluded from holding high-level positions in favor of prosecutors and judges who were in many cases “almost totally ignorant about local history and culture” (Sharp 2014, p. 87). A shift in focus would ensue “from high courts to hybrid court and traditional justice systems, and from internationally influenced TRCs to more locally

dominated ones” that could be more sensitive to cultural norms and practices (Triponel and Pearson 2010, p. 120; also Sharp 2013; Shaw and Waldorf 2010). The idea was that effective, legitimate, and sustainable interventions were assured through greater participation of domestic institutions and actors (Sharp 2018). A further development in this direction was the increasing attention given to victim participation in transitional justice from around the middle of the 2000s. It entered through discussions about approaches to reparations mechanisms and through the development of “victims’ rights” as a body of norms within international human rights law, international criminal law, and international humanitarian law (Correa et al. 2009; García-Godos 2016). These developments provided normative reasons for adopting participatory approaches in addition to the need for interventions that are sustainable. Transitional justice mechanisms such as truth commissions were recast as “victim oriented” or “victim centred,” and victims given more space to participate in international criminal justice institutions and processes.

Much like in peacebuilding, critics suggest that the toolkit approach still dominates in transitional justice and that this approach remains problematic. Where participation has been operationalized, it has tended to be of the consultative and information-sharing kind and therefore limited in scope (e.g., Lundy and McGovern 2008). Responses have come in the form of renewed calls for widening the scope of participation further through more “bottom-up” initiatives, driven by civil society actors in the main and organized informally outside of – but usually in relation to – formal transitional justice mechanisms and processes (McEvoy and McGregor 2008; Tsai and Robins 2018). Such processes may provide “effective participation in formal transitional justice processes” and “broaden the transformative impact of transitional justice processes” (Tsai and Robins 2018, p. 33). Examples of “local-level processes” may include judicial processes and dispute resolution; local truth telling and memorialization, such as the Ardoyne Commemoration Project in Northern Ireland; documentation of violations and forensic

investigations; support to victims; advocacy and social movements, such as the Khulumani Survivor Support Group in South Africa that promotes individual and community reconciliation; and traditional ritual and healing.

Looking Forward: Transformation and Emancipation

These critiques have framed emerging agendas in both transitional justice and peacebuilding for more “transformative” or “emancipatory” alternatives. In transitional justice, an agenda on “transformative justice” is centered around “transformative change that emphasises local agency and resources, the prioritisation of process rather than preconceived outcomes, and the challenging of unequal and intersecting power relationships and structures of exclusion at both local and global levels” (Greedy and Robins 2014, p. 2). It emphasizes social and political processes over legal ones; responses to structural and systemic violence, which are often prioritized by communities and populations; and local empowerment and participation as correctives to the top-down and toolkit approach of mainstream practice. The field is yet to decide whether transformative justice amounts to reforming transitional justice or replacing it entirely.

In peacebuilding, the notion of “emancipatory peacebuilding” has been around for longer and there are at least two distinct approaches to it. Both approaches are marked by a sensitivity to local justice issues and a perspective of justice as “constituent to supporting meaningful peace” (Byrne and Thiessen 2019). While most critics of liberal peacebuilding such as Roland Paris are committed to a reformed liberal project, emancipatory peacebuilding agendas may in some respects depart from it. The first approach is represented by Oliver Richmond’s (2012, pp. 3–4) conception of an “emancipatory peace” which refers to “an everyday form of peace, offering care, respecting but also mediating culture and identity, institutions, and custom, providing for needs, and assisting the most marginalised in their local, state, regional and international

contexts.” Building this peace involves a focus on grassroots and bottom-up projects that engage with marginalized and excluded groups and issues of social justice, and which involve social movements and other social actors (Lidén 2009). It entails a practice of “provocation or creation of local peacebuilding agency, allow[ing] it space to contest the liberal peace and represent its own contextual dynamics, and [which] ultimately through a local and transnational political process, leads to hybrid forms of peace” (Richmond 2012, p. 4; see also “► [Hybrid Political Orders and Hybrid Peace](#)” in the chapter by Boege, this volume). The second approach focuses on indigenous peacebuilding practices and mechanisms that are frequently overlooked by mainstream peacebuilding and which concentrate on truth-telling, reconciliation, and the reestablishment of relationships (Mac Ginty 2008). This particular approach underscores how indigenous methods may achieve legitimacy that is absent from mainstream tools and practices, and that it may be a source of alternative visions of peace.

Both agendas have developed largely in isolation from one another although they share many of the same concerns and critiques of mainstream practice in respective fields. What follows is an outline of a more radical nexus at the intersection of “transformative justice” and “emancipatory peacebuilding” that comprises several potential points of connection.

Structural Violence and Root Causes

“Transformative justice” and “emancipatory peacebuilding” may converge around an understanding of justice and peace that recognizes the indivisibility of economic, social, cultural, civil, and political concerns. This indivisibility at the heart of both agendas is acquired by bringing to bear a focus on structural violence and the structural roots of poverty and conflict. The convergence is assisted by recasting the peace versus justice debate in “positive peace” and “positive justice” terms, where we are encouraged to think “of peace as an expansive concept able to connect with everyday needs and aspirations. Similarly, positive justice is an expansive concept that encompasses and that goes beyond the formal

and judicial to recast justice as people in post-conflict context having access to resources” (Firchow and Mac Ginty 2019, p. 279).

Justice initiatives that act on this indivisibility may support emancipatory peacebuilding, for example, by having structural violence and the structural roots of poverty and conflict investigated through formal or informal mechanisms. Reparations may provide a way of addressing violence and its roots. While traditionally reparations have been conceived as a process for returning victims to their original condition, it has been argued they may be designed to provide transformative redress rather than restitution, so as not to return victims to the conditions of structural discrimination that characterized the past. Transformative reparations have been considered in relation to women’s experiences of conflict in particular (e.g., Boesten 2019). Weber’s (2017) grassroots work with women in Colombia for instance points to a role for reparations in restructuring social relations around education, organizational skills, and income-generating projects that might enhance women’s social and economic agency and autonomy. Brett and Malagon (2013) suggest at least three ways transformative reparations can contribute to emancipatory peacebuilding: (1) by addressing and redressing the root causes of conflict; (2) by addressing and redressing civil and political rights grievances in tandem with the socioeconomic and structural conditions for conflict; and (3) by promoting the participation of victims in the reparations process and their ownership over that process.

Social and Economic Development

Responding to structural violence and root causes also entails a commitment to a notion of development that goes beyond a narrow growth paradigm to connect with local needs and issues of inequality and welfare. Research in transitional and post-conflict settings routinely finds communities prioritizing socioeconomic needs and concerns, highlighting again the disconnect between mainstream practice in both traditions and communities (e.g., Vinck and Pham 2014). An “indicators of peace” project in Northern Uganda, for example, has seen communities develop indicators

around issues of lack of food, work, and access to land, and indicators that link to state provision such as access to medicine and money for school fees. At the same time, there was a lack of enthusiasm for transitional justice with an emphasis on civil and political interventions (Firchow and Mac Ginty 2019). Alternatives to the neoliberal template may be inspired or served by local systems of welfare and welfare provision in post-conflict settings, and other state models such as social democratic and welfare-based models (Richmond 2012). Social and economic development may be usefully recast in terms of “development alternatives” or “alternatives to development” (e.g., Lang and Mokrani 2013) that center around local agencies and resources, and local culture and knowledges. Justice initiatives may support emancipatory peacebuilding here, such as by having truth commissions contribute to broad national debates about new economic models, in particular, where “economic injustices are endemic and economic differences fuelled conflict in the past” (Gready and Robins 2014, p. 356). Truth-telling may shed light on structures and mechanisms of exclusion at the global level, not least on those that are manifest in the international political economy and in historic North–South hierarchies.

Supporting Local Agencies

Finally, there is a shared commitment to supporting local agencies for pursuing justice and peace and an understanding that these need to be experienced by communities in order to be meaningful. In this vein, local turns and participation in both traditions have yielded community-based justice initiatives, initiatives for peace, and hybrid political orders that contest the logic of imported and top-down approaches to peace and justice, as discussed above. Transformative justice may assist emancipatory peacebuilding by cultivating local agencies in more participatory transitional justice processes and for advocacy work around the design of new or more responsive institutions, policies, and programs, such as agrarian reform or access to services. Local agencies may seek to harness the law and legal processes strategically, such as where litigation raises

the public profile of socioeconomic issues in post-conflict/transition settings. Tentative excursions in the scholarship have also been made around transitional justice and the mechanisms of participatory governance, such as Zurba’s (2014) treatment of collaborative governance around natural resources as a means of reconciliation and addressing structural violence. Supporting local agencies may be usefully conceived of as part of a broader justice “assemblage” (Reading 2019, p. 236) that comprises clusters of practices involving “unfinished processes and interventions that operate across a number of domains” and scales, and which seek to consolidate particular justice goals over time. As well as judicial and political domains, such as represented through truth commissions and institutional apologies, and the economic domain (e.g., return of property), these may include the symbolic (e.g., cultural and creative acts), spiritual (such as local ceremonies), and affective (for example, individual and group therapy) acts and stories involving and driven by victims and survivors.

Summary

Transitional justice and peacebuilding deal in different ways with violence in post-conflict settings and laying the groundwork for peace. While they may appear to share a lot in common, the connections between them are only beginning to be understood. This entry has discussed some recent contributions seeking to close this gap that emphasize enhanced coordination and integration between transitional justice mechanisms and peacebuilding activities. The entry also moved from a discussion of this “mainstream” nexus towards a more radical nexus that draws on developments within, and critiques of, mainstream scholarship and practice in each tradition: liberal peace assumptions that underpin both traditions; the neglect of socioeconomic issues; the imported and top-down nature of interventions; and several “local turns” that shift focus towards local justice and peace initiatives. Looking forward, the entry began providing an outline of a more radical nexus between transformative justice and

emancipatory peacebuilding that comprises a common commitment towards addressing structural violence and the root causes of conflict and violence; a focus on social and economic development; and supporting local agencies.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Hybrid Political Orders and Hybrid Peace](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding: Utopia and Reality](#)
- ▶ [Socioeconomic Justice and Peacebuilding](#)

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the 1990s. The conflict, commonly referred to as the Homeland War, provided the foundation of the modern Croatian state, nation, and identity. The narrative surrounding it, of Croatia and Croats as victims of Greater Serbian aggression who only acted in self-defense, is universally accepted. It is quasi-legally enshrined, and to question it is to question the legitimacy of the Croatian nation and state. The transitional justice process can be observed in four key areas: the legacy of war crimes, international relations, civil society, and minority rights. The legacy of war crimes has been judicially dealt with both internationally and domestically, but these trials have failed to instill a better understanding of human rights in the public. The transitional justice process has shaped Croatia's foreign policy because European Union and NATO accession were closely tied to cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY). This resulted in domestic political elites complying with international demands but simultaneously questioning and challenging them before a domestic audience. The sanctity of the dominant understanding of the 1991–1995 conflict has marginalized civil society groups that deal with human rights abuses and has given war veterans' associations a prominent and politicized role. Finally, the Serb minority's rights have been curtailed because they are defined in terms of security.

Transitional Justice in Croatia

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Synonyms

[Civil society](#); [International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia \(ICTY\)](#); [Minority rights](#); [Reconciliation](#); [War crimes trials](#); [War veterans](#); [Yugoslavia](#)

Definition

Transitional justice in Croatia dealing with the 1991–1995 conflict has defined much of Croatian politics, society, and international relations since

Introduction

Transitional justice is an ambiguous and multifaceted concept in Croatia. Since the dissolution of the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s, Croatia experienced concurrent transitions from conflict to peace, from Communism to neoliberalism, and from authoritarianism to competitive authoritarianism and then to democracy. The legacy of human rights abuses committed by repressive regimes extends beyond the wars that followed Yugoslavia's dissolution. Crimes committed during the Second World War (1941–1945), during Yugoslavia (1945–1991), and during the conflicts in Croatia (1991–1995) and Bosnia-Herzegovina

(1992–1995) are all deemed as unresolved in Croatia and continue to define much of Croatian politics and society.

The transitional justice process dealing with the 1991–1995 conflict, known as the Homeland War (*Domovinski rat*), stands out due to the conflict's central role in Croatia's nation-building and state-building projects since the 1990s. Even this term, the Homeland War, is loaded since it represents only the Croat side of the conflict, but it is nevertheless commonly used in Croatian politics, culture, education, and media (Jović 2009). The Homeland War is considered the foundation of the modern Croatian state and it is a cornerstone of Croatian national identity. The narrative surrounding it, of Croatia and Croats as victims of Greater Serbian aggression who only acted in self-defense, is universally accepted. This version of history is quasi-legally inscribed in two parliamentary declarations (*Deklaracija o Domovinskom Ratu* and *Deklaracija o Oluji*), and questioning it is sanctioned.

This section examines how the Croatian state and society engaged with the legacy of war crimes and serious human rights violations dealing with the 1991–1995 conflict (Teitel 2000). The scope of this process in Croatia is vast. It predominantly concerns members of the majority Croat and minority Serb ethnic groups in the country. This covers almost the entire population, but it is worth noting that other politically active ethnic groups rarely deal with transitional justice issues directly. The geographic scope of transitional justice efforts is on the other hand much broader, since Croatian interests in the realm of transitional justice also concern Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, and Montenegro. Similarly, the process' influence on state institutions is extensive. Certain government bodies deal directly with transitional justice issues (e.g. the Croatian Ministry of Veterans' Affairs and specialized war crimes chambers of the Croatian judiciary), while many others, from language institutions to economic bodies, frequently find that the legacy of conflict influences their work.

It is also debatable how “transitional” Croatia is. The conflict ended in 1995. Since then, Croatia

has transitioned to liberal democracy and joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU). It is difficult to imagine armed conflict breaking out in Croatia at any point in the near future. Nevertheless, ethnic tensions persist and reconciliation between formerly opposed groups has not occurred.

Historical Context

The conflict in Croatia began in 1991, following a heating up of tensions during the dissolution of Yugoslavia and a brief armed conflict in Slovenia. By the time it ended in 1995, it had left 13,000–16,000 dead (the exact figure remains disputed, see Ivo Goldstein 1999 and Živić 2003) and 500,000 internally or externally displaced (Cruvellier and Valinas 2006), and much of the country's infrastructure destroyed (e.g. up to 30% of industrial infrastructure; Tanner 2001, p. 278). The conflict was marked by the frequent targeting of civilians and civilian structures, the destruction of cultural landmarks, and numerous human rights abuses. The city of Vukovar was almost completely destroyed, while the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Dubrovnik was bombed. Over 2,000 individuals remain missing to this day, and many of the over two million mines laid in the country are yet to be demined. The conflict ended following two Croatian military offensives, Operation Flash and Operation Storm, and the peaceful reintegration of Eastern Slavonia, Baranja, and Western Sirmium.

A large part of the population witnessed violence of some sort during the war and had first-hand experience of the conflict. The conflict also had an international nature. Trials and judgments at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) have shown that Bosnian Croat forces operating in Bosnia-Herzegovina had continuous and significant military support from the armed forces of Croatia. A chain of command existed, official or unofficial, between Zagreb and armed forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The war in Croatia, as well as in the rest of the former Yugoslavia, was unique because they were the first to have an international

criminal tribunal overseeing their conduct. They were also the first conflicts that took place in the context of an international human rights rhetoric where civil society had considerable international reach.

Croatia's first post-Yugoslav and post-Communist regime was the competitive authoritarian regime of President Franjo Tuđman and the HDZ (*Hrvatska demokratska zajednica* or Croatian Democratic Union). Formal democratic institutions were used by Tuđman's HDZ to gain and maintain political authority, and conventional standards of democracy were not met (Levitsky and Way 2002, p. 52). Media and judicial freedoms were neither fully repressed, nor were they completely free. Tuđman died in 1999, and the HDZ lost the parliamentary elections in 2000 to a center-left coalition that began Croatia's process of transition to liberal democracy in earnest. At this point the transitional justice process in Croatia was also allowed to gain traction, and cooperation with the ICTY began. The overriding goal of successive Croatian governments since 2000 was NATO and EU integration. Croatia joined NATO in 2009 and the EU in 2013.

Key Issues

The legacy of the 1991–1995 conflict and issues of transitional justice define much of the Croatian domestic political scene, judiciary, foreign policy, and cultural space (see Jović 2017; Sokolić 2019). Four key issues, however, stand out in terms of transitional justice: the legacy of war crimes; international relations, especially the effect of conditionality; civil society; and minority rights.

War Crimes Legacy

Several judicial and nonjudicial mechanisms have dealt with, and some continue to deal with, the legacy of war crimes in Croatia. The most visible of these was the ICTY, which in great part defined Croatia's transitional justice process. The particular circumstances of the Croatian state since 2000, especially the eagerness for Euro-Atlantic integration, meant that the ICTY was relatively successful in Croatia (Subotić

2009; Nettelfield 2010). By 2005 all indicted Croatian citizens had been transferred to The Hague, except Janko Bobetko who died shortly after his indictment. Bobetko was Chief of the General Staff of the Croatian Army from 1992 until 1995. Other cases were transferred to domestic courts by the ICTY, such as those of Mirko Norac, the first Croatian Army General to be found guilty by a domestic court for the killings of ethnic Serbs in Gospić and during Operation Medak Pocket, and Rahim Ademi. Ademi held several senior positions in the Croatian Army during the war and was accused of committing crimes against humanity during Operation Medak Pocket but was acquitted of all charges. Crucially, this does not account for the numerous individuals who would have been indicted had the Tribunal acted more quickly, most notably the likely indictment of President Tuđman.

By the time the ICTY had ended its work, no Croats had been sentenced for crimes committed in Croatia. Croats were only sentenced for crimes committed in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Croatian courts have sentenced Croats for crimes committed in Croatia, including individuals transferred from the ICTY (such as Mirko Norac), but this has nevertheless provided an opportunity for individuals and organizations to bolster the Croatian narrative of victimhood and innocence. Throughout its time of operation, Tribunal indictments and verdicts were interpreted as a potential threat to the legitimacy of the Croatian nation and state. Decisions that ran counter to the dominant Croatian understanding of the war as purely defensive were perceived to criminalize the entire Homeland War and thereby the foundation of the nation and the state. Major indictments and verdicts were met with mass protests and celebrations. In 2001, 120,000–150,000 people demonstrated the indictments against Norac and Gotovina (Cruvellier and Valinas 2006). The acquittals of Ante Gotovina and Mladen Markač in 2012, on the other hand, saw 100,000 take to the streets of Zagreb to greet them on their return to Croatia. Gotovina and Markač were Croatian generals who helped coordinate the controversial Operation Storm. In 2011 they were convicted and sentenced for war crimes and crimes against

humanity, but in 2012 they were acquitted on appeal and immediately released. The case of Gotovina, in particular, has consistently resulted in the strongest public reactions in Croatia and also led to the most serious tensions with the ICTY. More than any other case or individual, this one has been emblematic of the nexus of politics, symbols, rituals, and collective memory in Croatia (Pavlaković 2010).

The Croatian public's relationship with the ICTY was defined by key trials and specific dramatic moments in those trials. The ICTY's popularity has ebbed and flowed with these moments, but it has for the most part remained unpopular with the Croatian public (e.g., see the Belgrade Human Rights Centre 2011 survey). Most significant was the trial of Ante Gotovina and Mladen Markač (including their indictment), Gotovina's capture, their guilty verdict, and subsequent acquittal. Second to this was the televised in-court suicide of Slobodan Praljak, a former general of Croat forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina, who drank a vial of poison while his sentence was read out. Other noteworthy trials, although far less present in the eyes of the Croatian media or public, were the trials of major Serbian leaders, such as Slobodan Milošević and Vojislav Šešelj.

The ICTY failed to instill a better understanding of human rights in the population or to achieve any sort of reconciliation (Sokolić 2019). Croatia, much like its neighbors in the former Yugoslavia, exemplifies how the implementation of transitional justice mechanisms does not necessarily result in shared visions of the past. Moreover, the Croatian public remains unaware of the role of Croatian forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the dominant narrative remains one of exclusive defense within Croatia's borders (Sokolić 2017a).

War crimes trials in Croatian domestic courts were in comparison to the ICTY far less advertised, although much more numerous. By 2014, when figures were last officially collated, 3,553 individuals had been tried for war crimes in domestic courts, and 589 had been sentenced (the Croatian State's Attorney Office provides these figures; see www.dorh.hr/fgs.axd?id=1841). These processes have continued and are still

ongoing. The trials have not consistently upheld principles of legal fairness: most cases have taken place in the lower courts where judge bias is problematic; participation of the accused in the war as a member of the Croatian police or armed forces is often used as a mitigating circumstance in sentencing; and the vast majority of cases have been against ethnic Serb in absentia (Rangelov 2014, p. 150). Moreover, the public remains relatively poorly acquainted with the work of domestic courts, and the media give these trials little space, if any at all.

Responses to the war crimes legacy in Croatia are not purely judicial; civil society organizations also work on these issues, mainly through documentation and fact-finding efforts. This is a highly contested space, where government funding is limited and provided to organizations that more readily uphold the dominant understanding of the recent past. The most prominent example is the Croatian Memorial and Documentation Centre for the Homeland War, which collects information on the 1991–1995 conflict, publishes research on it, and gives lectures to the public and in schools. Their publications have overt political messages and use loaded terms extensively, all connected to the dominant ethnic understanding of the conflict. Other fact-finding organizations, most notably Documenta, that portray both sides of the conflict and have questioned dominant narratives about the conflict, have also found themselves operating in a hostile environment, where government funding is limited or nonexistent and threats to staff are commonplace. This has limited nonjudicial responses to those that the state supports.

International Relations

The transitional justice process has in great part defined Croatia's foreign policy. This is due to the powerful effect of ICTY conditionality. NATO and the EU made cooperation with the ICTY a condition for integration into their organizations. Croatian political elites felt compelled to comply with this conditionality in order to achieve their vision of Croatian identity as a member of the Western democratic nexus of states (Zambelli 2010, p. 1673). In order to maintain this identity,

the state needed to prove that it cooperated with the ICTY and that it was able to try criminals domestically (Zambelli 2010). This meant that transitional justice, and the performance of a specific instrument of justice, became a greater priority in Croatia's foreign policy than other domestic and EU factors (Brodersen 2014). Moreover, it stymied the development of a culture of law, and it fostered negative perceptions of the ICTY and the international community more broadly (Brodersen 2014; Hagan and Ivković 2006).

Domestic political elites manipulated this situation for their own purposes. Governments would accept demands from the Tribunal but also occasionally mount legal challenges to specific indictments, all the while encouraging a narrative of resistance to a domestic audience (Lamont 2010). Prime Minister Ivo Sanader, for example, viewed compliance as unavoidable but challenged the Gotovina indictment before a domestic audience. Strategic compliance with conditionality allowed governments to fulfill their international obligations and continue along the route to Euro-Atlantic integration while also contesting the legitimacy of the ICTY.

Transitional justice remains a key issue in Croatia's relations with its neighbors. In 2015 the International Court of Justice ruled on the cases that Croatia and Serbia had presented to the body, accusing each other of genocide (both cases were dismissed). Croatia continues to comment on domestic Bosnian politics, often to the frustration of the Bosnian government (less so to the Croatian entity in the government). The Croatian public and elites still view Croatian involvement in the Bosnian conflict as positive, in terms of Croatia welcoming Bosniak refugees and providing military assistance to protect it from Serbia, while negative aspects are marginalized or ignored (Sokolić 2017a).

Civil Society

The legacy of the war continues to significantly affect Croatian civil society. Civil society has consistently provided pressure for democratization and has generally functioned without significant impediments, as long as it has not

challenged the dominant understanding of the 1991–1995 conflict. This has marginalized organizations that deal with the human rights abuses committed by Croatian forces during the war or that support Serb victims of the war (Sokolić 2019). It has also given war veterans' associations a prominent and politicized role in Croatian civil society since the 1990s, often at the expense of victims' associations.

War veterans' associations have had nearly exclusive access to state funding because they have remained closely aligned with the nation-building and state-building projects. They have been able to employ symbols of the conflict and of their sacrifice to further their political aims, which have often been ideological rather than narrowly connected to war veterans' concerns (Sokolić 2019). The implication is that these associations prioritize their political aims over their therapeutic aims. Their close relationship with the government has also made the needs of victims' associations secondary to those of veterans. The Croatian experience highlights the need for social justice in the aftermath of conflict, which can create social divisions if neglected (Cocozzelli 2009; Ströhle 2013). This also highlights how in Croatia organizations have to be aligned with the dominant understanding of the conflict in order to access policy-making and funding.

Minority Rights

The rights of the largest ethnic minority in Croatia, the Serbs, remain curtailed due to the legacy of the war. Serbs are the "radical other" in modern Croat identity and in the modern Croatian nation (Zambelli 2010, p. 1664). Serbs are presented by elites and by the media and parts of the public discourse as oppressors of Croats and Croatia throughout history (MacDonald 2002). As a result, the Serb minority is defined in terms of security (Jović 2017). This is best exemplified by the curtailment of language rights for Serbs in Croatia and specifically the city of Vukovar, where according to the 2011 census Serbs comprise over one third of the population. The city was therefore legally required to put up bilingual Cyrillic signs, but this resulted in a series

of demonstrations in 2013 in Vukovar and other Croatian cities. The proposal frustrated war veterans and much of the public due to the wartime experience of the city and due to its symbolic position in the 1991–1995 conflict. Signatures were also collected across the country for a referendum to change the law on minority rights and bilingualism. The result is that Serbs are tolerated, but their rights are consistently curtailed (Sokolić 2017b).

Existing Research

Croatia remains an understudied case of transitional justice in comparison to Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia. Few authors have used it as a single case study to examine transitional justice and its mechanisms. Jović (2017, in Croatian), Lamont (2010), and Sokolić (2019) are exceptions to this. All of them examine the effect that the war and war crimes trials, domestic or international, have had on Croatian politics and society. In particular, they have examined why international human rights norms advocated by institutions such as the ICTY have struggled to take root in Croatia or why they became distorted when they did reach the public. This puzzle has also been the focus of several comparative studies of transitional justice, where the Croatian case was analyzed. Subotić (2009) argues that in Croatia, norms did not spread since domestic norm believers were not willing to take the lead in norm change. Rangelov (2014) uses the Croatian case to show how deliberation can be a key outcome of transitional justice processes.

Almost all studies of Croatian society also examine transitional justice, since the process is so ubiquitous. A number of authors examine topics closely related to transitional justice, such as identity, civil society, and narratives of the recent past. Banjeglav (2012), Pavlaković (2014), Pavlaković and Pauković (2019), and Peskin and Boduszynski (2003) all outline and analyze how the narrative of the 1991–1995 conflict is constructed based on the themes of struggle, survival, victimhood, and defense.

Koren (2011) outlines how this narrative has become semilegally enshrined. These works show the importance of this narrative and that to challenge its legitimacy is also to challenge the legitimacy of political elites. Finally, Clark (2012) examines how war veterans have integrated into Croatian post-conflict society, by focusing on the themes of identity and trauma.

Direction of Future Research

Research on Croatia would currently benefit from mimicking what has been done elsewhere in the former Yugoslav region, especially in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia. Research that complements current studies can help result in comparative insights into transitional justice processes. Some of these studies are following the newest trends in the scholarship that explore thus far overlooked actors and structures in transitional justice. For example, the roles of diasporas (Karabegović 2019) and of socioeconomic issues (Lai 2016) have been investigated in Bosnia-Herzegovina, but less so regionally. A comparative approach would address the regional nature of the conflict and of conflict structures in the former Yugoslavia, which require regional approaches and solutions.

Future research on Croatia would also benefit from following general trends in the transitional justice scholarship. There remains a lack of understanding of what caused the conflict in Croatia and, more generally and theoretically, of what causes conflicts. Consequently, many areas of transitional justice remain unexplored and potentially undealt with (Kostovicova 2019). Longitudinal studies examining the longer-term effects of transitional justice are lacking, even more so in Croatia since the focus of the scholarship has moved to different regions. This is despite that the process' true effect may only become apparent in the longer term and despite that the new generation, born after the war, is seeing an increase in social distance between ethnic groups. In Croatia, the longitudinal element has further dimensions. First, no one has examined the effect of EU accession on the transitional

justice process. Second, studies have yet to comparatively examine how the current transitional justice process has become implicated with the legacy of the Second World War in Croatia. Methodologically, studies of transitional justice in Croatia are dominated by ethnographic or ethnographically sensible (Simmons and Smith 2017) approaches. These have provided a number of insights into the process but would benefit from methodological innovation to supplement their findings and to allow for more universal theory building.

Summary

Transitional justice in Croatia, dealing with the 1991–1995 conflict, defines much of Croatian politics, society, and international relations. The conflict is the cornerstone of the modern Croatian state, nation, and national identity. The narrative surrounding it, of Croatia and ethnic Croats as victims of Serbian aggression who only acted in self-defense, is universally accepted. The most visible mechanism of transitional justice in Croatia was the ICTY, and it significantly defined Croatia's process of transitional justice. The process can be most acutely observed in four areas: the legacy of war crimes, international relations (in particular conditionality), civil society, and minority rights.

Croatia is an understudied case of transitional justice when compared to other countries in the former Yugoslavia, most notably Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia. It is rarely used as a single case study of transitional justice and is featured more frequently in comparative analyses. Most studies of Croatian society, however, also include some examination of transitional justice, since the process is so pervasive in Croatian society (e.g., in studies of identity, civil society, and narratives of the recent past). Future research on Croatia would benefit from replicating regional studies that could result in comparative insights that better address the regional nature of the conflict and conflict structures in the former Yugoslavia.

Cross-References

► [Hybrid Courts and Transitional Justice](#)

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Transnational

- [Feminist Peace Research](#)

Transnationalism

- [Diasporas in Peace and Conflict](#)

Transversal Politics

- [Feminist Peace Research](#)

Trauma

- [Different Layers of the Afghan Conflict](#)

Treaty

- [Stalled Peacebuilding: Dealing with the Violence of Colonization and Its Legacy](#)

Tribalism

- [Balkanization](#)

Triple Nexus

► Conflicts and Natural Disasters

Troubles, The: The Northern Ireland Conflict

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Synonyms

Disintegration; Disunity; Division; Fragmentation; Ireland; Secession; Separation

Definition

Northern Ireland is a divided society. The key source of discord is the divergent views on the constitutional future of the region, between those who wish to remain in the United Kingdom (“unionists”) and those who seek a united Ireland (“nationalists”). Although most unionists have traditionally been Protestants and most nationalists have been Catholics, the root cause of the conflict is not theological. Rather, the quarrel has centered on power. Protestant unionists exercised it for centuries and Catholics/nationalists have sought a more equitable share. With the support of the British Government in London, unionists exercised untrammelled power, firstly over the majority Irish Catholic population and, after the partition of the country, within Northern Ireland over the minority nationalist/republican community. The inability of the Northern Ireland regime to accommodate nationalist demands for equality led to a quarter century of violent upheaval euphemistically known as the “Troubles.” As the conflagration engulfed the region, Northern Ireland’s unionist regime collapsed in 1972. Proposals that might simultaneously mollify nationalist and unionist aspirations proved elusive. The obstacles

to a negotiated settlement appeared insurmountable, but in the 1990s a sustainable peace process was inaugurated. After several false starts, an accord based on power sharing, popularly known as the Good Friday Agreement (GFA), was negotiated on April 10, 1998 and was further consolidated with the signing of the St. Andrews’ Agreement in 2006. As a result, violent conflict in Northern Ireland has abated although societal divisions remain.

Background: A Place Apart

For several centuries, Ireland has been an arena of violent conflict. It is no coincidence that the destiny of so many British colonies, such as India, Cyprus, Palestine, and Ireland, has been partitioned. These outcomes resulted from the traditional British policy of *divide et impera* (from Latin: divide and rule), of fostering antagonisms between different groups in an effort to preserve hegemony. England’s conversion to Protestantism coincided with its growth as an imperial power, and when Irish chieftains finally acknowledged defeat in 1603, Britain embarked on an intensive policy of colonial plantation, particularly in the north of the country, which had been the center of Gaelic resistance (O’Leary 2019, vol I, pp. 118–120). Under British tutelage, the task of administering Ireland and quelling the inevitable dissent of the disempowered and subordinated indigenous inhabitants was delegated to the settler population supported by a large standing army. These settlers, mainly English Anglicans and Scottish Presbyterians, are the ancestors of today’s unionist population in Northern Ireland. Ireland remained predominantly Catholic, however, and almost every generation witnessed a major rebellion against British rule.

The slow democratization of the British polity allowed an Irish nationalist parliamentary movement to develop while the physical force tradition continued to attract a substantial body of adherents. When the separatist Sinn Féin party gained a majority of Irish seats at Westminster in 1918, it declared the country independent and established

a parliament in Dublin. To complement these political endeavors, the Irish Republican Army (IRA) conducted a war for independence against the British regime in Ireland (Ó Beacháin 2010, pp. 2–9).

When insurgency in Ireland threatened British rule, the country was partitioned in 1920 by a unilateral act of the Westminster Parliament. Partition satisfied unionist preferences and London's strategic objectives (Moore 2019). Two new political regimes were created: the Irish Free State (now the Republic of Ireland) which was overwhelmingly nationalist and opposed to partition and Northern Ireland, which contained a two-thirds unionist majority. More than half the area under the control of the new unionist regime in Northern Ireland was nationalist in sentiment, including the counties of Fermanagh and Tyrone and the region's second largest city, Derry. The forcible incorporation of so many nationalists, a decision motivated by a desire to secure the maximum amount of territory possible for the new unionist regime, sowed the seeds of future strife and condemned Northern Ireland to persistent volatility. Nationalists north and south of the border rejected partition as a device to prevent the exercise of self-determination in Ireland given that the vast majority of people on the island (approximately 82%) were opposed to the new order (Ó Beacháin 2010, pp. 1–2; Moore 2019, pp. 16–29).

British support for unionists in the north of Ireland continued for decades but the unwillingness of nationalists to recognize the legitimacy of the Northern Ireland state was a cause of instability. Northern Ireland possessed the formal features of a parliamentary democracy but, with an inbuilt unionist majority, was in reality a one-party state. The unionist regime enshrined anti-Catholic discrimination as official policy, establishing an apparatus of economic hegemony that excluded nationalists from political, social, and economic power. Complementing this system, the state invoked a series of repressive laws administered by a paramilitary police force that was almost entirely Protestant in composition (Farrell 1983; O'Leary 2019, vol II, pp. 17–60).

The Troubles

Although Northern Ireland remained part of the United Kingdom, British Government interest and knowledge of Irish affairs rapidly declined following partition. This trend was briefly arrested during World War Two and in its immediate aftermath, when Northern Ireland proved to be of vital strategic importance, especially when contrasted with the neutral stance adopted by the Irish state governed from Dublin. During the 1960s, however, as the region teetered on the brink of violent upheaval, there was not a single official employed full time in London to keep briefed on developments in Northern Ireland. The conventional wisdom in British government circles was that problems in Northern Ireland were generally of short duration and intensity and resolved themselves without British intervention (Ó Beacháin 2018a, pp. 80–81).

During the late 1960s, a combination of political and social forces, not least the expansion of third-level education and the advent of television, facilitated the establishment of a civil rights movement that sought a number of basic freedoms including an end to gerrymandering and the repeal of permanent security legislation (Ó Beacháin 2010, pp. 267–268; O'Leary 2019, vol II, p. 170). The Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association also highlighted major inequalities in voting rights; in the most egregious cases, businessmen (disproportionally Protestant) were entitled to cast six ballots whereas non-ratepayers (disproportionately Catholic) were deprived of the vote. Gerrymandering in local government had knock-on effects when it came to the distribution of jobs and houses. The Northern Ireland state, based in Stormont, could not accommodate the peaceful campaign for civil liberties as its very *raison d'être* was unionist supremacy in perpetuity. The violent response of state security forces and civilian irregulars to the civil rights movement precipitated a social conflagration and an armed nationalist insurgency that propelled society downwards into a spiral of violence, euphemistically known as “the Troubles,” which would last for decades.

A sequence of military debacles during the early 1970s transformed the conflict to the level of a full-scale conflagration (Mulroe 2017). These included the British army's imposition of a curfew on the nationalist stronghold of the Falls Road in July 1970, which resulted in five fatalities and scores of injuries. The reintroduction of internment of suspected nationalists on August 9, 1971 rejuvenated the civil rights movement (Ó Beacháin 2010, pp. 317–326). During an anti-internment march, on January 30, 1972, British troops opened fire on protesters killing 14 civilians and injuring over a hundred in a massacre quickly dubbed “Bloody Sunday” (McKittrick and McVea 2012, pp. 88–90). The British Government prorogued the unionist administration at Stormont in March 1972 and imposed direct rule from London. The Northern Ireland one-party government would never be reestablished, but the violence continued to escalate. In 1970, 13 people had been killed; in 1972 there were 467 deaths and over 10,000 recorded shooting incidents. At this time, Northern Ireland's population was just 1.5 million, out of a UK total of over 55 million people (Ó Beacháin 2018a, pp. 105, 115).

Direct rule from Westminster was never considered anything other than a stop-gap solution until a more durable form of devolved government could be established. Following the abolition of Stormont and the failure of repressive military measures, the British government adopted several different approaches including negotiations with the IRA (1972, 1975), a constitutional convention (1974–75), limited devolved power (1982–86), and the Anglo-Irish Agreement (1985). The most promising, perhaps, was the Sunningdale Agreement which came into effect on January 1, 1974. Under the terms of the agreement, power was to be shared between moderate representatives of the unionist and nationalist communities in a new Northern Ireland executive while a Council of Ireland would provide a legislative link between the Irish Government in Dublin and the new cabinet in Belfast (Ó Beacháin 2018a pp. 122–132; O’Leary 2019, vol III, pp. 59–65). The executive, however, provided a unifying focus for dissent, enabling unionist

politicians, paramilitaries, and proletarians to form a potent, if transient, alliance that would halt the erosion of Protestant privilege. The electricity supply – which was in militant Protestant control – was cut and, aided by British Government inertia and widespread intimidation, the executive collapsed after only 5 months (Fisk 1975; O’Leary and McGarry 1995, p. 160). Twenty-five years would pass before a similar power-sharing executive could be established again.

Why Conflict Endured

Psychological and emotional factors (e.g., fear, anger, mutual distrust) inhibited conflict resolution as unionists and nationalists fixated on fears generated by past events that sometimes led to preemptive aggression. Loss aversion was another key barrier to overcoming conflict as parties frequently attached much greater significance to a potential loss than to a potential gain, particularly when future gains (e.g., peace, prosperity) were uncertain and in the long term, while “losses” (e.g., accepting legitimacy/position of opponents) were immediate and certain. This meant that the conflicting parties were often unwilling to take risks in situations where they could make significant gains. Protagonists often viewed gains simply as entitlements but were slow to accept a loss. This frequently led to disagreements between parties over the value of concessions, reinforcing feelings of suspicion and mistrust, and further hindering efforts designed to transform the conflict dynamic.

Given the duration and intensity of the conflict, it is not surprising that the quest for “justice” inhibited mediation efforts, as negotiating parties felt entitled to receive some sort of recompense for past events. This expectation stemmed from the belief on both sides that it was they who had acted the most honorably in the past and who had suffered the most. In such a scenario, both parties were likely to believe that what to outside observers might seem like a fair deal gave their side less than it deserved and was too generous to their traditional foes.

Protagonists in Northern Ireland prided themselves on their unwillingness to compromise on fundamental principles. The two most common unionist slogans have been “No Surrender” and “Not an Inch” (of territory). When the IRA was asked to decommission their explosives and weapons, graffiti appeared on Belfast walls declaring “Not an ounce, not a bullet.” Such intransigence made brokering agreements difficult, as protagonists tended to view political developments in zero-sum terms, whereby any gain by the other side is seen as a loss to their own.

The relationship between political leaders and their followers/supporters, and the competing interests of different political actors within a single community, also acted as barriers to conflict resolution. Many political representatives, most notably the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) leader, Ian Paisley, publicly announced their unwillingness to compromise, sometimes as a negotiating device or because of an inability to reach mutually beneficial settlements. This in turn induced their electorates to adopt similar trenchant positions, which further limited maneuverability in negotiations. A popular aphorism coined by Ian Paisley provided a salutary warning to those who might flirt with compromise: a bridge builder and a traitor were the same, he claimed, because they both go over to the other side (Moloney 2008, p. 100).

Exiting the Violence

During the “Troubles,” academics and politicians sought to identify a middle way between the unionist wish to remain within the United Kingdom and the nationalist desire for a united Ireland. However, any solution that was not negotiated between all the major players and/or which was imposed at a time of war had little chance of success. By the 1990s, the British Army and the IRA had reached a stalemate whereby neither had defeated the other and neither could attain outright military victory. After several false starts, the Belfast (or Good Friday) Agreement was negotiated on April 10, 1998 and a second pact, designed to

reenergize the peace process, was agreed at St Andrews in October 2006 (Powell 2008, pp. 90–107, 281–289; Ahern 2009, pp. 210–230)

The Good Friday Agreement (GFA) provides for a three-stranded process, which centers first and foremost on power sharing between unionists and nationalists within Northern Ireland (strand 1), combined with institutional links between Northern Ireland and Ireland (strand 2) and between Ireland and the United Kingdom (strand 3) (Department of Foreign Affairs 1998). A guarantee of equal rights and an open-ended constitutional future have also been at the heart of the peace agreements. As part of strand one, an Assembly (initially 108-seats but since reduced to 90 members) is elected by proportional representation, and a First and Deputy First Minister are selected from the two communities. Seats in the executive are allocated, in accordance with the d’Hondt divisor, in proportion to the number of seats parties have in the Assembly (O’Leary 2019, vol III, pp. 182–197). Key decisions are made on a cross-community basis. Provision is made for a referendum (frequently termed a “border poll”) to be held in Northern Ireland to determine periodically the constitutional preferences of the people. If a majority of people in Northern Ireland express a wish to unify with the Republic of Ireland, the British Government is required to legislate for this preference. The initiative for holding such a poll rests with the British Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

Although the GFA is similar to that negotiated at Sunningdale in 1973, its chances for success were greater as it attracted the support of both the IRA and the loyalist paramilitaries, which had destroyed the power-sharing institutions established in 1974. The concept of ripeness, that conflicts reach a point where they are ready for resolution, is relevant here. William Zartman maintains that protagonists will only seek mediation once they have exhausted all their resources and recognize that they enjoy negligible chances of achieving victory. In such circumstances, the cost of maintaining the mutually hurting stalemate is so great for all parties that protagonists begin to entertain less-maximalist approaches (Connolly

and Doyle 2018). The institutional structures of the GFA are interlinked, and they stand or fall together. The price of a devolved administration in Northern Ireland was that power must be shared with nationalists and republicans. Nationalists attained an institutional link to the Republic of Ireland, but Northern Ireland was to remain within the United Kingdom for the foreseeable future. No party attained everything it wanted, but each secured a minimum set of guarantees.

Reasons for the Breakthrough

The fact that the 1990s peace process took place under the tutelage of two sovereign democratic governments, Ireland and the United Kingdom, was central to its ultimate success. A cooperative Anglo-Irish partnership had frequently been absent during previous decades. Indeed, for much of the time since the partition of Ireland and throughout most of the Troubles, there had been no meeting of minds between the governments in London and Dublin as to what constituted the causes of conflict in Northern Ireland, let alone unanimity on how to resolve the imbroglio. Moreover, for decades successive British Governments refused to countenance external mediation on the basis that this would infringe upon their sovereignty.

The British and Irish governments did much of the running throughout the peace process and proved vital in maintaining momentum when relationships broke down within Northern Ireland. Both administrations played a full role in the negotiations, allowing each side of the conflict in Northern Ireland to believe that they had an external guarantor that represented their interests (Powell 2008; Ahern 2009; Reynolds 2009). Crucially, Dublin and London appointed a political figure from outside the region, former US Senator George Mitchell, to chair the negotiations. Irish diplomacy and diasporans kept Ireland higher up the list of US priorities than would otherwise have been the case. The goodwill and interventions of the Clinton administration in the United States along with the prospect of EU funding to underpin aspects of the peace process also provided

favorable conditions for a settlement (Sanders 2019, pp. 207–257). International involvement, including external mediation and facilitation, proved vital in providing a mechanism whereby the disposal of weapons belonging to nonstate actors could be verified and conducted in a manner that minimized the stigma of surrender.

The peace process also enjoyed a favorable international context. It chimed with the prevailing optimistic zeitgeist of the early and mid-1990s. Communism had collapsed throughout Europe during the dying months of the 1980s, culminating in the dismantling of the Berlin Wall, the reunification of Germany, and the end of the Cold War (Cox 1998). Nelson Mandela was freed from prison in South Africa and apartheid quickly replaced by majority rule. Initially, the Oslo peace accords in the Middle East also generated optimism before quickly becoming a parable of what can go wrong in a peace process. Moreover, the establishment of legislatures in Scotland and Wales, following referenda in those countries, made devolution within Northern Ireland easier for unionists to digest. No longer did it necessarily signify that Northern Ireland was a place apart requiring exceptional treatment but, rather, it could be presented as part of an ongoing process of decentralization within the United Kingdom.

In addition to the ongoing support of the Irish and British governments, the peace process includes all major parties in Northern Ireland, including the late converts of the DUP, and this inclusivity has been an essential reason for its success. Moreover, as part of the GFA, all prisoners whose militant organizations had signed up to the peace process were quickly released. Previous initiatives had been opposed by the IRA, the organization responsible for the majority of fatalities during the conflict, and this rejection put a ceiling on expectations. The peace process received an early boost when aspects of the GFA were approved in a referendum by 71% in Northern Ireland and by 95% in the Republic of Ireland (Ó Beacháin 2018a, pp. 240–241). Having the vote in both parts of Ireland on the same day was also significant, simultaneously undermining the positions of dissident republicans and recalcitrant unionists.

Decommissioning, Demilitarization, and Policing

Decommissioning IRA weapons was central to the peace process and imbued with symbolism for both sides. But as Tony Blair and Bertie Ahern realized, getting the republican movement to sign up to the principle of majority consent within Northern Ireland being a prerequisite for a united Ireland was far more significant in the long term than dispensing with the IRA's armory. Decommissioned weapons could be easily replaced. Far more difficult to acquire was the degree of trust and cooperation necessary to convince combatants that military means were undesirable (Ó Beacháin 2018a, pp. 246–248).

Making decommissioning a precondition for Sinn Féin's participation in negotiations, as the British Government initially tried to do, risked derailing the peace process. Opposing protagonists engaged in a circular argument whereby the IRA used the British Army presence to justify a leisurely approach to decommissioning, whereas this in turn was cited as a reason for maintaining a substantial British military force in Northern Ireland. Armed conflict, Sinn Féin argued, was a product and not the cause of the deep divisions in society and only maintaining a sustainable and inclusive government could help banish the gun from Irish politics.

Ultimately, the process of decommissioning would have to be internationalized to be successful. An Independent International Commission on Decommissioning (IICD), composed of respected military and diplomatic figures and chaired by Canadian General John de Chastelain, was established to oversee the process. Former President of Finland, Martti Ahtisaari, and African National Congress leader Cyril Ramaphosa were appointed to inspect IRA weapons dumps in order to facilitate the decommissioning of firearms, ammunition, and explosives. The IRA finally completed decommissioning their military arsenal on September 26, 2005 (O'Leary 2019, vol III, pp. 236–243). British army demilitarization – the removal of British troops from Northern Ireland and the destruction of much of the British army military infrastructure such as bases and

watchtowers – also continued apace until September 2007. However, while the decommissioning of weapons was a process that took several years to negotiate, the dismantling of sectarian mindsets would take much longer.

Allied to decommissioning and demilitarization was the task of making policing acceptable to both communities in Northern Ireland (Doyle 2010). As Tony Blair's Chief of Staff, Jonathan Powell, noted "the IRA couldn't police the community any more, yet they wouldn't let the police do so either" (Powell 2008, p. 275). Chris Patten, a former senior Conservative Party figure and the last Governor of Hong Kong, was entrusted with the task of chairing the commission to review the future of the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), and his report on September 9, 1999 advocated a radical overhaul of the composition, ethos, training, and structure of the police (Patten 1999; Ahern 2009, pp. 264–265). The report recommended that the RUC be given a more neutral name – the Northern Ireland Police Service – and that half of all new recruits would be drawn from the nationalist community with the aim of eventually reaching parity. The police force could not be drawn exclusively from the unionist community so that, as in the past, one side of the conflict was, at government expense, policing the other. Patten and his supporters were guided by the objective of depoliticizing the police and sought to facilitate a move away from policing during a state of armed conflict to a form of community policing with a strong emphasis on impartiality and human rights.

Tradeoffs

A major barrier to conflict resolution in Northern Ireland has been the unwillingness of protagonists to recognize or acknowledge the basic rights of the other side. As denial of civil rights had fuelled the "Troubles" during the late 1960s, a peaceful transition from protracted conflict required parity of esteem for both nationalists and unionists within Northern Ireland. The GFA guarantees equality of political, civil, social, and cultural rights. Consent was designed to be a two-way

street so that neither unionists nor nationalists would be able to achieve much in Northern Ireland without first securing the agreement of their former adversaries with whom they now shared government power.

Ultimately, Sinn Féin accepted a formula that involved a right to self-determination for Northern Ireland that the party had previously dismissed as “the unionist veto.” Reaching consensus on defining the political unit that might benefit from self-determination was a major breakthrough. The GFA included the unwieldy formula that it was for the Irish people alone, by agreement between the two parts respectively and without external impediment, to exercise their right of self-determination but reiterated that majority consent from Northern Ireland’s electorate was a prerequisite. The birth right of all of Northern Ireland’s people to identify themselves as Irish, British, or both was recognized and this right could not be affected by any change to the constitutional status of the North. Significantly, the Government in Dublin agreed to reformulate Articles 2 and 3 of the Irish constitution so that it moderated what was perceived by unionists to be a “territorial claim” on Northern Ireland. The revised constitutional provision shifted the emphasis away from the rights *to* territory toward the rights *of* people (Ó Beacháin 2002).

Until the mid-1990s, it had been assumed that any power-sharing system of government within Northern Ireland would be between “moderate” nationalists and unionists, in other words the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) and the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP). However, while the power-sharing executive was initially based on these two factions, the more “radical” DUP and Sinn Féin eclipsed the SDLP and UUP in the early years of the twenty-first century and have formed the bedrock of Northern Ireland’s power-sharing administration. Indeed, the first power-sharing government established after the St. Andrew’s Agreement was led by erstwhile fundamentalist Ian Paisley and the former IRA military commander Martin McGuinness (O’Leary 2019, vol III, pp. 254–257).

Neither the Good Friday nor St. Andrews Agreements was presented as a final settlement.

Rather, the peace process allows for an open-ended constitutional development. The GFA acknowledged that a majority of people on the island of Ireland wished for a united Ireland, and that this included a substantial section within Northern Ireland, but emphasized that a majority in the six counties, freely exercised and legitimate, supported the status quo. In deference to nationalist aspirations, it was affirmed that should a majority within Northern Ireland opt for a united Ireland, it would be a binding obligation for both governments to introduce legislation to give effect to that wish. Had the GFA been presented as an end in itself, without leaving open the possibility of a united Ireland at some point in the future, it is most unlikely that it would have been accepted by nationalists within Northern Ireland or, indeed, by the Irish Government.

Brexit

Brexit introduced profound uncertainty into Anglo-Irish relations, damaged intercommunity relations within Northern Ireland, and undermined many of the certainties and assumptions on which the peace process had been predicated (Ó Beacháin 2018a, pp. 257–262). It immediately raised several important questions regarding Northern Ireland’s status within the UK and its relationship with the rest of the island. A majority of people in Northern Ireland (56%) voted to remain in the European Union and many feared that Brexit would undermine the work of reconciliation as well as destabilize the region (Murphy 2018). Moreover, the reintroduction of a physical border between the north and south of Ireland could have a negative impact on the peace process (Doyle and Connolly 2019). Following the Brexit referendum, Taoiseach Enda Kenny and the President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, jointly agreed that, in the event of Irish reunification, the North would be able to rejoin the EU, in a manner similar to East Germany’s accession in 1990 (Ó Beacháin 2018a, p. 259).

Consent is at the heart of the GFA, particularly the principle that there could be no change in the

constitutional status of Northern Ireland without a majority agreeing to such a change. Brexit now threatened to fundamentally alter Northern Ireland's status against the explicit wishes of the majority that had indicated a wish to stay within the EU. As the people of Northern Ireland are by birth right entitled to be Irish citizens, it is unclear how their rights as EU citizens can be protected post-Brexit.

Following its failure to win the snap election of June 2017, the ruling Conservative Party entered into a pact with the DUP, the only party within Northern Ireland to have supported Brexit during the referendum campaign. As the British Government depended on the DUP for its survival, it weakened London's ability to be "rigorously impartial" in its dealings with Northern Ireland, as required by the GFA (Ó Beacháin 2018b, p. 319). When the Conservative Party under Boris Johnson won a clear majority of seats in the December 2019 general election, it eliminated this dependence on the DUP but failed to resolve the tension between the UK diverging from the EU and the need to avoid a hard border on the island of Ireland. During the same month, the Northern Ireland assembly and power-sharing executive were reconstituted after a 3-year hiatus, occasioned by the "cash for ash" scandal, a failed renewable energy incentive scheme that had cost the Exchequer up to half a billion pounds (McBride 2019). The challenges to reestablishing the executive were accentuated by the DUP's centrality in propping up the Conservative Government and its hostility to the enactment of an act that would enhance the rights of Irish Language speakers in Northern Ireland. In the February 2020 general election, Sinn Féin attracted the largest number of votes in the Republic of Ireland for the first time since partition. The prospect of Sinn Féin being in government in both parts of Ireland is likely to enhance calls for a referendum on Irish unity.

Conclusion

Though it has occasionally faltered, the Northern Ireland peace process has endured for decades.

The implementation of the Good Friday and St. Andrews Agreements has fundamentally altered day-to-day life in Northern Ireland. Violence has abated and erstwhile antagonists have shared power, supported by the British and Irish Governments. While remaining within the United Kingdom, provision has been made for Northern Ireland to unite with the rest of Ireland at some point in the future. In Northern Ireland today, the population is evenly divided between nationalists and unionists. In the 2017 elections to the Northern Ireland Assembly, unionist and nationalist parties each won exactly 39 seats. As a result of the Westminster election of December 2019, Northern Ireland elected 9 nationalists (7 Sinn Féin, 2 SDLP), 8 unionists (all DUP), and 1 non-aligned (Alliance Party) (Ó Beacháin 2018b, p. 328; 2020).

The agreements constitute a successful attempt at conflict management, but it is perhaps too big a leap to say that what has been achieved is conflict resolution, let alone conflict transformation. Northern Ireland retains the scars of prolonged misrule. Society remains segregated in the most fundamental of ways, with nationalists and unionists living apart, going to separate schools and churches, reading rival communal newspapers, playing different sports, and so on. Segregation is both a symptom and a cause of conflict. The GFA respected the integrity of the conflict by institutionalizing it to an extent where it is difficult to conceive of a form of government that is not a coalition of opposites composed of unionists and nationalists who have little in common beyond a mandate to rule bestowed by the peace agreements. One can perhaps say that such a form of government is the worst for Northern Ireland except for the realistic alternatives.

Summary

In Northern Ireland today, the population is almost evenly divided between unionists and nationalists. Unionists (who wish for Northern Ireland to remain part of the United Kingdom) are in general from a Protestant family or

ancestral background, while nationalists (who seek a united Ireland) are much more likely to be the descendants of those Catholics displaced during the colonial project. The fundamental source of division, however, is not theological; the conflict centers on issues of power and identity. For centuries, and with the support of the British Government in London, unionists exercised control over the majority Irish Catholic population, which triggered numerous rebellions and uprisings. London's strategic objectives, allied with unionist preferences, resulted in the partition of Ireland in 1921 by a unilateral act of the British Parliament. Two new political regimes were created, a 26-county state (now the Republic of Ireland), which was almost homogeneously nationalist, and the much smaller 6-county Northern Ireland, which constituted less than 17% of the island of Ireland, where unionists outnumbered nationalists by two to one. While a constituent part of the United Kingdom, and subsidized by the British exchequer, the unionist regime in Northern Ireland enjoyed virtually unrestricted powers. From the beginning, Northern Ireland was a one-party state that excluded Catholics and nationalists from economic and political power. The hostile response of state security forces and armed irregulars to the civil rights campaign during the late 1960s precipitated a series of violent events, quickly dubbed "the Troubles," which would last for almost three decades. The core of the conflict was a triangular struggle that pitted nationalist insurgents against the British army and unionist paramilitary forces. The majority of fatalities, however, were non-combatants.

The Good Friday and St Andrews Agreements have institutionalized a peace process that has fundamentally altered day-to-day life in Northern Ireland. Violence has abated, and unionists and nationalists have shared power, supported by the British and Irish governments. While remaining within the United Kingdom, provision has been made for Northern Ireland to unite with the rest of Ireland at some point in the future should a majority of the electorate, by means of a border poll, express this preference.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Balkanization](#)
- ▶ [Georgian-Abkhaz Conflict](#)
- ▶ [Moldova-Transnistria Conflict](#)

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UN Missions in Ex-Yugoslavia

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Synonyms

[International intervention](#); [UN intervention](#)

Definition

During the 1990s and early 2000s, the ex-Yugoslavia region experienced a series of conflicts following the breakup of the country. The United Nations (UN) provided the main institutional response to the wars that erupted in ex-Yugoslavia from 1991 to 1999, deploying peacekeeping missions in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), and Macedonia and participating on a mission in Kosovo. At the same time, the ex-Yugoslavia region became a site that shaped the future of UN missions and established parameters for “success” and “failure.” Episodes like the genocide in Srebrenica, which had been declared a “safe area” by the UN forces in BiH, drove the organization into reshaping its doctrines and strategies for future peacekeeping engagements. Moreover, the UN also got involved in bolder initiatives of statebuilding following the wars in BiH and Kosovo.

The UN Missions in Light of the Yugoslavian Dissolution

The wars that erupted in ex-Yugoslavia from 1991 to 1999 were considered the most serious security crisis in Europe since the end of Second World War. The conflicts in Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo caused the death of approximately 140,000 people (Baker 2015, p. 1)

and were marked by massive human rights violations. The United Nations provided the main institutional response in face of the crisis in the region.

The 1990s were a crucial decade for the United Nations. While Yugoslavia was dissolved into new countries, the UN was experiencing a reformulation of its role in international issues, most specifically in what regards peace operations. Indeed, the end of the Cold War was marked by an increasing number of peace operations, most especially those led and authorized by the United Nations. That decade registered the highest number of UN missions ever created. An important aspect is the deployment of such missions inside the European continent, an unprecedented development since the 1940s (Belamy and Williams 2015).

As we discuss in the following sections, the ex-Yugoslavia region became a site that shaped the future of UN missions and established parameters for “success” and “failure.” Through the years that the UN was involved in the region, the operation mandates became wider and more complex – in an attempt to respond to the growing complexity of the conflicts. Following critical episodes in which the UN peacekeepers failed to protect local population, the role of the UN peacekeeping institution

came under scrutiny, forcing UN to reformulate its doctrines and strategies for future engagements. Moreover, in Europe, the UN was disregarded as the main peace actor in the ground as other organizations such as the European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) gained strength on that matter following the Yugoslav wars.

In the meanwhile, however, the UN deployed several peacekeeping missions in the region: United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR – 1992), United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation (UNCRO – 1995), United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH – 1995), UN Preventive Deployment Mission in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (UNPREDEP – 1995), United Nations International Police Task Force (IPTF – 1995), United Nations Mission of Observers in Prevlaka (UNMOP – 1996), United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (UNTAES – 1996), and United Nations Police Support Group (UNPSG – 1998) (see Table 1).

At times, those missions acted along or were replaced by other forces from regional organizations or by NATO, such as European Community Monitoring Mission (ECMM-EUMM – 1991),

UN Missions in Ex-Yugoslavia, Table 1 UN missions in ex-Yugoslavia in the 1990s

| Name of the UN mission | Acronym | Year of deployment | Country where it has been deployed |
|---|----------|--------------------|--|
| United Nations Protection Force | UNPROFOR | 1992 | Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia |
| United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation | UNCRO | 1995 | Croatia |
| United Nations Mission of Observers in Prevlaka | UNMOP | 1996 | Croatia |
| United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja, and Western Sirmium | UNTAES | 1996 | Croatia |
| United Nations Police Support Group | UNPSG | 1998 | Croatia |
| United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina | UNMIBH | 1995 | Bosnia and Herzegovina |
| United Nations International Police Task Force | IPTF | 1995 | Bosnia and Herzegovina |
| UN Preventive Deployment Mission in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia | UNPREDEP | 1995 | Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia |

Implementation Force (IFOR – 1995), Stabilization Force (SFOR – 1996), European Union Force Bosnia and Herzegovina (through Operation Concordia – 2003 and Operation Althea – 2004), Operation Essential Harvest (TFH – 2001) among others. Here, our focus will rely only on the UN-led missions (Bellamy and Williams 2015) in ex-Yugoslavia, even though at times we will mention how they relate to other actors.

In what follows, we analyze the UN missions within the context for which they have been deployed. As such, the analysis will be made by country, an organizational choice that allows for exploring the connections among the different actors in play and the developments and successions from one mission to another.

The UN Missions in Croatia

In February 1992, after 6 months of internal conflicts in Croatia between the Serbian minority and Croats, the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) was authorized by the UN Security Council (UNSC), as an “interim arrangement to create the conditions of peace and security required for the negotiation of an overall settlement of the Yugoslav crisis” (UN, p. 145). The Secretary-General, in his report of 15 February 1992 to the Security Council, stated that “the [I]mmediate UN deployment is the only remaining hope for avoiding an even more destructive civil war than that which prevailed during the second half of 1991” (Nambiar 2011). It was thus seen as an essential tool to prevent further conflict in the region and to restore peace, especially after Western Europe had failed to provide a response to the conflicts in Croatia.

The UNPROFOR was created according to the Vance Plan, which foresaw the deployment of UN troops and police monitors in certain areas of Croatia, designated as “United Nations Protected Areas” (UNPAs). These were areas constituted by a majority of Serbs and, therefore, judged more vulnerable by the Secretary-General. Due to the tensions between the two communities (Croats and Serbs), the UNPAs needed special arrangements to reach or consolidate a cease-fire. The

plan established three UNPAs in Croatia: Eastern Slavonia, Western Slavonia, and Krajina (UN 1991). It was part of the UNPROFOR mandate to ensure that these areas would be demilitarized, and that armed attacks would be avoided. Moreover, the mission counted with police monitors, who would assure that local forces would not discriminate against persons of any nationality or perpetrate human right abuses. Also, the UNPROFOR would help to relocate all Yugoslav National Army (JNA) forces still in Croatia to other parts of Yugoslavia. Finally, the mission would assist UN humanitarian agencies dealing with displaced persons (UN 1991).

UNPROFOR was deployed in May 1992 in Eastern Slavonia and by the end of June, it had already assumed its role in all set regions. However, the mission had some problems in certain areas of Croatia which were controlled by the JNA and inhabited mostly by Serbs. Most of these areas laid outside the UNPAs agreed boundaries. While Belgrade wanted these areas to be part of the UNPAs, the Croatian government was against increasing these areas. Nevertheless, through that year, UNPROFOR’s mandate also demarcated the “pink zones,” vulnerable areas outside of the UNPAs.

This was the first of many incremental expansions of the mission beyond its original scope, a process that has been called “mission creep” and which has been considered one of the main problems the UN missions faced in ex-Yugoslavia. Faced with the outbreak of war in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the rise of tensions in Macedonia, the UNPROFOR extended its mandate not only in terms of scope but also geographically.

It is important to stress that UNPROFOR in Croatia, unlike most UN missions deployed in the post-Cold War, was more similar to a traditional peacekeeping operation (those which were conducted during the Cold War) and, despite its “mission creep,” had limited capacity of action. Indeed, initially, UNPROFOR was essentially a Chapter VI (of the UN Charter) operation aimed at supervising a cease-fire, i.e., “freezing” the situation on the ground while political developments would be led by diplomatic efforts (Tardy 2014b). Although the United States and the European

Commission wanted the operation, from the beginning, to take place under the provisions of Chapter VII, India and China had opposed the idea (Shrivastava and Agarwal 2003). Being a Chapter VI operation means that the mission is allowed to use force in self-defense only, while Chapter VII operations are allowed to use all necessary means to restore peace.

Although UNPROFOR achieved some of its goals, it is usually dismissed and disapproved for its passive posture. Among its achievements, Tardy (2014b) lists: (1) the attainment of a relative stabilization of the UNPAs during the period the UNPROFOR was active in those areas, its mediating role among the two sides of the conflict and the negotiation of a partial withdrawal of the JNA from the UNPAs; (2) the avoidance of a renewal of violence in 1995, when it was replaced by United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation (UNCRO), which operated from March 1995 to January 1996; and (3) the UN claimed it has “played a major role in protecting the rights of minorities in the protected areas and the Croat population there has been relatively stable since the ceasefire agreement.”

However, the shortcomings outnumber the mission’s achievements. Tardy (2014b) also lists the failures that UNPROFOR endured in Croatia: (1) It reinforced the stalemate on the ground – the mission was accused of having consolidated and frozen Serbian territorial achievements in Croatia; (2) despite its mandate, the mission was not able to facilitate the return of minorities to the areas they monitored, and the UNPAs were never fully demilitarized; (3) UNPROFOR in Croatia was considered a “weak” mission since it lacked a strong support from the UN Security Council; and (4) the deployment of Operation Storm by the Croatian government, which violently seized the areas controlled by Serbian forces, and was a consequence of UNPROFOR’s failure in stabilizing the situation on the ground.

UN in Croatia After UNPROFOR

In 1995, UNPROFOR was replaced by UNCRO, a smaller and less powerful mission compared to its predecessor. UNCRO lasted less than a year and was dissolved into two new missions: United

Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (UNTAES) and United Nations Mission of Observers in Prevlaka (UNMOP). UNTAES was then a third successive UN mission deployed to Croatia. Established by the Security Council through Resolution 1037 (1996), UNTAES’ main objective was to reintegrate the region of Eastern Slavonia, Baranja, and Western Sirmium peacefully into Croatia’s legal and constitutional system (<https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N96/007/55/PDF/N9600755.pdf?OpenElement>). The region – majorly inhabited by Serbs – had broken out along other parts of Croatia in 1990 to form the Republic of Serbian Krajina. The latter was dissolved in 1995 with the end of the war in Croatia. The region, however, was only reintegrated in 1998.

In contrast to UNPROFOR and UNCRO, UNTAES is considered to have successfully fulfilled its mandate. A few important factors have contributed to this positive evaluation. The mission was deployed in an already more stabilized and favorable political and military context: the wars in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina had reached an end through the Dayton Agreement; there was stronger national and international support for the mission, and the region to be reintegrated was more isolated and experiencing growing economic crisis. The question of support here seems crucial: the mission has been endorsed by the Security Council and the Contact Group. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) and Serbian authorities in Croatia also sought to cooperate, especially when the latter understood they would not be annexed by the former (Simonović and Nimać 1999).

Another crucial aspect relies on the nature of the mission’s mandate. While UNPROFOR’s and UNCRO’s mandate were considered too ambitious – encompassing the aim of “achieving a political solution” – UNTAES had a more achievable one. UNTAES’ mandate encompassed both civil and military aspects, such as the emission of 154,443 certificates of citizenship and the demilitarization through a “weapon buy-back scheme” (Idem). When the mandate was concluded, in 1998, UNTAES made a transition towards the

United Nations Police Support Group (UNPSG) (resolution 1145/1997). UNPSG's aim was "to continue monitoring the performance of the Croatian police in the Danube region, particularly with respect to the return of displaced persons, for a single nine-month period" (UN 1997). In October 1998, after 9 months, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) took over the police monitoring responsibilities from UNPSG.

Another region of concern for the UN was the strategic Prevlaka peninsula, under dispute between Croatia and then FRY (nowadays, Montenegro). The Peninsula, located in the very south of Croatia, used to be a Yugoslav military base in the Yugoslav years. In 1992, Croatia and FRY agreed to demilitarize it and put it under the monitoring of UNPROFOR (Kajosevic 2020) through Resolution 779 (1992). The same functions were carried out by UNCRO once it took place. By the end of UNCRO's mandate, in 1996, the Security Council approved the deployment of more military forces to continue patrolling the area. **UNMOP** was thus created, according to Resolution 1038 (1996) (UN). Although small in numbers, UNMOP was in place for many years. The mission came to an end in 2002, when both Croatia and (now) Montenegro signed a protocol on an interim regime, according to which the peninsula remained in Croatia while Montenegro obtained the rights over the surrounding waters. While UNMOP managed to avoid physical violence in the area, the disputes around Prevlaka peninsula are still in place today (Kajosevic 2020).

UN Missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The **UNPROFOR** intervention in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) started without an official mandate to operate in the newly independent country. However, as the conflict in BiH became more violent and widespread, UNPROFOR extended its action to Croatia's neighboring country, following a request by (then) Bosnian president, Alija Izetbegović. Indeed, the situation on the ground had much deteriorated since BiH held

a plebiscite, on 20 February 1992, to establish its independence from the Yugoslavian federation – which was boycotted by the Bosnian Serbs. With 99.4% of votes pro-independence, Izetbegović declared BiH an independent state on 3 March 1992, triggering clashes between Serbs and Muslims in many parts of the country, Sarajevo included (Baker 2015; Shrivastava and Agarwal 2003). The JNA intervened along local Bosnian Serb forces and very quickly captured 70% of the territory, promoting ethnic cleansing campaigns in areas populated mostly by Muslims, especially in the North and East of BiH (Toal and Dahlman 2011; Shrivastava and Agarwal 2003).

But it was only on the 30 May 1992, amidst the upsurge of violence in Sarajevo, that the UN Security Council approved Resolution 757, which officially extended UNPROFOR's mission to BiH. Resolution 757 called for economic sanctions against Yugoslavia and established that UNPROFOR's main duty was the provision of humanitarian assistance to the Bosnian population. It also expressed concern with UNPROFOR blue helmets and humanitarian agents, which were being targeted by the JNA and pro-Serbs paramilitary groups in BiH while establishing "a security zone encompassing Sarajevo and its airport" (UN Resolution 757).

That was only the beginning of the bloodiest conflict in ex-Yugoslavia and the main theatre of war for UNPROFOR. However, the UN operation in BiH also experienced a "mission creep" which was not followed by matching efforts and sufficient means to accomplish its mandate. The government of Bosnia and Herzegovina accused the UN of doing very little to help, while calling for a military operation in the country. This lack of resources was also felt by the UNPROFOR. In the first 15 months on the ground, the mission lost 53 personnel and 542 were wounded (Shrivastava and Agarwal 2003). As the conflict advanced, the UN blue helmets systematically became targets of Bosnian Serb forces and, in various occasions, were held hostage and demoralized.

In 1993, the UN Security Council changed its strategy in the region, adopting a "deterrent" approach instead of a humanitarian one (Halilović 2016). It established the International Criminal

Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), which undertook the prosecution and adjudication of four types of crimes during the wars in the region (crimes against humanity, genocide, violations of the laws or customs of war, grave breaches of the Geneva Convention). The ICTY operated until 2017, charging over 160 persons. Moreover, the UN officially established six “safe areas” in BiH: Bihać, Goražde, Sarajevo, Srebrenica, Tuzla, and Žepa (Shrivastava and Agarwal 2003). At that point, those cities or villages had received thousands of Muslims from areas that were “ethnically cleansed” by Serbs. The UN promised to protect those “safe areas” following two rules: no weapons within and no entry of weapons from outside (Nambiar 2011). Most of them were located in areas controlled by the Serbs and, therefore, their safety was at minimum fragile and, in some cases, it was never actually established (such as in Sarajevo). Chenicheri Satish Nambiar, who was the first Force Commander and Head of Mission of UNPROFOR between 1992 and 1993, states that “it was also made clear that to ensure the implementation of this requirement (the safe areas), a ‘muscular’ deployment of UN forces was essential” (p. 178). Ironically, due to the lack of resources and political will to protect them, “safe areas” such as Sarajevo, Srebrenica, Goražde, and Žepa staged some of the most brutal atrocities of the war in Bosnia (Halilović 2016).

Furthermore, the Security Council left unclear whether the UNPROFOR could use force to protect the civilian population in the enclaves or only for their own self-defense. A subsequent resolution (resolution 836) clarified the issue, asserting that the blue helmets had a mandate to use force to “deter attacks against the safe areas.” However, as the Human Rights Watch reports, the UN estimated that it would need 34,000 troops “to ensure full respect for the safe areas” but only 3,500 were eventually deployed (Human Rights Watch 1995).

The most infamous event involving the UNPROFOR in BiH happened precisely in one of the UN safe areas: the genocide in Srebrenica. In July 1995, the Bosnian-Serbian forces commanded by general Ratko Mladic overran

Srebrenica – which used to be a village of 8,000 inhabitants, but, at that time, it counted 50,000 people, mostly displaced Muslims who were suffering from lack of food and other basic goods (Human Rights Watch 1995). Faced with the imminent attack, over 15,000 Muslim men in military age ran through the mountains, while other thousands sought protection at the Potočari compound, where the Dutch UN forces were stationed. Amidst the escalation of threats and being surrendered by Ratko Mladic’s troops, the blue helmets helped to organize the deportation of around 28,000 people in exchange for the release of 14 Dutch peacekeepers held by Bosnian Serbs. What followed caused one of the worst stains on the UN image. Muslim men were separated from women and children, inspected by the UN troops in search for sharp objects and handed to their enemies – the Bosnian Serb Army. Then, they were taken to several locations nearby, such as stadiums and warehouses, brutally murdered, and then buried into mass graves (Ó Tuathail 1999). Women and children were gathered in buses and taken to Muslim territory – many of them were terrorized, raped, beaten, and robbed along the way (Human Rights Watch 1995). Footage from these scenes shows UNPROFOR as completely submissive to Mladic’s troops while cooperating to evacuate Muslim refugees.

The Srebrenica genocide – where over 8,372 Muslims were killed – was labelled as the “UN darkest hour” (Waterfield apud Halilović 2016) and became one of the central points in classifying the mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina a failure (Kenkel 2013; Nambiar 2011; Simić 2013). In addition, it has prompted questions about whether the UN could have liability and be held responsible for actions and/or outcomes in the international political system (Hasanbasić 2014; Lang 2003). In 2014, in a legal case involving a group of victims called Mothers of Srebrenica against the Dutch State, a District Court of the Hague dismissed the UN as party to the suit, cementing the concept of UN’s “absolute immunity” while shifting a heavy portion of the liability for peacekeeper behavior onto Member States’ contributing troops (Hasanbasić 2014). The Court found that Dutch peacekeepers bear some amount of

liability in what regards the fate of 350 men who were hidden in the Potočari compound and of whom the Bosnian Serbs were unaware. The Court judged that “Dutchbat failed to offer these 350 male refugees the choice to stay where they were, even though that would have been possible” (Karasz 2019). Instead, they were handed to Bosnian Serbs.

UNPROFOR’s performance in BiH also raised concern to the use of force and the partnership with other organizations – most especially, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Already in 1992, NATO took part on the conflicts by assuring the implementation of economic embargoes and a no-fly zone over BiH (Kaufman 2002). It was also NATO that undertook the most muscular attacks against the Bosnian Serb Army, which prompted the parts to sit at the peace negotiation table and agree upon the signature of the Dayton Peace Accords. NATO was also responsible for the implementation of the military part of Dayton, and sent 55,000 troops to BiH to make the transition from war to peace (see ► “NATO’s Approach to Peace Operations and Peacebuilding”).

UN in Postwar BiH

The developments of UNPROFOR in BiH deeply shaped the future of the peace missions both in the region and in other places. In the following years, Western powers, most especially the USA, developed a doctrine of “liberal interventionism.” NATO-led mission in Kosovo in 1999 is a result of such policy (Halilović 2016).

The Dayton Peace Agreement, signed on 14 December 1995, established the end of the war in BiH. Soon after that, on 20 December, NATO-commanded Implementation Force (IFOR) took over from UNPROFOR and, on the next day, the Security Council established the United Nations International Police Task Force (IPTF) and a United Nations civilian office under the name of United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) (through Resolution 1035). UNMIBH’s mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina differed widely from its predecessor in scope. Acting in a postwar state, it held a statebuilding role and it was responsible for assuring law and

order, promoting the reconstruction of Bosnian economy and addressing the question of refugees and internally displaced persons. Besides, UNMIBH was only one actor among a broader ensemble of peace building organizations in Bosnia, such as NATO, the EU, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and even UN agencies such as the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR).

Therefore, the UNMIBH was part of a transnational government in BiH as an effort to promote wider international participation in rebuilding the state. This kind of international intervention – that was also implemented later in Kosovo and East Timor – is considered to be a response to the criticism against the UN and the international community more widely for failing to protect civilians especially in Bosnia, Rwanda, and Somalia. Such approach was, however, deemed a sort of neocolonialism, and the transnational government, a benevolent autocracy (Williams 2005).

Another important tendency regards the role the UN played in such missions. Indeed, from that point on, other organizations gained a much more prominent role in peace missions and peace and statebuilding in the region. A special mention must be made to NATO, which would lead military operations in Serbia and Kosovo a few years later, and to the EU, which has replaced both the UN and NATO in BiH in both civilian and military tasks in the 2000s.

UN Missions in North Macedonia

A third development of UNPROFOR took place in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (nowadays, North Macedonia), which became independent from Yugoslavia in 8 September 1991. Due to tensions that erupted in the Macedonian society – composed officially of 67% Macedonians, 23% Albanians (a number which is contested) and 10% Turks, Serbs, Vlachs, Roma, and other – and fearing spillovers from other conflicts in the region, the UN deployed to the country its first preventive military operation (Tardy 2014a). The UN Security Council

Resolution 795 established the mission in Macedonia on 11 December 1992. It was a traditional peace operation, deployed upon the request of the Macedonian government and under Chapter VI, which foresees the non-resort to force unless in case of self-defense (Kenkel 2013).

Unlike the missions in Croatia and BiH, UNPROFOR in Macedonia was considered a success. It started by patrolling Macedonian borders and, in March 1994, as the scope of the mission was enlarged to address also internal tensions, it has succeeded in maintaining the country's stability and not letting any conflict to scale up. In 1995, the year when UNPROFOR's mandate ended, the Secretary-General reported that Macedonia faced "no current military threat" (Tardy 2014a).

UNPROFOR was replaced by the UN Preventive Deployment Mission in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (**UNPREDEP**). On its first years, UNPREDEP faced two external challenges: the eruption of the pyramid economic crisis in Albania, in 1997 – which was followed by large waves of people trying to leave that country – and the intensification of conflicts in Kosovo on the following year. At this occasion, the mission received additional tasks such as monitoring and reporting on illicit arms flows and other prohibited activities (Resolution 1186, 21 July 1998). Moreover, the mission was performing statebuilding activities such as institution building and the promotion of good governance and rule of law (Tardy 2014a).

UNPREDEP had a strange end, at least in what concerns the timing. The mission reached its end on 25 February 1999, after a veto from China on the Security Council to renew its mandate (Ibid.). A month later, on 24 March 1999, NATO launched an air operation against Yugoslavia – which lasted 78 days and produced around 229,300 Kosovar refugees in Macedonia, corresponding to 11% of the population at that time (International Crisis Group 1999). The UN mission, however, was also not there in 2001, when the Albanian National Army launched an insurgency to claim more political, social, and cultural rights to Albanians in Macedonia. In fact, the conflict, which resulted in the Ohrid Agreements, was brokered by NATO – an

organization that gained more influence in the region due to the role it played in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The UN Mission in Kosovo

Differently from Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Macedonia, the UN mission to Kosovo was deployed only after the conflict had erupted and was close to the end. The United Nation Mission in Kosovo (**UNMIK**) was established by the UNSC Resolution 1244 on June 1999, after Yugoslavia agreed to withdrawal its forces from Kosovo, amidst a bombing campaign led by NATO. While the military mission in the region was attributed to NATO, through the Kosovo Force (KFOR), the UN became responsible to "provide an interim administration for Kosovo under which the people of Kosovo can enjoy substantial autonomy within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia" (UNSC Resolution 1244). The mission's mandate operated under chapter VII and had an unprecedented depth, giving the United Nations full power to function as an interim government and to administrate a state territory (Stahn 2001).

The UN Secretary-General was represented through the figure of the Special Representative and the mission worked closely with other organizations and UN agencies. Indeed, UNMIK was organized in four pillars, each one of them led by a different agency: (1) Humanitarian Assistance (UNHCR); (2) Civil Administration (UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations); (3) Elections (OSCE); and (4) Economic Reconstruction (EU) (Friedrich 2005; Gow 2009). The presence of multiple organizations and UN bodies was a crucial aspect of the postwar period in Kosovo. The organizations, however, not always reached agreements, and the lack of coordination among them has influenced the results of their work, especially in what concerns issues related to minorities.

Moreover, NATO's role was redefined during the Kosovo intervention to become increasingly associated to a humanitarian organization (Huysmans 2002). NATO started dealing with refugees,

even though it lacked the skills to do so and in competition and lack of cooperation with UNHCR. At the same time, the UNHCR feared working closely with NATO – which was also a part of the military conflict – given that it could undermine its impartiality and neutrality. UNMIK and NATO also acted under different legal settings. The Ombudsperson, institutionally set up in 2000, could hold UNMIK accountable for their actions, while KFOR has refused to allow the body to monitor its actions (Caruso 2007). The UNMIK also had difficulties coordinating its actions with the OSCE, especially regarding communication and media efforts (Ibid.).

On 17 February 2008, Kosovo declared independence from Yugoslavia. UNMIK thus assumed a status-neutral approach, but continued on the ground implementing its mandate. At the same time, it allowed the deployment of European Union Rule of Law Mission (EULEX). Overtime, the UN became increasingly marginalized within Kosovo, with its new leaders overseeing it as an administrative authority (Yannis 2004. See also ► [“United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo \(UNMIK\)”](#) on this issue). At the same time, the Western Balkans became a key priority for the European Union since the future of this region was largely associated to the integration in the EU. The European bloc utilized the promise of membership as a vital tool to exert its influence upon Kosovo (Braniff 2011). As such, peace became more associated with the integration to the European Union and a common market, than to the presence of the UN.

Summary

The ex-Yugoslavia region was an important site for the development of new practices regarding UN peacekeeping missions in the 1990s and early 2000s. With the Security Council more prone to approve such missions than during the Cold War times, the UN played a crucial role in the region. The UN experiences in ex-Yugoslavia shaped the future of UN missions and established parameters for “success” and “failure.” The UN held a more

traditional role in Croatia with UNPROFOR and, already at that point, it faced hostilities from local forces and shortcomings on assuring its mandate. However, when UNPROFOR was extended to Bosnia and Herzegovina, the challenges became even more substantial. While the mandate was enlarged and encompassed great responsibilities – such as the creation of “safe areas” – UNPROFOR did not have the resources to protect neither the civilians in those areas nor themselves. The blue helmets were systematically targeted and made hostage by Serbian forces. Moreover, the UN image got stained in the Srebrenica genocide, when the blue helmets not only watched Mladic’s men separate Muslim men from women and children but also cooperated with them and helped them to organize those actions.

UNPROFOR in Bosnia and Herzegovina became known as one of the biggest failures involving the UN in terms of peace operations in the 1990s. On the other hand, smaller missions with less ambitious mandates and greater international and local support, such as in Croatia and (North) Macedonia, proved to help the local population and to prevent tensions from escalating.

Besides, organizations such as NATO, the OSCE, and the European Union gained prominence and took on a more active role in peace operations. This can be noted during the postwar period, especially in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Kosovo. The cooperation between the UN and other regional or international organizations became a tendency due to the growing complexity of such missions, which involve a great range of actors, very ambitious mandates, and the enormous task of administering a state. However, this cooperation is not always easy and effective, and there are disagreements and lack of collaboration among them.

Cross-References

- [Ethnic Conflict in North Macedonia](#)
- [NATO’s Approach to Peace Operations and Peacebuilding](#)
- [Peacemaking and Peace Agreements on Kosovo](#)

- ▶ [Transitional Justice and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo \(UNMIK\)](#)

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UN Missions in Sudan and South Sudan

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Synonyms

Peace mediation; Peacekeeping; Peacemaking; Political missions; Political settlements; Third-party intervention

Definition

Sudan and South Sudan offer a unique laboratory for understanding the logistical, political, and ethical dilemmas of peace missions. Over two decades, these territories have hosted eight missions, four of which were actively deployed and one of which began drawing down in January 2021. These range from small bands of military observers, to multidimensional missions with combat-ready contingents that have robustly used force, to purely civilian political missions. Most of these missions fly the UN flag, while others are hybrid or regional deployments. But the UN has mandated, coordinated with or exercised command over all these missions. To understand UN missions in Sudan and South Sudan, it is necessary to grasp how all these missions interact in the same conflict theatre. This entry describes the operational context peace missions confront in Sudan and South Sudan, along with a brief political history. Then, it offers an overview of the eight peace missions that have deployed in this vast territory since the turn of the millennium. Lastly, the entry explores three peacekeeping and peacemaking themes that missions in Sudan and South Sudan throw into stark relief: the complications of managing host state consent; the ethical dilemmas missions face when they implement civilian protection mandates; and the challenges of regional cooperation in mission sequencing.

Introduction

Sudan and South Sudan offer a unique laboratory for understanding the logistical, political, and ethical dilemmas of peace missions. Over two decades, these territories have hosted eight missions, four of which were actively deployed and one of which began drawing down in January 2021. These range from small bands of military observers, to multidimensional missions with combat-ready contingents that have robustly used force, to purely civilian political missions. Most of these missions fly the UN flag, while others are hybrid or regional deployments. But the UN has mandated, coordinated with or exercised command over all these missions. To understand UN missions in Sudan and South Sudan, it is necessary to grasp how all these missions interact in the same conflict theatre.

This entry begins, first, by describing the operational context peace missions confront in Sudan and South Sudan, along with a brief political history. Secondly, it offers an overview of the eight peace missions that have deployed in this vast territory since the turn of the millennium. Thirdly, the entry explores three peacekeeping and peacemaking themes that missions in Sudan and South Sudan throw into stark relief: the complications of **managing host state consent**; the ethical dilemmas missions face when they implement **civilian protection** mandates; and the challenges of **regional cooperation in mission sequencing**.

Context

Sudan is not really a country at all, but many. A composite of layers, like a genetic fingerprint of memories that were once fluid, but have since crystallized out from the crucible of possibility. *Jamal Mahjoub, Sudanese novelist* (Copnall 2014: 10)

Before South Sudan became an independent country in July 2011, the former Sudan was the largest sovereign state by area in Africa. The territory (Figs. 1 and 2) encompasses immense ethnolinguistic diversity across a varied



UN Missions in Sudan and South Sudan, Fig. 1 Sudan, March 2012 (based on UN map)

topography, dominated by the Nile basin. Together, Sudan and South Sudan border nine countries, all of which in recent history have intervened militarily or politically, and exchanged flows of displaced people.

term **contested areas** refers to territorial areas with disputed sovereignty and borders, such as the Abyei Area.

Referring to Sudan and South Sudan
 For the purposes of this entry, the terms **Sudan** and **Sudanese** refer to the territory and citizens of the former Sudan before July 2011, and of contemporary Sudan afterwards. The terms **southern Sudan** and **southern Sudanese** refer to the territory in the former Sudan that eventually became South Sudan and Sudanese citizens who, before July 2011, asserted a southern identity. **South Sudan** and **South Sudanese** refer to the territory and citizens of South Sudan after independence in July 2011. The

Some trace Sudan and South Sudan’s conflicts to 1956, when Sudan became the first British-administered country to receive independence after WWII (Johnson 2003: 21). Southerners had long felt marginalized by Ottoman, Egyptian, and British colonial rulers, who had neglected territory below the tenth degree parallel, where Sudan’s deserts give way to unnavigable bush. In the first half of the twentieth century, the Nile valley around Khartoum received roads, health centers, high schools, and higher education, while southern Sudan received army outposts and Christian missionaries (Johnson 2003: 17–19).



UN Missions in Sudan and South Sudan, Fig. 2 South Sudan, October 2011 (based on UN map)

These inequities continued when a military coup toppled Sudan’s first postcolonial civilian government in 1958. Aggrieved southern politicians and exiled civil servants formed the Anyanya I (“snake venom”) rebel militia, which expanded to an armed opposition movement in 1963 (Thomas 2015: 170). Anyanya went dormant after a peace deal with the government in 1972, to reappear in 1983 as the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A), led by Dr. John Garang de Mabior. The SPLM/A’s prime objective was power in Khartoum. But the movement splintered in 1992, when Garang’s deputies, Riek Machar and Lam Akol, mutinied.

As Sudan’s civil war intensified in the 1990s, its neighbor, Ethiopia, looked on from its own disorder. In 1991, Meles Zenawi overthrew Mengistu Haile Mariam, who had ruled Ethiopia for 14 years through a violent military junta. Meles championed economic growth, devolution

and self-determination (De Waal 2015). In Sudan, he saw an ideological mission, a security challenge, and an opportunity to establish a reputation as a benign regional hegemon. Thus, Meles worked through the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to take the reins of a peace process. Founded in 1986, originally to fight drought, IGAD’s members included Djibouti, Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda, and Kenya. Shaped by Meles, its mission progressively grew to encompass development and security issues. His first act under the IGAD-led peace process was to frame the negotiations in terms of a Declaration of Principles, which included the right for southern Sudanese self-determination (De Waal 2016).

At the turn of the millennium, international pressure for peace intensified. First, the Organization of African Unity, which had lost credibility through corruption scandals, reconfigured as the

African Union with an ambitious vision. Its Constitutive Act established an African Union Commission and a Peace and Security Council, mandated to intervene in African conflicts, and conduct its own peace support activities (see Article 4h, Constitutive Act of the African Union, 2000). This gave unprecedented momentum to African regional organizations to lead peace processes and design peace missions without reliance on the United Nations or former colonial powers.

In parallel to the African Union's renaissance, the war on terror and the opening of Sudan's oil wells made resolution of Sudan's civil war an American priority (Osama Bin Laden had lived in Khartoum). These developments accelerated the IGAD-mediated negotiations, yielding the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), which stipulated a referendum on southern independence. In 2011, southern Sudanese voted and seceded.

To make an agreement possible in 2005, the CPA's mediators bracketed issues that threatened to stall negotiations. These included the conflict in Darfur, and the rifts within southern Sudan. IGAD sought to mediate a separate Darfur peace settlement, yielding an agreement in 2006 between the Government of Sudan (GoS) and only one of several insurgent groups. Peace talks continued in Doha, producing a framework agreement in 2010. While the deadliness of the conflict in Darfur dropped, it festered on without definitive resolution.

Meanwhile, South Sudan experienced a troubled transition to independence. In December 2013, the government and army fragmented, and civil war swept the country. This unleashed a flurry of IGAD-mediated peacemaking. The belligerents signed cycles of ceasefires and peace agreements that failed. IGAD would repeatedly resuscitate peace talks, sometimes mobilizing authoritarian neighbors such as Sudan's President Bashir, who mediated negotiations in July 2018. Milestones included the August 2015 Agreement to Resolve the Conflict in South Sudan (ARCSS) – which fell apart as violence erupted anew, in July 2016 – and the September 2018 Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS).

Sudan faced its own turmoil. After South Sudanese independence, it lost a large part of its oil revenue, triggering an economic crisis. Citizens engaged in waves of protests amidst rising food and oil prices, and restrictions to civil freedoms. State security forces often met these protests with violence, while generals started to waver in their loyalty to the president. In April 2019, the military ousted President Bashir, installing a Transitional Military Council (TMC). Citizens groups continued to protest, urging a full transition to civilian power.

In June 2019, members of the TMC deployed the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) on the streets of Khartoum to attack and abduct protestors. The creation of former President Bashir, the RSF was a Darfurian paramilitary unit originally known as "janjaweed." The RSF's deployment drew international condemnation and gave further momentum to a coalition of civilian groups, the Forces of Freedom and Change (FFC). The FFC negotiated a political agreement with the TMC to appoint a civilian-led transitional government. In August 2019, the former UN economist, Abdalla Hamdok, became Prime Minister. While navigating dissent within the military and an assassination attempt in 2020, Prime Minister Hamdok began to normalize relations with the USA and other countries that had treated Sudan as a pariah.

Missions Overview

As their shared political history illustrates, Sudan and South Sudan have encompassed a series of interlocking conflicts. The countries' relations with each other, their neighbors and regional organizations have driven a host of peace initiatives. These generated eight peace missions that deployed over two decades.

Defining Peace Missions

By **peace mission**, this entry refers to political missions and peacekeeping missions. **Political missions** consist of civilian personnel that work with a sovereign government to support political transitions and prevent conflict. UN special political missions sit under the purview of the

Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA), and before that, were under the Department of Political Affairs (DPA). **Peacekeeping missions** consist of both military and civilian personnel. They receive mandates to perform diverse tasks that have spanned monitoring ceasefires, active military action, administration of entire territories, civilian protection, statebuilding activities, and quick impact projects that restore infrastructure. UN peacekeeping missions sit under the purview of the Department of Peace Operations (DPO), and before that, were under the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO). Reflecting this diversity of purpose, the military contingents of peacekeeping missions range from being armed for robust use of force, to being primarily equipped for patrols and engineering activities; only a small proportion of troops in an operation will be combat-ready.

It is important to note that this definition of peace missions excludes sanctions monitoring committees (often referred to as panels of experts), commissions of inquiry into human rights abuses, and many ceasefire monitoring mechanisms. For example, when the GoS and SPLM/A signed the Nuba Mountains Ceasefire in 2002, they agreed to the formation of a small group of unarmed military observers to monitor the ceasefire under the Joint Military Commission (JMC). The JMC was mandated only by the parties to the agreement (De Waal 2016). While other analysts might include operations such as the JMC under a broader definition of peace missions, this entry excludes them in order to focus on missions that have had direct UN involvement through command and control or UN Security Council (UNSC) mandating. However, it is important to note that these other types of peace support activity – ceasefire monitoring, commissions of inquiry, and sanctions monitoring – have been numerous in Sudan and South Sudan, interacting in critical ways with the missions this entry analyses.

Peace missions may be designed, staffed, and mandated at the level of the United Nations, or a regional organization, such as the African Union or IGAD. However, all missions that use force must be mandated by the UNSC under

Chapter VII of the UN Charter, regardless of command and control. Chapter VIII of the Charter specifies that regional organizations that mandate missions to use force must expressly seek this authorization from the UNSC, while Article 103 supports this requirement by establishing that the UN Charter prevails over all other international agreements. In practice, this means the African Union Peace and Security Council may mandate a peacekeeping mission to use force, but before deployment, must seek UNSC authorization as a matter of international law.

Once authorized in this way, peace missions may fly the UN flag or that of another organization, such as the African Union, depending on command and control. Sudan and South Sudan have hosted both types of peacekeeping mission, including those that have “rehabbed.” For example, in 2007, the African Union Mission in Sudan traded its green African Union helmets for blue UN helmets, as it merged into the African Union – UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur.

Eight Missions in Two Decades

Peace missions have played a central role in political processes and peace agreement implementation in Sudan and South Sudan. This has entrenched these interventions in the governance of the two states (De Waal 2009). This section presents an overview of these missions.

Sudan, up to July 2011

In 2004, the CPA negotiation process neared conclusion, accompanying two divergent conflict trajectories. On the one hand, the peace talks between the GoS and SPLM/A promised at least a partial settlement between the government and southern armed groups. On the other hand, violence escalated between the GoS and Darfuri rebel groups, who had been excluded from the CPA negotiations. This led to contrasting peace support needs.

To safeguard the CPA, the USA, UK, and Norway convinced the conflict parties to accept deployment of a UN peacekeeping mission that would oversee implementation and political transition. In June 2004, the UNSC began by mandating a special political mission to prepare the

ground for a multidimensional peacekeeping operation (see UN doc. S/RES/1547 (2004)). The **UN Advanced Mission in Sudan (UNAMIS, 2004–2005)** deployed to Khartoum with a support office in Addis Ababa under the leadership of Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG), Jan Pronk.

Meanwhile, in August 2004, the African Union deployed 150 Rwandan troops to Darfur to protect ceasefire monitors. The **African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS, 2004–2007)** deployed under severe budget constraints, recognizing from the start that it would face pressures to expand. By October, the African Union had managed to deploy a further 2191 troops and 815 civilian police. While the UN member states and secretariat struggled to back AMIS with UN-hatted troops, the UNSC added to the UNAMIS mandate so that it could engage politically in the Darfuri conflict, to support humanitarian operations and peace talks in Abuja, Nigeria (see UN doc. S/RES/1556 (2004)).

In January 2005, GoS and the SPLM/A signed the “chapeau” of the CPA. The peace agreement contained complicated security provisions for joint patrols at the border and security sector reform, while creating a semiautonomous region in southern Sudan under a new federal arrangement. The UNSC followed in March by transitioning UNAMIS to a multidimensional peacekeeping operation, the **UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS, 2005–2011)**. Initially consisting of 10,000 military personnel and 715 civilian police, with further civilian staff support, UNMIS had a complex mandate (see UN doc. S/RES/1590 (2005)). Tasks ranged from supporting implementation of the CPA’s provisions, to refugee returns, mine clearance, and overseeing the South Sudan secession referendum.

The SRSG, Jan Pronk, remained intensely involved in the Darfur situation and committed to ensuring UNMIS could carry out protection activities in the region. The UNSC continued discussions with the African Union about a timetable for transitioning AMIS to a UN operation. However, as UNMIS tried to expand its activities to cover Darfur, it faced perpetual

barriers and restrictions to movement from the GoS. In October 2006, the GoS expelled Jan Pronk from the country due to his condemnation of the government for human rights abuses in Darfur.

Amidst this acrimonious relationship between the UN and GoS, the UNSC and African Union engaged in intensive diplomacy with the government. This resulted in eventual acceptance of an **African Union – UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID, 2007–2020)**, augmenting AMIS. Initially mandated to deploy 25,987 uniformed personnel, UNAMID was charged with complex conflict prevention tasks (see UN doc. S/RES/1769 (2007)). These included protecting civilians, supporting humanitarian aid delivery and mediating community conflicts.

Contested Area: Abyei

One of UNMIS’s milestone achievements was to facilitate a peaceful referendum in January 2011, when southern Sudanese voted overwhelmingly to break away from Sudan. As South Sudan’s independence approached in July 2011, several unresolved conflict issues came to a head, including the unresolved statuses of Abyei, Southern Kordofan, and Blue Nile State, and the continued operation of SPLM/A rebels in the Nuba Mountains. The relationship between the GoS and UN became even more conflictual. By July, GoS had withdrawn consent for a UN multidimensional peacekeeping force to remain on Sudanese soil, which the UNSC and DPKO had believed to be prerequisite for managing outstanding disputes at what would become the North-South border.

In May 2011, the SPLM/A and Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) clashed in the contested Abyei Area. This small region, bordering South Darfur, was of strategic significance as the location of a valuable oil well, the homeland of some of the SPLM/A’s most influential generals, and a critical transit point on the annual cattle migration of the Misseriya nomadic group, whose elite was politically influential in Khartoum. Tens of thousands of civilians fled, and SAF occupied Abyei Town. In response, the African Union mediated a peace agreement in Addis Ababa between GoS and the SPLM/A, which agreed to the deployment of the

United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA, 2011–present).

UNISFA was unique in several ways (De Waal 2016). First, the parties to the conflict specified its mandate in a peace agreement, and then passed it to the UNSC for authorization; mandating of UN missions is usually top down (see UN doc. S/RES/1990 (2011)). Secondly, UNISFA consisted entirely of Ethiopian troops, initially at a capacity of 4200 military and 50 police. This allowed for focused command and control. Thirdly, when it first deployed, UNISFA had almost no civilian staff to support it due to difficulties obtaining visas. This forced military personnel to engage in de-escalation activities related to border and land disputes, which would have otherwise been the responsibility of civil affairs staff at UNMIS, had it been able to remain in Sudan after July 2011. Some observers judge that the Ethiopian military proved strikingly successful in dispensing these tasks (Osterrieder et al. 2015). UNISFA managed to de-escalate tensions on several notable occasions. In May 2013, for example, Misseriya from the North attacked a UNISFA convoy, killing a peacekeeping and the powerful Ngok Dinka Paramount Chief, Deng Kuol Deng (the Ngok Dinka are sedentary pastoralists resident in Abyei that regard themselves as South Sudanese). While mission exit remained elusive in 2021, UNISFA had presided over 10 years without a major renewal of conflict between Sudan and South Sudan in Abyei.

South Sudan, After Independence

On July 9, 2011, South Sudanese raised the country's flag and sung their national anthem for the first time. A less reported dimension of independence week was the arrival in South Sudan's capital, Juba, of UN planes from Khartoum, full of bewildered UNMIS civilian staff with nowhere to sleep and uncertain final destinations. Up to this moment, the UNSC and DPKO had hoped to negotiate an extension of UNMIS. When GoS consent failed to materialize, the mission had to evacuate from the North almost overnight.

In UNMIS's place, the new Government of South Sudan (GoSS) consented to deployment of the **UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS,**

2011–present). UNMISS had a multidimensional mandate, with tasks that ranged from peacebuilding activities to supporting the GoSS with building the institutions and infrastructure of a new sovereign state (see UN doc. S/RES/1996 (2011)). The UNSC initially authorized it to deploy 7000 military, 900 police, and a civilian component. The immediate focus was to equip the GoSS to rule autonomously. Thus, UNMISS focused on logistics over engaging in politics and sought to decentralize its operations from Juba by building new bases in remote areas of the country.

South Sudan's fortunes changed dramatically in December 2013. As violence swept the country, civilians ran to UN bases for protection. The mission leadership took the decision to open UNMISS's gates. Within months, 200,000 civilians took refuge at these UN Protection of Civilians (PoC) sites, many of whom remained 8 years later. Some of these civilians had fled ethnically targeted killings. GoSS alleged that UNMISS was supporting the rebels by allowing protection for insurgents, whom they claimed traded uniforms for civilian clothes to enter the PoC sites. The relationship between the government and mission broke down, with the GoSS evicting senior officials involved in civil affairs and ceasefire monitoring from the country.

In July 2016, the situation deteriorated further. IGAD had brokered the ARCSS in August 2015, but the agreement had faltered in implementation. This came to a head a year later as violence again swept Juba, when government and rebel forces who had deployed together as part of the peace agreement turned on each other. Troops murdered and raped aid workers and citizens. During a notorious incident at the Terrain Hotel in Juba, UNMISS failed to respond to calls for help. These events led to an internal UN inquiry, further tensions with the GoSS over accusations of its own failure to protect civilians, and criticism from international humanitarian actors.

IGAD responded by proposing that it deploy the **Regional Protection Force (RPF, 2017–present)** to separate government and rebel troops. The UNSC backed this proposal, authorizing the deployment of 4000 military drawn from the

region, tasking them primarily with securing Juba (see UN doc. S/RES/2304 (2016)). The idea was that the RPF would have a distinct mandate but deploy under UNMISS command and control. The RPF was slow to materialize, in part due to struggles over financing and its relationship to UNMISS (Williams 2016). Its first troops, a contingent of 120 Rwandan soldiers, eventually deployed in August 2017.

Sudan, After the 2019 Revolution

Sudan's 2019 revolution created the most conducive environment in decades for multilateralism and UN diplomacy. In 2020, discussions progressed about the drawdown of UNAMID, leading to the end of its mandate in December. Sudan's new civilian government also consented to the deployment of a special political mission to assist with the transition towards elections (see UN doc. S/RES/2524 (2020)). In August 2020, a small advanced mission arrived in Khartoum to set up the **United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS, 2020–present)** under the purview of DPPA. Mandated during the global Covid-19 pandemic, UNITAMS became the first UN mission to be planned predominantly online (Table 1).

Themes

Sudan and South Sudan present a unique case for policy makers and conflict scholars to learn about peace mission dilemmas. This entry concludes by reflecting on three that have dominated mission operations in this context.

Consent Management

The first dilemma is that missions rely on host state consent to deploy and accomplish their mandates. This consent is relational: Over time, it can wax and wane, and be withdrawn as fast as it is given (Johnstone 2011). Host state consent demands careful diplomatic management over the course of a peace mission's life.

Sudan and South Sudan illustrate a range of challenges UN missions can face in managing consent. While UNMIS garnered limited consent

to deploy a large, multidimensional operation, it struggled to implement its mandate across Sudan. The GoS was able to restrict the mission's movement, especially in Darfur, and expel its leadership when it wanted to block criticism. Consent withdrawal took many forms, from small acts like refusing flight clearances and staff visas, to the eviction of the entire mission in July 2011 (Duursma 2020).

The UN's diplomatic influence in Sudan was limited by parallel political developments over which it also had limited control. President Bashir had hoped that the USA and other UNSC permanent members would reciprocate information exchanges with the US Central Intelligence Agency and concessions during the CPA negotiations by easing sanctions and removing it from the list of State Sponsors of Terror. That did not happen. Furthermore, the ICC prosecutor issued an arrest warrant for Bashir, putting UNMIS in the cross-fire between pressures for establishing peace and justice in Sudan. These developments removed GoS incentives for cooperation and made the regime intensely suspicious of any international presence on its soil; the government had limited interests in maintaining good relations with UNSC members.

UNISFA offers a contrast. While GoS occasionally obstructed the mission through staff visa denials, and had accomplished core military objectives in Abyei, it allowed UNISFA much more freedom of movement than UNMIS. This was partly possible because both GoS and GoSS maintained strong interests in good relations with Ethiopia. Also, the military staffing of the mission by one country meant a unified political and diplomatic strategy, without the contradictions in objective that emerged among UNSC members during UNMIS's lifetime (for further discussion on the consequences of mission composition, see Bove et al. 2020). UNISFA's success confronts it with the opposite problem to UNMIS: Its exit remains elusive.

Civilian Protection

The second dilemma is that UN peacekeeping missions frequently have mandates to protect civilians under imminent threat of physical attack,

UN Missions in Sudan and South Sudan, Table 1 Peace Missions in Sudan and South Sudan

| Year | | | Political events | Mission deployment/ exit | |
|-----------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|---|---|--------------|
| 1956 | | | Sudanese independence from Great Britain | | |
| 1963 | First Sudanese Civil War | | The Ananya I (snake venom) rebel group, which later becomes the SPLM/A, launches an insurgency | | |
| 1972 | | | Addis Ababa peace agreement ends insurgency | | |
| 1972–1983 | | | Decade without war | | |
| 1983 | Second Sudanese Civil War | | Dr. John Garang de Mabior takes over leadership of the SPLM/A and relaunches an insurgency | | |
| 1985 | | | Mainly driven by civil society, peace negotiations to end the civil war start and proceed sporadically for the next two decades | | |
| 1989 | | | In a military coup, Omar al-Bashir seizes power from the democratically elected prime minister, Sadiq al-Mahdi | | |
| 1992 | | | Riek Machar and Lam Akol mutiny against Dr. John Garang, splitting the SPLM/A; Sudanese civil war accelerates in deadliness throughout 1990s | | |
| 2001 | | | IGAD restarts peace talks between the GoS and SPLM/A, supported by the USA, UK, and Norway | | |
| 2002 | | | February: Nuba Mountains Ceasefire | | |
| | | | July: Machakos Protocol, which forms the basis of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) that eventually ends the Second Sudanese Civil War | | |
| 2003 | | Height of Darfur crisis | | Darfurian rebel groups announce their existence and launch attacks against government targets | |
| 2004 | | | | January: Army attacks anti-government groups in western Darfur. | |
| | | | | April: Humanitarian Ceasefire Agreement for Darfur | AMIS deploys |
| | | | June: UNSC mandates a special political mission to prepare for a future UN operation | UNAMIS deploys | |
| 2005 | | | January: GoS and SPLM/A sign the CPA chapeau, ending the Second Sudanese Civil War March: UNSC refers Darfur to the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court for investigation | UNAMIS transitions to UNMIS | |
| 2006 | | May: Darfur Peace Agreement | | | |
| 2007 | | | AMIS transitions to UNAMID | | |
| 2008 | | | May: SAF clash with SPLM/A in contested Abyei Area | | |
| 2009 | | | March: ICC prosecutor issues arrest warrant for Omar al-Bashir for crimes in Darfur, including genocide | | |
| 2010 | | | March: Framework agreement to resolve conflict in Darfur between GoS and one rebel group (Justice and Equality Movement), includes ceasefire April: General election across Sudan | | |

(continued)

UN Missions in Sudan and South Sudan, Table 1 (continued)

| Year | | | Political events | Mission deployment/ exit |
|------|--------------------------------|--|---|-------------------------------|
| 2011 | | | January: Self-determination referendum; 98.83% of southern Sudanese vote for independence | |
| | | | May: SAF and SPLA clash in contested Abyei Area, and Sudan occupies Abyei Town | |
| | | | June: Temporary agreement on Abyei, which specified creation of an Interim Security Force for Abyei; UNSC authorizes this force as UNISFA | UNISFA deploys |
| | | | July: South Sudanese independence; GoS withdraws consent for UN force on its territory to continue or succeed UNMIS | UNMIS exits UNMISS deploys |
| | | | July: Doha Document for Peace in Darfur provides framework for ongoing peace negotiations on Darfur crisis | |
| 2012 | | | Tensions between Sudan and South Sudan: South Sudan shuts down oil production in dispute over transit fee with Sudan (February); South Sudan occupies Heglig oil field (April); two governments sign series of agreements to resolve post-referendum issues (September) | |
| 2013 | South Sudanese Civil War | | December 2013: South Sudanese civil war erupts | |
| 2014 | | | | |
| 2015 | | | August: Agreement to Resolve the Conflict in South Sudan | |
| 2016 | | | July: Resurgence of violence in Juba | |
| 2017 | | | | RPF deploys |
| 2018 | | | September: Revitalized Agreement to Resolve the Conflict in South Sudan | |
| 2019 | | | April: Sudanese military oust President Bashir, ending his 30-year rule, and installing a Transitional Military Council (TMC) | |
| | | | August: Civilian-led transitional government takes over from TMC to rule Sudan, led by Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok | |
| 2020 | | | June: UN mandates a special political mission to assist Sudanese government with transition | UNITAMS deploys |
| | | | December: UNAMID mandate ends | |

but the problems of host state consent and capacity constraints often limit their capacity to do so.

From their inceptions, UNAMID and UNMISS had substantial civilian protection mandates. In Darfur, GoS frequently targeted UNAMID contingents with restrictions that ranged from denying staff visas to obstructing vehicles at checkpoints. These actions aggregated to disable the mission from dispensing its protection responsibilities (Duursma 2020; Müller

2020). UNMISS initially had more freedom to operate than UNAMID. This made possible a swift decision to allow civilians to take refuge on its bases when violence swept the country in December 2013. This saved many thousands of lives. However, capacity limitations and GoSS accusations that UNMISS had taken sides in the conflict prevented the mission from providing effective civilian protection outside its bases. This, in turn, undermined efforts to establish a

security environment where PoC site residents could return to their homes. In 2020, UNMISS remained in a bind: while mission leadership declared efforts to transition the PoC sites to non-UN-administered Internally Displaced People camps, more than 180,000 people remained on the bases (Craze and Pendle 2020). These site residents continued to face credible threats to their lives outside the camps, as UNMISS struggled to mitigate a resurgence in civilian killings (Stimson Center 2020).

Regional Cooperation and Sequencing

The third dilemma is that missions deploy amidst webs of regional interests and military interventions, and have to grapple with the legacies of predecessor operations. Therefore, regional cooperation and coordinated sequencing are critical to mission success. UNAMID and the RPF illustrate both the challenges and benefits of UN-regional relationships.

AMIS faced acute capacity constraints when it deployed because UN support did not materialize as quickly as the African Union had hoped. This, in part, had roots in the UN's conflictual relations with GoS. However, as a hybrid mission, UNAMID offered a creative model for circumventing these problems. The mission provided a blueprint for UN and African Union shared financing and command and control. By contrast, in the RPF's first 3 years, IGAD and the UN struggled to establish productive coordination modalities so that the force could dispense its mandate. This led to symbolic deployment of RPF troops, which modestly supplemented UNMISS instead of establishing a force that could accomplish distinct security goals.

Summary

Sudan and South Sudan offer a unique context for studying peace missions' most challenging ethical and operational dilemmas. Since the turn of the millennium, eight missions have deployed across this vast territory, mandated with critical political and security functions dispensed during immense

turbulence in both countries. This turbulence has included the secession of South Sudan, the escalation of violence in Darfur, the outbreak of protracted civil war in newly independent South Sudan, and a revolution in Sudan that has sought an end to military rule. Missions have assumed many forms, from multidimensional peacekeeping operations with dozens of troop-contributing countries, like UNMIS and UNMISS, to hybrid UN and African Union operations, like UNAMID, to political missions like UNITAMS. The Sudan and South Sudan have hosted peacekeeping innovations, such as the deployment of small missions with streamlined command and control that have effectively provided security at volatile flashpoints, and the creation of PoC sites on UN bases. They have also witnessed acute mission failures, such as UNMISS's inability to protect civilians outside those bases, including aid workers at the Terrain Hotel in Juba. In January 2021, four of the eight missions remained deployed, while UNAMID began to draw down. These missions may provide lessons for peace operation policy makers and scholars for decades to come.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Assessment of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Civil Wars in Sudan and South Sudan](#)
- ▶ [Conceptual Evolution of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Evolution of Practice in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations](#)
- ▶ [International Peace Architecture, Blockages, and Counter-Peace](#)
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- ▶ [Secession and Self-Determination](#)
- ▶ [Use of Force in Peace Operations](#)

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UN Peacebuilding in Timor-Leste

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The Setting

For a country with a population of not much more than one million and a land area of only about 15,000 km², Timor-Leste (East Timor) has been the focus of a disproportionate level of international intervention. Since 1999 four major UN missions, in parallel with two UN-approved military coalitions, have been deployed in the territory.

| Mission | Dates |
|--|------------------------------|
| UN Mission in East Timor (UNAMET) | June–September 1999 |
| International Force for East Timor (INTERFET) | September 1999–February 2000 |
| UN Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) | October 1999–May 2002 |
| UN Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISSET) | May 2002–May 2005 |
| UN Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT)/International Stabilization Force (ISF) | August 2006–December 2012 |

These peace operations were essentially a response to a protracted and sequential process of decolonization, first from Portugal, then from Indonesia, followed by the consolidation of statehood. The Portuguese occupation of Timor-Leste lasted from the early sixteenth century to the late twentieth century. With the independence of Indonesia in the 1940s, the Portuguese colonial state shared the island of Timor with the new state which had displaced the Netherlands from the western part. For Portugal, the situation was

similar to that in India where its enclave of Goa remained after British withdrawal until it was extinguished by an Indian invasion in 1961. But Indonesia, unlike India, had been generally content to accept the territorial arrangement. The small half-island colony amidst the vast Indonesian archipelago thus continued in a state of more or less benign stagnation. Its social structures and religious identity contrasted with surrounding Indonesia. Over the centuries Portuguese religious missionaries in Timor-Leste had ensured that more than 90% of the population were practicing Catholics. This made a special bond with the imperial metropole for a colony nested within a predominantly Muslim region. There was minimal anticolonial activism in Timor-Leste, at least compared with Portugal's continental African territories where, by the end of the 1960s, protracted wars of liberation were underway.

Things changed dramatically for Timor-Leste following the overthrow of the colonial regime in Lisbon in 1974. A pro-independence grouping now emerged – the Revolutionary Front of Independent East Timor (Fretilin – *Frente Revolucionária do Timor-Leste Independente*). Fretilin was largely a movement of young, educated activists with a strong *mestiço* (Portuguese-Timorese mixed race) element in its leadership. Its influences were drawn from the Marxist liberation movements in Portugal's African colonies as well as the radical Armed Forces Movement in the metropole itself, which had deposed the old regime.

Fretilin's independence program was not uncontested in the territory. Rival parties agitated for either continued links with Portugal or absorption by Indonesia. In the critical interregnum between the Lisbon coup in April 1974 and the end of 1975, the changing post-coup governments in Portugal were preoccupied with the more immediate problems of disentanglement from Africa. The small Portuguese administration in the colonial capital Dili was sympathetic to the Fretilin position but had little agency. This power vacuum, with its threat of a radical outcome, was seen as a danger by the authoritarian, anti-communist regime in Indonesia. Consequently, following a unilateral declaration of independence

by Fretilin, and with the apparent if tacit approval of the United States, Indonesian forces invaded and annexed the territory in December 1975. Six months later, Timor-Leste was declared an Indonesian province. In effect, one form of imperial occupation had been replaced by another.

There now began a long and brutal guerrilla war against the occupation conducted by Fretilin's military wing – the Armed Forces for the National Liberation of East Timor (*Falintil – Forças Armadas da Libertação Nacional de Timor-Leste*). Between the initial invasion and Indonesia's withdrawal in 1999, around 200,000 (approximately a quarter of the population) died as a direct or indirect result of the armed struggle.

Reacting to the Indonesian invasion, the UN Security Council initially affirmed Timor-Leste's right to self-determination under the Charter (United Nations Security Council resolution [UNSCR] S/RES/384, 22 December 1975). Legally, by the terms of the UN Charter, it remained a "non-self-governing territory" under Portuguese administration ([Charter of the United Nations](#), art. 73). This was plainly a fiction, however, and nothing effective was done to press for an Indonesian withdrawal. From the early 1980s annual reports were prepared for the General Assembly by successive UN secretaries-general, but this was little more than ritual. If anything, the possibility of a UN-driven solution became even more remote as time passed and the limited détente of the 1970s gave way to intensified cold war polarization in the Security Council.

By the mid-1990s, however, the first signs of change in the international position began to emerge. Indonesia, in common with other authoritarian regimes which had once served the West's interests and enjoyed support in return, found itself with diminishing leverage. Its brutalities in Timor-Leste now came under increasing scrutiny abroad. At the same time, the once vice-like grip on power of the regime in Indonesia as a whole rapidly weakened. It was finally broken in 1998 with the removal of the veteran dictator General Suharto. His successor, B. J. Habibie, encouraged by Kofi Annan the UN secretary-general, agreed to a referendum on the future of the territory to be

held in 1999 ([United Nations Security Council document \[UNSCD\] S/1999/513, 5 May 1999](#)). Full independence was to be one of the options.

1999–2002: UNAMET and UNTAET

Kofi Annan's activism in securing the 1999 referendum reflected the central role now adopted by the United Nations. The UN was to organize and supervise the vote, and the Mission in East Timor (UNAMET) was established to this end (UNSCR S/RES/1246, 11 June 1999). But crucially, the engagement did not extend to the provision of physical security. In a fatal miscalculation this was left to the Indonesian authorities. In the poll, held at the end of August, 98% of the 450,000 registered voters participated and 78.5% of them opted for independence. In response, the Indonesian military, which had always opposed Habibie's agreement to the referendum, embarked on a scorched earth strategy. The violence involved local Timorese pro-Indonesian "militias" whose activities both widened existing internal divisions and created new ones. More than a 1000 died in the referendum violence and about a quarter of a million refugees moved – or were coerced into moving – across the border to Indonesian West Timor (Wigglesworth [2012](#), pp. 8–10).

UNAMET's Mandate (Security Council Resolution 1246, 11 June 1999)

- Organize and conduct a popular consultation based on a direct, secret and universal ballot to decide between autonomous status within Indonesia or national independence.
- Deploy up to 280 civilian police officers to act as advisers to the Indonesian Police in the discharge of their duties and, at the time of the consultation, to supervise the handling of the ballot
- Deployment 50 military liaison officers to maintain contact with the Indonesian Armed Forces.

UNAMET's active peacebuilding involvement with local populations and structures was limited. In part this was due simply to a mandate focused on the rapid and efficient creation of electoral machinery. But it was also an inevitable consequence of having to operate in the unstable and unpredictable environment created by the violence unleashed by the Indonesian military and their local proxies. Liaison was maintained with both the Indonesian authorities and the organized pro-independence movement. But grassroots engagement by UNAMET was restricted largely to the process of voter registration. A consultative commission composed of local stakeholders was planned to follow immediately on the referendum, but this fell victim in the short-term to the prevailing chaos (Martin and Mayer-Rieckh [2005](#), p. 129).

Condemnation of the Indonesian forces and their local proxies was more or less universal and pressure for a decisive international intervention became irresistible (Wheeler and Dunne [2001](#), p. 818). The UN, however, faced multiple obstacles to effective action. For one thing, by 1999 the organization's peacekeeping capacities were close to exhaustion as a result of the post-cold war surge in operations. Most immediately, there would be obvious problems in recruiting troop contributing countries willing to intervene in an active and unpredictable conflict. And, even if this could be negotiated, there would be major problems in deploying a UN force with sufficient speed.

The answer lay in an UN-approved but primarily regional coalition of the willing with Australia as the "lead nation." Although not initially enthusiastic, the Australian government was driven on by public anger. The flow of brutal images of the violence just 700 km across the Timor Sea created a groundswell of public pressure for intervention (Dee [2001](#), p. 16). But to minimize the sense of the venture as an "external" incursion into a south-east Asian crisis, the International Force for East Timor (INTERFET), as the formation was to be called, drew contributors from Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand (Ryan [2002](#), pp. 23–44).

In the event, INTERFET was able to suppress the violence with little difficulty in the short-term. But it was fundamentally a military operation; practically and politically it could make little contribution to the broader process of peacebuilding. This was the responsibility of the United Nations. How was it to address the quite daunting problems of peace-making and capacity-building in a territory which had just asserted its independence but which had few of the essential tools to consolidate it?

The way forward, in Kofi Annan's view, lay in the creation of what was effectively a UN protectorate which would govern the territory pending its emergence as a sovereign state (UNSCD S/1999/1024, 4 October 1999). The organizational structure for this was the Temporary Administration for East Timor (UNTAET). A similar arrangement had been put in place for Kosovo the previous June but there were earlier precursors as well. A UN authority had administered nearby West New Guinea in 1962–1963, for example (another conflict involving Indonesia). Earlier still, the UN's predecessor the League of Nations had governed the Saar territory in the heart of western Europe for 15 years between the two World Wars.

UNTAET was to be: “endowed with overall responsibility for the administration of East Timor and . . . empowered to exercise all legislative and executive authority, including the administration of justice.” It was also to develop social services and build capacity for self-government. It was to include “personnel with appropriate training in international humanitarian, human rights . . . including child and gender-related provisions, negotiation and communication skills, cultural awareness and civilian-military coordination” (UNSCR S/RES/1272, 25 October 1999). The Temporary Administration would also replace INTERFET with its own force of nearly 12,000 troops, military observers, and civilian police. It was therefore to be both a peacekeeping force and a peacebuilding mission. The entire venture, with its wide responsibilities and powers, was to be headed the Brazilian UN official Sérgio Vieira de Melo who had led the UN Mission in Kosovo.

UNTAET's Mandate (Security Council Resolution 1272, 25 October 1999)

- Have overall responsibility for the administration of East Timor.
- Exercise all legislative and executive authority, including the administration of justice.
- Provide security and maintain law and order throughout the territory of East Timor. Establish an effective administration.
- Assist in the development of civil and social services.
- Ensure the coordination and delivery of humanitarian assistance.
- Support capacity-building for self-government.
- Assist in the establishment of conditions for sustainable development.

At the outset, UNTAET's main military challenges lay on the border with West Timor where refugees and fugitive militia members were intermixed. Within the territory itself the security situation was largely under control thanks to the initial INTERFET intervention. This did not mean, however, that the peacebuilding process surged ahead trouble-free; it was to prove highly fraught. Within the UN's organizational structure UNTAET was a Department of Peacekeeping Operations undertaking. There was a view that this tilted its culture and activities in an overly militarized direction. In this perspective, the peacebuilding effort would have been better served if UNTAET had been under the supervision of the UN's Department of Political Affairs. Vieira de Melo himself was criticized, even by some of his own senior officials. One of these accused him of a “preoccupation with control at the expense of the local community's involvement in government,” arguing that UNTAET risked becoming “merely another form of authoritarianism” (Chopra 2000, pp. 27–33).

The issue goes to the heart of a dilemma faced by many contemporary peace operations. During the cold war the constraints of bipolarity meant that mandates were usually limited to tasks of interposition and observation. But those constraints weakened in the 1990s. Now, more ambitious, multifunctional undertakings blending physical enforcement with social and political development tasks were possible. But this brought its own problems. The risk of over-weening interventionism in these situations has been described as “neo-trusteeship” or even “post-modern imperialism” (Butler 2011, pp. 2–4). There are obvious difficulties in managing the tension between pragmatic managerialism and deeper peacebuilding.

Richmond and Franks have proposed three types of liberal peace-making. Firstly, the “conservative” approach involves imposition of external models, perhaps with recourse to military force. Secondly, the “orthodox” formulation is similarly concerned with the importation of structures and values but with more sensitivity to local conditions. The last approach is the “emancipatory one.” This involves ownership of the peace-making process by the local actors. This framework embodies the main argument between the dominant UNTAET approach – which according to the authors was a blend of “conservative” and the “orthodox” thinking – and the emancipatory one championed by the UN’s critics (Richmond and Franks 2008, pp. 187–189). UNTAET, as a governing authority, had to determine how to divide effort and resources between “peacekeeping” (implicitly “conservative”) and “peacebuilding” (ideally “emancipatory”). Should it focus on providing – even imposing – efficient administration and social control in order to create the basic conditions for early independence? Or should it take things more slowly and painstakingly? Would a protracted process of local capacity-building and social, development give a better chance of ensuring long-term equity and stability?

The answer was not as clear cut as some might have liked to think. The UN was under real financial stringency at the turn of the millennium which limited the range and complexity of its peacebuilding projects. It would also have been

criticized if it were seen to be drawing out an “imperial” role in a territory aspiring to independence. In short, there was a “tension between the ‘logic of peacekeeping’ and the ‘logic of development’ ... a persistent predicament throughout UNTAET’s existence” (Martin and Mayer-Rieckh 2005, p. 136).

Yet within these constraints, UNTAET made real advances in peacebuilding during its two-and-a-half-year mandate. Before the end of 1999 it had formed a National Consultative Council (CCN: *Conselho Consultivo Nacional*) which brought together different political, regional, and civil society groupings (UNSCD S/2000/53, 26 January 2000). The Council worked with and learned from UNTAET officials across the range of state-building areas including the security and justice sectors (embracing both the military and police components), and taxation and budgets. Within a year, members of the 36 strong Council held 5 of UNTAET’s 9 cabinet portfolios. In October 2000, the CNN became the National Council (CN: *Conselho Nacional*). The CN had 36 members and was in effect the embryo of a future national legislature. Although UNTAET operated at arm’s-length in the process, it also facilitated the emergence of a political party system, a prerequisite for the parliamentary structure which would come with independence.

Inescapably, however, the extent of UNTAET’s engagement with, and encouragement of, the peacebuilding process at grassroots level was limited. The balance of its approach, for better or worse, lay towards the top-down rather than the bottom-up. But, in fairness, whether this was indeed for “better” or for “worse” can be genuinely debated. On one side, the UN’s approach on the ground at this time could be seen as a squandered opportunity for embedding the peacebuilding process in Timorese society. In this view, it was a failure for which a high price would be paid in the coming years. Alternatively, though, it might be argued that peacebuilding was most effectively pursued hand-in-hand with state-building. That is to say, it should come after rather than before national independence. In this contrary view, the primary focus during the UNTAET period was, correctly, on capacity-building.

2002–2005: UNMISET

Independence finally came in May 2002. At this point the Security Council authorized a successor operation, the Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET). Initially, UNMISET was planned as a 2 year commitment. Although now without governmental powers, UNMISET was mandated to continue with many UNTAET projects. It had, however, a stronger focus on the peace-making rather than the peacekeeping role. To an extent this was simply a necessity: UNMISET's military capacity was much reduced from that of UNTAET. The primary focus of the new venture was civilian: to "provide assistance to the core administrative structures critical to the viability and political stability of East Timor" (UNSCR S/RES/1410, 17 May 2002). The resources made available for this, however, were limited, the challenges having perhaps been underestimated in the drive for the rapid establishment of statehood. UNMISET pursued three principal programs. Firstly, it was to build capacity for national administration. Secondly, it was to develop law enforcement capacity. Thirdly, it was to assist with national security.

UNMISET's Mandate (Security Council Resolution 1410, 17 May 2002)

- Provide assistance to core administrative structures critical to the viability and political stability of East Timor.
- Provide interim law enforcement and public security and to assist in the development of a new law enforcement agency.
- Contribute to the maintenance of the external and internal security.
- Deploy a civilian police component initially comprised of 1250 officers.
- Deploy a military component with an initial strength of up to 5000 troops.

The challenges in supporting the creation of effective administrative machinery in the new

state were daunting. There were scant human resources to build on. Portugal's highly centralized colonial administration had ended more than a quarter of a century earlier and those involved with the machinery of Indonesian rule were inevitably compromised. Reflecting the dilemma already faced in the UN temporary administration period, UNMISET's specialist Civilian Support Group (CSG) had to take on direct operational responsibility for administration while at the same time training and mentoring local staff. It was not always a comfortable dual role. Areas highlighted by UN planners as being particularly problematic included finance and, most significantly, justice. There was neither a national judicial system nor a corpus of qualified Timorese lawyers. Consequently, the post-independence president, the former Fretilin resistance leader Xanana Gusmão, agreed to maintain the UNTAET arrangement by which law was administered primarily by international staff (Ishizuka 2003, p. 50).

A full year into UNMISET's deployment the CSG was still directly responsible for the day-to-day work of 15 ministries because of the "scarcity of essential skills and capacity" (UNSCD S/2003/449, 21 April 2003). Six months later Kofi Annan warned that it was "clear that it will not be possible for Timor-Leste to achieve self-sufficiency in certain key areas of the mandate" in the medium-term (UNSCD S/2003/944, 6 October 2003).

This circumstance of split roles and protracted international control was particularly problematic in the area of policing. UNMISET's international police (UNPOL) had to carry out routine operational duties while working to train the local *Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste* (PNTL). By November 2002, UNMISET had handed over primary responsibility for policing to the PNTL in only four of the country's 13 administrative districts. UNMISET's initial planning assumption had been that the PNTL would have full national control by the end of 2002 (UNSCD S/2004/888, 9 November 2004). In matters of policing, of course, the problem of "tainting" by association with the Indonesian administration was particularly sensitive. Although routine crime in Timor-Leste was relatively low, there were

periodic episodes of public disorder as various interest groups asserted themselves in the new state. The predicament here was that UNMISSET was wary of taking on a direct operational role in such politically charged matters while the PNTL had neither the credibility nor the experience to do so effectively.

Surprisingly, perhaps, the third area of UNMISSET's peacebuilding mandate, national security, was probably the least fraught. Despite the recent history of bitter conflict, the new state quickly established a broadly cordial and constructive relationship with Indonesia. UNMISSET worked with the Indonesian military on the West Timor side of the border where thousands of refugees from the 1999 violence still remained. It provided an important link between the new Timorese national army, the *Forças de Defesa de Timor-Leste* – FDTL) which had grown out of the anti-Indonesian guerrilla movement Falintil and its former enemies from the liberation struggle.

Beyond these transnational advances, however, progress on the development of independent local structures and capacities continued to move much more slowly than envisaged when the original 2 year timescale for UNMISSET was fixed. With this in view, Kofi Annan urged the Security Council in March 2003 to significantly expand UNMISSET's mandate. This would have delayed planned personnel reductions and eased the time constraints on the operation as a whole. But only limited adjustments were agreed by the Council which was determined to reduce the UN's presence on the ground at a time of intense global demand for peacekeeping resources. Working closely with the Fretilin prime minister Mari Alkatari, Annan eventually succeeded in winning an extension of UNMISSET until April 2005 for "consolidation" purposes (UNSCD S/2003/243, 3 March 2003). The reality was that there was very little ready to be consolidated but the Security Council showed no inclination for further latitude. At the end of UNMISSET's extended mandate in 2005, the UN presence would be drastically reduced to an Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL) which would be staffed by a small group of civilian advisers (UNSCR S/RES/1599, 28 April 2005).

Annan and other senior figures in the UN system were in no doubt that the UNMISSET phase of UN peacebuilding in Timor-Leste had ended prematurely. While the threat from border insecurity had been greatly reduced during the period of the mandate, the domestic challenges of peacebuilding had been met only fitfully during UNMISSET's 3 year deployment. Moreover, the most glaring shortcomings lay in the critical areas of policing and justice. Against this unpromising background, the depth of still unresolved problems within Timorese society would soon emerge.

2006–2012: UNMIT

Despite the generally cohesive nature of Timor-Leste society, the years of armed struggle between 1975 and 1999 had opened certain cleavages. The fact that a significant number of Timorese joined with the Indonesian military in opposing the outcome of the independence referendum had highlighted this. Although not a sharply regionalized nation, there was a broad perception that different geographical areas had varying levels of commitment to the national liberation struggle. For a critical period after independence, the peacebuilding process was threatened by an incipient split between the east and west of the country. Many easterners – the "*Lorosae*" – felt themselves to have been more invested in the liberation struggle than westerners – the "*Loromonu*" – whose geographical and cultural proximity to Indonesian West Timor supposedly diluted their commitment.

In March 2006, the Fretilin-dominated government demobilized almost half of the 1400-strong FDTL, ostensibly on economic grounds. The majority of the soldiers dismissed by the eastern Lorosae-dominated high command were western Loromonu. Violent protests soon broke out in Dili and western parts of the country (Braithwaite et al. 2012, pp. 139–141). The shortcomings of UNMISSET's efforts to create an effective local police force to replace the UNPOL presence now became starkly obvious.

Beyond questions of police capability, there were additional toxifying elements in the mix. One was an underlying rivalry between the army

and the police (a not uncommon phenomenon in newly emerging states). This now turned into open conflict as the PNTL was accused by the military of bias in favor of the protesting Loromonu. More broadly, the entire crisis took place against an unstable national political background as Fretilin, the dominant party in government, was itself weakened by in-fighting (Wigglesworth 2012, pp. 12–14).

As the situation deteriorated into a general breakdown in order, the government appealed for international intervention. In the short term this was met by what was basically a recreation of 1999's INTERFET in the form of another coalition of the willing. With Australia once again as the lead nation, the International Stabilization Force (ISF) imposed a tense peace in the worst affected areas. The UN Security Council, evidently repenting of its haste to draw down UNMISSET, now agreed to Kofi Annan's plea for a new large-scale "multidimensional, integrated mission in Timor-Leste" (UNSCD S/2006/628, 8 August 2006). The UN Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) was mandated to resume the interrupted peacebuilding efforts of UNMISSET. UNPOLs would be deployed once again on operational duties and would resume their training and mentoring efforts with the PNTL.

The UN would take over the organization of upcoming presidential and parliamentary elections. The campaigns around these would pose an immediate threat to public order, as would the possibility of a contested outcome (UNSCR S/RES/1704, 25 August 2006).

UNMIT's Mandate (Security Council Resolution 1704, 25 August 2006)

- Deploy a civilian component, including up to 1608 police personnel, and an initial component of up to 34 military liaison and staff officers.
- Support the government and relevant institutions to consolidate stability, enhance a culture of democratic governance, and facilitate political dialogue.

- Support Timor-Leste in all aspects of the 2007 presidential and parliamentary electoral process.
- Ensure, through the presence of United Nations police, the restoration and maintenance of public security in Timor-Leste through the provision of support to the Timorese national police.
- Assist in further building capacity in areas where specialized expertise is required, such as in the justice sector.
- Assist in strengthening the national institutional and societal capacity and mechanisms for the monitoring, promoting and protecting of human rights and for promoting justice and reconciliation.
- Facilitate the provision of relief and recovery assistance.

The apprehension of continuing insecurity and violence was well-founded. Although the ISF did the necessary "heavy lifting" of stabilization, serious difficulties continued in various parts of the country. UNMIT's first head (the Special Representative of the Secretary-General), Atul Khare, cast a cold eye on the situation. The violence, he said, "revealed the institutional fragility in coping with a crisis and structures for conflict resolution within these institutions were not well developed" (UN Peacekeeping Operations Review 2007, p. 37).

Despite the recent violence and disorder, the 2007 elections were largely successful. The process was organized, policed, and supervised by UNMIT and was an important step forward in the peacebuilding process. Fretilin remained the largest party but it was pushed into opposition by a broad coalition of other groupings. The intra-party factionalism that had weakened Fretilin – and therefore the national government – during the violence of 2006 had led to the departure from the party of its two best-known figures, Xanana Gusmão and the Nobel laureate José Ramos Horta. They now took the positions of, respectively, head of government and head of state in the new coalition.

This apparent new stability was misleading, however. Major threats to the peacebuilding effort remained. In February 2008, assassination attempts were made on both Gusmão and Ramos-Horta, carried out by a rump of Loromonu dissidents based in the hills outside of Dili. The attempt almost succeeded against Ramos-Horta who was severely wounded. UNMIT police and ISF troops now went on to high alert against the possibility of major disorder. This “militarization” of the intervention inevitably impeded for a time UNMIT’s civil projects. However, persuasion and mediation by UNMIT led the government to agree a financial compensation package for the soldiers whose dismissal in 2006 had precipitated the long, divisive crisis (UN Peacekeeping Operations Review 2008, p. 31). The crisis then slowly receded. But the UN’s efforts at the “localization” of the police and justice sectors – where UNMISSET had faced its greatest challenges – continued to advance only slowly. Kofi Annan remained cautious about the process; a stance shared by Ban Ki-moon who replaced him as secretary-general in 2008. Both were aware of the potentially grave consequences of a premature transfer of powers from the UN police to the PNTL (UNSCD S/2010/522, 13 October 2010).

While the concerns around the police related to training and discipline, the problems of the judicial sector were if anything more intractable. There was a fundamental shortage of Timorese with legal training. Additionally, the government insisted on maintaining Portuguese as the language of the courts. Although the new state opted for Portuguese as an official language, it is not widely spoken or understood in the country. The *lingua franca* is Tetum, a composite language of many influences (Wigglesworth 2012, pp. 16–17). Portuguese is largely restricted to older, more educated Timorese who were schooled during the Portuguese colonial era. This element, with its residual attachment to Portuguese, was strongly represented in the original Fretilin leadership which initially dominated decision-making in the new state. During this critical period of capacity-building, the language issue not only obstructed the transfer of responsibilities to the already scant pool of local lawyers, it also meant that

international support could be drawn only from a relatively narrow base.

The judicial system was the location of another area of difficulty, one in which there was a divergence of interest between external agencies involved in the peacebuilding process and those whose peace was supposedly being built. The UN intervention in Timor-Leste, reflecting the new international norms of the time, prioritized the prosecution of those involved in the violence of 1999. But national authorities in contrast were wary of the dangers to fragile community cohesion in being too energetic in the matter. There was also a fear for the construction of good relations with Indonesia, a key component of Timor-Leste’s emerging foreign policy. As a result, government agencies were often slow to act against those guilty of historic crimes, and showed a marked tendency to leniency when they did. The UN, both in the field and in New York, saw this as undermining a broader global agenda against impunity, embodied in the new International Criminal Court and the special courts for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda. Ban Ki-moon was concerned at the questions the Dili government’s position raised about the “violation . . . of international standards and principles” (UNSCD S/2009/504, 2 October 2009).

2012 and Beyond

The endgame for the UN in Timor-Leste, and a vital test of its peacebuilding effort, was to be the electoral process of 2012. Effective, free and fair presidential and legislative elections would, so to speak, provide the necessary passport out of Timor-Leste for the UN operation. In contrast to the previous process in 2007, when UNMIT was responsible for the organization and conduct of the elections, the responsibility would lie primarily with the Timor-Leste government. The UN would provide logistical support and a security backstop, but in essence it was to be a “national” project.

In the event, the rounds of the presidential poll, held in March and April, and the legislative contest in July, were successfully organized and

conducted by the central and district-level Timorese authorities. Heavily monitored by international bodies, the elections were judged to be effective and legitimate (UNSCD S/2012/765, 15 October 2012). José Ramos-Horta unexpectedly failed to be re-elected as president, though Xanana Gusmão remained prime minister at the head of a multi-party coalition. It was the peaceful outcome the UN had hoped for, and the mandates of both UNMIT and the Stabilization Force duly ended in December 2012. A small UN office remained after the end of UNMIT in the same way as UNOTIL after UNMISSET in 2005. Now, however, this proved sufficient, and there was no need for any international redeployment as there was in 2006.

Fears about the social and economic impact of the withdrawal of the major UN presence after a virtually unbroken 13-year presence proved largely unfounded. The Timor-Leste state has proved able to navigate the “post-UN era.” National politics has not been without incident, but the conflicts have for the most part been contained within the constitutional system. The ongoing process of national peacebuilding has been aided by Timor-Leste’s offshore oil and gas resources. These have provided a financial safety system in the form of a substantial sovereign wealth fund. This in itself carries its own risks, of course. Corruption, a classic symptom of the “resource curse,” is now clearly present in Timorese public life. But it would be frankly naive to argue that this could have been reduced in any meaningful way by UN efforts during its intervention.

Interestingly, Timor-Leste itself has become a contributor to UN peace operations. PNTL officers have been deployed as UNPOLs in Guinea-Bissau, and a contingent of the FDTL has served under the umbrella of the Portuguese contingent in the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (Bernardino and Moreira dos Santos 2018). The country has therefore moved from “peacekept” to peacekeeper.

Since 1999 the UN’s peacebuilding role in Timor-Leste has covered the spectrum of interventionist roles from quasi-governmental authority to light touch presence. At times, the UN presence has been plainly inadequate. The

communal violence around the independence referendum in 1999 might have been moderated, if not avoided entirely, had UNAMET been provided with even limited policing and enforcement powers. Similarly, the Security Council’s determination to end the UN’s major role in Timor-Leste in 2005 by withdrawing UNMISSET merely led to the necessity for an even greater commitment in the form of UNMIT and the ISF.

In the last weeks of UNMIT in 2012, a UN paper exploring the organization’s global peacebuilding efforts was unusually critical in respect of Timor-Leste. It regretted the “early departure of the initial United Nations Transitional Administration mission from Timor-Leste, and the rapid succession of two additional United Nations missions” which “led to a lack of continuity in expertise and investment to support nascent national institutions” (UNSCD S/2012/746, 8 October 2012). This criticism might be justified with hindsight. But the contemporary realities, both local and international, in which these critical decisions were taken surely allow for a more sympathetic view. Timor-Leste was a small, socially and culturally cohesive state which after the initial trauma of 1999 seemed to successfully navigate its immediate post-conflict phase. Continuing shortcomings in national administrative, policing, and judicial capacity were evident. But against the generally favorable prevailing conditions, these remaining difficulties for peacebuilding would not at the time have appeared as grave as they eventually revealed themselves to be.

The UN intervention in Timor-Leste certainly focused new attention on important conceptual debates about the fundamental nature of the peacebuilding project. What is the “correct” balance between straightforward capacity-building for rapid self-government and longer-term “emancipatory” processes designed to embed enduring social cohesion? Does coercion have a role in peacebuilding – or is it to be avoided in all circumstances? Should “progressive” global notions of justice and accountability be imposed on local settings where they might be counterproductive? None of these questions was satisfactorily answered during the UN years in Timor-Leste, but they were certainly brought under active

discussion. In an odd sense, the relative stability of the country during the UN presence (excepting the crises of 2006–2007) may itself have facilitated Timor-Leste's role as a kind of "laboratory" for the exploration of such issues. In the chronicles of UN intervention, Timor-Leste was very far from being a Bosnia or a Somalia or a Rwanda. Whatever the practical shortcomings and conceptual missteps of UN peacebuilding in Timor-Leste, in contrast to those near contemporary catastrophes of intervention, the UN's efforts were far from unsuccessful.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Collective Security and Collective Responsibility in International Interventions](#)
- ▶ [Emancipatory Peace](#)
- ▶ [Evolution of Practice in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations](#)
- ▶ [Participatory Constitution-making and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding and Postcolonial Subject](#)
- ▶ [Post-conflict Elections](#)
- ▶ [Post-conflict Timor-Leste](#)
- ▶ [Security Sector Reform After Armed Conflict](#)
- ▶ [UN Security Council and International Interventions](#)
- ▶ [United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo \(UNMIK\)](#)

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UN Security Council and International Interventions

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Synonyms

[Humanitarian intervention](#); [Military intervention](#); [Use of force](#)

Definition

International interventions are a frequent yet challenging issue for the United Nations (UN). While

often justified with the need to use military means for humanitarian purposes, they question the normative and legal foundations of the UN, most importantly the principle of state sovereignty and the prohibition of the use of force. The UN Security Council (UNSC) has unique instruments available to maintain international peace and security on behalf of the UN members, including the sole authority to legitimize the use of force. This chapter sheds light on how the UNSC deals with the challenges international interventions pose for the UN. Looking at actual practice reveals variation in UNSC responses to these challenges. While the UNSC had long remained rather reluctant to deal with intervention, it has become actively involved in the issue since the end of the Cold War. However, the blurring of lines between UN peacekeeping and international interventions, some of them conducted by the UN itself, demonstrate not only the inconsistency, but also the flexibility that has shaped the UNSC's account of international interventions. Key issues regarding their legality and legitimacy, however, remain disputed.

Introduction

Few issues in global politics are as contentious as international interventions. Often defined as external military action in the domestic sphere of a state for humanitarian reasons (Hehir 2010, p. 20; MacQueen 2011, p. 1; Weiss 2016, p. 7), intervention represents a fundamental tension of competing principles of the UN. Justified by moral obligations to protect civilians, intervention violates the principle of state sovereignty and the prohibition of the use of force. The inconsistent response to mass atrocities questions not only the motives for intervention, but also the relevance of the underlying moral and legal principles. How intervention actually unfolds in practice can also differ very much in scope and range, from attempts at short-term regime change to long-term state- and peacebuilding efforts (Schroeder 2018, p. 139).

Therefore, intervention has long been discussed controversially, both in academia and in politics. As Reus-Smit observes, all interventions have a number of widely acknowledged structural features: (1)

interventions have been ubiquitous in past and present world politics, (2) interventions represent asymmetric relations of power and material capabilities, and (3) interventions are violations of jurisdictional boundaries and spheres of authority (Reus-Smit 2013, p. 1060). However, their legitimacy and legality has been subject of much debate (Nardin 2002; Pattison 2008; Tesón 1997). Considerable attention is also given to the role of interventions in the emergence of new norms and the challenges they bring to existing international legal and political orders (Chesterman 2001; Finnemore 2003; Hurd 2011; Welsh 2004). It is a widely held view that the nature of intervention has undergone significant changes, especially since 1990 (Bellamy and McLoughlin 2018; Weiss 2016). The effects of this post-1990 “liberal interventionism” and the merging of security and development issues have been critically analyzed (Chandler 2010; Duffield 2014; Paris 2004). Interventions hardly ever occur out of altruistic motives alone (Chesterman 2002, p. 302; Weiss 2016, pp. 8–9). On the contrary, scholars emphasize that they often serve as an instrument of powerful states revealing their double standards about the principles of the international community (Ayooob 2002; Menon 2016). Research on the operative level of interventions highlights the prevalence of technocratic policies that are often too narrowly focused on traditional notions of state sovereignty. This literature argues instead for the need to shift attention to the social and spatial effects of interventions on the local level as well as on the increasing interdependences between international and local actors in hybrid spaces (Chandler 2015; Hameiri et al. 2017; Schroeder 2018).

Intervention questions the normative and legal foundations of the UN. Therefore, the issue cannot be discussed without taking into consideration the role of the UNSC as the UN's principal organ responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security (Berdal and Economides 2008; Binder 2017; Einsiedel et al. 2016; Lowe et al. 2008b). While the UNSC is often seen as the obvious authority for deciding about interventions (Hehir 2010, p. 135), its current role in dealing with intervention was not anticipated when the UN was founded. Instead, the UNSC's approach

was – and still is – driven by incremental practice rather than by clearly defined and formalized responsibilities. Although this has resulted in inconsistent decision-making by the UNSC, it also demonstrates its flexibility in dealing with intervention. This chapter demonstrates that while traditionally focused on preventing intervention, the UNSC has increasingly conducted interventions itself since 1990. Its incremental practice has also reframed the meaning of intervention and changed its broader normative framework, which provides grounds for both the justification and politicization of interventions. Key issues regarding their legality and legitimacy, however, remain disputed.

Conflicting Principles of Maintaining International Peace and Security

The UN Charter defines a system of collective security designed to promote international peace and security, to protect state sovereignty and to uphold the principle of non-intervention. For this, it prohibits the use of force except for cases of individual and collective self-defense. The principles and purposes of the UN, however, are in tension with each other. While protecting state sovereignty requires the UNSC to adopt measures to prevent intervention and to prohibit the use of force, the maintenance of international peace and security may require the exact opposite. Whether interventions are or should be an imperative for the UN is, therefore, the subject of much debate (Holzgrefe and Keohane 2003; Wheeler 2002).

The UNSC is the key institution realizing these conflicting principles of the UN and has unique instruments available for doing so, including the authority to authorize the use of force (Cronin and Hurd 2008, p. 3; Welsh and Zaum 2013, p. 66). The UNSC has “wide latitude” to use its power (Luck 2006, p. 23): it decides what actions it should take, not by applying clearly defined legal thresholds, but by coming to a political agreement among its members. Decisions are usually made on a case-by-case basis. Heavily affected by inequalities between the ten

elected members (E10) and the five permanent members (P5), this often creates a gap between the theory and practice of using the instruments available to the UNSC (Hurd 2007, p. 5; Thakur 2017, p. 33). The UNSC, therefore, has acted quite differently in realizing the conflicting principles of the UN Charter. Nevertheless, over the decades a pattern has emerged that, though inconsistent, gradually legitimizes interventions as a means for realizing the UN’s principles. During the Cold War the UNSC’s scope of action was significantly constrained, but since 1990 it has become actively involved in the conduct of interventions, indicating a normative shift from sovereignty to protection as a rationale for action. However, post-Cold War UNSC decision-making on humanitarian crises is highly selective, which undermines the UNSC’s legitimacy (Binder 2017). As much of its power results from UN members being willing to execute UNSC action, such a lack of legitimacy is ultimately a threat to UNSC authority (Hehir 2010, p. 135). Key issues regarding the legality and feasibility of interventions also remain contested (Weiss 2016, p. 75). Most importantly, the UNSC’s legal framework has not been adapted to the changing landscapes of international security, including the emergence of new actors and types of violent conflict. None of the instruments currently available to the UNSC are therefore “directly intended to enable the UN to carry out humanitarian interventions in the sense of that term understood today” (MacQueen 2011, p. 13). How the UNSC deals with interventions, therefore, is best understood by focusing on actual practice and its incremental and at times contradictory change of the underlying normative framework.

Preventing Intervention

For most of the Cold War, the UNSC was primarily concerned with preventing intervention. Notable exceptions, such as UN-authorized military action in the Korean War (1950–1953) and the UN peace operation in the Congo (1960–1964), demonstrated the UNSC’s ability to become actively involved in interventions. The UNSC also discussed military

invasions that were explicitly justified with reference to humanitarian imperatives several times, such as Vietnam's intervention in Kampuchea 1978–1979 and Tanzania's 1979 intervention in Uganda. Yet, overall, UNSC practice during the Cold War was largely aimed at preventing interventions. If the UNSC became active, it was primarily by authorizing "traditional" peacekeeping missions, i.e., peace operations that were based on consent by the conflict parties and often limited to observer missions in peace processes (Bellamy et al. 2010, p. 173). The growing power equilibrium between the USA and USSR in later decades furthered the reluctance to authorize the use of force (Morris 2015, p. 404).

Preventing intervention is deeply built into the UN's system of collective security. Article 2 of the UN Charter not only states that the UN is organized around the equality of its members (Art. 2.1), but more importantly prohibits the use of force (Art. 2.4) and asserts the principle of non-intervention into domestic affairs (Art. 2.7). These principles are reflected in Article 51 on the use of force for collective or individual self-defense. Upholding the principles of the UN is a key part of the UNSC's "primary responsibility" for international peace and security (Art. 24). Of special importance are the provisions on action regarding threats to the peace in Chapter VII of the UN Charter. Article 39 grants the UNSC exclusive authority to determine whether a situation constitutes a threat to the peace and to subsequently decide whether to use measures other than the use of force (Art. 41) or those involving the use of force (Art. 42). However, many of the instruments available to the UNSC are directed at the prevention of violent conflict. Chapter VI of the UN Charter defines instruments for the peaceful settlement of conflict by the UNSC, such as negotiation, mediation, and the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice. The UNSC can also delegate the maintenance of international peace and security to regional organizations (Chapter VIII). In addition, the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) authorizes the UNSC to refer cases to the ICC. While often considered less important than the coercive measures of Chapter VII, instruments of peaceful

settlement and prevention of conflict provide the UNSC with far-reaching powers to decide itself when and how to become involved in conflicts (Lowe et al. 2008a, pp. 6–7; Luck 2006, p. 22).

The P5 have "special responsibilities" in the prevention of intervention, not only because they have (material) resources exclusively available to them, but also because they face expectations to commit themselves to realizing the principles and purposes of the UN (Clark and Reus-Smit 2013; Morris 2015). The UN was created to provide a forum for cooperation among them to prevent further threats and aggressions (Hehir 2010, p. 140; Luck 2006, p. 11). Their consent to establish the UN could only be achieved by giving them special powers and privileges (Hehir 2010, p. 140), most importantly the right to veto. The veto was instituted to ensure coordinated action by the P5 and to prevent unilateral interventions by any one of them (Buchanan and Keohane 2011, p. 47). In practice, however, it is often used as an instrument for realizing their national interests. Therefore, the veto remains a source of criticism undermining the UNSC's legitimacy. This became especially important at the end of the Cold War when changing security landscapes challenged established policies of the UNSC.

Conducting Intervention

In the early 1990s intervention increasingly became a practice of the UNSC. While traditional UN peacekeeping had dominated before, the early 1990s led to a surge of military operations authorized by the UNSC (Doyle and Sambanis 2006, pp. 144–145). This so-called "new interventionism" (Berdal and Economides 2008) changed UN peace operations significantly, both in terms of their numbers as well as in their quality. Grounds for this new type of UN peace operation were provided by the changing nature of peacekeeping operations in the late 1980s. Missions in Namibia, Mozambique, and Cambodia were tasked among others with state-building, election monitoring, and humanitarian assistance (Bellamy et al. 2010, p. 93; Thakur 2017, p. 41). It also reflected a changing relationship among P5 members

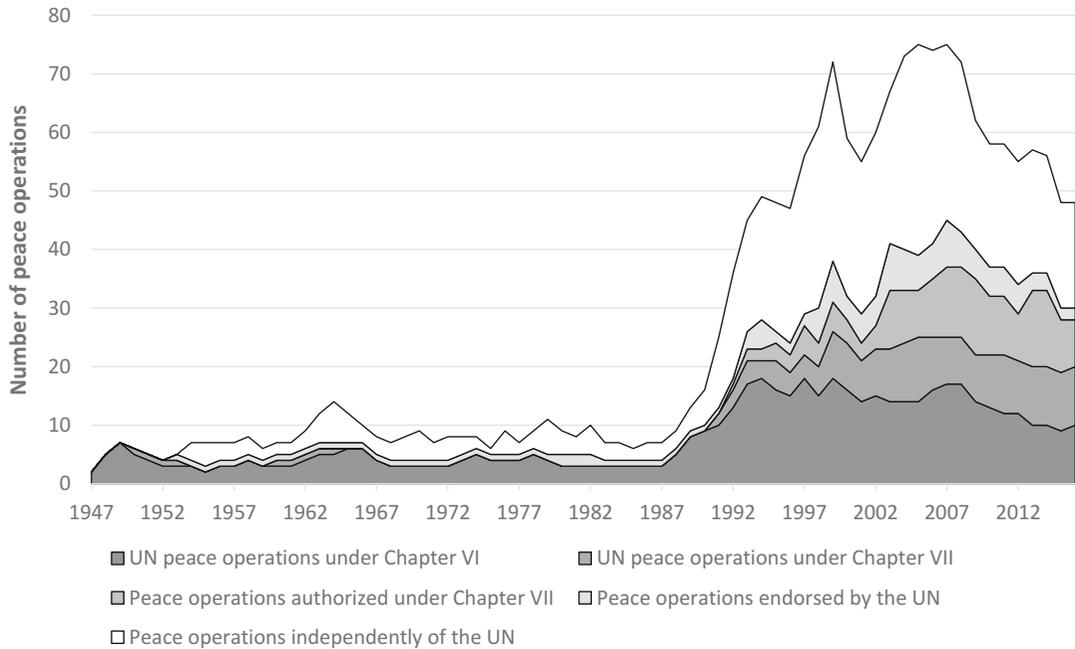
during the late years of the Cold War that saw a greater spirit of cooperation (Mayall 2008, p. 11). The unparalleled number of UNSC resolutions and meetings in the early 1990s demonstrated that this spirit was translated into new activities (MacQueen 2011, p. 63). Most importantly, however, the 1990s were also driven by an increasing number of violent intrastate conflicts, the rise of violent nonstate actors, and a surge of internally displaced persons and changing technologies of modern warfare (for example, small arms and light weapons), creating a need to adapt established UN peace operation practices to changing security landscapes (Weiss 2016, p. 90).

As a consequence, the UNSC began authorizing the use of force for humanitarian causes differently. Resolution 688 on the situation in northern Iraq from 1991 is often referred to as the starting point of these activities, but especially UN peace operations in Somalia and Bosnia since 1992 are widely considered exemplary of such interventionist activities (Doyle and Sambanis 2006, p. 145; Thakur 2017, p. 43). Indicators such as the number of deployed peacekeepers, the UN's peacekeeping budget, the number of peace operations, as well as the number of fatalities among UN peacekeepers all demonstrate that the first half of the 1990s was very much a turning point for the UNSC in its conducting of interventions (Luck 2006 p. 37; Thakur 2017, p. 44). However, effective implementation of this new role proved to be already challenging in Somalia and Bosnia (MacQueen 2011, p. 148). Failures to prevent mass atrocities in Rwanda in 1994 and Srebrenica in 1995 demonstrated in particular the limited abilities of the UN to align its proactive engagement for humanitarian purposes with the available resources, the scope of mandates, and the political will of UN members. NATO's unauthorized 1999 Kosovo intervention demonstrated how paralysis affects the UNSC's abilities to conduct intervention. It was widely interpreted as a "defining moment" (Hehir 2010, p. 201) for the post-Cold War UNSC, underlining the peculiarities of its interventionist practices.

The challenges in shifting UN peace operations toward intervention during the 1990s partly resulted from the fact that the UN Charter only

indirectly refers to when and how the UNSC can authorize interventions. Therefore, actual UNSC practice, rather than rules and regulations, define the boundaries between intervention and other UN peace operations. In theory, (traditional) peacekeeping can be clearly differentiated from more robust types of operations by the principles of consent by the parties, neutrality, and non-use of force (except in situations of self-defense). As UNSC practice demonstrates, however, these boundaries have become increasingly blurred. While many of the UNSC's operations cannot easily be categorized as interventions in a narrow understanding of military action without the government's consent, they represent gradual shifts in the conduct of peace operations. As the famous concept of "Chapter VI ½" operations demonstrates, this is hardly a new development. On the contrary, it has shaped UNSC practice from early on. However, as Fig. 1 illustrates, UNSC practice since 1990 has created an array of different types of peace operations. While many of them are still mandated under Chapter VI, the most notable development is the authorization of operations under Chapter VII. These include robust UN peace operations, that is, military interventions by the UN such as in Somalia 1992 and non-UN missions authorized under Chapter VII, such as the Australian-led intervention in East Timor 1999–2000, which was carried out with the "strategic consent" of the government (Weiss 2015, p. 83). The UNSC also authorizes more traditional peacekeeping missions, whose mandates were adapted to worsening situations, such as the UN mission in Cote d'Ivoire since 2004. As the missions in Mali since 2013 and Central African Republic since 2014 demonstrate, so-called stabilization missions were recently used by some governments to fight against rebels (Karlsrud 2018, p. 20). Fig. 1 also demonstrates the continuing importance of interventions carried out outside of the UN framework, for example, by regional security organizations such as NATO. Overall, it has become increasingly difficult to distinguish the various types of UN peace operations from interventions (Karlsrud 2018, p. 21; Weiss 2016, p. 81).

Aside from unclear formal boundaries, the conduct of such operations by the UN was and still is



UN Security Council and International Interventions, Fig. 1 The UNSC and Intervention Over Time. (Based on data from the Military and Non-Military Interventions Dataset (MILINDA). MILINDA defines intervention broadly as military and nonmilitary operations that are

“explicitly designed as peace operations” and characterized by the “expeditionary use of uniformed personnel” (Jetschke and Schlipphak 2019, pp. 610–612), including peacekeeping and observer missions.)

characterized by functional problems. Increasingly complex mandates lack the necessary resources and operations often reveal discrepancies between policies and their actual implementation in the field. Furthermore, UN personnel have engaged in misconduct and “exploit and abuse those whom they are entrusted to protect” (Karlsrud 2018, p. 19). UN interventions have also had unintended outcomes, such as the suffering of civilians or the conduct of war crimes by conflict parties (Roberts 2016, p. 362). Therefore, scholars tend to emphasize that given its expertise and capacities the UN would benefit from drawing a sharper boundary between situations calling for intervention and those requiring peacekeeping operations (Fortna and Howard 2008, p. 290).

Reframing Intervention

The UNSC’s failures to respond appropriately to situations of mass atrocities in the late 1990s

caused much criticism of the UN’s inability to protect human rights effectively. The UNSC faced an increasing gap between the discourse and practice of intervention, creating a need to determine whether to retain its principles and practices or modify them (Karlsrud 2018, p. 16). This initiated a process of normative change aimed at aligning the principles and discourses of UN human rights protection with the actual conduct of intervention. Normative change was also necessary to provide better grounds for responding to the changing demands of more complex and transnational security threats. After a hiatus in the early 2000s, therefore, UN peace operations again grew strongly in the number of missions as well as the number of deployed troops around 2005 (Karlsrud 2018, p. 17).

Normative change was nothing new for the UN’s dealing with interventions, though. Early on in 1992, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali’s *An Agenda for Peace* laid out a vision for UN peacekeeping activities suitable for the

challenges and expectations of the post-Cold War era. Then, in 2000 the *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations* was published under the leadership of Lakhdar Brahimi. It contained several recommendations for aligning UN peace operations to the realities of complex conflict constellations. The report emphasized the need to reevaluate the principle of political neutrality, which was constitutive for differentiating traditional peacekeeping operations from interventions: “Impartiality should not translate into complicity with evil” (Thakur 2017, p. 47). While both reports made important recommendations for more robust UN peace operations, they also made clear that the UN should refrain from all too interventionist activities (Karlsrud 2018, p. 20; Weiss 2016, p. 12). Subsequent reports furthered these debates, most notably the 2008 *Principles and Guidelines for UN Peace Operations (Capstone Doctrine)* on the impartiality and neutrality of UN peacekeepers and the 2015 *Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO)* on the problem of insufficient resources of missions and the need for tailored responses instead of templated ones. In 2018 the UN Secretary-General sought the support of UN members for a more comprehensive approach to UN peace operations in his *Action for Peacekeeping* initiative (A4P).

The most important normative development was probably to establish the *Responsibility to Protect* (R2P), which reframed intervention from a matter of violating state sovereignty to a matter of protecting people at risk (Bellamy 2009; Evans 2008; Thakur and Weiss 2009). One of the aims of the *International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS)* that published the accompanying report in 2001 was to develop ways out of UNSC deadlock situations. The 1999 Kosovo crisis, for example, demonstrated not only the inability of the UNSC to fulfill its mandate, but also the instrumentalization of humanitarian arguments to justify unauthorized military intervention (Thakur 2017, pp. 280–281). Although the ICISS report included proposals on how to circumvent the UNSC in deadlock situations, its formal endorsement by the UN at the 2005 World Summit clarified the strong and

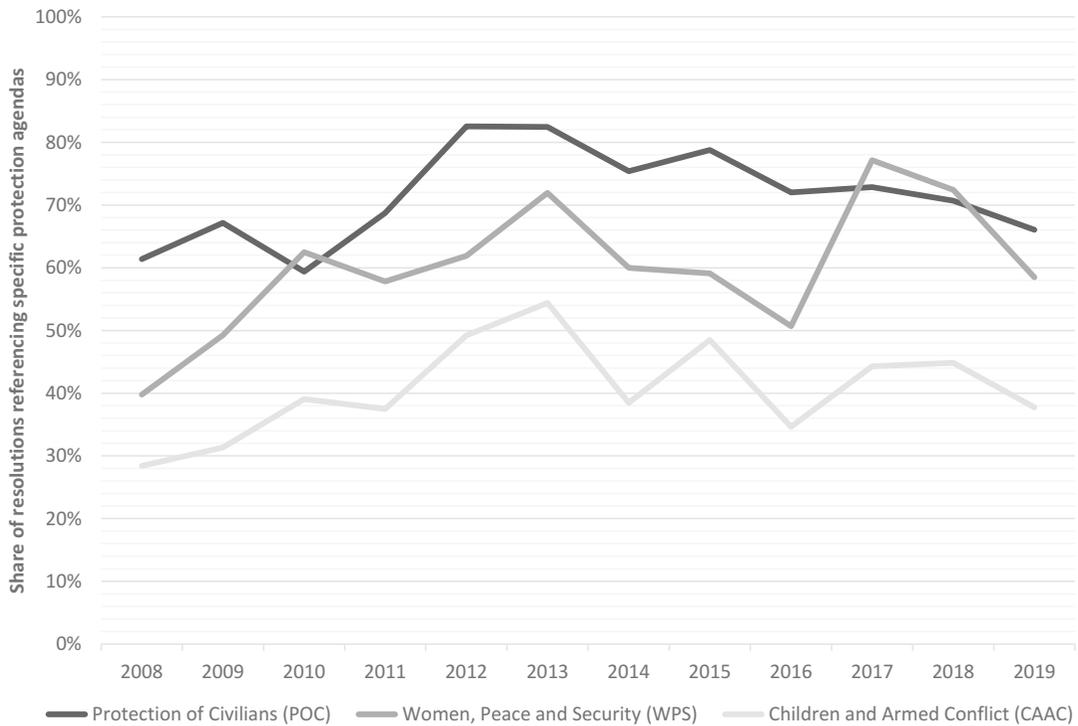
leading role of the UNSC in protecting people at risk (Bellamy 2016, p. 253). The official endorsement by the UN was an important step toward recognition of R2P, but critics point to the lack of clear criteria and thresholds for action stemming from this concept (Bellamy 2008, p. 623). UNSC decision-making since 2005 has also demonstrated that the recognition of a concept does not automatically ensure its application in actual practice. Inaction in light of mass atrocities in Darfur, and also crises in Kenya, eastern Congo, and elsewhere underlined that there was considerable reluctance, especially among the P5, to actually apply R2P (Bellamy 2016, p. 258). At the same time, UNSC debates on the humanitarian crisis following the cyclone Nargis in 2008 and attempts by the Russian government to legitimize military action against Georgia as a case of protecting its people abroad spurred controversies over what would precisely constitute a case of R2P (Badescu and Bergholm 2009 p. 289; Badescu and Weiss 2010, p. 364). Authorizing military action against the Libyan government by resolutions 1970 and 1973 in 2011 then became a much awaited break with the UNSC’s previous handling of R2P (Bellamy and Williams 2011). The inability of the UNSC to come to a similar conclusion about the war in Syria, however, underlines the volatility of these developments and the UNSC’s latitude in dealing with such situations.

While R2P focuses on changing the legal framework and language of interventions, UNSC decision-making has also spurred normative change by emphasizing the vulnerabilities of groups of people in need of protection. The so-called “protection agendas” on the *Protection of Civilians (POC)*, *Children and Armed Conflict (CAAC)*, and on *Women, Peace, and Security (WPS)* have contributed to a more nuanced understanding of the UNSC’s mandate. While these agendas do not address intervention explicitly, they change the normative framework within which interventions are carried out. Often the result of deliberate efforts by civil society organizations to initiate norm change, UNSC decision-making on these issues has contributed greatly to these changes.

The protection agendas are an important element of a larger normative shift of the UNSC’s agenda from state action to people in need of protection. Focusing on the victims of violent conflict does not resolve conceptual ambiguities of intervention, but makes a significant difference for actual practice. Fig. 2 demonstrates that, while not a linear process, references to these protection agendas in UNSC resolutions have with different degrees become a continuous and stable pattern. Research on POC suggests that UN peace operations actually do aim at their implementation (Hultman 2013). Moreover, converging effects are found in the consideration of POC in peace operations by regional security organizations (Dembinski and Schott 2013). The UNSC has thus contributed greatly not only to changing how traditional UN peace operations are carried out, but also to profound changes in the normative framework of international interventions more generally.

Justifying Intervention

The normative change generated by the shift from sovereignty to protection provides grounds for establishing so-called “stabilization missions” in recent years (Karlsrud 2019). At the same time, crises in the UNSC concerning the situations in Libya and Syria emphasize that such normative change, especially related to R2P, has not alleviated the need to justify interventions, even those with UNSC authorization. NATO’s 2011 Libya intervention was hailed as a confirmation of R2P that would shape the conduct of future interventions (Bellamy and Williams 2011, p. 845). However, some UNSC members criticized that NATO’s intervention aimed at unauthorized regime change rather than the protection of people from atrocities. This dispute caused faction among the P5 and led to an unparalleled number of vetoes cast to prevent UNSC action on Syria. Hence, the decision to authorize NATO



UN Security Council and International Interventions, Fig. 2 References to protection agendas in UNSC resolutions on country-specific or regional situations. (Based on data from United Nations 2019, 2020)



intervention in Libya has significantly affected the UNSC's ability to respond to the war in Syria (Morris 2013, p. 1275).

As Martha Finnemore observes, "every intervention leaves a long trail of justification" (Finnemore 2003, p. 15). Such processes demonstrate that the UNSC is credited not only with formal, but also with normative authority. Although the UNSC is often understood as an institution designed to facilitate decision-making among the great powers, scholars have emphasized its deliberative and legitimizing function (Hurd 2007; Johnstone 2003). In this understanding, the UNSC is "the forum of choice for debating and deciding on collective action requiring the use of force" (Thakur 2007, p. 387). These processes of justifying intervention are highly controversial, though. They rely on supposedly shared norms and values that are in fact contested and ambiguous (Niemann 2019). As "rhetorical resources" (Hurd 2007, p. 206) these norms and values are subject to strategic instrumentalization for different purposes rather than shared understandings with fixed meanings. Hence, justifications do not always produce the expected outcome.

The impetus to justify intervention in the UNSC emphasizes the importance of normative arguments for the conduct of interventions. It seems that states demonstrate "deference toward Security Council action as a necessary first step in gaining approval for this highly sensitive use of force" (Kahler 2011, p. 32). Such arguments also demonstrate that interventions are usually accompanied by politicization and contestation. At the same time, they take place in an institutional environment designed primarily around the privileges and interests of the P5.

more involved in interventions in different ways. These developments demonstrate how much actual practice has changed the UNSC's role on interventions over the course of the last decades. It has generated new types of peace operations, such as stabilization missions, normative change regarding state sovereignty and the prevention of large-scale human suffering, and rhetorical shifts toward the language of responsibility and protection. This has not been a linear process, though. Instead, to cope with the enduring contestation about the issue of intervention, the UNSC is in constant need of aligning actual practice with a changing political context and an often outdated legal framework. Most importantly, these changes have not allowed the UNSC to resolve the fundamental tension between the principle of protecting the sovereignty of UN member states and that of protecting people from mass atrocities.

The developments of the last 20 years have only furthered expectations for more coherent UNSC action. Ignoring overt gross human rights violations and atrocities increasingly undermines the UNSC's legitimacy. Moreover, UNSC actions take place in more and more complex environments, which increases the risk of mission creep (Clark and Reus-Smit 2013, p. 39). Proper responses require appropriate mandates, sufficient resources, and sustainable working relations of all involved stakeholders, but they also raise fundamental questions about the general role and mission of the UNSC. In the face of criticism of its inability to prevent interventions or to conduct them properly for the sake of a greater humanitarian good, the UNSC will most likely continue responding to mass atrocities with great flexibility and selectivity.

Summary

The UN was established as a system of collective security under the leadership of the great powers (Hurd 2011, p. 295). Interventions were considered, if at all, a potential threat to the post-World War order rather than a humanitarian imperative for responding to the large-scale suffering of civilians. Since then, however, the UNSC became more and

Cross-References

- ▶ [Assessment of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Collective Security and Collective Responsibility in International Interventions](#)
- ▶ [Conceptual Evolution of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Evolution of Practice in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations](#)
- ▶ [Great Power Involvement in Peace Operations](#)

- ▶ Liberal Peace in Peace Operations
- ▶ Peace Operations, Principles, and Doctrine
- ▶ Stabilization Operations and Their Relationship to Liberal Peacebuilding Missions
- ▶ Use of Force in Peace Operations

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Unarmed Bodyguards

► Unarmed Civilian Protection/Peacekeeping

Unarmed Civilian Peacekeeping

► Unarmed Civilian Protection/Peacekeeping

Unarmed Civilian Protection

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Unarmed Civilian Protection/ Peacekeeping

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Synonyms

[Accompaniment](#); [Community self-protection](#); [Nonviolent peacekeeping](#); [Nonviolent protection](#); [Peace communities](#); [Peace zones](#); [Protective accompaniment](#); [Unarmed bodyguards](#); [Unarmed civilian peacekeeping](#); [Unarmed civilian protection](#)

Definition

Unarmed civilian protection/peacekeeping (UCP), also known as (protective) accompaniment among other synonyms, provides effective nonviolent, civilian-to-civilian alternatives to police- and military-based protection. It can be described as “the practice of civilians protecting other civilians in situations of imminent, ongoing, or recent violent conflict. It involves trained international civilians protecting local civilians, local civilians protecting each other, and even local civilians protecting international or non-local civilians” (Oldenhuis et al. 2021, p. 5). Peace Brigades International, Nonviolent Peaceforce, Meta Peace Team, and Operation Dove are examples of international UCP organizations. Local protection organizations include Bantay Ceasefire in the Philippines, Bear Clan Patrol in Canada, and Cure Violence in the USA,

while the Indigenous Guards of Colombia and the Women Protection Teams in South Sudan are examples of manifold forms of nonviolent community self-protection. All UCP is characterized by physical presence in communities experiencing violence and by the deployment of nonviolent strategies with the aim to protect specific individuals, groups, and/or whole communities from physical harm. Key principles of UCP include nonviolence, the primacy of local actors, and independence. For many organizations, nonpartisanship is also central; others rather emphasize solidarity with the oppressed. Key legal pillars include international human rights and humanitarian law. Numerous evaluations and studies have demonstrated UCP’s effectiveness, and some recent UN reports and declarations have called for an increased use of UCP. Yet there is also debate within the UCP community of practice in how far an extension in scale and/or scope is possible or desirable.

Introduction

It is estimated that 2 billion people today live in fragile and conflict-affected areas of the world, where they are impacted by violence and natural disasters – a number likely to grow in the future due to population growth and the impacts of climate chaos (UNOCHA 2019). In these areas, civilians are faced with a wide variety of human rights violations, such as killings, torture, sexual abuse, and forced displacement. In many countries, individuals are forcibly recruited into armed groups, trafficked for sexual exploitation, or imprisoned or killed for their environmental or human rights activism or their social leadership. Recognizing the overwhelming need for the protection of civilians, former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon insisted that “human protection is a defining purpose of the United Nations in the twenty-first century” (Ki-Moon 2012). Since 1999, UN peace operations have increasingly included protection of civilians (PoC) mandates. However, there are many situations of war and violent conflict where UN peace operations cannot be deployed or are ineffective, and where

government actors are not willing or able to provide protection to some or all civilians. In some situations, the government itself is a, or the, main source of violence against civilians. The international community has struggled, in theory and in practice, with the question of its responsibility to protect civilians within the territory of sovereign states as well as in the face of the scale and complexity of protection challenges in violent conflicts around the world (O'Callaghan and Pantuliano 2007).

By building local protection infrastructures for and with communities and individuals threatened by violence and forced displacement, unarmed civilian protection/peacekeeping (UCP) offers a bottom-up approach to complement or substitute state-led, top-down (armed) protection approaches. Civilians have protected themselves nonviolently across all cultures and times and, since the early twentieth century, have increasingly used nonviolent strategies known as interpositioning (between warring factions) and accompaniment (of people under threat) (Julian and Schweitzer 2015; Schirch 2006; Weber 2000). Famously, in Gandhi's later years he called for the creation of a *Shanti Sena* – a peace army – to go to areas of conflict between Hindus and Muslims within India and position themselves between combatants (Weber 1996). Threads like these came together in the founding of Peace Brigades International (pbi) in 1981, the oldest international nonviolent UCP organization currently in operation. From the beginning, pbi fielded teams of international volunteers focused on protecting human rights defenders and other social activists threatened with death for their activities. To date, the organization has had projects in 13 countries, including Mexico, Colombia, Indonesia, and Kenya (<https://www.peacebrigades.org>).

Since 1981, numerous other organizations have fielded international teams going to places of overt or covert violence to protect communities, specific organizations, or individuals. They include organizations such as Christian Peacemaker Teams (<https://cpt.org>), the Ecumenic Accompaniment Program in Palestine and Israel (<https://eappi.org/en>), Nonviolent Peaceforce

(<https://www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org>), Meta Peace Team (<https://www.metapeaceteam.org>), Peace Watch Switzerland (<https://www.peacewatch.ch>), and many more. According to the Selkirk College UCP database, UCP has been provided at times by over 60 organizations in the three decades between 1990 and 2020 (Selkirk College 2020). In addition, more and more national and local organizations have formed in the Global North and South, including Cure Violence (<http://cureviolence.org>) and DC Peace Team (<https://dcpeaceteam.com>) in the USA, Bear Clan Patrol in Canada (<https://bearclanpatrol.org>), Bantay Ceasefire in the Philippines (<http://www.eprpinformation.org/files/peaceprocesses/ceasefires/What-is-Bantay-Ceasefire.pdf>), and UDEFEGUA in Guatemala (<https://udefegua.org>). Not least, there are also numerous unarmed community guards, peace communities, humanitarian and weapon-free zones, and other nonviolent grassroots self-protection initiatives around the globe (e.g., Kaplan 2016; Krause 2017, 2018; Moser-Puangsuwan 1996; Mouly et al. 2015).

Understanding the Place of UCP Within Peace Studies

Within the triad of peacemaking, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding, peacekeeping is the prevention and reduction of direct violence with the consent of the parties involved. Military peacekeeping, which relies on (the threat of) the use of force to change the behavior of armed actors to comply with agreements or protect civilians, remains the dominant method used and studied. However, unarmed civilian peacekeeping/protection also changes the behavior of armed actors to protect civilians. It challenges the widely held assumption that armed actors only yield to the threat of violence, which has been proven to be untrue. UCP therefore presents a practical critique of traditional peacekeeping by challenging the latter's underlying assumptions. This places UCP within the field of critical peacekeeping studies, such as Pugh's (2004) work, which uses critical theory to show how military peacekeeping

fits within the global political order that benefits powerful states, and Cunliffe's (2013) study, which suggests imperialism as a lens through which we need to understand multilaterally sponsored armed peacekeeping.

There is a growing body of research on UCP which argues that nonviolent, unarmed strategies are effective in protecting civilians without relying on or reproducing the militarized global order. Using case study material from NGOs, Julian and Gasser (2019), for instance, show how most of the tasks of peacekeeping can be done by unarmed civilians and demonstrate that the military are not essential to peacekeeping. Julian (2020) therefore argues that nonviolence challenges the belief that violence or the threat thereof is necessary for peacekeeping, enabling us to develop new theories and understandings of how peacekeeping works. Wallace (2017) similarly argues that nonviolence challenges the false choice "do nothing or take military action" when civilians are threatened by violence and shows how civilian protection can be carried out using nonviolence. Drawing on evidence of successful nonviolent protection, she demonstrates how using unarmed strategies can provide new approaches in civilian protection. So, although UCP and military peacekeeping do many of the same tasks, they do so from a completely different understanding of power and relationships (Furnari 2015, 2018). By employing a critique of military peacekeeping, UCP thus enables us to explore assumptions which are made within peacekeeping.

In recent years, there has indeed been a growing recognition of the importance of unarmed strategies among policymakers. It has been noted, among others, in the report of the UN High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) 2015, which accepted that unarmed strategies are also useful in peace operations and peacekeeping (UN 2015). Yet, while UCP is many times less expensive than military interventions, since it harnesses the power of nonviolence and civilians, it remains generally poorly funded, and there has been a tendency to dub all sorts of unarmed activities by state actors "UCP," which has raised concerns about a hollowing out of the approach. Rather than being a "toolbox"

that protection actors can borrow single instruments from, UCP is a holistic approach that rests on indivisible elements such as nonviolence, relationship-building, and primacy of the local.

In addition to nonviolence, UCP draws on feminist approaches to understanding the relationship between militarism and protection. Military peacekeeping depends on a masculine view of protection that Enloe (2014) argues is about "power over," the myth of men protecting women, and the normalization of militarism which imagines that armed actors can only be tackled by increasing military threat. Feminism shows the importance of the interconnections between people and their experience, that power is more varied than just "power over," and that protection is a multilevel multifaceted activity (Oakley 2020).

Finally, UCP also engages with the local turn in critical peacebuilding studies (Khamidov et al. 2017). While UN peacekeeping talks about engagement with local communities, this is different to both local ownership and transformative peacebuilding, in which local communities lead the efforts for peace. One of the core principles of UCP is the primacy of the local, which means that protection activities and programs engage local people in the planning and implementation of the projects. This ranges from everyday meetings and working together between locals and internationals, to groups and community efforts entirely run by local people (for example, the South Sudanese Women Protection Teams, see below). Of course, "local" is a complicated identifier. UCP interventions by international organizations must assess thoughtfully the divergent interests, agendas, and identities in those considered local.

Delineating Unarmed Civilian Protection/Peacekeeping

UCP's foremost focus is on the reduction or prevention of physical violence. Just as with all peacekeeping, UCP works where there is consent of parties to the conflict. Another similarity are the limitations – neither UCP nor military peacekeeping does or can work in all contexts. Yet different

from armed peacekeeping, UCP is based on core principles of nonviolence, primacy of the local, and either nonpartisanship (“humanitarian” UCP organizations) or solidarity with the oppressed (“activist” UCP organizations) (for a discussion of the two models, see Schweitzer 2019b, pp. 78–79, cf. Coy 2012). Much of the UCP literature has concentrated on international UCP organizations and evaluated their strategies and effectiveness. Such studies by academics and practitioners show that UCP organizations have successfully worked in a range of violent political conflicts of different types and intensities on all continents and encompassing countries and regions such as the Balkans (Schweitzer and Clark 2002), Bougainville (Gehrman et al. 2015), Colombia (Koopman 2014; Lindsay-Poland and Weintraub 2016), Georgia, Guatemala, Iraq, Mexico (Weaver 2002), Palestine (McCarthy and Pinckney 2016), the Philippines (Furnari 2016a; Gündüz and Torralba 2014), Sri Lanka (Coy 2001), South Sudan (Easthom 2013, 2015; Furnari 2016b), and the USA (Butts et al. 2015; McCarthy 2012), to name but a few. The examples testify to UCP’s versatility to adapt to very different contexts and types of political violence (cf. also Schweitzer 2018a, b, 2019a, b, 2020).

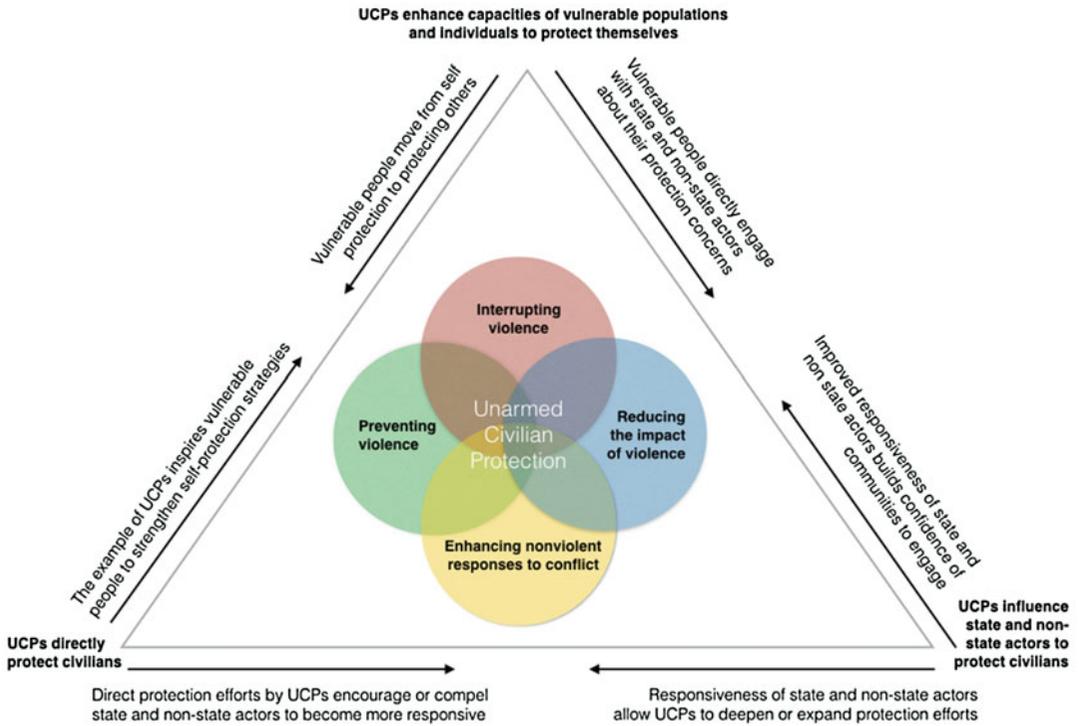
In addition to the reduction and prevention of physical violence, it has also been argued that UCP can make significant contributions to peacebuilding and positive peace, by breaking cycles of revenge and providing alternative conflict resolution models (Furnari et al. 2021) and by “creat[ing] a safer environment, or a ‘safer space’, for civilians to address their own needs, solve their own conflicts, and protect vulnerable individuals and populations in their midst” (Furnari et al. 2015, p. 30). Increasing attention has therefore also been paid to local protection infrastructures consisting of both the numerous local organizations and movements for self-protection in areas of conflict, which range from peace communities and weapons-free zones to forms of nonviolent engagement with armed actors. Where such local (self-)protection initiatives use nonviolent strategies, they need to be seen as an essential part of the UCP field of practice (see Alther 2006;

Engelbrecht and Kaushik 2015; Garcia 1997; Gorur 2013; Hancock 2016; Jose and Medie 2016; Kaplan 2013, 2016; Krause 2018; Macaspac 2018; Mitchell and Allen Nan 1997; Moser-Puangsuan 1996).

The range of experiences of nonviolent self-protection upends the idea of the protection of civilians from violence as necessarily an “outside protection” and shows ways in which communities have prevented, interrupted, and reduced violence at the local level. International and national organizations who see their main task in supporting, or “being with,” such grassroots initiatives, therefore, usually prefer the term “accompaniment” over “protection” and count “solidarity” rather than “nonpartisanship” among their core principles, to emphasize the central role of communities and local actors (Schweitzer 2019b, 2020). This is also seen by many within the UCP community as a way to address the problem inherent in the use of white privilege or Global North privilege as a primary form of deterrence in international protection, which has resulted in a call to continuously work on the decolonization of UCP (Boothe and Smithey 2007; Coy 2011; Koopman 2013).

The different objectives, levels, and interconnections of UCP are illustrated in Fig. 1, taken from a UCP training manual by Oldenhuis et al. (2021).

A defining feature of all UCP is that its activities typically take place at the grassroots level of communities in conflicted-affected areas and are sustained over longer periods of time. Unlike their armed counterparts who often live in bunkerized compounds apart from the population they are to protect (Duffield 2010), unarmed civilian protectors/peacekeepers usually live in the communities they work with, which allows them to be attuned to the dynamics at the local level and to seek the involvement of local actors in their work. They see this as taking the principle of the primacy of the local seriously in their situational and conflict analyses and their program planning, as living and working in the community contributes directly to timely situational analysis and relationship-building. Living in local communities may not always be possible for all staff members or



Unarmed Civilian Protection/Peacekeeping, Fig. 1 Goals and objectives of UCP. (Source: Oldenhuis et al. 2021)

volunteers, however, for example, due to travel restrictions for international companions by the host country’s government (as is the case in Myanmar) or due to violence being directed specifically at UCP personnel (as was the case in Mindanao, Philippines, during a period of time). In these contexts, UCP organizations generally seek for other ways to work directly with grassroots communities, for example, by deploying national staff to whom travel restrictions do not apply or by training communities to self-protect where outside presence is impossible, while also using their national and international connections for advocacy work and trying to contribute to sustainable local protection infrastructures that will outlive the international presence.

How UCP Works

UCP provides a range of nonviolent strategies across five areas of activity: proactive engagement (e.g., interpositioning, protective accompaniment,

and protective presence), monitoring (e.g., ceasefire monitoring, rumor control, and early warning – early response), relationship building (e.g., confidence-building, multitrack dialogue), capacity enhancement (e.g., through training, supporting the building of local protection infrastructures), and advocacy (at different levels from local to international). Underpinning these different strategies are three different ways in which UCP is working: through deterrence, the strength of relationships, and proactive presence.

Deterrence works by increasing the cost of carrying out violence – making the perpetrators more visible and making it harder for them to attack human rights defenders, for instance. Protective companions, or “unarmed bodyguards,” use their presence, visibility, strong relationships, and a responsive network to make threats visible and deter them from being carried out. This widens the space for human rights and peace activity to occur (Mahony and Eguren 1997). Protective accompaniment of human rights defenders is probably the most classic example



of strategies of deterrence of violence by international UCP organizations, employed in many countries around the world. By watching – including monitoring, investigating, and reporting – both those who are threatened by violence and those who threaten and perpetrate violence and being visible in this watchful presence, UCP raises the stakes for violent actors to harm civilians. In this way, the behavior of perpetrators is changed at checkpoints, along paths women take to collect water, when people are farming, during demonstrations, during evictions, and at meetings.

For UCP organizations, building good working relationships is essential (Furnari 2014, 2015, 2018). Being perceived as independent and unarmed is seen by most organizations as conducive to this. For organizations of the “humanitarian” type, this usually means engaging with most parties to a conflict. With regard to the armed actors, good working relationships ideally include groups on all sides (state military, insurgent groups, militias, etc.) and at all levels (from commanders to rank and file members), though this is not always possible. With regard to unarmed actors, relationship building takes place with and within the local communities who are to be protected as well as with stakeholders at regional and national levels. Good relationships with as broad a spectrum of actors as possible, i.e., ideally with all state and nonstate armed groups, authorities at different levels, other relevant local stakeholders, as well as the violence-affected communities and different groups within them, will enable UCP organizations to carry out their work, or to carry it out more easily. For example, in places as different as Indonesia and Colombia, pbi volunteers have found that developing good relationships with soldiers at various checkpoints makes it possible to move more smoothly through the checkpoints with those they are accompanying. In Kachin state, Myanmar, local civilian conflict monitors used their network of established relationships with the Burmese army, the Kachin rebel group, and politicians to negotiate the safe passage of internally displaced persons, who had fled from aerial bombings to the forest, into the nearest city, and to reclaim youth that had been forcibly recruited into the armed groups. In addition to good relationships enabling UCP organizations

to engage in direct protection tasks, they can also mobilize these networks to connect different groups of society, facilitate communication and dialogue, and contribute to multitrack processes of mediation and negotiation by linking local communities to higher levels of politics or other international intervening organizations.

Proactive presence takes the principle of “presence” a step forward (Wallis 2010). UCP practitioners are present in areas of conflict, potential conflict, and threats. Yet they are generally not a passive presence but rather, as described above, are actively engaged in building relationships and networks, connecting with diverse social sectors. In many contexts (other than providing protection at a demonstration, for instance, which is very short-term), they are present in communities for many years, or as local people may live there. They are often also actively engaged in working with people in communities (including their own communities) to develop early warning – early response plans, reaching out to the military with training in International Humanitarian Law, accompanying people to courts or other government institutions, and other manifestations of active engagement. Accurate and frequent context analysis is critical for the effectiveness of UCP and can only be accomplished through frequent, lengthy, local interactions which depend on proactive presence.

Finally, whatever methods are being used, they are all based in the primacy of local actors through discussions with local people, to understand the strengths and existing strategies being used, and the unmet protection needs as expressed by diverse groups within a community or by the specific individuals needing protection. The challenge for UCP actors here is to navigate the complexity of local communities, where different sectors may have different perspectives and needs. What they share is a commitment to constant reflection on these difficulties.

Three Examples of UCP in Practice

The following are three examples from the wide range of existing UCP, accompaniment, and self-protection projects and initiatives, which serve to

illustrate the variety of work in the UCP field of practice: international protective accompaniment and local self-protection in Colombia, UCP in the Philippines, and local protection provided by Women Protection Teams in South Sudan.

International Protective Accompaniment in Colombia

Colombia has witnessed a range of political and other violences for many decades. The state military as well as paramilitary and guerrilla groups have been engaged in violent conflict for many decades, and although some have signed peace agreements, other groups have carried on. International drug trafficking cartels, increasing violence instigated by multinational corporations, and high levels of targeted killings and general criminal violence have added to the picture. In this context, international and national civilians, human rights defenders, and different types of peace communities in Colombia have been using nonviolent protection strategies for over 35 years. Colombia is an interesting case for the study of UCP because there are possibly more organizations doing UCP and community self-protection in Colombia than there are in any other country. There are both local and international organizations, many of which are networked together to support one another and local civilians as well as a range of peace communities, humanitarian zones, Indigenous and peasant guards, and many other nonviolent grassroots initiatives (Alther 2006; Koopman 2014; Lefebvre 2018; Lindsay-Poland and Weintraub 2016; Mouly et al. 2015; Schweitzer 2020).

International accompaniment organizations such as Peace Brigades International (pbi) and Operation Dove have run programs in Colombia to accompany human rights defenders as well as local self-protection initiatives. Lindsay-Poland and Weintraub (2016, p. 61) give the following example of a pbi protection: “There is also the case of Mario Calixto in the town of Sabana de Torres in 1997. He was accompanied by PBI, and when two paramilitaries entered his house to take him away, the PBI members managed to interposition themselves between the armed men and Mario, explaining their work and their presence. Calixto took advantage of the distraction to

escape, and the paramilitaries left the house. A short while later, Calixto left the town with PBI accompaniment.”

Kaplan (2013) discusses the case of the Association of Peasant Workers of the Carare (ATCC) that developed its own system of investigation and justice, in order to prevent militias and military forces from committing violence in the name of justice. In this way, when an allegation of cooperating with guerrilla forces was presented, the community itself carried out the investigation and decided on the appropriate consequences, if any, if indeed cooperation was found. This prevented disappearances and extrajudicial killings as well as providing encouragement for community members to noncooperate with any armed actors. In this way, a community developed effective self-protection mechanisms.

Unarmed Civilian Peacekeeping in Mindanao, the Philippines

Civilians in Mindanao experience different levels and types of violence, ranging from political violence by armed groups, now partly subject to a peace agreement, to “rido” or community violence. The work of the unarmed civilian protection teams in Mindanao has included tasks and strategies as diverse as rumor control and de-escalating community violence, preventing the displacement of people in villages near barracks, and helping with the safe return of internally displaced persons (IDPs). They have monitored and investigated incidents and trained local people in UCP (Furnari 2016a).

UCP in Mindanao has three main characteristics that make it particularly interesting to study. First, it is the first time UCP has been written into a peace agreement as the monitoring mechanism. When an Agreement of Peace was negotiated between the Government of the Philippines and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), the tasks of monitoring and investigating breaches of the agreement were given to a team of civilians who used UCP to proactively engage with armed actors and local communities (International Monitoring Team – Civilian Protection Component; see OPAPP n.d.). As well as being “on the ground” to de-escalate violence, they trained thousands of people in human rights, violence

reduction, and relationship-building. Those people have then become active in their own communities and have built new mechanisms for making their communities safer (Gündüz and Torralba 2014).

Second, UCP in Mindanao is based on an interrelationship between local and international civilians. Bantay Ceasefire began violence monitoring and reduction work in Mindanao and was joined by international groups, especially Nonviolent Peaceforce (<https://nonviolentpeaceforce.org/program-locations/philippines>). Local and international groups have successfully built mixed teams, combining the essential context knowledge of local team members with the international links and relationships of the international organizations.

Third, UCP in Mindanao developed Community Early Warning and Early Response (CEWER), which is a mechanism through which local communities meet and learn to understand the early warning signs of imminent violence, such as armed actors changing their behavior or people starting to gather in a particular place. Community Early Warning and Early Response involves working with local communities to understand the threats, the indicators that threats are developing, and appropriate responses they can take to ensure community and civilian protection. CEWER enables communities to plan what they will do if they see changes that might lead to violence, such as reporting it and calling someone to help, or identifying a specific protection activity (flee, negotiate, confront, etc.) to be carried out. These responses are under the control of the community, meaning that people can take action themselves and are not dependent on external actors (Engelbrecht and Kaushik 2015; cf. Macaspac 2018).

UCP and Local Women Protection Teams in South Sudan

South Sudan is so far the only place in the world where a large UCP mission (by Nonviolent Peaceforce, <https://www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org/what-we-do/program-location/south-sudan>) and other local UCP actors are operating in the same

country as a UN peacekeeping mission, making it a great case for comparisons between (the effectiveness of) different forms of peacekeeping and protection of civilians in a country with high levels of political and other forms of violence. UCP teams in South Sudan are able to operate in remote rural areas by having good relationships with communities and armed groups, particularly relying on local knowledge to understand the threats people face, their existing capacities and ways of self-protection, and opportunities for improving civilian safety. While people most often already have protection capacity – they know to flee, confront, negotiate, or hide, for example (Gorur 2013) – UCP enhances their capacity by providing new communication and relationship-building strategies, visibility, or creating the safer space in which new conflict resolution mechanisms can be established by the communities (Easthom 2013, 2015; Furnari 2016b).

South Sudan is also one of the few cases in which an international UCP organization has specifically trained local women to form Women Protection Teams (WPTs) (Nonviolent Peaceforce 2015). Thousands of women have been trained in UCP and work in their local communities to reduce violence. The WPTs are visible – the women wear bright pink shirts – and work in groups in their local area where they meet, are a constant presence for civilian safety, and train others in building local protection responses. For example, women might go to talk to a group of young people who are threatening others and intervene to halt violence, or they might work with other Women Protection Teams to tackle gender-based violence by different armed groups at checkpoints. Another example relates to cycles of revenge killings that in many communities have been going on for generations. In some communities, the WPTs have intervened after a killing, with the relatives of the deceased, to find other ways of responding than further killing. The women are motivated by concern for their own families, but also understanding how very local cycles can lead to much larger cycles of killing and other violences. The emphasis of all these activities is on enhancing local capacity and

enabling civilian safety and protection to be carried out at community level.

Summary

In summary, approaches of unarmed civilian protection/peacekeeping and (protective) accompaniment, broadly conceived, can improve civilian safety and protect civilians from armed conflict and other forms of violence. Unlike armed peacekeeping and other police- and military-based forms of protection, it does so without the use, or threat of use, of violence. Thereby, UCP de-militarizes protection. UCP is locally rooted, thus embodying and actualizing the ubiquitous call for “local leadership” or for protection and peacebuilding efforts being “locally-led.” Generally, UCP efforts are based in local capacities and needs, rather than driven by (neo)liberal or other outsider agendas. UCP is able to respond to different contexts and types of violence, enhances capacity of existing protection measures, and is equally carried out by local people as well as internationals, and often in collaboration. UCP is a mechanism that depends on presence, relationships, communication, and visibility, and people can be trained to use UCP. The embeddedness of this nonviolent type of protection from physical harm in the actions and strategies of unarmed civilians contributes to long-term peacebuilding and reduces the impact of militarism, by creating safer space for civil society actors to work on resolutions to local conflicts and by breaking cycles of violence and power based on force. This makes UCP both a critique of and a viable alternative to dominant security orders locally, nationally, and internationally.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Civil Resistance for Peace and Conflict Management, Role of](#)
- ▶ [Nonviolence and Civil Resistance](#)
- ▶ [Pacifism and Peace](#)
- ▶ [Popular Protest in Palestine](#)
- ▶ [Zones of Peace](#)

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Unarmed Resistance

- ▶ Popular Protest in Palestine

Uncertainty

- ▶ Insights from Complexity Theory for Peace and Conflict Studies

Unexpected

- ▶ Unintended Consequences of Peace Operations/Sexual Abuse and Exploitation by Peacekeepers

Unintended

► [Unintended Consequences of Peace Operations/Sexual Abuse and Exploitation by Peacekeepers](#)

Unintended Consequences of Peace Operations/Sexual Abuse and Exploitation by Peacekeepers

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Synonyms

[Abuse](#); [Aid](#); [Assistance](#); [Collateral](#); [Conflict](#); [Consequences](#); [Effects](#); [Humanitarian](#); [International](#); [Intervention](#); [Military](#); [Peace](#); [Peacekeeping](#); [Results](#); [Sexual](#); [Unexpected](#); [Unintended](#); [Violence](#)

Definition

The formulation and implementation of military and civilian humanitarian and peace-building policies by international or nongovernmental organizations frequently trigger unexpected and frequently counter-productive social and political results. These unpredicted outcomes are what is commonly referred to, in Peace Studies, as “unintended consequences.” All international policies – such as United Nations (UN) peacekeeping operations – that intend to support politically unstable countries in their path to achieve sustainable peace and economic development have the potential to provoke such unintended effects. It is fundamental to emphasize that these unforeseen political reactions are not desired by the actors who formulate and implement international humanitarian and peacebuilding strategies. Once such processes are in place, they very often form a rapidly increasing chain of negative outcomes,

which transforms the prediction, management, and containment of these accidental processes into a complex challenge. For example, international assistance can, through the provision of food or other resources, inadvertently enhance the power of certain groups, incentivizing more violence between combatants and even prolonging the conflict and worsening the already precarious living conditions of a certain population. Within the context of UN peace operations, for instance, many negative side effects, that could hinder the construction of sustainable peace, have been witnessed in the last decades, such as cases of sexual misconduct by peacekeepers. The political consequences of such cases are specially damaging and spread much beyond the suffering of the victims: sexual misconduct can even erode local support towards the mission, fundamental for the efficient implementation of its goals.

Introduction

What Are “Unintended Consequences”?

Contemporary peace operations are certainly one of the most complex political strategies in the construction of long-term peace and stability: it often involves the implementation of a plethora of distinct military and civilian functions and the presence of numerous political actors, such as United Nations (UN) employees and peacekeepers, within a context that is, most of the time, characterized by economic failure and political division. This intricate combination makes it very hard to predict the various consequences a peace operation can have, especially for the so-called host-society. These unpredicted results are called “unintended consequences”: outcomes that are not intentional, or desired, by the designers of a certain peace operation, and that, at the same time, are extremely hard to predict, and therefore to manage and contain (Aoi et al. 2007). More importantly, these unintended effects can represent, many times, the opposite of the pre-established goals of a mission, frequently harming exactly the individuals and groups who were meant to benefit from the presence of the UN in the field.

The concept of unintended consequences is not limited to the study of the various effects of the presence of UN peace operations but is also central to the analysis of the influence of a broad range of different military and nonmilitary strategies that aim to provide humanitarian assistance and help countries dominated by conflict in constructing sustainable peace and economic development. The focus on the systematic analysis of the many negative side effects of international aid – a subject that started to gain more space within Peace Studies since the 1990s – allowed policymakers to understand that international assistance, even when formulated and implemented with the best of intentions, can very frequently have contrary and damaging results, to the point of even exacerbate and prolong political instability and violence (Anderson 1999).

The ways by which international aid can produce such negative outcomes are quite varied, but they always form a complex and vicious chain process, whose ultimate effect is hard to predict. Some examples of these consequences can be considered as more direct or visible, such as when goods distributed by an organization are stolen by a certain group of rebels or paramilitaries, who can, for instance, exchange it for armaments, therefore increasing their power. Other negative results are sensed in a more structural or indirect way: for example, a large influx of food (for instance, rice), distributed by an international NGO, can dramatically decrease the prices of this same good in the local market, therefore damaging small-scale agricultural producers, and at the same time economically “incentivizing” individuals – who could otherwise benefit from a potential local economic development – to remain involved in criminal activities. The final result might be a completely counter-productive situation in terms of constructing sustainable peace: the lack of local economic development (many times due to the dependency on international donations) and the high levels of poverty in a certain state might be intimately linked to the widespread use of violence against civilians – a strategy used by warring parties to obtain financial resources. The final result of a well-intentioned international assistance might,

ultimately, be the possible perpetuation of the conflict (and of the suffering of civilians) and a higher probability of its recurrence in the unlikely event that any kind of peace might be reached at some point.

Before policy-makers and scholars brought to light these potential negative consequences of humanitarian and developmental assistance, the simple idea that international aid could be detrimental seemed not only unfeasible but almost illogical. How can policies devised specifically to aid a certain population have such detrimental results? The answer lies in the political encounter between humanitarian workers and peacekeepers and the highly complex and unstable settings where assistance policies will be implemented. In this sense, any sort of international assistance strategy cannot be seen as an exogenous factor that enters a certain system solely to perform a predefined goal: Once aid policies take place in a context of political instability, struggle for resources, plurality of actors, and high levels of violence, humanitarian actors inexorably become an active part of the conflict – despite the strong desire of many donors, policy-makers, and peace workers to remain apolitical or detached from the complexity of the conflict itself (Keen 2008).

The Unintended Consequences of Constructing Peace in the Context of Contemporary Conflicts

Indeed, the occurrence of such unintended consequences, and the necessary formulation of ways to prevent their occurrence have definitely become more complex in the last decades, when organized violence, according to many authors (Kaldor 2007; Duffield 2001; Keen 2008, 2012; Hoffman 2007), has changed in significant ways. According to these authors, post-Cold War political rivalries became complex humanitarian crises that, even if present within the borders of a certain state, seriously threaten international peace and security, as also asserted by many UN documents (DPKO 2012). Mary Kaldor, probably the most cited author when it comes to the systematization

and analysis of this post-Cold War type of war, names these “complex, prevalent and intractable” (Keen 2012, p. 11) conflicts as “new wars” (2007). Recent conflicts in Sierra Leone, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, the Balkans, Colombia, among many other states (Polman 2010; Keen 2012) share important similarities regarding political goals, methods of warfare and financial support. Each of these traits, that constitute this unprecedented logic of warfare, creates new challenges for the provision of international aid and for the prevention of a whole plethora of potential non-predicted consequences that might strongly impact a state’s short and long-term political stability and economic development.

In these transnational wars (Kaldor 2007) – that challenge definitions of intra and inter-state violence – the plurality of actors involved significantly complexifies any attempt to provide international assistance without indirectly influencing the balance of power formed by a mix of state forces, rebels, counterinsurgent groups, members of private security companies, paramilitaries, foreign forces, and other actors who struggle for the scarce resources existent. Within this intricate setting, clear distinctions between ordinary criminals, official combatants, and civilians become blurred, which offers another level of difficulty for humanitarian workers who are faced with the difficult task of separating civilians from rebels or criminals. Also, despite the presence of so many actors, the battleground is not the place where winners and losers are defined. Violence (in its most horrendous forms) is now mainly directed at the civilian population – a common strategy employed to displace entire communities, therefore guaranteeing social and political control of certain territories (Kaldor 2007, 2013; Duffield 2001). Any strategy of humanitarian assistance or development employed, then, carries the risk of indirectly increasing the suffering of civilians. In summary, the logic of these “new wars” – based on the blurring between war and crime, the plurality of actors involved and high levels of human rights violations – increases the urgency and the difficulty of the formulation and implementation of peacebuilding policies.

For instance, take the example of the (potentially damaging) relation between international assistance, local economic context, and contemporary conflicts. Differently from Kaldor’s “old wars,” commonly financed by their governments (2007), the financial sources of contemporary conflicts come from a plethora of (local and international) actors and places, and strongly rely on the revenue produced by internal and transnational criminal activities. The political context existent during violent conflicts – commonly characterized by weak state institutions (or the complete absence thereof), especially regarding police and judiciary systems – allows, and even incentivizes, the free engagement of many individuals in a series of criminal activities, such as extortion, drug and human trafficking, illicit arms trade, spoliation, and control and exploitation of natural resources, among many other unlawful enterprises. Such permanent source of economic funds creates a vicious cycle: It financially supports many actors involved in the conflict by providing them the monetary means to continually engage in violence and in the quest for power; at the same time, combatants also benefit individually from the context of widespread impunity that never-ending and each time more recurrent wars provide. According to the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (2016), of the 259 armed conflicts identified by the study since 1946, 159 recurred (around 60% of the cases). This pattern, nevertheless, increased significantly since the 1990s. According to the UCDP report, the beginning of the 2000s witnessed, at the same time, the lowest number of new conflicts starting, and the highest number of recurrences – a trend that continues to deepen continually (PRIO 2016). Also, from an individual standpoint, many combatants financially benefit more from war than from demobilizing and reintegrating into civilian life. In this sense, despite the unprecedented level of destruction and violence involved, certain individuals and groups achieve a level of financial resources and power they would probably not have during peaceful times (Keen 2008). In this sense, any type of international assistance will not only help civilians in need but also directly interfere with the different benefits that many

combatants (or criminals) derive from war. These groups are then expected to react – politically and militarily – to compensate for their financial and political loss. Willingly or not, humanitarian workers and peace soldiers, by interfering in this complex system, open endless inter-connected possibilities of unintended consequences.

The seriousness of these side-effects should not be underestimated. Ultimately, through a chain of events, some of these unintended consequences can have significant influence in the outcome of the conflict. For instance, resources brought by humanitarian aid can become an important financial source for a certain combatant group (who can either “tax” the donations, by charging humanitarian workers a certain amount of money to allow goods to reach those in need, or by simply stealing them), inadvertently shifting the balance of power between the (many) parts of the conflict (Polman 2010). This addition of power might strengthen a rebel group that was previously weaker vis-à-vis other groups, therefore prolonging the conflict by diminishing the gap between combatants. The use of humanitarian aid by one warring part as a financial resource can be used, for instance, to obtain more armament, resulting in more violence, more refugees, and the possibility of spreading the instability to neighboring countries. Opposite groups can also respond with the intensification of violence against civilians, in an attempt to regain their position of power. The use of force can also be intensified by fighting parts, as rebel groups or even state forces, as a protesting “response” to the presence of international humanitarian workers or foreign soldiers. Even the end of a consistent period of influx of international donations might result in the recurrence of violence, as non-state groups could try to compensate for the loss by attacking the government or reengaging in criminal activities (Nielsen et al. 2011). As the concepts of civilian and combatant become blurred in contemporary conflicts, humanitarian aid might even directly provide resources for warring parties, who are considered as civilians by humanitarian workers (Anderson 1999), inducing a violent response from other groups. At the end, the sole presence of humanitarian

workers and peacekeepers might be enough to enhance criminal activities, as drug trafficking and prostitution, due to the sudden flooding of money that follows the arrival of a large number of peacekeepers.

The goal of understanding the effects of potential unintended consequences of international aid and peace construction efforts is not to “prove” that international assistance is damaging to its beneficiaries and their communities and should therefore be altogether eliminated. Unintended consequences, even the most damaging ones, are not representative of the majority of cases nor the sole causal factor of the recurrence of conflicts – a deeply complex, multicausal process, in which many other political, cultural and social factors play an important role. Moreover, there is vast evidence that when UN peacekeepers or humanitarian workers closely follow the full implementation of peace agreements and support the execution of development policies, the probability of conflict recurrence becomes much lower (PRIO 2016). If policy-makers commit to keep a constant focus on how peace construction and more immediate international assistance can exacerbate conflicts (despite their best intentions), through the systematic analysis of past and current missions, it is possible to identify, many times, situations in which side effects are more likely to occur. Such study can also help devise initiatives that can prevent, or at least soften, damaging unintended consequences that could hinder the construction of sustainable peace and further harm populations that already have to live with unprecedented levels of violence in all its most horrendous forms.

The Possible Collateral Effects of United Nations Peace Operations

Within the context of UN peace operations, unintended consequences work very similarly, in a systemic and nondesired way, with the exception of cases in which peacekeepers purposely engage in actions that could not only damage the local population but also erode the efforts implemented by the mission. The opposite of the so-called “unintended consequences” of a peace

operation is its expected or desired results: for instance, the establishment of democratic and nonviolent political systems, the recovery of the local economy or the implementation of more equal gender policies – goals not only desired by designers and participants of a mission, but previously established in the mandate. In the same way that desired outcomes established in the mandate end up by creating an environment that continually benefits the host-society on long-term, in the form of a cyclical system (for instance, efficient democratic institutions enhance political stability; and more political stability consolidates even more those institutions, spurring other positive effects), unintended consequences create a chain of harmful events that makes their prediction and containment very challenging. The results of cases of sexual misconduct by peacekeepers, for example, go much beyond the harm done to the victims: it can raise the incidence of Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs), marginalize women in their own societies, erode local support, damage the image of the UN in the region, and spur critiques by nongovernmental organizations.

The difficulties in predicting the emergence and the end results of unintended consequences derive also from their societal complexity: undesired results can have a political, economic, social, or cultural nature; frequently though, all these factors merge together, creating an intersectional phenomenon whose resolution and control represents a challenge to UN employees, peacekeepers, and analysts alike. The rapid rise of inflation and of salary disparities among the local population, the higher incidence of STDs, the increase in cases of corruption and criminal activities (such as prostitution or drug trafficking) and in criminal behavior committed by peacekeepers, such as executions, torture, bribery, and sexual abuse are just a few examples of consequences that touch every sphere of a certain society, harming the UN, the mission, state institutions, communitarian organs, communities, groups, and individuals. In this sense, due to its continuous effects and increasing damaging power, unintended consequences can represent a fundamental factor in the success or failure of a peace operation.

In order to understand the contextual traits that explain, or at least facilitate, the increasing development of undesired results within the context of peace missions, it is necessary to emphasize some fundamental characteristics of contemporary peace operations. As vastly explained by various experts in peace operations (Bellamy et al. 2004; Doyle and Sambanis 2006), these missions go through significant changes in the after Cold War world. The character of intrastate violence, specially, changes so significantly that what was previously considered as “internal conflicts” start to be seen as “complex crises” that, in the language of the UN Chart, threaten international peace and security. It seems to be only natural that, within this modified context of numerous crises that require urgent response, peace operations reach unprecedented numbers – in number of missions and in the size of the military contingents employed. Differently from the so-called “classic” or “first generation” of peace operations (Bellamy et al. 2004), the contemporary model is based on the idea of directly using military, police, and civilian personnel in the construction of political stability and security. Peacekeepers and UN employees, then, start to engage in a series of tasks, such as protection of civilians, implementation of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) of former combatants, organization of elections, monitoring of human rights, reforms of police and judiciary sectors, refugees repatriation, distribution of food, construction of infrastructure (Doyle and Sambanis 2006), among many other functions.

The common trait among all these distinct tasks today exercised by civilian employees and peacekeepers alike is the fact that they all require an intense and constant interaction with the local population. In this sense, the political complexity of contemporary missions (especially regarding its different functions), the large number of peacekeepers and UN employees employed, as well as the constant contact between these actors and the society that receives the mission creates a context in which unintended consequences are almost always to be expected. There are still other circumstances, linked to the political and social context in which contemporary peace missions are

embedded, that also fuel the surge of damaging unpredicted consequences. Characteristics proper of the host-society, as the lack of effective legal and police systems and unequal gender cultures, combined with other circumstances, such as the immunities given to peacekeepers, and the sudden presence of large amounts of financial and material goods in a collapsed economy, that is frequently based on economic informality, culminates in an environment of survival needs and impunity – the perfect environment for the free flow of the most diverse unexpected consequences (Freedman 2018; Pallen 2003; Allred 2006; Tripodi and Patel 2002).

For example, the influx of financial and material goods that come along the arrival of peacekeepers (who not only have the financial means to engage in sex commerce but are also immune to the host-state's jurisdiction, even for serious crimes) into a society that lacks proper legal and police structure often spurs an increase in local sexual commerce (which many times is already linked to unequal gender norms, economic collapse, and the prevalence of sexual violence during conflict). This increase in prostitution might result in a higher incidence of STDs and in possible children that will not receive proper financial support from their fathers, among other negative consequences that can, ironically, strengthen exactly the environment of impunity that the mission in place was supposed to revert. In this context, the potential failure of the goals established in the resolution that gives birth to these operations can harm local individuals and groups and weaken, in an international level, the political legitimacy and image of peace operations (potentially affecting even troop and budget contributing countries, who might become more wary to see themselves involved with a political strategy linked to several scandals).

One of the most prominent, damaging, and politically complex types of undesired consequences in the context of peace missions are cases of sexual misconduct (as the UN regularly refers to cases of rape, prostitution, sexual abuse and exploitation) by military peacekeepers in relation to members of the host-society (usually women and children) – a complex phenomenon

that is interconnected with the economic, social, cultural, and gender relations of the environment in which peacekeepers and victims are embedded.

Sexual Misconduct by Peacekeepers: A Complex and Challenging Unintended Consequence

A Brief Overview of Sexual Abuse in Peace Operations

Although the concept of Sexual Abuse and Exploitation (SEA) has been formalized quite recently, in 2003, the first reports of cases of sexual misconduct by peacekeepers date to the 1990s, when the increase in the number of troops in peacekeeping operations and the more intense interaction with the local population becomes a fundamental trait of these contemporary missions (Simic 2012; Simm 2013). Despite the presence of many news accounts regarding cases of sexual abuse in the UN missions in Cambodia and Somalia (Pallen 2003; Allred 2006), the first time the subject appears in an official UN document is in 1996, when a report of the expert of the Secretary-General denounced that children were getting involved in prostitution upon the arrival of peacekeepers (General Assembly 1996), who were engaging regularly in sexual relations with these minors. Within the next years, cases of sexual abuse by military peacekeepers were widely publicized by the international media, especially in the UN Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC) and in the UN Stabilisation Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) – two of the largest and most high-profile missions deployed by the UN until today (Simic 2012; Simm 2013).

Confronted with increasingly pressing media accounts regarding sexual violence committed by peacekeepers in different countries, the subject gains a profile within UN policies with the introduction of a series of measures to combat “sexual misconduct.” In 2003, the UN finally releases a comprehensive document on the subject, in which it defines the concept of sexual abuse and exploitation to be adopted by the organization. According to the UN concept (United Nations

2003), “sexual abuse” is defined as “the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force *or under unequal or coercive conditions.*” Sexual misconduct would include, thus, not only forced sexual relations but also prostitution and the abuse of power by peacekeepers in exchange of sexual favors. It means that the exchange of sex for food or any other items and the exploitation of local prostitution are also considered inappropriate conduct. Many missions, in this sense, simplify the concept by implementing a zero-sex policy on the ground between peacekeepers and their beneficiaries.

This specific understanding of sexual abuse and exploitation designed by the UN derives from the idea that the difference of power and resources between UN personnel and local women would make genuine consent impossible or difficult to discern (Simic 2012), blurring the concept of autonomous choice. Although most scholars and analysts have accepted the idea of inequality of power as an obstacle to sexual autonomy, some authors have claimed that the concept of sexual abuse and exploitation of the UN is not only confusing, but paternalistic and blind to the notion of female agency. Gabrielle Simm, in *Sex in Peace Operations* (2013), engages with feminist theories to propose that, instead of being completely banned, sex between peacekeepers and local women should be better, more effectively, regulated, in a way that can potentially give more space to female choices and autonomy and to the diversity of sexual relations established between local women and peacekeepers. Olivera Simic, in *Regulation of Sexual Conduct in UN Peacekeeping Operations* (2012), also proposes a “rethinking” of the concept of sexual abuse and exploitation as defined by the UN, by calling attention to the paternalistic and sexist elements of the zero tolerance policy instituted by the Organization, and by critically engaging in a discussion about the concept of female agency within the context of peacekeeping missions. Despite such criticisms, the UN, and specially the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), continues to use this umbrella-concept that includes rape, exploitative relations, and prostitution and that sees the power gap between

peacekeepers and “beneficiaries” as an obstacle to the possibility of sexual autonomy.

The 2003 document that defined the concept of sexual abuse and exploitation also gave birth to the so-called zero tolerance policy: an assembly of policies implemented by the DPKO and/or suggested to troop-contributing countries in order to strengthen mechanisms of prevention, report and remedial actions. Prevention would be enhanced specially through predeployment, early mission specific induction and mission ongoing training (in the language used by the DPKO) and formulation of awareness campaigns that emphasize peacekeeper’s standards of conduct. The document also highlights the urgent need for the enhancement of safe and efficient mechanisms of allegations for victims, such as hotlines, investigation teams, and Conduct and Discipline Units. In terms of enforcement, prosecution, and remedial action, the resolution suggests a series of possibilities, as the negotiation of a series of agreements between the UN and the DPKO and troop-contributing countries regarding repatriation, financial compensation, and prosecution of peacekeepers in their home countries (given their immunities). Despite the actual implementation of many of these zero-tolerance policies in the last years, the subject of sexual misconduct lost the urgency of 2003 and was rarely discussed in the reports produced either by the DPKO, either by the Secretariat, regarding peace operations.

Actually, accounts of cases of sexual abuse and exploitation by peacekeepers never disappeared from the media. But it is only in 2015 that the issue starts to regain space in UN documents and policies, right around the same time that accounts of cases of sexual violence that included sex with children, gang rape, and exchange of sex for food in the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) (see Wolfe 2015; UN News 2016; Sieff 2016. The Washington Post also published a long news story about cases of rape by peacekeepers in Central African Republic) were widely publicized by the international media and by Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs) such as Human Rights Watch (UN 2016) and Amnesty International (CAR 2015), consolidating the

impression that the UN frequently acts in regards to sexual misconduct in a reactive way, through a sort of seasonal policy of damage containment.

Indeed, following the allegations in the MINUSCA, in the year of 2016, several actions were taken in an attempt to prevent more cases of sexual abuse and exploitation: within the space of a few months, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon appoints a “Special Coordinator on improving the United Nations response to sexual exploitation and abuse,” with the sole function of improving the responses regarding the issue; the Security Council requests legal authorization to repatriate peacekeepers accused, with “sufficient evidence,” of sexual abuse and exploitation; the UN launches a Trust Fund to financially support “victims” of sexual exploitation and abuse; and an online course on prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse is formulated for peacekeepers on the ground. (Timeline on Conduct and Discipline. Conduct in UN Field Missions. Available at <https://conduct.unmissions.org/timeline>) Also, in 2016, the Secretary-General, through his annual report on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (General Assembly 2016), publicizes, for the first time, information regarding the nationalities of the perpetrators of the abuses – certainly a breaking point for the UN that was always wary of diplomatic conflicts with troop contributing-countries. According to the data presented by the DPKO, cases of sexual misconduct continue, nevertheless, to occur. (Recent data on sexual misconduct by peacekeepers are made public by the DPKO through the website of Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse. <https://www.un.org/preventing-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse/>)

Despite all the political initiatives implemented by the UN, the general sense among analysts and experts who deal with the subject is that the policies implemented are still deficient in terms of effective prevention and prosecution (Freedman 2018; Neudorfer 2014a; Simm 2013), which should be seen, by the DPKO, as an urgent concern, once sexual misconduct is undoubtedly one of the most damaging unintended consequence within the context of peace operations. First, it is detrimental to the victims in numerous ways:

peacekeepers that engage in those exploitative and abusive sexual relations are exposing women and girls (and ultimately themselves) to the risk of contamination by HIV and other STDs, to the possible marginalization in their own communities, and to further economic dependency. In addition, cases of SEA can represent serious obstacles to the effectiveness of the operations, since they jeopardize the construction of an environment of trust and stability, necessary for state reconstruction and long-lasting peace. Lastly, it erodes international credibility of the mission in place, of the United Nations in general and more specifically of the DPKO vis-à-vis other organizations and troop and resources contributing countries that might doubt the ability of UN peace operations to help countries in need without exacerbating their already complex problems.

Several authors have attempted to envision more effective solutions and ways to prevent cases of sexual misconduct by proposing legal, political, and logistical changes in the local systems of investigation and prosecution, in the immunities granted to peacekeepers, in the training programs offered by the DPKO, and the specific policies regarding sexual misconduct implemented in specific missions. Experts have also systematically tried to emphasize and delineate the most relevant factors in understanding the development of these cases in order to devise more effective strategies. Kelly Neudorfer, in *Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in UN Peacekeeping: An Analysis of Risk and Prevention Factors* (2014a), analyzes, through a variety of theories of criminology, the most important (political and logistical) contributing factors to sexual abuse and exploitation and which UN policies are most effective in controlling such cases. Neudorfer claims that the implementation of Conduct and Discipline Units (CDU) in missions is “negatively and significantly correlated with the number of SEA allegations” (2014b, p. 623). Deterrence measures, or the certainty of punishment, concludes Neudorfer, are also effective in the reduction of SEA. In *Criminalising Peacekeepers: Modernising National Approaches to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse* (2017), Melanie O’Brien builds a series of propositions as to how

contributing-countries can prosecute, through their domestic laws, their own soldiers for crimes committed abroad. In another work (2011), O'Brien brings the idea that the International Criminal Court could be a third neutral place (besides host-countries and countries of origin of peacekeepers) where these crimes could be prosecuted. As Neudorfer, O'Brien's approach is based on the idea that the change to a more efficient system of prosecution of cases (that could work despite the immunities granted), and of accountability would probably have a positive deterrent effect in medium and long term. Other authors propose a completely new approach to the prevention and prosecution of cases of sexual abuse and exploitation: Freedman (2018), for instance, proposes a "new holistic approach" centered on the victims (instead of on perpetrators), on human rights (rather than state sovereignty), and on truth and reconciliation. This new system, nevertheless, would also be based on more transparent accountability strategies. In this sense, it is possible to realize that the more efficient policies against sexual misconduct are quite clear: transparent rules, effective training of troops, the establishment of properly equipped Conduct and Discipline Units, accountability and the certainty of punishment. The systematic implementation of these strategies requires, nevertheless, political will (by the DPKO and by troop contributing countries) and proper financial resources.

Are "Unintended Consequences" Really Unpredictable?

The literature on UN peace operations, that includes scholars, analysts, and policy-makers from universities, international organizations, NGOs, and many research institutes, include studies on an enormous number of different subjects. In the specific case of academic production, Peace Operations Studies is a highly intersectional field that benefits from theoretical tools and analysis from many academic areas. Despite this fertility, there are visible limitations and unexplored avenues of analysis in the conceptualization, systematic study, and formulation of policies regarding

the idea of "unintended consequences" within the context of peace operations. In order to start investigating such analytical absences, it is necessary to uncover some of the political assumptions of the concept itself: seeing certain results of peace operations as unexpected effects takes the focus away from the agency and responsibility of the peace mission, or of the UN, in their occurrence. On the other hand, the concept assumes the ability to prevent, fix, and contain such problems, improving the effectiveness of the present model of peace missions. In other words, fixing the system by which peace operations are implemented is enough to contain those collateral effects. There is a different set of authors, nevertheless, that understands the damaging effects of peace operations not as problems to be studied and fixed, but as symptoms of a wider and deeper question: the adequacy and legitimacy of the liberal model of peace operations purposely implemented by the United Nations, which brings, in its core, completely expected negative effects (Pugh 2000; Newman et al. 2009; Jabri 2010).

These more critical theories on the negative effects of peace missions contribute specially by opening three unexplored lines of analysis: First, they systematically problematize the political and normative assumptions of the contemporary model of peace operations; second, they emphasize the importance of considering individuals and groups (and not just the stability of the state or its government) in the analysis of the success or failure of a mission; and third, they include questions of ethics and normativity in their understanding of the negative effects of operations (versus a more rational approach that tends to see unintended consequences as problems that require specific adjustments). Indeed, several authors have formulated vast critiques (with theoretical and analytical differences nevertheless) regarding the model of peacekeeping and peacebuilding implemented today, with a focus on questions of power and imperialism, the negative effects of these missions over communities, and individuals and the normative and political implications of the contemporary design of peace operations in philosophical, but also political, terms. For instance, in *New Perspectives on*

Liberal Peacebuilding (2009), Newman, Paris, and Richmond claim that contemporary peace operations are based on a monolithic liberal prototype that ignores local specificities and needs. Such one-size-fits-all model, more frequently than not, ends up by reinforcing the levels of poverty and violence in communities and states that the missions were supposed to support. In other words, within this critique, unintended consequences would actually be the expected results of a model that is misguided in its source.

Beyond the discussion regarding the strengths and weaknesses of such literature, these more “critical” readings bring to the forefront fundamental questions regarding unintended consequences that, despite its fundamental importance, remain subanalyzed: How to politically and normatively frame, explain, or read the numerous cases of abuses and misconduct committed by military peacekeepers in UN peace operations? More importantly, how to understand the persistent presence of such occurrences across so many missions? Are these, and other damaging results, a problem of the model itself that consequently needs to be entirely replaced or a fixable and containable issue through the implementation of the right policies? Are unintended consequences really the best concept to understand such negative effects of peace missions given that their occurrence is so systematic that it becomes almost entirely predictable? In this sense, this critical literature regarding UN peace operations is able to reveal important aspects of the normalized political assumptions of these missions, thereby constructing fundamental critiques that should be taken into account by policy makers and scholars, even if the conclusion of such analysis does not support the arguments formulated by such authors.

Summary

Unintended consequences are not only limited to international policies of humanitarian assistance. Damaging unpredicted results – effects that are not predicted nor desired – are also present in the implementation of peacekeeping operations,

especially in missions that involve a high number of United Nations (UN) employees and military peacekeepers. Such intricate operations normally take place in the complex and unstable context of contemporary conflicts (or in the immediate post-conflict), in which violence is brutally employed by a plurality of combatant groups within a setting of formal economic failure, illegal financial activities, and deep political divisions. When the goals established in the mandate of an operation are effectively reached, these outcomes end up by creating a positive cyclical system that continually benefits the host-society, as in the connection between democratic institutions and political stability, or economic development and lower levels of violence. In the same way, negative unintended consequences create a chain of harmful events, as in cases of sexual misconduct by military peacekeepers.

The intricate combination between holistic peace operations and contemporary conflicts makes it extremely hard for policy-makers to predict the various consequences a peace operation can have, especially for the so-called host-society. Limiting these collateral results once they are already in place represents an even more challenging task. Political actors have, nevertheless, an incredibly rich source of knowledge in the systematic analysis of past and current peace missions that can, and should, be used in the understanding of relevant predictive factors (for instance, the existence of unequal gender norms) and in the formulation and examination of effective policies to predict and contain such negative effects. For instance, because sexual abuse and exploitation by peacekeepers is such a widespread occurrence across missions, it is possible to perceive numerous relevant correlations that help in the understanding of what incentivizes or contains unintended consequences – such as the negative correlation between awareness campaigns and predeployment training and sexual misconduct – which allow analysts to predict in which cases the occurrence of negative effects is more likely. The careful, focused, and systematic analysis of past and present missions is also useful to measure the effectiveness of a series of policies implemented by the UN throughout the years.

This assembly of useful information, produced by the UN and the DPKO (that could actually improve substantially the collection of data in the field) and by many scholars, is essential in learning how to deal with unexpected negative effects. Nevertheless, policy-makers, especially actors directly involved with the formulation of peace missions, should actively commit to use this important source of knowledge, instead of continuously acting in a reactive and inefficient way. Despite all difficulties regarding the understanding and containment of unintended consequences, it is fundamental that UN diplomats and staff, military representatives and officials, civilian and military peacekeepers, representatives of troop contributing-countries and of donors display genuine political will to effectively deal with the problem, by systematically engaging in initiatives necessary to increase the success rate of UN peace operations. In this sense, policy-makers responsible for peace operations should (again, through the invaluable source of knowledge the analysis of current and past operations represent):

1. Be always conscious, during the formulation of a mission, that unintended consequences are *not* an exception to the rule, given the complexity today's conflicts and peace missions, requiring policy-makers to predict possible unexpected scenarios and to devise ways to prevent it.
2. Fully understand the damaging effects unintended consequences can potentially have on the host-society and for the accomplishment of the mission's goals once they occur, and how it can spiral to other spheres of society.
3. Identify the most likely unintended consequences in a certain setting before the deployment of a mission and formulate specific policies or strategies to prevent them.
4. Once these negative effects are in place, military and civilian policy-makers must employ (preferably pre-design) ways to contain, or at least soften, these damaging consequences before they spiral into an uncontrollable situation that could hinder the construction of sustainable peace and further harm populations that already have to endure unprecedented levels of violence.

These political initiatives are essential to the survival and success of UN peace operations, to the construction of local support, to regional and international stability, and especially to the wellbeing of the individuals and communities that suffer the most with widespread violence and high levels of violations of human rights so typical of contemporary conflicts. Unintended consequences are certainly not included in the goals of a certain policy or mandate, but they should never come as a surprise: in a time in which United Nations missions are deployed primarily to highly complex and violent contexts, it is time for the organization to focus on past and current operations in order to formulate, test, and systematize effective policies to prevent and contain unintended consequences.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Conceptual Evolution of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Liberal Peace in Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Peace Operations, Principles, and Doctrine](#)
- ▶ [Rule of Law as a Component of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Security-Development Nexus in Peacebuilding](#)

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United Kingdom

► Reconciliation in Northern Ireland

United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK)

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Definition

UNMIK, established on 10 June 1999, is a subsidiary body of the UN Security Council established by UN Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999) (Resolution 1244) under Chapter VII

of the UN Charter. Pursuant to Resolution 1244, UNMIK has the mandate to provide an interim administration for Kosovo until an agreement is reached on its political status.

UNMIK, together with the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), were the first UN missions vested with full executive and legislative authority for the administration of state territory (Stahn 2001). As noted by Stahn (2001), “the scope and depth of the mandate, vesting the United Nations with the task of acting fully as an interim government for a war-torn society, marks a novelty in the history of United Nations peacekeeping.” In addition to territorial administration in form of an interim government, both UNMIK and UNTAET were responsible for preparing and facilitating a political settlement of the international legal status of the territory under their administration (Stahn 2001). This form of territorial administration is different from the mandate system under the League of Nations and the United Nations Trusteeship system as territorial administration under Chapter VII of the UN Charter is an instrument of “conflict resolution for the maintenance of international peace and security” (Stahn 2001). Territorial administration also differs from state-building and military occupation. According to Caplan (2005), “state-building refers to efforts to reconstruct, or in some cases to establish for the first time, effective and autonomous structures of governance in a state or territory where no such capacity exists or where it has been seriously eroded.” While in Kosovo territorial administration included state-building, this is not always the case, such as the interim administration of Eastern Slavonia (Caplan 2005). Military occupation means the occupation of the territory of a sovereign state without the consent of the “host” state, while UN territorial administration is based on an authorization under the UN Charter (Caplan 2005).

Introduction

The United Nations (UN) Security Council established the United Nations Interim

Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) in 1999. UNMIK is one of the largest UN missions entrusted with the administration of a territory. Despite Kosovo’s declaration of independence in 2008, UNMIK still maintains a presence in Kosovo with limited administrative capacity and increasing demands by Kosovo’s government and other international actors to end its mission.

The following will outline the background to the Kosovo conflict, which led to the establishment of UNMIK. It will also discuss the structure of UNMIK and how it evolved to ensure first of all self-government for Kosovo under UN authority and then to adjust to Kosovo’s unilateral declaration of independence in 2008, as the Security Council failed to endorse the Comprehensive Proposal for a Kosovo Status Settlement, which recommended (temporarily supervised) independence for Kosovo. The political impact of UNMIK as well as current problems associated with UNMIK’s role and function in Kosovo, which does not recognize UNMIK’s exclusive legislative and executive mandate, will also be addressed.

Key Issues

Background to the Kosovo Conflict

The Kosovo conflict is a conflict between Albanians and Serbs about sovereignty over Kosovo (Visoka 2017). While Kosovo claims independence from Serbia, Serbia still considers Kosovo to be part of its territory. Kosovo has significant symbolic meaning for Albanians and Serbs. Serbs see Kosovo as the cradle of their culture and nation. The Battle of Kosovo (1389) is a key element of the Serb national narrative, which forms the core of the Serb national identity (Friedrich 2005). For Albanians, Kosovo is associated with the anti-Ottoman movement of the League of Prizren (1878), which set the national foundations for Albania’s liberation from the Ottoman Empire. While Albania became independent in 1912, Kosovo, which at that time had a significant Albanian population, remained under the Kingdom of Serbia (1912), which in 1918 changed to the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and

Slovenes. Following World War II, Kosovo remained part of Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY). The SFRY was composed of six Republics (Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Macedonia) and two autonomous provinces (Vojvodina and Kosovo), which were formally part of the Republic of Serbia. Under the 1974 SFRY Constitution, Kosovo obtained a very high degree of autonomy, with its own government institutions, the authority to pass legislation, to adopt and change its own constitution, and to be represented in the federal organs of the SFRY (Malcolm 1999).

During the 1980s, following the death of SFRY leader Josip Broz Tito, nationalist sentiments and political tensions increased throughout the SFRY (Malcolm 1999). In 1989 Serbia suspended the autonomy of Kosovo in view of growing tensions between Albanians and Serbs. In reaction to that, the Albanian members of the Kosovo parliament declared in 1990 Kosovo as an independent Republic within the SFRY. In response, Serbia dissolved Kosovo's parliament and government and established direct rule over it. In 1991, a parallel Assembly of Kosovo declared the independence of the Republic of Kosovo, which established a government in exile and a parallel health and school system in Kosovo (Malcolm 1999; Glenny 1999; Petritsch et al. 1999; Visoka 2018). The early 1990's were characterized by a peaceful Albanian resistance movement against Serbia's direct rule. During this time, Albanians were subjected to a systematic denial of their basic human rights, including discrimination, exclusion from the legislative, administrative and judicial branches of government, summary executions, acts of violence and arbitrary arrests, discriminatory dismissals from public institutions, and the banning of the use of the Albanian language (General Assembly 1995).

The continuing repression of Kosovo Albanians and disappointment that the Dayton Accords (1995) did not address the Kosovo problem triggered an armed resistance which culminated in the creation of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). As of 1998, clashes between Serb forces and the KLA intensified, and Serbia's

attempts to oust the KLA led to expulsion, killings of civilians, and destruction of private property.

The Rambouillet Accords of February 1999, facilitated by the United States and European countries, proposed an interim democratic self-government of Kosovo within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (the SFRY ceased to exist in 1992 and Serbia and Montenegro formed the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia). Kosovo would have the option to hold a referendum for a final settlement of Kosovo's status and Serb forces in Kosovo would be replaced by an international military force (Muharremi 2008). The Rambouillet Accords were accepted by the Albanians but were rejected by Serbia. Following increased armed conflict and ethnic cleansing after the failure of the Rambouillet Accords, NATO started on 24 March 1999 a military air campaign against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) (Weller 2009).

On 2 June 1999, FRY agreed to the withdrawal from Kosovo of all military, police, and paramilitary forces and the deployment of international civil and security presences under the authority of the UN. This agreement was endorsed by the Security Council on 10 June 1999 in form of Resolution 1244.

UNMIK's Mandate

Resolution 1244 established an international civil presence and an international military presence in Kosovo.

The international security presence is the NATO led Kosovo Force (KFOR). Its mandate is to:

- Deter renewed hostilities and ensure the withdrawal and preventing the return into Kosovo of Federal and Republic military, police, and paramilitary forces
- Demilitarize the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) and other armed Kosovo Albanian groups
- Establish a secure environment and public safety in Kosovo
- Supervise demining, conduct border monitoring, and ensure the protection and freedom of movement of the international civil presence

The international civil presence, known as UNMIK, operates under the authority of the Secretary-General, who is represented in Kosovo by a Special Representative (SRSG). UNMIK's mandate under Resolution 1244 is:

to provide an interim administration for Kosovo under which the people of Kosovo can enjoy substantial autonomy within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and which will provide transitional administration while establishing and overseeing the development of provisional democratic self-governing institutions to ensure conditions for a peaceful and normal life for all inhabitants of Kosovo. (United Nations Security Council 1999)

Resolution 1244 includes a roadmap for the implementation of UNMIK's mandate. UNMIK would initially perform basic civilian administrative functions, including police and justice, and in parallel organize and oversee the development of provisional institutions for democratic and autonomous self-government pending a political settlement. Once the provisional institutions were established, UNMIK would transfer its administrative responsibilities to these institutions and then facilitate a political process to determine Kosovo's future status. In a final stage, UNMIK would oversee the transfer of authority from Kosovo's provisional institutions to the institutions established under a political settlement. UNMIK would have no role in determining the political status of Kosovo.

UNMIK was initially organized in four pillars, each of them headed by a specific international organization responsible to the Secretary-General:

- Pillar I (humanitarian assistance): (Lead agency: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR))
- Pillar II (civil administration): (Lead agency: United Nations – Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UN DPKO))
- Pillar III (elections): (Lead agency: Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE))
- Pillar IV (economic reconstruction): (Lead agency: European Union (EU))

The pillar structure remained in place until Kosovo's declaration of independence, with the

exception that Pillar (I) was transferred to the UN with responsibility for police and justice.

UNMIK's mandate for the administration of Kosovo is considered extensive. All legislative and executive authority with respect to Kosovo, including the administration of the judiciary, is vested in UNMIK and exercised by the SRSG (UNMIK Regulation 1999/1). UNMIK is responsible for the administration of movable and immovable state and socially owned property. UNMIK is authorized to issue legislative acts in the form of regulations, which prevail over any other law in Kosovo (UNMIK Regulation 1999/1).

UNMIK initially determined that the law applicable in Kosovo, except of UNMIK regulations, would be the laws, which were applicable in the territory of Kosovo prior to 24 March 1999 (UNMIK Regulation 1999/1). Due to resistance by Albanian judges and prosecutors, UNMIK determined that the law applicable would be the law in force in Kosovo on 22 March 1989 (UNMIK Regulation 1999/24), i.e., the law in force prior to the suspension of Kosovo's autonomy and which. This meant a return to the laws of the socialist Yugoslav system that existed at that time. The laws adopted between 1989 and 1999 could be applied if a subject matter was not regulated by the laws of 1989 and the law was in accordance with international human rights standards. UNMIK created a complex legal system composed of UNMIK regulations and former Yugoslav laws, which very often caused legal uncertainty and confusion. Between 1999 and 2008, UNMIK adopted more than 440 regulations transforming the entire institutional and legal framework of Kosovo with a view to transitioning Kosovo from a socialist to a liberal-democratic regime.

Kosovo's Self-Government Under UNMIK

Between June 1999 and January 2000, UNMIK's priority was to deploy as a mission, to gradually establish control over Kosovo and to disintegrate parallel government structures, such as the "Provisional Government of Kosovo" and "Presidency of the Republic of Kosovo," which had emerged during the armed conflict and which claimed to be the legitimate government of Kosovo.

In January 2000, UNMIK established the *Joint Interim Administrative Structure* (JIAS) to dissolve the parallel government structures and to allow for an inclusive representation of all Kosovo political forces in governance structures that operate under UNMIK's authority. The JIAS was composed of a Kosovo Transitional Council (KTC) and an Interim Administrative Council (IAC). The KTC, which reflected Kosovo's ethnic composition, had a consultative function, while the IAC was responsible for making policy and legislative recommendations to the SRSG. The IAC was composed of the four international pillar heads and four Kosovo representatives. UNMIK also established administrative departments which were led by one international and one local head and which were responsible to the IAC. The entire JIAS structure operated under the authority of the SRSG who remained the final political and legislative authority.

In 2001 UNMIK adopted the *Constitutional Framework for Provisional Self-Government* (UNMIK Regulation 2001/9) which established the *Provisional Institutions of Self-Government* (PISG) for democratic and autonomous self-government pending a political settlement as required by Resolution 1244. The governance structure of the Constitutional Framework remained in place until 2008 when Kosovo declared independence from former Yugoslavia.

The PISG included the:

- Assembly
- President of Kosovo
- Government
- Courts
- Other bodies and institutions established by the Constitutional Framework

The Constitutional Framework defined Kosovo as an entity under interim international administration which has unique historical, legal, cultural, and linguistic attributes. Kosovo would be governed democratically through legislative, executive, and judicial bodies, and institutions in accordance with the Constitutional Framework and Resolution 1244.

The Constitutional Framework very clearly established that the PISG functioned under the

authority of UNMIK. Certain government responsibilities were transferred to the PISG, such as economic and financial policy; education, science, and technology; youth and sport; culture; health; environmental protection; labor; and social welfare. The Government and Assembly as part of the PISG could prepare laws in the area of transferred responsibilities but their entry into force was subject to approval and promulgation by UNMIK. UNMIK's powers included so-called "reserved powers," such as the final approval of the Kosovo budget, monetary policy, appointment of judges and prosecutors, police, Kosovo Protection Corps (a civilian emergency preparedness organization), foreign relations and international agreements, and state and socially owned property and enterprises. UNMIK's powers included the authority to dissolve the Assembly if it acted in violation of Resolution 1244 or the Constitutional Framework. UNMIK could also amend the Constitutional Framework at any time and without the consent of the PISG. UNMIK also appointed the local judges and prosecutors to Kosovo's new court and prosecutorial system, and established hybrid tribunals for the prosecution and adjudication of international and serious crimes. A special chamber of the Supreme Court of Kosovo to decide cases related to the privatization process was established where international judges were in majority.

The Constitutional Framework established a legal mechanism for the protection of human rights and minority rights. The PISG was required to respect certain international human rights instruments, even though Kosovo was not formally party to them, such as the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

The PISG were required to respect the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and the Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. The Constitutional Framework avoided the term "minorities" and instead used the term "communities," which was defined as "inhabitants belonging to the same ethnic or religious or linguistic group." Communities included not only minorities living in Kosovo but extended also to the

majority Albanian population. All communities had certain rights to preserve, protect, and express their ethnic, cultural, religious, and linguistic identities. These rights included the right to use of their language and alphabets, to receive education in their own language, to enjoy access to information in their own language, to enjoy equal opportunity with respect to employment in public bodies, to provide schooling in their own language and alphabet, and to operate religious institutions.

Despite the transfer of responsibilities from UNMIK to the PISG, the status issue remained unaddressed. In December 2003, the Security Council adopted a “Standards for Kosovo” policy. Under this policy, the PISG had to achieve certain standards before final status of Kosovo could be addressed (Security Council 2003). The eight standards under the policy were functioning democratic institutions, rule of law, freedom of movement, returns and reintegration, economy, property rights, dialogue with Belgrade, and the Kosovo Protection Corps. A review mechanism co-chaired by UNMIK and the PISG would review the PISG’s progress under the eight standards, set benchmarks, and specific policy measures to be taken before talks on the political status of Kosovo could be opened (Secretary-General 2004).

UNMIK and Kosovo’s Declaration of Independence

The March 2004 riots in Kosovo showed that the unresolved status question was causing frustration among Kosovo’s communities and that there was a growing risk of inter-ethnic violence (Vrieze 2004). Following completion of a “standards before status” process, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Kai Eide, concluded in 2005 that the circumstances were established to begin a political process for determining Kosovo’s status. In November 2005, the Secretary-General appointed Martti Ahtisaari, former President of Finland, as his Special Envoy to facilitate talks between Kosovo and Serbia. The appointment was endorsed by the Security Council (International Court of Justice 2010) and the

Contact Group (an informal grouping of States formed in 1994 to address the situation in the Balkans and composed of France, Germany, Italy, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, and the United States).

Between February and September 2006, Ahtisaari facilitated several rounds of negotiations, but no agreement could be reached. In February 2007, Ahtisaari submitted a draft Comprehensive Proposal for the Kosovo Status Settlement (the “Proposal”) to Kosovo and Serbia. In March 2007, a final round of negotiations was held in Vienna to discuss the Proposal, but no agreement was reached. On 26 March 2007, the Secretary-General submitted the Proposal to the Security Council.

The Proposal provided that that “the only viable option for Kosovo is independence, to be supervised for an initial period by the international community.” A return of Kosovo to Serbia would not be a feasible option as Serbia had irreversibly lost control of Kosovo as a result of years of separate governance since 1999. A continued administration by UNMIK would also not be a realistic option. However, to ensure that an independent Kosovo would respect the interests of its minority communities, especially the Serb community, the Proposal provided for robust constitutional and legal safeguards for the protection of such minorities, including community rights, decentralization, and the protection of religious institutions. Kosovo would be supervised by an International Civilian Representative (ICR), who would have the final authority in Kosovo regarding the interpretation and implementation of the Proposal. The ICR would be responsible to an International Steering Group (composed of France, Germany, Italy, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, the United States, the European Union, and NATO). The Proposal provided for an expiry of UNMIK’s mandate after a transition period, after which all legislative and executive authority vested in UNMIK would be transferred to the governing authorities of Kosovo (International Court of Justice 2010).

A draft resolution sponsored by Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom,

and the United States endorsing the Proposal was withdrawn when it became clear that it would not be adopted by the Security Council due to Russia's and China's threat with a veto.

Between August and December 2007, a Troika comprising representatives of the European Union, the Russian Federation and the United States held further negotiations on the status of Kosovo. In December 2007, the Troika reported to the Secretary-General that "the parties were unable to reach an agreement on Kosovo's status" and none of them "was willing to yield on the basic question of sovereignty" (International Court of Justice 2010).

In view of the failure of the Security Council to endorse the Proposal, Kosovo declared independence on 17 February 2008. The declaration of independence was coordinated with the United States and most of the EU member states, which immediately extended recognition to Kosovo (Weller 2009; Gow 2009). In its declaration of independence, Kosovo unilaterally accepted all obligations contained in the Proposal, including an international supervision. Kosovo also accepted the deployment of an EU rule of law mission (EULEX) as well as KFOR to continue with its mandate as set out in Resolution 1244. The Declaration of Independence did not provide for any authority for UNMIK. The states that initially recognized Kosovo formed an International Steering Group (ISG) as required by the Proposal and appointed an International Civilian Representative (ICR) with the powers set out in the Proposal.

In June 2008, the Secretary-General announced that UNMIK would continue implementing Resolution 1244 subject to a major reconfiguration. EULEX would be included under Resolution 1244 and UNMIK's administrative functions would be significantly reduced. The Secretary-General acknowledged that Kosovo's declaration of independence had created a new reality on the ground and that the UN would follow a status-neutral approach in view of implementing its mandate under Resolution 1244. UNMIK would hereafter focus on:

- Monitoring and reporting
- Facilitating international agreements for Kosovo
- Facilitating dialogue between Pristina and Belgrade (Security Council Report 2008)

UNMIK continued to exercise some governmental functions, primarily in Serb majority areas, but over time UNMIK was marginalized as an administrative authority, especially since the end of supervised independence in 2012. Kosovo's government institutions do not recognize UNMIK as a lawful and legitimate authority and cooperation is reduced to a minimum and where necessary, such as cooperation with INTERPOL, where Kosovo is still represented by UNMIK. For Serbia, which does not recognize the Republic of Kosovo, UNMIK is still the administrative authority in Kosovo.

The Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) of 2010 confirmed that despite Kosovo's declaration of independence, Resolution 1244 would remain in force (International Court of Justice 2010). However, Kosovo's declaration of independence would not be in violation of international law, as neither general international law nor Resolution 1244 prohibited such declaration. The ICJ remained silent on questions regarding self-determination of peoples, remedial secession, and whether Kosovo was a state (Muharremi 2010). The ICJ interpretation allowed for the existence of two parallel legal systems in respect of Kosovo, one under Resolution 1244 and other under the Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo, which operates outside the framework of Resolution 1244.

As of 2018, the United States and the United Kingdom increasingly insist in closing down UNMIK, while Russia and China still demand its continuation. In 2019, Kosovo's Ambassador to the United States stated in the Security Council that "UNMIK has no role and no longer has a mandate in Kosovo" (United Nations 2019). The arrest of an UNMIK official in 2019 for allegedly hindering a Kosovo police operation in a Serb majority area further increased tensions between Kosovo and UNMIK.

Assessing the Effectiveness and Impact of Transitional Administration

International Territorial Administration

UNMIK and UNTAET, the UN's administration mission in East Timor, are the largest UN missions so far entrusted with the administration of a territory (Wilde 2000). Since UN missions were usually limited to peacekeeping operations, the administration of a territory is a novelty (Yannis 2004). Territorial administration is covered by Chapter VII of the UN Charter. It is generally accepted that Chapter VII provides a legal basis for a territorial administration by the UN (Friedrich 2005). The argument in support of this interpretation is that the term "peace" in Article 39 UN Charter includes the establishment of long-term and sustainable peace and is not limited to absence of violence (Friedrich 2005). To the extent that territorial administration is necessary to fulfill this task, the Security Council has the power to authorize such administrations (Friedrich 2005).

UNMIK's Political Impact

UNMIK's main challenge was to operate under conditions of political uncertainty. On the one hand, UNMIK had to govern Kosovo, to establish institutions and make reforms for the development of the country. On the other hand, UNMIK had to make sure that governing and reforming Kosovo would not violate Serbia's sovereignty. A continuous political balancing act was required and involved numerous local international actors, which added to the complexity of the policy environment within which UNMIK operated. Very often, individual states tried to use UNMIK and other international organizations involved in the administration of Kosovo to further their political interests at the expense of a coordinated international approach (Eckhard and Dijkstra 2017). According to Visoka (2017, p. 38), "UNMIK did not have a clear and consistent policy of peace-building in Kosovo". UNMIK was caught between "Kosovo Albanian claims for independent statehood and Serbian aims at preventing independence" (Visoka 2017, p. 38). As a result, "UNMIK chose a policy of incremental improvisation that was guided not by rational policy-making or the political will of Kosovo citizens, but by

the interests of major powers and an international agenda of peacebuilding and state-building" (Visoka 2017, p. 38).

Despite such complex circumstances, UNMIK incrementally changed Kosovo's legal and institutional framework so fundamentally that over time Kosovo's governance institutions became fully separated and different from Serbia. The changes made by UNMIK to Kosovo's governance system were so profound that Ahtisaari concluded that Serbia's loss of factual control over Kosovo was irreversible. It was therefore UNMIK which, from an institutional perspective, created the conditions for Kosovo's independence.

Regardless of large international support and direct international administration, Kosovo is still plagued by weak governance, rule of law and economic development. With a population of around 1.8 million, Kosovo has a GDP per capita of 3877 US\$ (2017), one of the lowest in Europe, and an unemployment rate of 29% (2019), the highest in the Western Balkans. Kosovo's economy is characterized by a persistent trade deficit, a weak production base, informal economy, and reliance on remittances. According to Capussela (2015, p. 12), "after the 1999 conflict Kosovo received from the international community 50 times more peacekeeping troops and 25 times more funds than Afghanistan did after the 2001 war." The EU alone has provided more than 4 billion EUR in aid, which is the largest annual per capita contribution ever provided to a third country (Capussela 2015). However, a large amount of the financial assistance to Kosovo was diverted outside Kosovo to finance international consultancy firms employed by international organizations involved in the administration of Kosovo, including for the purchase of goods and services outside of Kosovo.

A key point of criticism is that the present situation in Kosovo is considerably the result of the institutions that UNMIK established and which were perpetuated by Kosovo after independence. Lack of cultural sensitivity when designing policies and institutions (Lemay-Hebert 2009); neglect of law enforcement and arrangements with and empowerment of local strongmen to main peace and order in return for impunity, diverging interests of different countries, which

were involved in the design of UNMIK's policies; and limited accountability of UNMIK are seen as the main shortcomings of UNMIK, which have contributed to the creation of weak institutions (Capussela 2015). The institutions created by UNMIK, which reflected particular historical contingencies at the time, led to a path dependency that still influences governance in Kosovo (Capussela 2015), which is still far from sustainable peace (Visoka and Richmond 2017).

UNMIK Accountability and Human Rights

While Resolution 1244 vests in UNMIK the authority of a government, UNMIK is continuously criticized for lack of accountability (Benedek 2015), especially for human rights violations in the course of the exercise of its administrative authority. A Human Rights Advisory Panel, established by UNMIK, determined that UNMIK had violated human rights, including the right to life, when it failed to provide safe shelter to displaced Roma families (Human Rights Advisory Panel 2016). UNMIK had knowingly kept the Roma families on contaminated soil which had led to serious health damage and the death of a Roma child. Despite the determination of the Human Rights Advisory Panel, the UN still refuses to pay compensation to the victims. Due to UN having immunity under international law and Kosovo law, the victims cannot claim compensation before regular courts and have no other access to legal remedies. In 2017 the UN established a voluntary Trust Fund that would fund projects which address specific health and educational needs of individual victims and their families but it would not include the compensation of victims (Rudic 2019). The Fund has so far received no contributions from any country (Rudic 2019).

Other complaints against UNMIK about human rights violations include arbitrary detention, sexual and other criminal misconduct, and failure to protect minorities (Human Rights Watch 2007). A lack of independent mechanisms for oversight of UNMIK is a key point of criticism (Human Rights Watch 2007). UNMIK's internal oversight structures would be dysfunctional as they would either not perform their function or have too limited jurisdiction to provide for effective legal remedies (Human Rights Watch 2007).

The absence of effective accountability would damage the reputation and legitimacy of international territorial administration (Visoka 2012; Human Rights Watch 2007).

Summary

While territorial administration by the UN is a legitimate instrument for the maintenance international peace and security, the main challenges are related to its implementation and how to avoid unintended negative consequences which may adversely affect the future development of the territory under the UN's administration. Separating the administrative aspects from the political, as was the case with UNMIK, is not a viable option, since administrative decisions have political consequences and lasting effects. Different and uncoordinated, and very often competitive, national interests pursued by UN member states under the cloak of an international mission compromise the effectiveness and legitimacy of such UN missions. UN missions must also address criticism related to lack of effective accountability mechanisms and compromise solutions with powerful local actors, which seem to bring stability in the short term but harm the long-term development of the territory and the prospects of its people to establish good governance.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Assessment of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Conceptual Evolution of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Great Power Involvement in Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [NATO's Approach to Peace Operations and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Peacemaking and Peace Agreements on Kosovo](#)

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United Nations Missions in Haiti

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Synonyms

MINUJUSTH; MINUSTAH; MIPONUH; UNMIH; UNSMIH; UNTMIH

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Definition

The United Nations missions in Haiti generally refer to the six peacekeeping missions following the country's rocky transition to democracy in the early 1990s through the conclusion of the most recent mission in October 2019. These include: (1) the United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH) which operated from 1993 to 1996; (2) the United Nations Support Mission in Haiti (UNSMIH) which was open for 1 year ending July 1997; (3) the United Nations Transition Mission in Haiti (UNTMIH) which was open from August to November 1997; (4) the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti (MIPONUH) from 1997 to 2000; (5) the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) from 2004 to 2017; and (6) the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH) from 2017 to 2019 (see Fig. 1).

Concurrent with the early peacekeeping missions was the International Civilian Mission in Haiti (MICIVIH), a joint operation of the United Nations and the Organization of American States created in 1993 to monitor and promote human rights and support efforts to build and expand democratic institutions in the country. MICIVIH was succeeded by the International Civilian Support Mission in Haiti (MICAH). Though not a civilian or a peacekeeping mission, the current United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (known by its French acronym, BINUH) is widely seen by Haitians as a continued United Nations mission in their country.

Introduction

The history of Haiti from precolonial times to the present nascent democracy has been marked by foreign military occupation and intervention, abuse of human rights, economic and political instability, and conflict based on class and/or skin color. Since the country won its independence in 1804, when kidnapped Africans and their descendants overthrew the French colonialists who had enslaved them, foreign intervention – political, military, and economic – has hampered the ability of Haitians to govern themselves. This

has led to a complicated relationship between Haitian citizens and the international community and has influenced how Haitians view democracy, the process of their own transition to democratization, as well as the role of the United Nations and the troop-sending countries that support its peacekeeping missions.

Emergence of a Prodemocracy Movement

Despite being the first independent Black republic in the world, Haiti did not see hints of democracy until a popular uprising overthrew the father-son Duvalier regime in the 1980s. This prodemocracy movement, the leaders of which who would later take on positions of national and international significance, would influence the country's political trajectory through the current day. For two decades (ending in 1934), a brutal and oppressive force of American marines occupied Haiti. American marines established forced labor brigades by kidnapping and enslaving Haitian men to build infrastructure including a national highway system. Those who refused to work or escaped from the brigades were beaten, tortured, and sometimes killed. Before leaving Haiti in 1934 as a part of President Roosevelt's "good neighbor" policy, the occupying American forces installed a succession of puppet leaders, all from the mulatto class.

A series of coups and military dictatorships marked the period immediately following the American's withdrawal from a physical presence in Haiti (the US government retained control of Haiti's finances until 1947). In September 1956, Dr. François Duvalier seized power in a military coup, and a year later was elected president. Duvalier, known as "Papa Doc," declared himself "president for life" (Abbott 1988) and established what is widely viewed as one of the most brutal and repressive dictatorships in modern human history.

It was Duvalier who established the feared *Tonton Macoute* death squads. The macoutes carried out tens of thousands of politically motivated executions, beatings, kidnappings, and disappearances each year. While the vast majority of Haitians lived in crippling poverty, Duvalier won support with some elements of the middle class, however, by establishing public works programs in their neighborhoods, promoting tourism (which

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| Feb. 1986 | Popular prodemocracy protest forces Jean-Claude Duvalier into exile |
| Dec. 1990 | Presidential elections (Jean Bertrand Aristide) |
| Sep. 1991 | Coup d'état led by Lieutenant-General Raoul Cédras overthrows the elected government |
| Feb. 1993 | MICIVIH opens |
| Jun. 1993 | Haitian government in exile appeals to UNSC requesting an embargo and naval blockade of Haiti |
| Jun. – Jul. 1993 | Governor Islands Agreement negotiations and signing |
| Jul. 1993 | Robert Malval appointed prime minister, a key step in realization of the Governor Islands Agreement |
| Jul. – Aug. 1993 | FRAPH death squads created by Emmanuel Constant |
| Sep. 1993 | UNMIH opens |
| Oct. 1993 | USS Harlan County prevented from docking by a small crowd of armed protestors; peacekeeper do not disembark; Minister of Justice Guy Malary ambushed and killed by FRAPH; MICIVIH staff evacuated to the Dominican Republic |
| Apr. 1994 | Massacre of Raboteau residents by FADH and FRAPH members |
| Sep. 1994 | MNF deployed to Haiti; former US president Jimmy Carter negotiates amnesty for the military junta and US visas for some of the coup leaders in exchange for a peaceful surrender |
| Oct. 1994 | Elected government including Pres. Aristide return to Haiti |
| Nov. 1994 | MICIVIH mandated extended to include institution building |
| Mar. 1995 | UNSMIH assumes full functions within Haiti and MNF closes operations |
| Jun. 1995 | HNP founded |
| Dec. 1995 | Presidential Election (Rene Preval) |
| Jun. 1996 | UNMIH closes |
| Jul. 1996 | UNSMIH opens |
| Jul. 1997 | UNSMIH closes; UNTMIH opens |
| Nov. 1997 | UNTMH closes |
| Nov. 2000 | Presidential elections (Jean Bertrand Aristide) |
| Feb. 2004 | US marines take over key government sites in the greater Port-au-Prince area, President Aristide is removed from office; the United States, France and Canada create the MNF; Boniface Alexandre takes office as provisional president |
| Jun. 2004 | MINUSTAH opens |
| Feb. 2006 | Presidential elections (Rene Preval) |
| Jan. 2010 | Magnitude 7.0 earthquake struck 25 km southwest of Port-au-Prince causing widespread damages and the deaths of at least 140,000 people |
| Mar. 2011 | Presidential elections (Michel Martelly) |
| Feb. 2016 | Jocelerme Privert takes office as provisional president |
| Nov. 2016 | Presidential elections (Jovenel Moïse) |
| Oct. 2016 | Matthew, a category 5 hurricane, struck southwestern Haiti near Les Anglais, causing \$2.8 billion in damages |
| Oct. 2017 | MINUSTAH closes and MINUJUSTH opens |
| Oct. 2018 | A magnitude 5.9 earthquake struck 19 kilometers northwest of Port-de-Paix, Haiti, causing the building damage and the deaths of at least 18 people. |
| Oct. 2019 | MINUJUSTH closes |
| Jul. 2021 | President Jovenel Moïse assassinated; Claude Joseph, acting prime minister, takes control of the country before resigning and handing power over to Ariel Henry of the Council of Ministers |
| Aug. 2021 | A magnitude 7.2 earthquake struck the Tiburon Peninsula in the Caribbean nation of Haiti killing 2200 people. |

United Nations Missions in Haiti, Fig. 1 Timeline of Important Events Related to the UN Missions in Haiti

improved the economy overall), and by setting up industries such as assembly factories, which middle class professionals could run.

When François Duvalier died in April 1971, the office of president was passed on to his son, 19-year-old Jean Claude Duvalier who was known as “Baby Doc.” Under Jean Claude Duvalier’s rule, conditions in Haiti worsened for ordinary citizens. Repression became so bad that in 1983 rebellion spread throughout the country with mass demonstrations being held regularly by Haitians who were demanding the establishment of a democracy. After 3 years of protests, in February 1986, the Haitian army pressured Jean Claude Duvalier to resign, and he left the country for exile in France.

From the departure of Duvalier through 1990, Haiti was ruled by a series of provisional governments. Human rights abuses continued to be widespread. The Macoute death squads were never disbanded, and they continued to be a source of violent enforcement of government authoritarianism. During several high-profile incidents, citizens were executed while waiting in line to vote in a series of unsuccessful presidential elections. A prodemocracy movement called *Lavalas* (Haitian Creole for “the flood”) grew more powerful and denounced the continuation of what they called “Duvalierism after Duvalier” (Aristide 1996).

One significant development of the time was that a new constitution was written, which provided for an elected local government, parliament, elected president and an appointed prime minister, Supreme Court, and cabinet ministers. The new constitution set the stage for an eventual transition into a democratic government. In December 1990, the country had an election that was deemed free and fair by international observers. Jean Bertrand Aristide, a populist priest who was one of the leaders of the *Lavalas* movement, was elected with 67% of the popular vote and took office on February 8, 1991.

Seven months into his term, a violent coup led by Lt. General Raoul Cedras and other officers from the Haitian army (known by the acronym FADH) deposed Aristide, who was forced into exile first in Venezuela and later in Washington,

DC. The coup was carried out by the Haitian military but supported or perhaps directed (depending on the accounts) by Haiti’s business elite. The coup had tacit “behind the scenes” approval from the United States, which had become increasingly disturbed by President Aristide’s policies and their potential impact on US business interests in Haiti but perhaps did not anticipate the violence that would ensue.

Unlike previous coups in Haiti, this time there was mass resistance to the overthrow of the elected president, and Haitians took to the streets in protest. Thousands of ordinary citizens were executed for demanding a return to the democratic government. The death squads were out in full force, rounding up suspected *Lavalas* members and brazenly executing them in the streets, occasionally in the presence of international human rights observers and the news media (Human Rights Watch 1993).

The coup regime was in power for 3 years, from 1991 to 1994. During that time, though officially opposed to the overthrow of the elected government, the United States covertly supported the military junta. One of those who was on the US payroll was Emmanuel “Toto” Constant. According to Constant, shortly after Aristide’s ouster, Colonel Patrick Collins, a US Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) attaché who was stationed in Haiti from 1989 to 1992, pressured him to organize a front that could oppose the *Lavalas* movement and do intelligence work against it. In response, Constant set up a brutal paramilitary group known as the Front for the Advancement and Progress of Haiti (FRAPH) to terrorize supporters of exiled president Jean-Bertrand Aristide (Dupuy 2005; Nairn 1994; Sprague 2012; Whitney 1996).

Constant was paid by the CIA from 1992 to 1994, as were several other leading members of the military junta. According to the US officials, he provided information to the agency in exchange for about \$500 a month. During this time, Constant and the FRAPH paramilitary death squads were responsible for more than 4000 extrajudicial murders and thousands more sexual assaults, kidnappings, beatings, and acts of terror (Sprague 2012; Whitney 1996).

Context of the UN Involvement in Haiti

Under mounting international pressure, the United States and other members of the UN Security Council were forced to intervene. Their first step was the creation of the International Civilian Mission in Haiti (MICIVIH) in February 1993 as a joint diplomatic effort with the Organization of American States (OAS) at the request of president-in-exile Jean Bertrand Aristide. This was the UN's first joint mission with a regional organization. The mission's mandate was to promote human rights and strengthen judicial, police, and prison institutions important for the promotion and protection of human rights.

MICIVIH staff struggled in their attempts to fulfill this mandate as violence by both state and nonstate actors created an increasingly dangerous situation. MICIVIH was authorized to investigate and record alleged human rights violations, to verify case facts with Haitian institutions, and to make recommendations to Haitian authorities. However, alleged victims who reported abuses were targeted by the agents of the *de facto* regime, and a general climate of impunity made investigations and advising challenging. The UN and OAS had both enacted interactional economic sanctions against the coup government to persuade them reduce violence against citizens and to engage in peaceful negotiations. But the civilian mission had no power to enforce their recommendations or to protect Haitians who were still being beaten, tortured, and executed by military forces and the death squads.

Governor Islands Agreement

On June 7, 1993, President Aristide made a formal request to the UN Security Council that they decree a mandatory embargo and a naval blockade against Haiti. This was resisted by some OAS members, including Brazil, which was able to convince the other council members to discard plans for a naval blockade. However, an embargo against importation of arms and fuel was approved and adopted on June 16 (UN Security Council Resolution 841, 1993).

Succumbing to the pressures of the embargo along with a crippled economy, Cedras agreed to meet with a UN mediator, former Argentine

Foreign Minister Dante Caputo, on the conditions under which he would peacefully step down and allow the elected president to return to office (Malone 1997). After 7 days of negotiations, an accord was signed on July 4, 1993, by Lt. General Cedras on behalf of the military and President Aristide on behalf of the elected Haitian government. Dubbed the Governor Island Agreement, it was viewed within Haiti as a negotiation between Haiti's oligarchy/their military enforcers and the US president Bill Clinton (who was facing internal criticism regarding his response to boatloads of Haitian refugees heading to US shores). Though President Aristide did sign the agreement, he had little say in its terms, which were unfavorable toward the interests of the Haitian citizens and those who had been victimized by the military junta.

In exchange for amnesty and maintaining the Haitian army, the coup regime agreed to step down within 4 months. Marrack Goulding, then head of peacekeeping at the UN, encouraged Aristide to sign the agreement, saying that 4 months lead time was necessary to recruit and deploy a UN policing mission to serve as a buffer force for Aristide's return. Under the agreement, the military leaders would be allowed to retire or be transferred but would not be held accountable for overthrowing the elected government or their violent repression of the prodemocracy movement (Klarreich 1993; Meisler 1993). The elected government, including President Aristide, was to return by October 30, 1993.

United Nations Mission in Haiti (September 1993 to June 1996)

Implementation of the Governor Islands Agreement proved challenging. In accordance with the agreement, a new prime minister, Robert Malval, took office in July. In response, sanctions were suspended the following month (UNSCR 861, 1993). As outlined during the Governor's Island Agreement, the UN Security Council authorized the United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH) on September 23, 1993, with the mandate of securing the transition back to the

constitutional government by modernizing the armed forces of Haiti and establishing a new police force (Security Council resolution 867). That same day the UNSC approved deploying the 700 military and 600 police personnel of the United Nations Mission in Haiti. Within a week, 80 American and Canadian staff had arrived Port-au-Prince.

However, the Haitian military had already begun violating their agreement. Violence against citizens throughout the country intensified. On September 11, 1993, prodemocracy businessman Antonio Izmerly was grabbed from church during mass and executed in front of both a crowd of parishioners and an international news crew as uniformed police looked on (French 1993). The military refused to step down as promised, and by mid-October 1993, the MICIVIH staff were evacuated to the Dominican Republic (Ramalho and de Souza Neto 2014). (In January 1994, a small contingent from MICIVIH would return before being expelled by the Haitian military in July 1994.)

The event that led to the evacuation of the MICIVIH and UNMIH staff occurred on October 11, 1993, when a group of approximately 100 armed FRAPH members, reportedly backed by FADH and police, blocked a contingent of US and Canadian peacekeepers from disembarking the USS Harlan County at the Port-au-Prince seaport. Accompanying the civilian MICIVIH and UNMIH staff and diplomats were 193 US marines and 25 Canadian troops who had arrived in the country in advance of the UN's projected deployment of 1300 peacekeepers. The UN and OAS peacekeepers, staff, and diplomats at the port were surrounded by military irregulars who fired weapons into the air, threw rocks, and beat the windows of their vehicles. Several fishing vessels and a Haitian coast guard cutter further blocked the USS Harlan County from approaching the port (Farah and Tarr 1993).

In the end, the ship did not dock. Without consulting the security council, and without a clear military justification for withdrawing, the USS Harlan turned around and left. Canada followed suite, withdrawing their troops. On October 14, 1993, Minister of Justice Guy Malary,

who was critical of the military junta leadership, was ambushed and killed by FRAPH death squads (Weisbrot 1997). And 2 days later, MICIVIH staff were evacuated to the Dominican Republic. It would be another year before Haitians would see an end to the de facto military regime (Granderson 1998; Ramalho and de Souza Neto 2014).

During the military's final year in power, the abuse of human rights and violence against citizens continued to escalate. One notable event was the Raboteau Massacre. Raboteau, an impoverished seaside neighborhood in the city of Gonaïves had resisted the military junta for since the coup first occurred. Residents held rallies opposing the de facto military junta's leaders. On April 22, 1994, FADH soldiers and FRAPH paramilitary forces raided the neighborhood shortly before dawn. Going house to house, they beat and arrested residents, including children, elderly people, and people with disabilities. Residents were made to lie down in open sewers and those who ran were shot. A group of residents who had been out gathering firewood were indiscriminately fired upon. Soldiers also commandeered rowboats from the residents and used them to attack men who were fishing offshore during the massacre. Afterward, the FADH soldiers prevented families from collecting the bodies of the dead, making an exact count of the dead impossible. Estimates of deaths range from 8 to 30 individuals with more than 100 residents of all ages reporting serious injuries. (Concannon 2018; Cynn 2008; Girard 2005; Henry 2020; Marshall 1995; Stoelting et al. 2001; Suárez 2003).

These events, and a mass exodus of Haitian refugees to the shores of the United States and neighboring countries, made it impossible for the international community to continue promoting a diplomatic resolution to the conflict. UN Security Council resolution 940 (1994) authorized the creation of a multinational peacekeeping force (MNF), which began deployment on September 19, 1994, as Operation Uphold Democracy. In a last-minute deal brokered by former US President Jimmy Carter, the military coup leaders agreed to leave Haiti for exile in the United States. Among them was FRAPH commander Emmanuel Constant.

On October 15, 1994, the constitutionally elected government returned to Haiti (Kretchik 2016; Kreps 2007). MICIVIH was reestablished in Haiti, reaching full force by October 16, 1994, with new responsibilities including assisting with the repatriation and resettlement of displaced persons, providing medical and social assistance to victims of torture and other human rights abuses, providing civic education, and expanding responsibility for democratic institution-building (Kretchik 2003; Solomon 1999). Similarly, UNMIH's mandate was also expanded; the new goals of the mission included assisting the elected government to sustain a stable environment, protecting international personnel and key installations, and assisting the legitimate constitutional authorities in creating an environment conducive to free and fair elections (Security Council resolutions 940 [1994] and 975 [1995]). UNMIH assumed its full functions on March 31, 1995 (Kreps 2007; Solomon 1999).

Upon returning to the country, Aristide immediately took steps to disband the Haitian Army and to create an independent civilian police force. He emphasized the importance of investigating and prosecuting those who had violated human rights during the coup period – a stance that was not always supported by the UN and OAS, or by the US diplomats who had helped restore him to power. In late 1994, Aristide established a council to investigate the human rights crimes committed by the army and by private citizens during the coup. This process was hampered, however, by the United States decision to have MNF soldiers confiscate more than 10,000 pages of documents from the offices of the coup leaders. Requests from the Haitian government through diplomatic channels to retrieve these records were initially unsuccessful.

Peaceful democratic elections were held for the legislative branch in summer 1995 and for the presidency in December of that same year. In 1996, for the first time in Haitian history, power was peacefully transferred from one elected president to another. Rene Preval, an agronomist, had been elected with 88% of the vote. During Preval's first term, the general human rights situation continued to improve. A court decision finally

forced the United States to return the documents US marines from the MNF had seized during the initial invasion of Haiti, and these were used to prosecute members of the FADH, FRAPH, and the military junta for ordering and carrying out executions of political dissidents. Eventually dozens, including FRAPH leader Emmanuel Constant, were convicted of human rights crimes and many were imprisoned (Girard 2005).

United Nations Support Mission in Haiti (July 1996 to July 1997)

While UNMIH had decidedly been a peacemaking and peacekeeping mission designed to transition the country from coup-leadership to democracy (while preventing further political violence against the population), the United Nations Support Mission in Haiti (UNSMIH) was a peacebuilding mission created to foster the conditions for future stability (Siman and Galoumian 2015). This was to be accomplished through the creation of a national police force. Prior to the intervention of UNMIH, Haiti's internal security had been tied to both the military and system of official and unofficial government-endorsed paramilitary groups and death squads. When the elected leadership was restored to power in October 1994, one of first steps President Aristide made was to abolish military-controlled police and commit to the creation of a nonpartisan national police force, which would uphold international human rights standards. One of UNSMIH key mandates was to support this goal through the training of a new national police force (United Nations Security Council resolution 1063).

Beginning June 28, 1996, the mission initially consisted of limited forces. UN Civilian Police (CIVPOL) were concentrated in the greater Port-au-Prince area, typically working at larger police stations, prisons or jails, and the newly formed police academy (Harston 2001; Meharg 1996). In addition to CIVPOL activities, the mission was also charged with continuing to support the maintenance of internal security, institution-building (particularly related to the justice system), national

reconciliation, and economic revitalization. CIVPOL focused on training senior and midlevel police officers to professionalize the new police force. They also created training curricula and oversaw nearly all of the training for new recruits, created a system for vetting officers to weed out those with criminal backgrounds and involvement in gross human rights abuses, and introduced techniques to promote respect for human rights in general, such as nonlethal crowd control procedures and the verbal interrogation of suspects without the use of torture (Harston 2001).

Overall, the mission was well-received by both the Haitian government and Haitian citizens, as there was widespread support for the move to a civilian-controlled police force. However, the mission faced some significant hurdles. The uncertainty of the mission's tenure made long-term planning a challenge and creating a disquieting climate of insecurity in both the mission and the Haitian National Police (HNP) (Blair 1997; Knight 2001). CIVPOL officers frequently rotated in and out, leading to confusion as new policies and procedures were created and hampering institutional memory (Knight 2001; Kolbe and Muggah 2011). And a serious economic crisis throughout Haiti heightened national tensions and slowed realization of expected economic developments mandated by the mission.

During the mission tenure, free speech was guaranteed and political demonstrations on all sides of the spectrum took place unimpeded by government agents. But the individual soldiers from the disbanded Haitian army had never been disarmed. Caches of weapons were established in strategic locations throughout the country, and members of the disbanded army, along with the mulatto elite, began to agitate for the return of Duvalier and the removal of Preval. The security situation deteriorated somewhat during the summer of 1996 when ex-soldiers from the disbanded FADH attacked several police stations, including one in Port-au-Prince. The newly trained HNP was barely able to repel the attacks and it was clear that further training and support was needed. In April 1997, legislative elections for one-third of the assembly seats and most of the local assemblies were called into question and led to a

political impasse, as Preval's government was unable to organize a second parliamentary election.

United Nations Transition Mission in Haiti (August to November 1997)

In November 1996, anticipating that end of UNSMIH, President Preval expressed concerns that the Haitian National Police were not yet at full capacity and that the fragile security sector would be unable to survive a UN exit (then planned for early 1997). Other reforms expected under UNSMIH, particularly economic improvements and the building and creation of internal government supports and structures, had been slow to materialize. In response, the Secretary General advocated for an extension of the UN's support with the creation of a limited-focus mission of 4 months in duration. The United Nations Transition Mission in Haiti (UNTMIH) began in July and ended in November 1997. Civilian police concentrated their efforts on continuing to build institutional capacity and expertise of the HNP, particular in the areas of presidential security, crowd control, and the use of specialized police units (Harston 2001).

United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti (December 1997 to March 2000)

By December 1997, it was clear that Haiti's newly created national police force had yet to reach the capacity needed to provide internal security. President Preval requested continued assistance, and the UN responded with the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti (MIPONUH). Its main task was to assist the Government of Haiti in the professionalization of the Haitian National Police (Harston 2001).

MIPONUH, which succeeded the previous United Nations Missions in Haiti in December 1997, focused on leadership and supervisory level training as well as the training of specialized police units to respond to gangs, civil unrest, and to protect government institutions. Other tasks

included accompanying police officers in their day-to-day duties and facilitating coordination with technical advisers to the Haitian National Police funded by the United Nations Development Programme and bilateral donors. MIPONUH's special police unit was tasked with providing assistance to MIPONUH personnel and protecting its property (Donais 2005; Harston 2001).

While significant gains were made on improving and expanding the new civilian police force, security sector reforms related to the justice system and courts were slower to materialize, effectively undermining the gains made by improved policing (Donais 2005; Iwata 1999). The judicial system lacked basic institutional capacity to carry out its mandate. Records, all on paper, were scattered and disorganized. Individuals who were detained were not presented to a judge within 48 h as mandated by the constitution. Courts lacked computers, phones, electricity, and even toilet facilities. Prisoners were sometimes held in makeshift facilities such as shipping containers and closets within police stations. People who were arrested were often held and released arbitrarily. The disorder within the justice system was systemic to the Haitian government overall. Despite international support and technical advising, efforts to build institutional capacity were slow (Iwata 1999; Roy 1999).

International Civilian Support Mission in Haiti (March 2000 to February 2001)

Both MIPONUH and MICIVIH concluded their activities on March 15, 2000. They were succeeded by the International Civilian Support Mission in Haiti (MICAH) approved by the General Assembly of the UN in December 1999 (General Assembly resolution A/54/193 of December 17, 1999). MICAH's mandate was to consolidate the gains achieved by MICIVIH and MIPONUH, promote human rights, support the Haitian police and justice system in solidifying institutional improvements, and facilitate dialogue between the international community and Haiti's complicated collection of political and social actors (Donais 2005).

In May 2000, new legislative elections were finally held and, in an election, hailed by

international observers as free and fair, more than 60% of registered voters went to the polls. The prodemocracy party, Lavalas, won a large number of seats in both the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate. The political opposition, which had regrouped and solidified itself in a coalition of 17 opposition parties known as the Democratic Convergence, claimed the elections were fraudulent and demanded Preval step down and be replaced with a provisional government. Preval refused and the Democratic Convergence threatened to boycott the upcoming November 2000 presidential elections. On November 26, with only an estimated 20% of Haiti's 4.8 million registered voters coming to the polls, Aristide won a bid for his second term as president with 96% of the vote. The Democratic Convergence refused to recognize Aristide as president but conceded that even if they had participated in the elections he still would have won.

The Destabilization of Haiti's Nascent Democracy

Aristide's second term in office was marked by both a declining standard of living and rampant political conflict. From the moment he was elected, leaders of the Democratic Convergence agitated for Aristide's removal from office. In 2001, two failed coup attempts reportedly orchestrated by demobilized Haitian soldiers left 16 dead. An international aid embargo from November 2000 to February 2004 blocked more than \$500 in international loans and foreign aid to Haiti. This included a \$146 million dollar loan from the Inter-American Development Bank that was earmarked for literacy programs, improvements in rural transportation, health clinics, and the distribution of potable water.

Under intense international pressure, the US government signed an agreement in September 2002 to release the funds. The agreement, negotiated by the OAS, required the Haitian government implement structural adjustment programs and eliminate government subsidies on gasoline and required Haiti to pay \$66 million in arrears for debts incurred by previous governments, primarily the Duvalier governments and the military juntas, which ruled Haiti in the 1980s, before

receiving any loans. Even after the Haitian government complied, the funds were not distributed for nearly a year.

While government reserves shrunk 50% from 2001 to 2004, the cost of living rose 40%, gasoline prices doubled, and many ordinary citizens were no longer able to afford basic necessities. Hunger, malnutrition, and deaths from preventable illness became widespread between 2001 and 2004, particularly among the urban poor. Political conflict grew as members of the disbanded Haitian army reformed and reorganized themselves in the countryside, eventually staging an armed rebellion. Between November 2003 and February 2004, several hundred ex-soldiers who had been living and training in the Dominican Republic crossed over the border into Haiti. During January 2004, sporadic reports of military activity in the rural North were reported, and numerous peasants claimed that armed men in battle dress were raiding farms, patrolling the mountains in heavily armed pickup trucks, and traveling in from the Dominican Republic by helicopter.

On February 5, 2004, a contingent of former soldiers led by ex-military officer Guy Philippe attacked the port city of Gonaïves, killing dozens, including at least eight police officers. On February 7, the rebels, as they referred to themselves, took over the nearby city of St. Marc, killing an unknown number of police officers and bystanders in the battle. The next day a force of 150 police officers attempted to retake Gonaïves but failed. Lacking adequate weaponry and unfairly matched against seasoned soldiers, the police officers were quickly repelled. By nightfall 14 officers had been killed, and the rest retreated without retaking Gonaïves. The officers were more successful in St. Marc, which they recaptured on February 10. At the same time, a second battalion of rebels in the south began to march on the city of Grand Goâve, which they captured on February 9. Again, a contingent of reinforcements from the Haitian National Police was successful in overcoming the rebels and retaking the city.

The success of rebel activity in the North created panic throughout Haiti. Tens of thousands fled from the countryside into Port-au-Prince to

escape fighting and avoid rebels on maneuvers in their area. Meanwhile, residents of Northern cities fled from the urban areas into the countryside or south to Port-au-Prince. Human rights workers reported that, as cities and towns were taken, members of the local government, including public school teachers and employees of government health clinics, were summarily executed and their homes destroyed. During the next 2 weeks, several towns in the north and the south were taken, lost and retaken again by the rebels.

The Haitian government requested international assistance, and several countries responded, including South Africa, which dispatched a plane of weapons and materials. However, the United States and Canada, two of Haiti's main benefactors since the departure of Duvalier, did not intervene. Speaking to the press February 26, US Secretary of State Colin Powell blamed the violence on Aristide and urged him to step down.

On February 19, Buteur Mètayer, leader of the Cannibal Army (an urban gang that joined forces with the demobilized soldiers and renamed itself the "National Revolutionary Front for the Liberation of Haiti"), declared himself president of Haiti with Guy Philippe as commander of the newly reformed Haitian Army. Mètayer's leadership included Jean Pierre Baptiste (also known as Jean Tatoune), a former leader of the FRAPH death squads. Tatoune was convicted of human rights violations and murder for his actions in the April 22, 1994, Raboteau Massacre. In July 2004, Tatoune escaped from a Gonaïves prison and emerged as one of the leaders of the Cannibal Army (Girard 2005).

Rebel forces continued to advance toward the capital during the end of February 2004. On February 28, a contingent of US marines arrived in Haiti without invitation from the Haitian government. They secured the U.S. Embassy, the U.S. Consulate, and later that same day took control of the Port-au-Prince International Airport and the National Palace. While marines were securing a perimeter around the National Palace, a convoy of diplomats and marines traveled to Aristide's home in Tabbarre, 15 miles away. Aristide and his wife were forced into exile, first in the Central African Republic, then Jamaica, and later in South Africa.

United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (June 2004 to October 2017)

The days immediately following the departure of Aristide were tumultuous. There was no formal UN presence in Haiti; US, French, and Canadian troops occupied the country as part of a US-led Multinational Interim Force (MIF), and they were widely viewed by Haitian citizens as supporting the overthrow of democracy and violence against the prodemocracy movement. Rebel forces broke into the National Penitentiary, freeing thousands of criminals and convicted human rights violators such as Carl Dorelien, who after being deported by US immigration authorities in January 2003, was sentenced to life in prison for his role in the Raboteau massacre. Many of the newly freed men joined forces with the rebels, patrolling the countryside and the cities, appointing themselves as mayors, police chiefs, and judges throughout the country (Hallward 2008; Lindsay 2006).

Boniface Alexandre, chief justice of Haiti's supreme court, succeeded Aristide. The sitting prime minister, Yvon Neptune, stepped down and immediately went into hiding. A council of "wise men" convened at the OAS office in Port-au-Prince and chose Gerald Latortue, a former UN official of Haitian American descent, to be the new prime minister of Haiti. Latortue accepted and immediately moved from his home in Boca Raton, Florida, to Haiti. Most government officials and many government employees, including a significant number of police officers, went into hiding or left Haiti for exile in the Dominican Republic, Cuba, Venezuela, or other countries in the Americas.

In the first few months after the departure of Aristide, Amnesty International investigators (2005) described the situation in Haiti as "chaotic" and found widespread evidence of both judicial and police misconduct. They reported that insurgents controlled the countryside where they had taken over police stations and set up their own road blocks. Louis-Jodel Chamblain, a convicted criminal who was deported from the United States on the basis of his human rights crimes, was observed presiding over impromptu "trials"

against Lavalas supporters in Haiti's Northern Department. Throughout February and March 2004, rebel forces and their supporters engineered numerous prison breaks that freed more than 3000 convicted criminals in Port-au-Prince alone. Riot conditions were reported in major cities during the first few weeks of March 2004, including looting and the destruction of government property and the personal property of suspected Lavalas members.

MINUSTAH took over from the MIF in June 2004 with an initial deployment of 4800 troops. MINUSTAH's presence in the country was established by UN Security Council resolution 1542, passed April 30, 2004, which provided for the deployment of peacekeeping troops to reestablish law and help create the conditions under which a successful presidential election could be held. A key focus was on security sector reform and improvements to the HNP (Donais 2005; Lindsay 2006).

Despite the circumstances surrounding the interim government's establishment, the international community stepped in to support it with a stated goal of reshaping the fragile security sector. Much like the US-led de-Baathization process in Iraq, the HNP was purged of 60% of its officers, many of whom fled to other areas of the country or to the Dominican Republic, fearing that remnants of the rebel army might exact revenge. Some 540 members of the rebel army, many of whom had been soldiers in Haiti's long demobilized armed forces, were integrated into the "new" HNP during demobilization. Few of them, if any, were required to undergo the formal training and graduation from the police academy required of new recruits (Hallward 2008; IGC 2005; Lindsay 2006; Mendelson-Forman 2006).

After four postponements, presidential elections were held February 7, 2006. The Fanmi Lavalas party was initially barred from registering a candidate by the Provisional Electoral Council, which later backed down. However, the favored Lavalas candidate, Father Gerald Jean-Juste was arrested (Dupuy 2005; Regan 2005). Named a "prisoner of conscience" by Amnesty International, Jean-Juste was imprisoned without charge

during the presidential nomination period and for 8 months afterward. When Lavalas officials approached the Provisional Electoral Council to register him, they were told he was ineligible because he was in prison and could not come to their office personally (Dupuy 2006).

Eventually Rene Preval, who served as president from 1995 to 2000 as a Lavalas member, formed his own party, *Lespwa* (Kreyol for “hope”), and registered as a candidate. Marc Bazin, a former presidential candidate who was backed by the United States during the 1990 elections, registered himself as a Lavalas candidate for president, even though he was not a member of the Lavalas party. Other presidential candidates included former president Leslie Manigat who served as president for a few months in 1998 before being overthrown in a military coup, and Charles Henri Baker, a businessman from Group 184 who holds US residency.

Rene Preval won the election with just over 51% of the vote. Manigat received approximately 12% of the vote, and Baker received 8% of the votes. All the remaining candidates, including rebel leader Guy Philippe, won less than 5%. The election also included voting for 129 members of Haiti’s parliament. The results of these votes were disputed. President Preval began his second 5-year term as Haiti’s president on May 14, 2006.

MINUSTAH’s Response to Armed Groups

Membership in Haiti’s armed groups has vacillated over the years. In the early 2000s, when armed ex-FADH groups first launched their insurgency, many urban gangs took sides in the conflict aligning themselves with the prodemocracy and Lavalas movements or the anti-Lavalas movement and insurgency. After the insurgency was successful in early 2004, leaders of the interim Haitian government hailed the ex-FADH and their allies as “freedom fighters” and a period of increased political repression against the Lavalas movement began (Hallward 2008). During this 3-year period of political repression, membership in armed groups across the spectrum increased. Both pro- and anti-Lavalas gangs actively sought funding and members. When ex-FADH supported

anti-Lavalas gangs and attacked pro-Lavalas gangs, it only fueled the membership drive and accelerated violence. Crime, committed by both political actors and crime committed by opportunistic criminals, increased. This complicated efforts by both the MIF and MINUSTAH to disarm and demobilize armed groups.

In Haiti, the demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration (DDR) process did not include disarmament. It is likely that ceremonial disarmament, in which armed groups give up weapons during a public ceremony on the order of their commanders, was absent from Haiti’s process because there was no peace process involved in the postcoup period. The international community refused to respond to insurgents until after they had nearly overthrown the elected government. Foreign support for the insurgents also complicated matters. At the time of the 2004 coup, the part of Jean Bertrand Aristide was supported by roughly half of the population. The multinational forces then, were seen as invaders who came under UN Security Council authorization, not to establish or keep the peace, but to complete the coup d’état (dos Santos Parra 2019; Kolbe 2020; Schuberth 2017; Sprague 2012; Von Einsiedel and Malone 2006).

With MINUSTAH came the first efforts at DDR. However, the UN, MIF, and other actors disagreed on who was to be disarmed. Rural armed insurgents affiliated with the anti-Lavalas side and supported by the MIF were not labeled by the MIF as insurgents, while armed urban gangs that had (for the most part) not engaged in any action against the government were labeled as insurgents and targeted with indiscriminate violence by both the MIF and the HNP. MINUSTAH inherited a difficult DDR situation. With competing policies and ideas about who should be demobilized, bias against prodemocracy and Lavalas-supporting armed groups, and political pressure to avoid disarming the rural anti-democracy insurgents, the DDR faltered from the beginning (dos Santos Parra 2019; Kolbe 2013, 2020; Sprague 2012).

There was no formal peace process. The DDR leaders lacked credible carrots and/or sticks to

persuade armed groups to enter into the process. Misinformation about who was armed and who wasn't, lack of accurate information about the scope and nature of the armed conflict, and lack of political will within the UN system and from the main MINUSTAH funders hampered DDR activities and the creation of a DDR process. Eventually, foreign DDR staffers found themselves negotiating, through Haitian staff intermediaries who themselves had competing interests, with individual armed gangs to try to get them to join the DDR program. No large-scale or formalized disarmament ever took place.

From the creation of MINUSTAH in 2004 through 2007, reintegration efforts were coordinated at the national level by a committee and were administered from a centralized DDR office. Beginning in 2007, the national DDR committee was disbanded and its work was absorbed into the Brazilian NGO Viva Rio and UN-related DDR efforts were officially coordinated by the newly created Community Violence Reduction (CVR) office located at Camp Charlie on the outskirts of Port-au-Prince. CVR was officially part of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO).

Within MINUSTAH, CVR was widely acknowledged as an important contributor to development and reconstruction efforts. Rather than invest only in traditional, individual-level interventions common with the DDR programs of the 1980s and 1990s, the MINUSTAH's CVR program emphasized a community-based approach toward reducing violence in Haiti's most marginalized urban areas. Demobilized individuals from armed groups received the same vocationally focused services they did in the past, but the agency also invested a great deal of money and time in efforts to improve the neighborhoods where violence most frequently occurred. By improving the community in which demobilized men were living, the hope was that individuals would be able to integrate into lawful employment and that communities would be addressing neighborhood- and state-level problems such as lack of employment, social marginalization, and political disenfranchisement, which may have previously prevented demobilized individuals from successfully reintegrating (Muggah 2009).

Security Sector Reform

Despite its origins and relationship to a movement that overthrew of the democratically elected government, MINUSTAH slowly began to make some inroads and gain the confidence of some parts of Haitian society. Along with CVR, one of its more well-received efforts included the training and professionalization of the Haitian National Police. Beginning in earnest in 2005, efforts to train the HNP and bring them to full capacity were funded as part of an extension of MINUSTAH's mandate. Within the National Police Academy, CIVPOL officers and MINUSTAH technical advisors focused on capacity building for Haitian instructors, curriculum development, administration, and the reinforcement of international standards and norms including respect for human rights. By 2009, there was growing confidence among international actors in the potential of the HNP to provide security, with the UN Security Council acknowledging key gaps but also citing real improvements (Kolbe and Muggah 2011).

In January 2010, an earthquake struck Haiti, killing 158,000 people; among those were 96 peacekeepers (Kolbe et al. 2010). A MINUSTAH facility collapsed, trapping many inside and killing Hédi Annabi, the UN's special representative to Haiti. The disaster was a severe blow to both the mission and to the country, which already was contending with fragile political and economic stability. Through the next few months, it became apparent that, though many UN efforts to improve Haiti's democratic institutions had not succeeded, the Haitian National Police were surprisingly successful at maintaining internal security and assisting in the recovery and reconstruction effort (Kolbe and Muggah 2012). By 2010, more than two-thirds of Haitians surveyed said that the HNP should be the primary security provider for the country (Kolbe and Muggah 2011). However, the success of the HNP continued to be precarious (Kolbe 2020).

Controversies and Criticism of MINUSTAH

No peacekeeping mission is without controversy or criticism; however, the UN missions in Haiti have, because of the context, decisions by leaders, and influences from troop-sending countries faced a number of unique controversies during the UN's

tenure in Haiti. These have included concerns regarding the missions' support for democracy and interference by foreign powers, leakages, and distribution of arms and ammunition to the public, the direct and indirect support of violence and overuse of force, the cholera epidemic, and complaints of sexual exploitation and abuse of Haitian citizens by peacekeepers (James 2010; Kolbe 2020; Korson 2015; McDougal et al. 2019; Pinget 2018; Reisman 1995; Russell 2013; Schuller 2012). In years to come, it is most likely that MINUSTAH will be remembered by Haitians for two things: creating a cholera epidemic and sexual abuse by peacekeepers.

Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

MINUSTAH has always had a perception problem. A portion of that problem was inherited from the MIF and the rest of the problem was created by individuals within MINUSTAH and by the behavior of groups of peacekeepers. During the 1991–1994 military junta, FRAPH, police officers, and soldiers engaged in politically motivated sexual assaults, including mass rapes, of people known or suspected of supporting the prodemocracy movement Cynn 2008). This tactic was adopted again during the 2002–2004 insurgency by some, but not all, of the armed groups involved in the overthrow of the elected government (James 2010). Sexual assaults by both state and nonstate actors continued to happen with alarming frequency after the MIF invasion on February 28, 2004.

Between February 2004 and December 2005, a period that included the entire tenure of the MIF as well as the first 7 months of MINUSTAH, an estimated 35,000 women and girls (95% CI: 28,000–41,000 females) were sexually assaulted in the greater Port-au-Prince area (Kolbe and Hutson 2006). While the majority of the sexual assaults recorded by Kolbe and Hutson (2006) were by criminals or unknown perpetrators, 13.8% (95% CI: 6.3–21.3%) were committed by officers from the Haitian National Police force. Ex-soldiers from the disbanded Haitian army committed 3.2% of the assaults, while members of armed anti-Lavalas groups and partisans of anti-Lavalas groups committed 10.6% and 1.1%, respectively, of these sexual assaults.

Given the historic use of sexual assault as a political tool and the involvement of HNP officers, including some police officers newly inducted from the ex-FADH groups involved in the insurgency under the MIF and MINUSTAH in sexual assaults after the overthrow of the elected government, it was inevitable that rape and sexual assault would continue to be a contentious issue during MINUSTAH's term. While there is no evidence of systemic sexual abuse or exploitation of Haitian civilians by foreign peacekeepers, MINUSTAH's tenure included a number of sexual exploitation and abuse scandals.

When MINUSTAH took over from the MIF in 2004, they were initially unable to curtail sexual abuse, harassment, and assaults by HNP officers as part of the SSR efforts. The mission itself then became embroiled in controversy when accusations of sexual abuse, prostitution scandals, and a child sexual exploitation case that led to the expulsion of 114 of the 950 Sri Lankan peacekeepers then serving in the mission. In 2006, a BBC reporter (2006) interviewed an 11-year-old child who was living on the streets near the National Palace who said she had been sexually molested by peacekeepers. That same reporter also located a 14-year-old girl who claimed to have been abducted and taken to a UN base where she had been sexually assaulted. Though neither claim was acted on by UN investigators, other complaints of sexual abuse and assault were substantiated.

In November 2007, the Sri Lankan government ordered 114 of their peacekeepers to be immediately repatriated after a news radio stations in Haiti reported that three officers in the contingent had organized a "child sex" brothel in an impoverished neighborhood of Port-au-Prince. The removal of the accused perpetrators meant that Haitian police authorities were prevented from concluding their investigation of the case. However, early reports had circulated accusing the peacekeepers of criminal sexual abuse and rape of children as young as 7 years old. While some of the children had been forced, others had been coerced into the brothel with promises of food, money for school fees, clothing, and cell phones in exchange for sexual acts. (Dodds 2017).

Eventually UN investigators substantiated some of the children's claims, though no peacekeepers were ever held criminally responsible.

In 2011, the city of Port Salut erupted in street protests after the audio from leaked cell phone video footage taken by a Uruguayan peacekeeper was played on the local radio station. The video shows the four uniformed peacekeepers sexually assaulting a high school student inside of their barracks. The boy could be heard crying as soldiers restrained his arms and forced him faced own on a mattress. The teenager who had been assaulted eventually traveled with his mother to Montevideo to testify against his attackers in court.

In 2012, three Pakistani peacekeepers serving as military police in the city of Gonaïves were court martialled for the sexual abuse of a 13-year-old boy with cognitive impairments. Sentenced to a year of hard labor and dismissed from the military, they were repatriated to serve their jail sentences at home (Al Jazeera 2012; Dodds 2017).

During MINUSTAH's tenure, there were fewer than 200 cases of sexual abuse or exploitation reported to the UN. However, those cases which did occur received both media attention and became an impetus for local anger at the mission. Though not widespread or as common as in other peace-kept locations, the history of politically motivated rape in Haiti along with local discontent over the mission and its role in the overthrow of the democratically elected government made every allegation against MINUSTAH particularly potent. Of particular frustration to local advocates has been the treatment of sexual assault survivors who have struggled to find justice within the UN reporting system.

Numerous reports have also highlighted the difficulties that women who have given birth to children with peacekeepers have experienced in asserting their legal rights, obtaining child support, and holding the fathers accountable legally and economically for their children. In MINUSTAH's 13 years, dozens of women gave birth to children fathered by peacekeepers. While many were in romantic relationships with the peacekeeper, some of these births resulted from

sexual assaults, prostitution, or transactional sex (in which the woman or girl was given food, jobs, or other items in exchange for sex). More than a dozen women have pursued paternity cases against peacekeepers who refused to support their children after returning to their home countries. Few have received support, despite judgments in their favor within the Haitian court system. In early 2017, women's advocates in Haiti reported a rare victory when UN officials announced that a one-time financial payment of USD \$45,243 had been made to a woman living in Leogane who gave birth to a child fathered by a commander from the 16th Sri Lanka Peacekeeping Battalion (Dodds 2017). Though the woman was not raped, she was vulnerable due to her financial and social position, which made the relationship exploitative, and led to the commander being dismissed from the Sri Lankan military.

The Costs of Cholera

MINUSTAH's other legacy was the cholera epidemic. Cholera was unheard of in Haiti before an outbreak in October 2010, linked to poor sewage disposal practices at a United Nations base in the Artibonite department, located along the Meille River (Katz 2016; Tappero and Tauxe 2011; Piarroux et al. 2011). Though cholera was initially discovered in rural areas, within a month of the epidemic being identified it had spread into urban Haiti, as rural dwellers came to urban centers seeking medical attention, and as rain and flooding became worse during the rainy season, the situation became more critical (Burgess and Waananen 2013; Katz 2010). Highly populated urban neighborhoods with poor sanitation, shared pit toilets, and inadequate municipal services such as water delivery and rubbish removal quickly became breeding grounds for cholera infections (Barzilay et al. 2013; Schaaf 2010).

Within the first year, the United States Center for Disease Control (CDC) reported more than 470,000 cases of cholera in Haiti with 6631 deaths as a consequence (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2011). This was believed to an underestimation of the extent of the epidemic (Luquero et al. 2016). The cholera epidemic was primarily surveyed through information collected

in and by clinics or hospitals, which are part of Haiti's infrastructurally weak health care system; vulnerable populations including rural residents, those who were too poor to afford care, and those who did not have access to information about the seriousness of the disease may not have accessed care, leading to an undercount of deaths. Six years into the epidemic it was reported that more than nearly 800,000 individuals had been infected with cholera, with the number of deaths as a consequence of the disease exceeding 10,000 (Katz 2016; Russell 2013). Luquero et al. (2016) estimated a 2.9-fold increase in deaths in four sites (two urban and two rural) impacted by the epidemic.

Epidemiology studies into the origin of the Haiti cholera outbreak concluded that a strain of *Vibrio cholerae* was introduced into the country through human activity thus resulting in the epidemic. Results, although politically controversial, indicated a correlation between the arrival of a Nepalese battalion originating from an area suffering a cholera outbreak in Nepal and the appearance of the illness in Haiti. There were also allegations of the same troops illegally dumping waste tank contents into rivers, which are used for bathing and washing, which further led to the spread of the infection (Chin et al. 2011; Hendriksen et al. 2011; Piarroux et al. 2011). MINUSTAH was slow to take responsibility for the epidemic's origin, which contributed to a growing national sentiment against the mission.

Data from a longitudinal survey of Haitian households between 2011 and 2016 showed overwhelming economic and social costs of the epidemic.¹ In this study of 3000 households throughout Haiti, residents of popular zones were disproportionately affected by cholera; they were 6.66 times more likely to die of cholera than a resident of another zone (95% CI: 3.88–11.42). Popular zone residents were 1.99 times (95% CI: 1.73–2.29) more likely to report a cholera illness than those not living in popular zones. In addition to living in densely populated neighborhoods with few municipal services and poor sewage disposal, residents of these low-income zones were also more likely than residents of other zones to report that a family member or friend from the provinces

stayed in their home while seeking treatment for cholera.

Of all households surveyed, more than three-quarters (n=2280; 76.0%) lacked regular access to potable drinking water. Access to clean water was an even greater problem in popular zones where only one of every ten households said they had regular access to treated drinking water during the previous month. Handwashing after using the toilet was practiced less than 15% of residents surveyed in 2011; though this increased to 18.6% of respondents by June of 2016. Residents of all urban areas said they struggled to access health care services to diagnose or treat cholera. Nearly one-third of those who reported confirmed cases of cholera reported that the clinical diagnosis was delayed for 12 h or more after exhibiting serious symptoms because the household had no money to pay for medical care and/or transportation to see a medical professional.

The Direct Costs of Cholera

The costs of cholera included a number of expenses: medical care, home treatment, lost wages, transportation, care for children of ill or deceased caregivers, changes in household hygiene practices, funeral expenses, and paying for ill individuals and others in the household to repeat missed school terms. Most popular zone residents with cholera reported receiving medical care at a free or reduced-price clinic or hospital (66.7%), while residents of other zones were more likely to receive care from private doctors, clinics, or hospitals (85.0%). Few cholera sufferers reported being hospitalized for treatment; most were cared for in their own homes by family members. Figure 2 outlines the average costs incurred by households due to cholera illness or death.

Households with deceased members suffered the greatest economic costs. One man, whose wife died of cholera, put it this way: "I borrowed to pay for her to go to the clinic, for her medication, and for her funeral. I've sold all I have, and I have nothing left to sell. They might as well have tied a stone around my neck and thrown me in the ocean." Many respondents expressed fears that they would not be able to recover from the monetary costs associated with the individual's illness.

| | Mean Cost | SD | % of Average Monthly Household Income (\$110.04) |
|---|-----------|---------|--|
| Clinic/Doctor Fees, Tests & Supplies (including hospitalization) ¹ | \$131.88 | \$95.01 | 119.85% |
| Traditional medicine services ² | \$22.65 | \$7.50 | 20.58% |
| Transportation for treatment | \$29.26 | \$14.33 | 26.59% |
| Treating water (prevent spread to uninfected household members) | \$40.93 | \$30.12 | 37.20% |
| Medication, special foods/liquids, extra food to regain weight post-illness | \$60.02 | \$29.75 | 54.54% |

United Nations Missions in Haiti, Fig. 2 Average costs paid by households for cholera treatment per individual in US dollars

Funerals were by far the highest expense listed by respondents with respondents describing this cost as “crushing.” Funeral and burial costs averaged USD \$5491.34 (SD: \$3014.87). In addition to funeral costs, households reported paying for ambulance services to transport the body, formal and informal fees for paperwork and death certificates, costs for religious services after the death (in addition to the funeral; these services were often provided by traditional religious leaders), and transportation of family members to attend the burial. The average number of work or school days missed by ill individuals was 30.5 days (SD: 17.8 days). The average number of work or school days missed by adult caregivers of ill individuals was 19.4 days (SD: 15.1 days), while the average number of school days missed by children who cared for ill household members was 112.4 days (SD: 40.6 days).

Indirect Costs of Cholera on Haitian Households

Cholera-impacted households also experienced other indirect costs – financial, social, medical, and quality of life-related costs – resulting from the epidemic. Some populations, such as children, displaced families with limited social ties to their current geographic area of residence, and those renting homes without yards in the poorest urban neighborhoods, were all particularly vulnerable to these negative impacts. Overall, individuals from cholera-impacted households were more likely to report other physical health and mental health

problems, more likely to experience family dysfunction, more likely to report symptoms of depression, more likely to have poor nutrition, and less likely to report that children aged 5–18 were attending school than other households with children in the same age group.

Of particular concern is the food security of cholera-impacted households. When examining the food consumption of these households, it is clear that households which experienced a cholera illness were more likely to be food insecure and have inadequate nutrition in the 60–90 day period after the illness was first reported. This is likely due to the fact that cholera-impacted households reduced food expenditures by an average of 57.1% after the first cholera case in their household; the mean number of days that cholera-impacted households reduced food expenditures was 95 days post-illness. In addition, food budgets for other household members may have been reduced because special or extra food was purchased for ill household members. Additional or special foods, along with medications, teas, and herbal remedies prescribed by traditional medicine practitioners averaged \$60.02 (SD: \$29.75). This amounted to more than half (54.54%) of the mean monthly household income of respondents.

Not only did the cholera epidemic cause financial problems for its victims, but it has also caused numerous social problems to those affected as well as to their household members. Primarily, adults experienced fears of not being able to recover from the financial strain imposed on

them. Children and adult students were forced to leave school to care for ill relatives. Families were required to go into debt equal to nearly 5 years of the average household income to cover the costs of burial expenses. And families of cholera patients – whether the patient lived or died – had to make the difficult decision of paying for food or for the cholera-related expenses; food insecurity among families touched by the cholera epidemic was shockingly high.

These findings highlight the clear economic, social, and psychological consequences to Haitian households affected by the cholera epidemic. Though MINUSTAH did eventually take responsibility for the epidemic, efforts to provide financial redress focused on supporting institutional and government efforts to combat the epidemic. No payments were ever made to the families of those who died (Bode 2015; Concannon 2018; Pan American Health Organisation 2013; Walton and Ivers 2011).

United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (October 2017 to October 2019)

Following the closure of MINUSTAH in 2017, the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH) was created with an objective of completing MINUSTAH's mandate (Security Council Resolution 2350, 2017). The drawdown from MINUSTAH to MINUJUSTH was stark; the new mission had 351 civilian staff, 980 military police and staff, and 295 CIVPOL. Initially the mission was approved for only 6 months and was to end on April 15, 2018. Like MINUSTAH, MINUJUSTH's mission was to assist the Haitian government in security sector reform while promoting and protecting human rights. The new mission was welcomed by President Jovenel Moïse but rejected by actors from across the political spectrum.

Peyi Lok: From Football to Fuel

In 1993, it was a fuel crisis caused by international sanctions that had provided the impetus to force the military junta to the negotiation table,

but in 2018, it was another fuel crisis that led to widespread civil unrest and delayed the conclusion of the MINUJUSTH mission. In February 2018, the Haitian government under the leadership of Jovenel Moïse, signed a comprehensive voluntary agreement to improve tax collection and reduce government expenditures by, among other things, eliminating a national subsidy on fuel. This decision, made with the approval of the president, emerged from the March 2017 “roadmap” of priorities presented to government ministers by the prime minister in consultation with the president and MINUSTAH advisors.

The officials involved in the decision, notably the Minister of Finance, and the Minister of Commerce and Industry, announced the agreement but declined to announce the date on which government fuel subsidies would end. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) agreement received little attention in the press and most Haitians were unaware of pending changes or how it would impact their daily lives. Electricity in Haiti is provided by a centralized government run utility company, *Electricité d'Haïti* (EDH), and most people live in homes which do not receive any electricity. Even those homes that are connected to EDH do not receive predictable or abundant electricity. Electricity is turned on in rotating grids for 4–8 h per day with some rare neighborhoods receiving priority for additional electricity and others going without any electricity at all for weeks or months at a time.

Haitians cope with the limited access to power by using alternative sources. Though use of wind and solar power is rare, it is increasing. Most homes are lit with glass kerosene lamps, the fuel for which was subsidized at 51% under the current system. Families and businesses which can afford to do so opt for gas or diesel generators which they connect to cobbled-together (and frequently dangerous) electrical systems that use an inverter to charge a series of car batteries. Depending on the quality and quantity of the batteries and the inverter, and strength of the generator, a gallon of gas or diesel in the generator can provide 2–10 h of electricity for lights, a refrigerator, charging phones, or running a fan. The price of gasoline would increase by 38%

without the subsidy that was in place at the time, while the cost of diesel would go up by 47%.

The price of fuel at the pump, which includes taxes and fees, is set by the Haitian government each year and included in the national budget. In 2006, then President Rene Prèval signed the PetroCaribe agreement under which Venezuela met most of Haiti's petroleum needs, paying for 60% of the cost of the fuel upfront and the remainder over 25 years at 1% interest. The Haitian government then acts as a broker, reselling the fuel to the four major companies that in turn supply the country's gas stations and airports. The private companies pay upfront from the fuel they are receiving and resell it at set prices.

The funds generated by the PetroCaribe agreement were to be used by the central government for infrastructure and development projects and under Prèval they were, with most being earmarked for education, health care, and disaster preparedness and response. Observers noted that PetroCaribe funds were easier and faster to disperse after the January 2010 earthquake, while foreign funding took months or years to arrive and primarily to NGOs or foreign entities, rather than Haiti's central government.

However, in 2012, after Rene Prèval's term ended, the ease with which the funds could be used led to a national scandal when the new president, Michel Joseph Martelly, was accused of receiving kickbacks totaling more than \$2.5 million, in exchange for awarding construction and development contracts which were supposed to have been subject to competitive bidding. Despite this, the Haitian government continued to rely heavily on PetroCaribe to supply most of the country's petroleum-based fuels through 2016, when the program became less active due to economic changes in Venezuela.

This was not the first time in recent years that Haitians had protested the cost of fuel. In February 2015, a national transportation strike shut the country down for 2 days as protestors demanded a decrease in government-set prices for fuel. At the time, gasoline was USD\$4.50 a gallon and diesel was USD\$3.55 a gallon. Then Prime Minister Evans Paul initially refused to change fuel prices saying the government "cannot lower the price of petrol. It's not that we do not want to, it's

because we are not able to." However, after intervention from abroad and prodding from MINUSTAH technical advisors, he later relented and announced a reduction in the price of gas and diesel by USD\$0.25 and USD\$0.20 respectively.

The price of fuel has long been associated with the high cost of living, or *lavi chè*, as it is referred to in Haitian Creole. In 2015, fuel prices were one of several bones of contention leading to national protests, along with concerns about delayed and irregular national elections that left the Martelly government ruling by decree. Elections were eventually held and Martelly's handpicked successor, Jovenel Moïse, became president in February 2017. Moïse, a businessman from Trou-du-Nord, pledged to balance the national budget and directed cabinet ministers to cooperate with international partners, including the IMF, in implementing structural changes to make Haiti more attractive to foreign investors. One of those steps, outlined in President Moïse's March 2017 roadmap of priorities, was the cooperation with the IMF and technical advising from MINUSTAH, including elimination of the fuel subsidies.

Knowing the incendiary potential of a public announcement that fuel prices would increase 38–51% overnight, the Ministers of Finance and Commerce decided to release the news during the July 6 World Cup quarter final game between Brazil and Belgium. Brazil's football team is wildly popular in Haiti; many businesses closed for the World Cup games with banks and government ministries closing for an extended lunch period so employees could watch the game. But the game ended unexpectedly early and news announcements about the fuel price increase directly followed on most radio and television stations. Within hours, the streets were filled with protestors and makeshift roadblocks had been erected by residents across all major highways. Four months of protests followed. Schools and businesses remained closed. Periods of protest with demonstrations and violence-enforced strikes, called "peyi lok" (roughly translated as "countrywide lockdown" in Haitian Creole), continued through the following year. The protests expanded to include concerns about the economy, democratic rule, the departure of the UN mission, and concerns about government corruption. By the time

MINUJUSTH closed in 2019, 42 people had been killed in the protests, 17 of whom died in the 5 weeks preceding the closure of the mission (IFRC 2020).

Progress Toward Mission Mandates

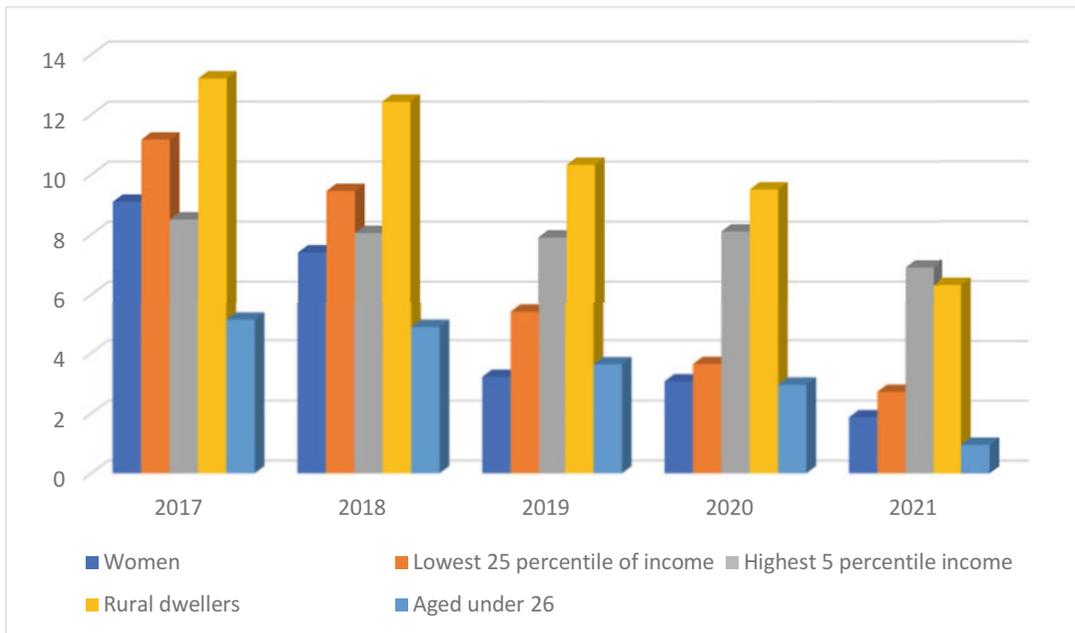
While the first UN mission in Haiti had been state-centric and designed to restore democracy through state institutions, MINUSTAH, and by extension MINUJUSTH were decidedly more diffuse in their approach to accomplishing their mandates. Resources were intentionally decentralized and often directed away from the Haitian state. In the case of CVR, this led to a wide portfolio of interventions that effectively reached some of the country’s more marginalized people. But as a road toward strengthening democratic institutions, at the end of the UN’s tenure, the Haitian people were particularly convinced that their country was a functioning democracy.

Longitudinal data from public opinion polls between 2018 and 2020 demonstrate decreased agreement with the statement “Right now, Haiti is a democracy” (see Fig. 3). Similarly, citizens were not confident that the HNP would be available to help them if they were needed protection

(see Fig. 4). It appears that, from the perspective of ordinary Haitians, MINUJUSTH was unsuccessful in meeting its goals. MINUJUSTH closed 15 continuous years of UN peacekeeping presence in Haiti on October 15, 2019.

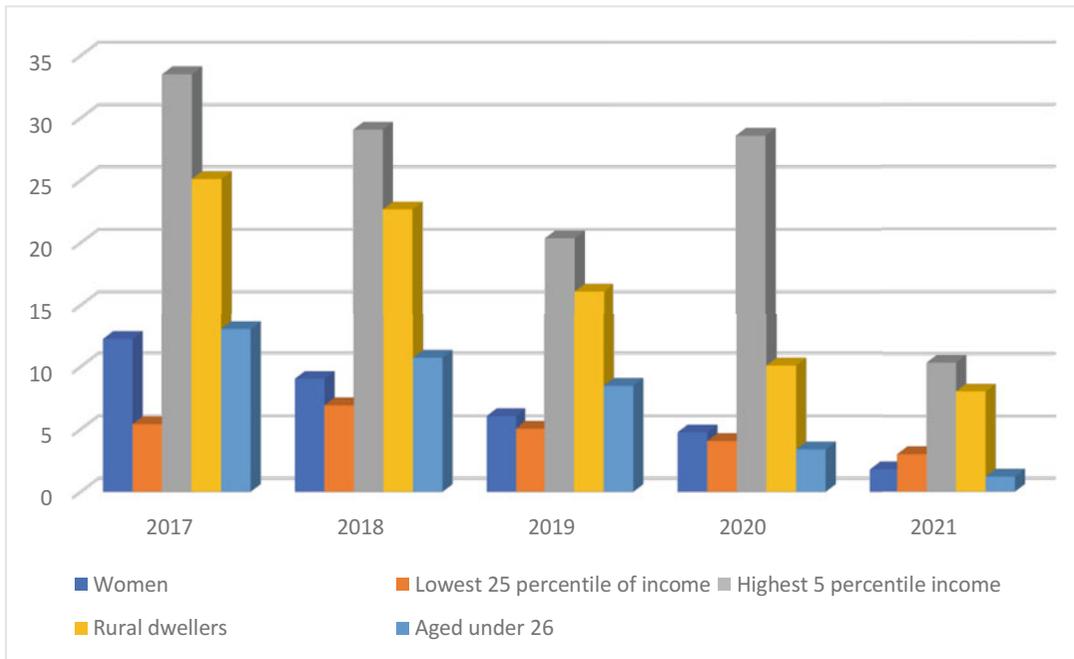
Notes

1. A longitudinal survey was conducted in Haiti using random sampling methods. Beginning in August 2011, representatives of households residing in urban areas of Port-au-Prince, Les Cayes, Cap Haitien, Gonaives, St. Marc, Jacmel, and Leogane were randomly selected and surveyed about their experiences with crime, their quality of life, and their ability to access basic human services such as health care. Respondents were then recontacted and interviewed monthly for 1 year. Households who reported a member or members who experienced cholera were interviewed every 6 months between August 2013 and August 2016. This section presents data from an assessment that applied a random GPS coordinate sampling approach to surveying local



United Nations Missions in Haiti, Fig. 3 Percentage of citizens agreeing with the statement “Right now, Haiti is a democracy”





United Nations Missions in Haiti, Fig. 4 Percentage of citizens who were confident that the HNP would be available to help them if they needed protection

populations. Specifically, households in urban areas of Haiti were selected for inclusion in the assessment. A total of 3000 households participated in 6 surveys, each 30 days apart, with a response rate of 90.4%. Participants included 1255 households in the greater Port-au-Prince area, 532 in Cap Haitien, 201 in Jacmel, 212 in St. Marc, 298 in Gonaives, 243 in Leogane, and 259 in Les Cayes. A two-member research team visited the selected home and randomly selected an adult over the age of 18 to interview. The same adult was subsequently contacted on a monthly basis for follow-up interviews via telephone through May 17, 2013. Households with a member who contracted cholera were then contacted and interviewed via telephone every 6 months thereafter through June 10, 2016.

Summary

The controversial and often violent United Nations peacekeeping interventions in Haiti spanned several decades, beginning with the

country's rocky transition to democracy in the 1980s, skipping through several coups, and finally ending with a short justice system- and policing-focused mission in 2019.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Conflicts and Natural Disasters](#)
- ▶ [Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration \(DDR\)](#)
- ▶ [Human Security](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding–Development Nexus](#)
- ▶ [Police Reform and Peacebuilding](#)
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- ▶ [Rule of Law as a Component of Peace Operations](#)
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- ▶ [Socioeconomic Justice and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Unintended Consequences of Peace Operations/Sexual Abuse and Exploitation by Peacekeepers](#)
- ▶ [Urban Violence and Crime](#)

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UNMIH

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Unrecognised State

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Urban Gangs

- ▶ [Urban Violence and Crime](#)

Urban Peacebuilding

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Introduction

This chapter is concerned with processes of peace that are situated within and constitutive of the cityscape. In particular, it locates peacebuilding in conflict-affected cities where divisions and barriers separate communities and bring about ruptures in the urban dynamic. Often these divides remain regardless of peace processes, national peace accords, and international efforts at peacebuilding. Cities like Nicosia, Mostar, and Belfast have proved remarkably resistant to liberal peacebuilding efforts aimed at reconstruction, reintegration, and reconciliation (Bollens 2011; Nagle 2009; Brand and Fregonese 2013). Here physical separation of communities has emerged

as a short-sighted and counterproductive solution to violent conflicts. These divided cities demonstrate the importance of the urban to peacebuilding and show how urban conditions can dictate the ability to build peace. Thus, the urban is proposed as a prism through which to view and understand peacebuilding processes localized in the city and describe whereby the urban conditions the construction, maintenance, or resistance to peace.

To rethink and re-theorize where peace takes place, the urban dimension needs to be added in order to ground peacebuilding in the city. This chapter suggests that peacebuilding needs to be rescaled to the urban and that such urbanized peacebuilding is better able to address causes of conflict at the urban scale, mitigate tensions in the urban dynamics and counter spatial practices in the city that uphold divisions and conflict, and resist reconciliation. The urban peacebuilding approach is situated in broader critical peacebuilding theory and at the same time hinges on conditions pertaining at the urban scale (Bollens 2011; Björkdahl 2013).

Urban peacebuilding is not peacebuilding in miniature. There is something distinctive about urban peacebuilding beyond merely general peacebuilding adapted to scale. Rather the urban focus creates a particular kind of peacebuilding paradigm that is not a mirror image of liberal peacebuilding at the state level. Instead it challenges the logic of peacebuilding as statebuilding and provides a pertinent critique of state-centrism and Westphalian territoriality as it raises new questions about the city as subordinate to the state and the principle that the world is divided into sovereign states. The city, where urban peacebuilding unfolds, is a political entity that is heterogeneous, densely populated, and open and permeable. As such, it occupies a central position within its wider sociopolitical context, and functions through mixing, conflict, accommodation, creativity, and fragmentation (see Brenner 2014; Lefebvre 1996; Sassen 2013). The divided city, which can be seen as a host to differences and conflict where identities become mutually exclusive and the basis for politics. However, the city is also a site where difference can be negotiated and transcended. Thus, these characteristics of the city

condition peacebuilding, and peace takes specific urban forms when being built in the city.

Emplacing Peace and Peacebuilding in the Urban

This chapter unpacks the multidimensionality of peacebuilding, emplaces peace and peacebuilding in the urban, and conceptually develops the notion of urban peacebuilding. By marrying critical peacebuilding literature and urban studies peace is connected with the urban, where the everyday unfolds, and thus provides a complementary lens through which to analyze peace and peacebuilding. Three concepts – the urban, urban peace, and urban peacebuilding – provide key interlinked, conceptual building blocks to situate peacebuilding in the urban.

The Urban

Rescaling to the urban means to disentangle the urban from the rural and the global. The urban is an umbrella concept embracing both the city and city life. It is associated with (1) the materiality of the cityscape; (2) urban dynamics, i.e., the relational aspect of city life; as well as (3) a spatial scale of operation.

The materiality of the cityscape captures urban places such as material barriers, peace walls, buffer zones as well as crossings, and open public places such as squares, streets, bridges, cafes, sports arenas, and shopping malls. In the divided Cypriot capital Nicosia, the material and political legacy of the conflict prevent peace from being built across the divide. In response to interethnic violence in Nicosia, a Green Line was drawn through the capital and across the island separating the two communities while creating a buffer zone on each side guarded by UN peacekeepers (Papadakis 2005; Papadakis et al. 2006). In Nicosia the division continues to run through the city center, and freedom of movement is restricted as there is still a requirement to formally check out on one side and then check in to the other side by using one's passport (Bakshi 2015). The zone between the checkpoints is often referred to as the "dead zone," "no man's land," or "UN land" (Papadakis 2005).

The urban also describes actor interactions within the closeness of the urban space (Magnuson 2011). Urban dynamics embraces aspects of human interactions and subjectivity, everyday life, and the performances of multiple dimensions of identity that are central to understandings of social life and relationships. In Nicosia, for example, an unexpected political decision to open some of the checkpoints in 2003 paved way for crossing the border between the Southern and the Northern part of Nicosia and facilitated the ambitions to increase mobility between the two sides. Yet, the communities continue to be separated along the lines of the zone, and the presence of “the other” in one’s everyday is rare. Crossings remain irregular, and the buffer zone retains its militarized character with the presence of peacekeepers, barb wire, and control stations. The bicomunal movement has built a home for cooperation in the buffer zone trying to create a shared space, but the bicomunal activities undertaken often fail to reach out to other sectors of society, and many Cypriots today show a reclining interest in interacting with the other, co-construct shared spaces and cross to the other side.

Like social interactions, politics operate differently at the urban scale (Murtagh 2002). Central to urban politics is the notion of propinquity, which does not apply at other scales (John 2003), but describes a particular political practice where the political leadership is close to its diverse constituencies and to what it administers and where politics, and thus peace and peacebuilding, extend way beyond the formal institutions into the realms of everyday life. In the late 1970s, the two mayors of Nicosia, Lellos Demetriades representing the Greek Cypriots in the South part of the divided city and Mustafa Akinci representing the Turkish Cypriots in the North, struggled to connect the two sides of the city. While both leaders looked for a solution to the political situation, they realized they also needed to deal with the immediate everyday problems of the city, reversing the decay and centrifugal growth of the city and ensuring that the collaboration on the sewage system would continue despite the frozen conflict (Demetriades, cited in Björkdahl and Kappler

2017; Akinci, cited in Björkdahl and Kappler 2017). Being close to their respective constituencies, they had a better grasp of the urban dwellers’ everyday struggles in the divided city, and they were able to use practical solutions to everyday problems as means of building trust and foster collaboration that proved useful for further collaboration to challenge the divisions in the city.

Urban Peacebuilding

Urban peacebuilding involves a number of place-based and people-related processes such as mediating intergroup competition over territory and resources; constructing safe, shared public spaces; limiting the spatial expression of conflictual discourses; opening up the city; and dismantling material barriers in order to build positive relationships, heal wounds, reconcile antagonistic differences, restore esteem, respect rights, meet basic needs, enhance equality, instill feelings of security, and empower the disempowered (Bollens 2011; Lederach and Appleby 2010). The post-conflict city is the arena on which urban peacebuilding unfolds.

Urban peacebuilding strategies address the urban scale of operation, and as such they focus on material places and structures, urban politics and institutions, and urban dynamics. Thus, urban peacebuilding aims to transform material places by grounding peace; to alter the dynamic of social interactions toward peaceful cooperation, integration, and reconciliation; and to change spatial practices in order to enhance mobility while realizing that the urban scale of operation is messy and difficult to disentangle from other scales and that peace is both multi-scalar and trans-scalar. More practically urban peacebuilding is realizing the peace dividend to the urban dwellers. Shared public spaces are regarded a core feature of cities, and they offer potential for peacebuilding as such spaces can stimulate social interaction to overcome divisions by assuming “a right of inclusion for all” (cf. Murtagh and Keaveney 2006; Shirlow and Murtagh 2004). Urban peacebuilding strategies interact with and are mediated by various forms of material and immaterial urban structures. Urban structures stress the functional character of spatial elements such as borders, boundaries,

frontiers, and their effect on cooperation and coordination of the partitioned entity in matters concerning the whole urban area.

The Nicosia Master Plan (NMP) is an urban peacebuilding strategy developed in collaboration between Greek and Turkish Cypriot urban planners to restore and revitalize the city as a city for all, both Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots (Bakshi 2015). Almost 100 local NMP projects committed to contributing to the revitalization of Nicosia as a whole including the restoration of churches and mosques on both sides of the Green Line have now been completed.

To alter the urban dynamics and spatial practices in the divided city, the urban planners launched the bicomunal Nicosia Master Plan Walk with the aim to increase mobility, unify the city, and enable its user to experience the city as one in its structure across both sides of the city. It is a municipality-based initiative that cuts across the buffer zone and to create a common space for people to walk in the city of Nicosia (Bakshi 2015; Demetriou 2007). Through material symbols along the pathway that guide the walker, the Nicosia Master Plan Walk brings the city together into a whole for the ones that choose to follow the path (Papadopoulou, cited in Björkdahl and Kappler 2017). It enables people to criss-cross from the South of Nicosia via the opened checkpoints at Ledra Street and walk through the UN-patrolled buffer zone into the Turkish Cypriot Northern part of the city where Ledra Street changes its name to Lokomaci street. The Nicosia Master Plan Walk takes the walker to a number of urban projects. Many of the projects are about preserving the historic architecture of the city within the Venetian walls, but the Nicosia Master Plan Walk also highlights two major residential rehabilitation projects: the Chrysaliniotissa and Arab Ahmet areas located on either side of the buffer zone. These two neighborhoods have long been neglected because of their proximity to the buffer zone, and they housed a large percentage of low-income households. As a consequence, the urban peacebuilding initiatives to improve the housing conditions and the provisions of community facilities have contributed to the revitalization of Nicosia on both sides of the Green Line. The

Nicosia Master Plan has had profound implications for the urban order in Nicosia and made the Old City more attractive and economically more thriving (Bakshi 2015).

Moreover, the opening of the Ledra Street crossing has made an impact on the urban dynamics. According to a survey, 57% of Greek Cypriots said that they visit the Old City more frequently since the opening. However, only 34% of Turkish Cypriots reported the same (Jacobson et al. 2009: 17). Thus, there have been some changes in spatial practices with the opening of the crossings. In that sense, the Nicosia Master Plan Walk can be regarded as a successful urban peacebuilding initiative as it made use of the mobility offered by the opening of the checkpoints to overcome both the material and immaterial barriers between the North and the South of the city.

Urban Peace

Without being based in concrete places, peace is simply an abstraction. Thus, peace conceived and achieved on a small scale is contextualized and tangible. The relational combined with the spatial is the core of an understanding of urban peace. Thus, urban peace is about socio-spatial relations that are always made and re-made. Clearly, the organization of place and space is central to the structure and function of peace.

Urban peace is closely aligned with plural forms of peace and emplaced in the urban. The concept of urban peace offers a positive epistemology raising the possibility of post-sovereign ontologies of peace and develops an understanding of alternative social, political, and spatial ontologies of peace (and barriers to them) (Rasmussen 2003; Richmond 2008). This concept of peace relates to an emancipatory project, reflecting both agency and the everyday. Such peace is understood as ever “becoming” and best characterized as a process – not an outcome. Urban peace is shaped by the locality in which it finds itself (see, e.g., Björkdahl and Buckley-Zistel 2016). This is evident when it comes to how peace is playing out in the city. The interplay between the city and in how it is constituted and how it functions “urbanizes” peace and efforts to build peace. The urban peace is an emplaced

peace that deals with issues that have “real” consequences to the urban dwellers, such as employment, housing, and local investments. Urban peace is about everyday practices that may transcend negative peace and that speaks to the ideal of the positive peace. Adopting an urban peace, however, must mean rejecting the universalist claims of positive peace, because the urban peace is a type of peace that is invested with contextual characteristics. By being contextualized urban peace may provide a particular space and horizon of transformation from war to peace.

The Nicosia Master Plan Walk helps highlighting the achievements of urban planners to build an urban peace, enplace the peace in the urban, and help materialize the abstract notion of peace. The Walk thus represents some steps toward the realization of an urban peace as it connects the two parts of the Old City together through the spatial practice of walking and it creates a presence as well as movement that challenges the infrastructure of the divided city. It almost makes the checkpoints irrelevant through its deliberate decision to make the process of crossing a part of the Walk and decreases the relevance of the visible and invisible borders to movement. However, the Walk is not used by the majority of the local citizens and is therefore restricted in visibility and not part of everyday practices. Nevertheless, it creates a key avenue to a process, which transforms the infrastructure of the city and, with this, the ways in which peace is perceived by the urban dwellers.

What Lessons Can Be Learned from Urban Peacebuilding in Nicosia?

The liberal peacebuilding efforts in Cyprus in general have not been calibrated to address persistent conflict dynamics in the city and the material legacy of conflict, and most of the efforts undertaken have not managed to reconcile the divide. One reason is that the efforts have been guided by a liberal peacebuilding approach which is based on a statist ontology and as such it has rarely managed to grasp and address the material manifestation of conflict in the urban space or the everyday issues that conditions the building of

peace. Manifestations of the conflict in terms of, for example, buffer zones freeze the conflict, and frozen conflicts evoke an intricate relation between conflict dynamics and urban dynamics, including sociocultural and subjective, spatial and temporal, as well as political dimensions of power that urban peacebuilding must address. In Nicosia the UN buffer zone and physical walls of separation contribute to the persistence of conflict and intercommunal tensions and stimulate oppressive political discourses, which polarize intercommunal relations. To transform the buffer zone has proved to be a real challenge as people’s everyday practices and perceptions have proved hard to change. Moreover, state-centric liberal peacebuilding initiatives often fail to connect to the place-based, everyday issues such as infrastructure, housing, and schooling and to improve the conditions of everyday life in multiple deprived areas such as the low-income household areas close to the buffer zone in Nicosia.

In contrast, and as the empirical examples of urban peacebuilding in Nicosia show, peacebuilding rescaled to the urban can better address urban conflict-generating practices such as political polarization and ethnic segregation and their material manifestations such as barb wire and sand bags that function as walls of separation that produce ethno-nationalist enclaves. Moreover, urban peacebuilding can better utilize urban peace-enhancing practices such as collaborative urban planning initiatives, movement cross divides, and bicomunal cooperation across conflict lines to generate a positive urban dynamic helpful to build a sustainable peace (Bollens 1999; Gaffikin and Morrissey 2011). As demonstrated in Nicosia, the urban peace depicts the dynamic relationship between peace and place, including sociocultural tolerance, diversity, and spatial, temporal, as well as political dimensions of power. In a sense, the urban peace has much in common with the cosmopolitan city, which stands in contrast to the conflict-affected and divided city. Urban peacebuilding, as illustrated by the initiatives in Nicosia, is a transformative strategy, which seeks to transform power relations expressed and represented in the urban landscape. When successful, urban peacebuilding changes

spatial practices and contributes to urban dynamics that enhance mobility, seeing the other in one's everyday, and access to space and politics. It is about encouraging wider social change through transforming the antagonistic relationship between the parties to the conflict and by negotiating the identity of urban communities in relation to place. It zooms in on processes of peace, which are situated within and constitutive of different spaces and places. Such strategies build peace where peace actually "takes place," addressing place production in identity politics and the spatialization of identity-based conflict.

Summary

Here a spatial perspective as a set of analytical tools has been mobilized to bring analytical clarity and purchase on where peace and peacebuilding are situated. It is because of the traction that such tools give to peace and conflict research they are central to the project of urbanizing peacebuilding. By rescaling peacebuilding to the urban, we are able to better understand how the urban conditions processes of peace and conflict dynamics. It has helped rework some key assumptions about peace and conflict and their relation to space and place. For example, it is possible to think of a spatially divided peace, i.e., two peace(s) co-existing in a divided city like Nicosia. A spatially divided peace challenges the idea of peace as undivided.

Through the prism of the urban, it has been possible to identify and map peace activities that frequently are under the radar of peacebuilding researchers, such as regeneration programs, opening up of boarders and barriers stimulating mobility, and everyday cooperation driven by pragmatic concerns. Urban peacebuilding, as shown here, transforms the cityscape, alters perceptions of space, and changes the spatial practices of urban dwellers. Urban peacebuilding is, as we can see from the empirical example of Nicosia, rooted in place-based politics and in local institutions that may provide a forum for negotiations across differences. In that sense, peacebuilding grounded in urban politics offers new possibilities for bringing together multiple political trajectories and stimulates co-existence of different groups. Urban

peacebuilding is thus related to the city as it comprises cosmopolitan spaces of tolerance and civility and where a shared civic identity can be developed. Moreover, it is possible to conceive of an urban peace as a potential incubator for large transformations of society and governance toward a multi-scalar and sustainable peace. While urban peacebuilding may offer a path to peace in some cases, it is not a panacea. In promoting an orientation that connects peace with urban space, the ambition is not only to critically examine existing peacebuilding practices and theories but also to provide a complementary approach through which to expand the conduct of peacebuilding.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Divided Cities](#)
- ▶ [Human Geography and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Peace](#)
- ▶ [Urban Peacebuilding](#)

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Urban Violence

- ▶ [Youth Gang Violence in Honduras](#)

Urban Violence and Crime

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Synonyms

[Favelas](#); [Slums](#); [Urban Gangs](#); [Violence in Poor Neighborhoods](#)

Definition

The definition of urban violence can have multiple meanings (Moser 2004; Pavoni and Tulumello 2018) – as expected in all discussions concerned to analyze violence – but for this entry, we follow the definition that urban violence “as the interplay between representations and the reality that people experience in certain urban environments. In other words, the city is generally referred to as a dangerous place because, the discourse says, dangerous populations live there in dangerous neighborhoods and make life unbearable for others” (Body-Gendrot 1995, p. 525). This definition is seconded by Pavoni and Tulumello (2018, p. 12) because “it can provide a further challenge to the ‘urban age’ thesis and its reductionist characterization of the urban as a mere question of (human) inhabitation” opening the analysis for a “whole array of other entities, practices, and relations that constitute the urban,” including the manifestation of violent crime. In particular, violent crime is a key obstacle to peace in some countries, like Brazil, El Salvador, and South Africa. Those latter cases will be better examined in this entry.

Introduction

Complementary to the approaches offered in the entries ▶ [“Divided Cities”](#) and ▶ [“Urban Peacebuilding”](#), the focus here is the social violence related to criminality experienced in urban areas, as seen in countries like Brazil, El Salvador, and South Africa. In these cases, we find a puzzling scenario of nonwar neither peace, in which coexist the rule of law, democratic institutions, an active civil society, but also violence index equivalent to zones of war in some urban areas. Also, are patent in those societies elements of structural violence (e.g., high inequality, mortality rates higher in suburban areas, limited public representation of low-income classes) and cultural violence (e.g., prejudice against minorities, blacks, natives, and also patriarchal values that depreciate the role of women in the society).

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, more precisely in 2007, demographic data was reversed decisively on the planet: the urban

population exceeded the rural population worldwide. Thirteen years later, 55% of the population lives in urban areas and in some countries these numbers reach more than 90%, as are the cases in Argentina and Japan (Ritchie and Roser 2020). This movement of populations to cities brings significant challenges for states in a setting of continuing high rates of population growth, in which young people are deprived of socioeconomic structures to develop their basic human needs (Brennan-Galvin 2002). When done in a disorderly mode, the rural-urban migration brings with it high levels of poverty, social inequality, and chaotic urbanization (Briceño-León 2008).

Those factors can contribute to growing crime rates in regions like Latin America and South Africa. If added here factors dependent of each country background like segregation related to cultural violence against some ethnic groups and state violence against poor populations, the urban violence can reach levels equivalent to zones of war, as explored in the entries ► [“Peace and Conflict in Brazil”](#) and ► [“Youth Gang Violence in Honduras”](#) in this Encyclopedia.

Giving the factors enumerated above would be insufficient to understand urban violence just as the manifestation of direct violence, often manifested through violent criminal offenses. The urban violence and crime are an “interplay between representations and the reality that people experience in certain urban environments” (Body-Gendrot 1995, p. 525). On the one hand, direct violence represents this “reality that people experience” in the cities, like seen in acts like robbery, rape, or homicide. On the other hand, the representations can be found in the cultural and structural violence experienced by disadvantaged in urban settings, as seen for example in the segregation of poor in slum areas, the gender violence, and the increased exposure to direct violence by the black and native population in Latin America and South Africa.

Caroline Moser reminds us that accelerating rates of violence and crime are by no means an urban specific problem; however, they are particularly challenging in urban areas (Moser 2004, p.

6). Besides, in general, it is in the “low-income urban areas that everyday violence is most prolific, and within these areas, some social groups are more at risk from certain types of violence than others” (Winton 2004, p. 166). The scale of violence in the poor areas or slums has become normalized, making millions of people to have routinized an everyday violation of their basic human needs (Moser 2004, p. 6).

Not surprisingly, the discussion on the effects on urban violence and crime on peace is more prolific in Latin America and South Africa, largely because of the interest of many scholars specializing in the study of violence in these contexts (see Winton 2004, p. 165; Moser 2004; Imbusch et al. 2011; Ferreira 2019b).

Given this setting, two aspects of urban violence and crime are explored in the following pages: first, urban violence and crime in post-conflict societies, followed by a subsection that explores the case study of El Salvador; second, the urban violence seen in nonwar neither peace settings (as also explored in the entry ► [“Violent Conflicts in South America”](#) in this Encyclopedia), as seen in countries like Brazil, Mexico, and South Africa.

Urban Violence and Crime in Post-Conflict Societies

While urban violence and crime are dependent on socioeconomic structural context “in terms of its manifestations, relative levels and the actors involved,” in the “post-conflict” or transitional societies these structures are disrupted or weakened more acutely. Consequently, such disruption witnesses an increased risk of “reactive” violence (Winton 2004, p. 179).

One of the central problems in post-conflict societies has been the reintegration of former combatants into society. When the state or international actors fail in the process of reintegration, what is seen is the immersion of former combatants in organized crime, resulting in a singular impact on large cities. This can be particularly seen recently in Colombia, in which the recent

investigations show that former combatants not involved in reintegration programs are more prone to be engaged in homicide and robbery activities (Peña and Dorussen 2020).

In this regard, Latin America is regrettably an example of how challenging can be urban violence when neglected structural factors to reintegrate former combatants. The region experienced several outbreaks of conflict during the Cold War, in which states and guerrilla groups served as proxy for USSR and US interests. Where the former guerrillas laid down their weapons peacefully in the peace processes in the 1980s to 2000s, the difficulty of being inserted into a market economy made them take up their arms again, but this time to achieve economic gain from illegal activities (Sampaio 2014; Themner 2013). In South America, several of these men joined the economic drug chain, as seen with the guerrilla groups FARC (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia) and AUC (Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia) in Colombia and the Shining Path in Peru.

In Latin America – and also beyond – the liberal peacebuilding process grounded in neoliberal policies neglected major adjustments toward the reduction of inequalities (Richmond 2015). The focus on reconstruction of democratic institutions and the rule of law, in addition to the ineffective adoption of neoliberal adjustment policies, has created the environment for the development of complex crime networks in urban areas. Consequently, a mass of young unemployed Latin Americans formerly engaged in armed conflicts found an alternative path to survive: to continue with guns on hands, not for political reasons, but economic survival.

In a seminal study, Nazih Richani (2010) adds the importance of dealing with structural violence to struggle against the difficulties of urban violence and crime in post-conflict settings. According to him, “states recovering from civil wars have limited capacities, and these capacities are further weakened arguably in the ‘short term’ by economic policies of structural adjustments (such as decreases in expenditures on public education and health and on food subsidies)” (Richani 2010, p. 451).

Furthermore, the proliferation of urban criminal and youth gang violence are hand by hand with “violent forces that accompany the geographic and qualitative advancement of global neoliberalism” (Hristov 2014, p. 34), which obscures that a considerable part of the rural-to-urban migration “is actually an intentional product of displacement (whether direct/forced or indirect)” (Ibid., 9). While the case of Colombia is extensively explored in the last years (see Taylor et al. 2015; Pearce 2020; Peña and Dorussen 2020), El Salvador’s case illustrates how a peace process that neglect the economic aspirations of the population can boost crime and urban violence, as analyzed in the following subsection.

El Salvador Case

El Salvador’s case – a country that in 2019 is ranked in first place in homicide rates worldwide, according to UNODC (2019, p. 17) – demonstrates the destructive relationship between a peacebuilding process that neglects structural factors and the violence in urban areas. In a search for reaching legitimacy, when El Salvador emerged from their 12-year civil war it was introduced representative democracy process to reincorporate former guerrillas into politics. With a focus on institutional adjustments, few investments were committed to improving living conditions in urban areas and the “peace accords did not redress the socio-economic inequalities that contributed to the onslaught of the war” (Wade 2008, p. 29).

After the peaceful (political) settlement in 1992, thousands of El Salvadorians searching for better life conditions migrated to the USA, reaching 1.2 million people in the 2000s. Nevertheless, the high unemployment among Latin immigrants in the USA created the conditions for a share of these people to engage in criminal activities. Between 1993 and 2003, the USA deported more than 130,000 people, 43,000 of them with a criminal record (Richani 2010). Divided into two large gangs, MS-13 (short for Mara Salvatrucha, a reference to the Salvadorian descent) and the 18th Street gang (M18), the mass of young people without socioeconomic perspectives created a complex criminal ecosystem, based

on drug trafficking, extortion, and violent governance in areas neglected by state – mostly, urban slums areas.

The results of this complex urban crime organization are shocking. As summarized by Richani (2010, p. 439), “in light of the rampant underemployment and the minimum wages, El Salvador’s system of violence serves as a mechanism of income redistribution through protection rents and robberies. In 2003, an estimated \$307m was transferred through robberies. The system of violence also provides business opportunities to the security commodity to which about \$411m is invested by private enterprises and individuals.” Not surprisingly, in El Salvador’s cities can easily be found vigilantes protecting shops and private properties with guns commonly used in war-scenarios, like rifles and guns caliber 0.12.

The gangs control through extortion productive chains that are key for El Salvadorian cities. The public transportation system – mostly informal in this developing country – is a key revenue for gangs, in which drivers and owners of small bus/van companies are demanded to pay weekly or monthly for M18 and MS-13 to continue to operate. Those who refuse to pay are murdered – as were 1,000 transport employees from 2004 to 2015 – or have their vehicles burned (Economist, May 21, 2016). The total cost of violence is nearly 16% of GDP, the highest level in Central America (Ibid.).

As can be noticed analyzing El Salvador’s case, the difficult situation experienced by the country with urban violence and crime can be understood within a historical background that covers a setting of socioeconomic marginalization, rising inequality, lack of access to quality education, a culture of violence, and the availability of arms (Wade 2008, p. 30). Added to these factors, the country had a peacebuilding process that gave little or no importance to the socioeconomic demands of the population. Furthermore, El Salvador’s case shows that the political peace process without policies to address structural violence can develop as a side effect a complex set of urban violence and crime, letting sustainable peace far from most of El Salvadorian citizens.

Urban Violence and Crime in Democratic Societies

Cases like El Salvador and Colombia can demonstrate the associations between political violence and urban violence. However, other important countries with high levels of violence and crime in urban areas present different characteristics: they are nations with consolidated institutions, representative democracy – albeit with some specific problems like low political participation of woman –, absence both of formal conflicts and armed groups contesting the status quo. Brazil and South Africa, just to enumerate a few, are some of the countries with these features.

While both countries do not experience war or formal conflict, their historical background and demographic changes can give us some clues on why they have such violent urban settings. In all cases we are referring to countries with high inequality, rapid changes in the movement of populations from rural areas to cities and significant background of violence and social breakdown.

The largest share of intentional homicides in the past 25 years – most of them in urban areas – were registered in the Americas and Africa (UNODC 2019). Related to this data, the World Bank found a positive correlation between the annual pace of urbanization and city homicide rates in a study of 50 countries (Nowak 2012, p. 2). In this regard, “marginalized and segregated communities suffer the most from the incidence of violence” (Nowak 2012, p. 3), being this social violence not only homicides. Armed robberies and assaults with firearms are also common in these cities, reaching in the cases of Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) and Johannesburg (South Africa) more than 10% of the population held at gunpoint in some moment of their lives (Nowak 2012: Fig. 1).

In the particular case of South Africa, the steady increase in the homicide rate in the twentieth century corresponds to a period of rapid urbanization and industrialization. Such social change “generated major social disruption, as millions moved from traditional, rural contexts to urban townships organized around different values and structures of authority” (UNODC 2019, p. 25). A similar context is experienced in Brazil, which

witnessed in the twentieth century growing poverty and inequality in urban areas like Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo. Just to give an example of this radical social change, Sao Paulo had a dramatic demographic change from 2.1 million to 11.2 million people in the city from 1950 to 2010.

Besides the demographic change that brings together social disruption and chaotic urbanization, the escalation of violence in countries like Brazil and South Africa also reflects the impact of cultural violence (“the symbolic dimension that legitimizes the effective and affective impact of direct or structural violence,” according to Pavoni and Tulumello (2018, p. 5)) manifested in prejudice, segregation, and selectiveness in use of force by state.

In South Africa the state’s apartheid policies of enforced racial segregation put in motion forcible removals that “destroyed communities and social networks, caused widespread trauma and entrenched poor conditions and spatial exclusion” (UNODC 2019, p. 25). In Brazil, repression is historically stronger in poor areas, as better developed in the entry ► “Peace and Conflict in Brazil”. There is a clear criminalization of poverty and securitization of poor areas (FBSP 2016, p. 21; Gledhill 2015), seen in the repressive policing by the state that violates human rights, increases the incarceration of black and poor population, and reproduces the structural violence (Ferreira 2019b). Moreover, in the particular case of Brazil, we have a police structure developed during the military dictatorship (1964–1985), in which the police have a militarized hierarchy and motto which reproduces authoritarian values in their daily routines.

To change a scenario of high violence and crime is key for countries like Brazil, Colombia, and South Africa the “realign of the population’s allegiance toward the state and away from the non-state criminal entities” (Felbab-Brown 2011, p. 5). The inadequate state presence opens room for illicit economies, such as the drug trade and even criminal governance.

Criminal organizations operating in urban areas, mainly in Latin America, have developed a kind of governance that evolves according to the

progress of the criminal business. In general, this development starts with a focus on the control and imposition of norms for managing illicit activities with a perverse alliance with the state through the corruption of state officers. In a second stage, such groups become more autonomous as they achieve control and impose norms that challenge the dominance of the state in a given social space, as seen in the development of Primeiro Comando da Capital operations in Brazil (Ferreira 2019a).

Given this complex setting, there is no easy response to overcome violence and crime in the cities. Analysts and policymakers can work on developing new strategies not only for new approaches toward direct violence but also to reduce the structural and cultural violence that divide cities and social groups. To insist on *mano dura* approaches – as seen in Brazil, Philippines, and Colombia – is innocuous and only reproduces the violence against the poor and disadvantaged in historically unequal societies.

Summary

In a world that 14% of violent deaths occur in areas of armed conflict, 8% are non-intentional homicide, 4% are legal interventions, and 74% occurred intentionally – with significant share in urban areas (Geneva Declaration 2015, pp. 51–53) – new conceptualizations and analysis are demanded to address the challenge of urban violence and crime. This entry offers only a starting point to examine this important and emerging topic in Peace and Conflict Studies agenda.

Given that insecurity results from complex factors associated with structural violence, chaotic urbanization, and lack of social cohesion, “approaches to reducing urban crime and violence must be intersectoral and interdisciplinary in nature” (Alvarado and Muggah 2018, p. 57). This involves approaches that deal simultaneously with economic responses to illicit networks, development of public health, and also public policies dedicated to strengthening social bonds. Moreover, “reforming repressive and politicized institutions and changing cultural norms are vital components of any peace-building

exercise” (Wade 2008, p. 29). The problem of urban violence and crime demands new ways to think urbanization and inclusion policies to foster peace formation, learning from good practices and initiatives connecting civil society organizations and the state. In a world that is expected to 7 billion people living in urban areas in 2050 (Ritchie and Roser 2020), this learning process is key to build sustainable urban peace with a significant reduction of crime for future generations.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Divided Cities](#)
- ▶ [Peace and Conflict in Brazil](#)
- ▶ [Security-Development Nexus in Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Urban Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Violent Conflicts in South America](#)
- ▶ [Youth Gang Violence in Honduras](#)

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Use of Force

- ▶ [UN Security Council and International Interventions](#)

Use of Force in Peace Operations

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Definition

How and whether to integrate the use of force into United Nations (UN) peace operations opens up fundamental questions about their overall purpose. During the Cold War period, UN peace operations were only mandated to use force in self-defense and were lightly armed in their main role as providing “buffers” deployed to monitor cease-fires in interstate wars. However, when peace operations were deployed in internal wars, this attitude toward using force became harder to maintain, especially in the face of violence committed against civilians under UN watch. Since the late 1990s, the use of force has therefore become a firm part of peacekeeping doctrine as a last resort to protect civilians. Despite this, it remains inconsistently applied in practice. More fundamental questions pertain to resorting to offensive force in efforts to deter spoilers of

peace processes, often referred to as peace enforcement. Although first experiments in this direction in the 1990s failed and the practice was abandoned, it has resurfaced in the 2010s in the form of stabilization missions. Yet, doubts about the extent to which targeting specific conflict parties is tantamount to the UN giving up its impartiality, and therefore convening power as a world organization, linger unresolved.

Introduction

For long, their differing relationship to the use of force has provided the dividing line between *peace operations* (originally conceived of as peacekeeping, later also as peacebuilding) and *peace enforcement*. But since the 2000s, this line has become more blurry through the inclusion of more and more complex tasks into peace operations’ portfolio, such as protecting civilians. Emerging from the UN’s political practice rather than from the UN Charter, peace operations exist in the space between the peaceful resolution of disputes of Chapter VI and the enforcement measures of Chapter VII. This location is typically referred to as “Chapter VI ½” and is defined by three fundamental peacekeeping principles: consent of parties to the conflict, neutrality/impartiality, and the use of force in self-defense. While these principles were coined in relation to peacekeeping of the 1950s, they continue to set the contours for peace operations today, where they provide a flexible arrangement rather than a rigid structure. Perhaps not surprisingly, all three principles have encountered significant challenges as peace operations diversified to include more tasks, but especially so the use of force.

The Long Journey to the Use of Force

Attitudes toward how and whether the use of force should be integrated into UN peace operations have changed significantly. This has not been a linear development, but rather a relationship characterized by greater and further proximity. The first peace operation under UN mandate, the

UN Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) in Israel/Palestine (1948), only featured unarmed military observers. Even as peace operations became more formalized as a significant practice with the preparation of the first major peacekeeping mission in response to the 1956 Suez Canal Crisis (UN Emergency Force, UNEF I), peacekeepers remained lightly armed and were only mandated to use force in self-defense. The use of force was simply not thought of as a task to be performed by peacekeepers – not least because their deployment depends on host state consent and therefore strict adherence to the principle of non-intervention (see Article 2(7) of the UN Charter). This also neatly describes the core (and clearly limited) logic underlying peace operations during the Cold War period: conflict management. Peacekeeping was supposed to be taken literally as operations were deployed where there was *peace to keep*. Essentially, peacekeepers were in the field after a cease-fire agreement had been reached to create a buffer zone between warring factions and ensure that the agreement held via performing monitoring functions.

The lack of a use of force element as part of this traditional version of UN peacekeeping made these rather unique missions for its military personnel. This is captured by former Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld's quote that "peacekeeping is not a job for soldiers but only soldiers can do it." Peacekeeping's military tasks therefore require a change of mind-set: Brian Urquhart, one of the practice's founding fathers at the UN Secretariat, noted that peacekeepers do not have "[...] enemies [...] just a series of difficult and sometimes homicidal clients" (Urquhart 1991, 293; see also Levine 2014). Initially, peace operations were seen as a restricted and limited UN activity, and their lack of a use of force component contributed to peacekeeping being perceived as largely a low-risk exercise. A traditional UN definition reflects this, referring to peacekeeping as "an operation involving military personnel, but without enforcement powers, undertaken by the United Nations to help maintain and restore international peace and security in areas of conflict" (United Nations 1996, 4). The first peacekeeping brochure published by the UN in 1987 underlines

this perception by featuring a picture of a peacekeeper in uniform with a blue beret prominent on his head and a sparrow sitting on his outstretched hand (United Nations Department of Public Information 1987).

Yet, as conceptions of what peacekeepers were *supposed to do* altered, so did perspectives on the use of force. Crucial to this is a fundamentally different sense of purpose that entered peace operations in the late 1980s/early 1990s. So-called multidimensional/multifunctional operations, such as the UN Transition Administration Group (UNTAG) in Namibia, were not merely designed to manage a conflict or to "keep the peace." Rather, as can be seen by their increasingly long list of functions that included the organization of elections, human rights monitoring, and even temporary international administration, UN peace operations were now in the business of *conflict resolution*. These peacebuilding components did not automatically include the use of force. But its logic paved the way for the use of force becoming a bigger factor as UN peacebuilders began to be perceived as an integral part of resolving conflict situations.

The first key UN document to allocate the use of force a different place in a more diversified array of peace operations was an *Agenda for Peace*, authored under Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali in 1992. This document came at a period when the "new international atmosphere" represented by the end of the Cold War "[...] provided a concrete opportunity for the United Nations to play an even broader role in the system of collective security" (United Nations 1988, 19). An *Agenda for Peace* defined a range of mission options the UN could engage in to further international peace, distinguishing between peace enforcement and peacekeeping. Incidentally, peace enforcement is discussed under the heading of peace-making, separate to a discussion of peacekeeping in the subsequent section. Insightfully, an *Agenda for Peace* defines peacekeeping as "[...] the deployment of United Nations presence in the field, *hitherto* with the consent of all parties involved" (Secretary-General 1992, para. 20 own emphasis). In fact, the principle of the consent of all parties involved

over time increasingly turned into host state consent only, creating an opening for the use of force to enter peace operations vis-à-vis non-state actors.

In practical terms, the UN's first foray(s) into combining peace operations with a peace enforcement component, although kept somewhat separately from the main mission, ended in disaster. In Somalia, Security Council Resolution 794 endorsed a peace enforcement element as offered by the United States: "[...] action under Chapter VII should be taken in order to establish a secure environment for humanitarian relief operations in Somalia" (UN Security Council 1992, para. 7). While the majority of peace enforcement tasks were supposed to be undertaken by the US-led Unified Task Force (UNITAF), the Chapter VII mandate to use force in response to violations of the peace also referred to the UN Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II). In fact, UNOSOM II peacekeepers targeted specific conflict actors, notably warlord Mohamed Farrah Aidid, thereby departing from the neutrality principle (Macqueen 2006, 218). As a consequence, both UNOSOM II peacekeepers and US military personnel "[...] came under fire and were killed" (Baehr and Gordenker 1999, 84). While the infamous Mogadishu raid that led to the killing of 18 US Special Forces and hundreds of Somalis had been carried out under US rather than UN command, the general conclusion of integrating use of force (peace enforcement) elements as part of UN peace operations was resoundingly negative. For many commentators, such as Thakur, the offensive use of force threatened the very foundation that peace operations are built on as the UN risks losing its role as an impartial arbiter between conflicting parties: "[I]t is better in the long run for the organisation to leave with its reputation intact and capable of intervention elsewhere with the consent of all parties, than to turn into a factional participant, part of the problem instead of the solution, the object of armed reprisals and street demonstrations" (Thakur 1994, 410).

By the mid-1990s, the UN had abandoned the inclusion of peace enforcement elements into peace operations. Doctrinally, Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali reflected on this explicitly in his

1995 supplement to an *Agenda for Peace*. This document pointed to peacekeeping's problematic capacity limitations as the reason, but also to a more fundamental incongruence of using force while retaining the UN's neutral role:

[...] Nothing is more dangerous for a peace-keeping operation than to ask it to use force when its existing composition, armament, logistic support and deployment deny it the capacity to do so. The logic of peace-keeping flows from political and military premises that are quite distinct from those of enforcement; and the dynamics of the latter are incompatible with the political process that peace-keeping is intended to facilitate. (Secretary-General 1995, para. 35)

The failures of peace operations in Somalia and later Rwanda pushed the practice into crisis. But even the doctrinal turnaround on peace enforcement elements "[...] left tensions unaddressed and other questions unanswered" (Berdal and Ucko 2015, 7). Indeed, UN peacekeepers remained deployed in situations when agreed cease-fires were not adhered to and without meaningful political processes leading toward conflict resolution. The case of the UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in Bosnia Herzegovina illustrates this. It was deployed in 1992 with only a tenuous cease-fire in place, which most parties to the conflict did little to adhere to, let alone respect. Still, the UN Security Council kept expanding UNPROFOR's mandate multiple times in its first year of operation alone and included not only the protection of humanitarian convoys but also the creation of so-called safe zones, "a new- and undefined concept" (Netherlands Institute for War Documentation 2002b).

The creation of safe zones raised justified protection expectations among the civilian population, which the UN peace operation was both unable, in terms of its overall size and personnel, and unwilling to fulfil. The fall of the "safe" area of Srebrenica became the epitome of the UN's failures and highlights peace operations' deeply problematic relationship to the use of force:

[...] The UNPROFOR troops in Srebrenica never fired at the attacking Serbs. [...] Had they engaged the attacking Serbs directly it is possible that events would have unfolded differently. At the same time, it must be recognized that the 150 fighting men of

Dutchbat were lightly armed and in indefensible positions, and were faced with 2,000 Serbs advancing with support of armor and artillery. (General Assembly 1999, para. 272)

This quote illustrates how the limited military capabilities of typical peacekeeping forces made using “robust force” tenuous. But the unwillingness to use force was further connected to understandings of neutrality, another of the three peacekeeping principles. Here, the non-use of force was seen as a means to avoid being perceived as a party to the conflict, with UNPROFOR’s strict adherence to neutrality frequently mentioned in the Dutch review of the Srebrenica massacre (e.g., Netherlands Institute for War Documentation 2002a, 1099, 1134, 1156).

In sum, there were two main, and potentially contradictory, lessons learned from the use of force in UN peace operations of the early 1990s. First, including significant peace enforcement elements into UN peace operations is not only not viable but actually risks the very foundation of the practice. Second, future peace operations need to include more robust force mandates to protect civilians under the peacekeepers’ care in order to avoid another Rwanda or another Srebrenica.

The Protection of Civilians

Use of force considerations were prominent in the UN’s rethinking exercise culminating in the Brahimi Report published in 2000. Among its calls for a focus on prevention, more realistic deployments, and restricted and achievable mandates, the report also highlighted more robust use of force mandates to protect civilians. These passages are clearly written in direct response to the lack of such protection civilians in Srebrenica or Rwanda experienced under the very eyes of peace operations: “[. . .] United Nations peacekeepers — troops or police — who witness violence against civilians should be presumed to be authorized to stop it, within their means, in support of basic United Nations principles” (United Nations 2000, para. X). The recommendations included in the Brahimi report, while still adhering to

peacekeeping’s holy trinity of fundamental principles, connected the use of force to the protection of civilians as a new, emerging principle of peace operations. Importantly, the Brahimi report rethought neutrality as *impartiality*, understood as the adherence to unbiased rules, such as the basic principles of the UN Charter, “not passivity in the face of violence perpetrated by one of the parties” (Oksamytna and Karlsrud 2020, 5). As the report argues: “In some cases, local parties consist not of moral equals but of obvious aggressors and victims, and peacekeepers may not only be operationally justified in using force but morally compelled to do so” (United Nations 2000, para. 50). If UN peace operations acted impartially in fulfilling their mandate vis-à-vis all conflict parties, e.g., in protecting civilians, their integrity as a non-party to the conflict should still be preserved.

The UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) in 1999 was the first peace operation to explicitly include the protection of civilians among its tasks, and most operations mandated since then have included protection of civilians mandates (Bode and Karlsrud 2019; Breakey 2014; Hultman et al. 2013). While the protection of civilians also includes unarmed options, it rests on the military capability to deliver on protection expectations (United Nations 2015b, 28). Protection of civilians mandates therefore typically include variations of the following standard phrasing: “[a]cting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, decides that in the discharge of its mandate UNAMSIL may take the necessary action [. . .] to afford protection to civilians under imminent threat of physical violence” (Security Council 1999, para. 14). Arguably, the fact that all new UN peace operations after 1990 were deployed in intra-state conflicts also eased the introduction of the use force, at least on a doctrinal level. UN peace operations remain state-centric, being situated within an international system that still follows this logic, and securing host state consent (however tenuous at times) remains a key principle for the deployment of peacekeepers.

The integration of using force as a last resort to protect civilians has continued consistently on

a doctrinal level. Most recently, the Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) even elevated the protection of civilians to, at least, the same level as the “traditional” peacekeeping principles: “[...] these principles must be interpreted progressively and with flexibility in the face of new challenges, and they should never be an excuse for failure to protect civilians or to defend the mission proactively” (United Nations 2015b, X). Indeed, the years since the Brahimi report have also seen various efforts (United Nations 2015a, 2017) to ensure the effective implementation of protection of civilians mandates by “removing confusion and conflicting understandings” (Bode and Karlsrud 2019, 459).

But all of this does not mean that the use of force has been regularly applied in the practice of peace operations. In fact, a 2014 internal UN report argued that “the use of force [...] appears to have been routinely avoided as an option by peacekeeping operations” (General Assembly 2014, 1). Looking more closely at specific UN peace operations, for example, the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), underlines the uneasy place that the use of force still holds.

Since its creation in 2011, UNMISS resolutions have consistently referred to acting under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, the enforcement chapter, for their protection mandate. Yet, over time, drafters of the resolutions have found it necessary to re-iterate much more explicitly the connection to the protection of civilians. While Security Council resolution 1996 (2011) therefore “[a]uthorizes UNMISS to use all necessary means [...] to carry out its protection mandate” (Security Council 2011, para. 4), Security Council resolution 2187 (2014) introduces the protection of civilians as a new sub-heading immediately following the reference to Chapter VII and specifies to “[...] protect civilians under threat of physical violence, irrespective of the source of such violence, within its capacity and areas of deployment” (Security Council 2014, para. 4). Moreover, Security Council resolution 2187 (and all resolutions that follow thereafter) “emphasizes that protection of civilians, as described in paragraph 4 (a), must be given priority in decisions

about the use of available capacity and resources within the Mission” (Security Council 2014, para. 5). This greater, clarified emphasis as the mandate evolved signifies a felt necessity to make even more explicit the use of force to protect civilians – all necessary means in UN language – given that it had only been used reluctantly in UNMISS at that point.

The integration of the use of force to protect civilians has therefore resolved the issue of protection expectations in doctrine *but not in practice*. The reasons for UN peace operations’ continued failure to offer proper protection to civilians are manifold: they include, among others, a lacking capacity to fulfil expectations, deployment in increasingly complex and volatile situations featuring a plethora of non-state armed actors, unreliable state partners, having to cover vast swathes of territory, and also uneven understandings among troop contributors about what are the appropriate means of using force (Bode and Karlsrud 2019). As this list demonstrates, many of the factors that hamper the protection of civilians have plagued UN peace operations that included the use of force since the failed mandates of the early 1990s. Despite these practical difficulties, UN peace operations began to include even more significant use of force elements in the form of so-called stabilization missions.

Stabilization Missions

Stabilization missions are a more contested form of peace operation to follow on from the robust turn in the late 1990s and have seen use of force elements become more integral. Such missions involve the deployment of peacekeepers into hostile and volatile situations and include authorizations for using offensive force to neutralize specific armed groups. These armed groups are non-state in nature, given the backdrop of host state consent that still continues to hold as a key principle of peace operations. Stabilization missions are thus “[...] deployed in active support of extending state authority to areas controlled by violent extremists and terrorist groups” (Karlsrud 2017, 2).

The first peace operation to include a stabilization element was the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH 2007–2009), but stabilization began to feature more prominently from 2011 onward in missions such as the UN Multi-dimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). The Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) deployed in March 2013 as part of the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) is another connected development. Having been established in 2010 with a protection of civilians mandate, MONUSCO was heavily criticized for not doing enough to fulfil this, epitomized by the operation's failure to even respond to widespread rapes in direct vicinity of its military bases (Security Council 2010, paras. 8, 13, 36). Events such as these threatened the overall legitimacy of MONUSCO in the middle of a further deteriorating security situation, exemplified by the M23's seizure of Goma with little resistance by peacekeepers (Murphy 2016, 225). As a direct response, a renewed MONUSCO mandate in March 2013 included the FIB "with the responsibility of neutralizing armed groups [...] and the objectives of contributing to reducing the threat posed by armed groups to state authority and civilian security in eastern DRC and to make space for stabilization activities" (Security Council 2013a, 6). Composed of around 3,000 military personnel from Tanzania, Malawi, and South Africa, the FIB was characterized as a new, unprecedented step in UN peacekeeping activities at the time (Boissoneault 2013). We can clearly see how the FIB logic has seeped into stabilization missions. In the Security Council's 2013 authorization for MINUSMA in Mali, it specified that the peace operation should act "in support of the transitional authorities of Mali, to stabilize the key population centers [...], to deter threats and take active steps to prevent the return of armed elements to those areas" (Security Council 2013b, para. 16 ia).

This integration of using force offensively to target spoilers of peace processes has triggered significant discussions about its rightful place within peace operations on both practical and fundamental accounts. Practically, peacekeeping

troops are not equipped for these mandates in terms of capacity and rules of engagement. With stabilization mission mandates, the violent targeting of peacekeepers has increased: from 2013 to 2017, "[...] 195 personnel in United Nations peacekeeping missions have been killed by acts of violence, more than during any other 5-year period in history" (Dos Santos Cruz et al. 2017, executive summary). MINUSMA stands out with 208 fatalities from 2013 to 2019 (United Nations 2019), while many peacekeepers in Mali have been killed in so-called malicious attacks "[...] involving improvised road bombs and targeted attacks" (van der Lijn and Smit 2015, 8). A well-publicized report co-authored by a former UN force commander used these numbers to argue for the necessity of more significant use of force postures in UN peace operations: "unfortunately, hostile forces do not understand a language other than force" (Dos Santos Cruz et al. 2017, executive summary). Of course, presenting this as the only natural consequence has been vigorously disputed – not only because it may imperil peacekeepers' lives even further but also because it may jeopardize the UN's role in facilitating political progress (Hunt 2018).

Fundamentally, military contingents of peace operations that use offensive force against "spoilers" of the peace process risk the UN's independence and impartiality and therefore the bedrock of the world organization's convening power. Acting in this way, the UN might increasingly be perceived as a party to the conflict *taking sides* rather than as an impartial force – and events in connection to MINUSMA already point in this direction (Karlsrud 2015). These debates are remarkably similar to the first inclusion of peace enforcement elements in the mid-1990s, therefore pointing to intractable questions pertaining to including use of force in this way.

A particularly controversial use of force aspect concerns the blending of counterterrorist elements into stabilization missions. Key doctrinal documents for UN peace operations, such as the 2015 HIPPO report and the 2018 report of the Special Committee on Peace Operations (C34) clearly affirm "[...] that United Nations peacekeeping missions are neither suited for nor equipped to

engage in counter-terrorist operations” (United Nations 2018, para. 68). Still, it is notable that in a period of increased competition among the permanent five members of the UN Security Council from 2011 onward, the organ still established five new peace operations from 2011 to 2013. Most of these operations, in particular MONUSCO, MINUSMA, and the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), include stabilization and peace enforcement approaches, as well as counterterrorist elements. This triggers three observations, especially vis-à-vis counterterrorism aspects: First, it seems logical, from a UN Security Council decision-making perspective, that peace operations have seen the introduction of counterterrorism issues as this is one of the few thematic areas where the P-5 appear to share interests (Gowan 2018; Wiuff Moe and Stepputat 2018). Second, the return of “traditional” troop contributing countries such as small and middle powers like Canada, Norway, or Denmark also pushes UN peace operations in the direction of a strategic shift toward counterterrorism (Karlsrud 2019). Third, and looking beyond the mid-2010s, in a period of budget constraints, not least because of the growing restraint, there may be financial incentives to align peace operations more closely with the counterterrorism agenda to secure additional sources of funding. Taken together, these observations signal firmer alignment of use of force mandates into peace operations for the time being.

Summary

The use of force has gone through various forms of doctrinal rethinking in relation to its place within the broader practice of UN peace operations. While peace operations started off with a focus on minimal force as well as its restriction to self-defense purposes only, it has become integrated in its offensive form in the latest type of peace operations, stabilization mission. Generally, and despite decisive setbacks of peace enforcement approaches in the mid-1990s, the doctrinal development has moved toward an official

integration of the use of force since the late 1990s and then primarily in connection to the protection of civilians. But this does not mean that the discussion on whether the use of force should be part of peace operations has been settled. In fact, fundamental questions remain, both doctrinally and practically. Many contingents in peace operations still remain reluctant to use force to protect civilians, even when they are clearly mandated to do so. Moreover, offensive use of force mandates of the type seen in stabilization operations have led to a more fundamental rethinking about the viable direction (and future) of peace operations as a whole.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Conceptual Evolution of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Peace Operations, Principles, and Doctrine](#)
- ▶ [Stabilization Operations and Their Relationship to Liberal Peacebuilding Missions](#)

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V

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Violent Conflicts in South America

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Definition

South America is a sub-continent of the Americas that comprises 12 sovereign states (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay, and Venezuela), the British overseas territory Falkland Islands (disputed by Argentina), and a French overseas department, French Guyana. Despite a nineteenth century mostly built on independence wars and social conflicts, currently the sub-continent is seen by some analysts and international organizations as a peaceful region, especially in terms of the low number of inter-state conflicts in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries (Kacowicz 1998; Holsti 1996; UNGA 2003; see also Kurtenbach 2019). However, if violence is studied beyond inter-state tensions and we focus on armed social violence (Pearce 2012), it becomes clear that the absence of conflicts between states does not mean a peaceful environment (Pearce and Perea 2019; Perea 2019; Kurtenbach 2019). Indicators such as homicide and violent deaths by firearms are very high and

equivalent to war zones, according to several studies of the UN agencies and specialized institutes (Ferreira 2017; HIIK 2019; UNODC 2019). This scenario is interconnected with a violent background from the colonization period (sixteenth to twentieth century), as well as the structural and cultural violence that put Afro-Americans, natives, and white European descendants in opposition. Moreover, international variables such as drug and arms trafficking trigger clashes between the state and organized crime and also victimize ordinary citizens.

Historical Background

After a violent colonization that enslaved Africans, killed millions of natives, and created a long-term social inequality between European descendants, natives, and Afro-Americans, in the nineteenth century, South American countries were established through wars and social conflicts. *Libertadores* (liberators) – mostly military local-born European descendants like José San Martín, Simón Bolívar, Manuel Belgrano, and Bernardo O’Higgins – led the independence from Spain and gradually defeated the royalist forces. In Brazil, the moving of Portugal’s royal family to Rio de Janeiro in 1808 to escape from Napoleonic troops paved the path for a peaceful independence in 1822. However, soon the country experienced social convulsions like Cabanagem, Sabinada, and Malê Revolt (see entry ► “Peace and Conflict in Brazil”).

Moreover, the nineteenth century also witnessed bloody and brutal wars in the sub-continent. Some of these shaped new borders and significantly shaped the region’s history. The Cisplatine War (1825–1828), in which Brazil and the United Provinces of the River Plate (currently Argentina and Uruguay) were opposed, resulted in a defeated Brazil and the independence of the Republic of Uruguay. Decades later, the Paraguayan War (1864–1870), fought between Paraguay and the Triple Alliance (composed of Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay), resulted in more than 350,000 dead, 80% of these being Paraguayans. Lastly, the War of the Pacific (1879–1883) pitted Bolivia and Peru against Chile

over border and sea control. While Chilean forces won and landlocked Bolivia, the latter demanded the neighbor country in the International Court of Justice. A decision was only made on this in October 2018, whereby Chile was not forced to negotiate a Bolivian exit to the sea (Van den Berg and Laing 2018).

Currently the sub-continent is seen by some analysts and international organizations as a peaceful region, especially in terms of the low number of inter-state conflicts in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries (Kacowicz 1998; Holsti 1996; UNGA 2003; see also Kurtenbach 2019). While the region experienced cases of tensions, such as between Colombia and Ecuador in 2008, the Peru-Chile maritime dispute, and the Beagle Channel dispute between Chile and Argentina in 1978, there have only been three conflicts or military disputes between countries in the region since the 1930s: the Chaco War between Paraguay and Bolivia (1932–1935), the war between Peru and Ecuador (1941, with short conflicts also in 1981 and 1995), and the Falklands War (1982). In the latter, there was a conflict of a South American country with an external actor, Great Britain (Kurtenbach 2019). This context creates a perception that the region is a *zone of peace*. Such zones are characterized by the absence of direct violence between states, since they share a degree of mutual trust that allows the prolongation of dialogue channels as the primary tool for solving tensions (Kacowicz 1998; Holsti 1996; UNGA 2003).

However, if violence is studied beyond inter-state tensions, it becomes clear that the absence of conflicts between states does not mean a peaceful environment. Indicators such as homicide and violent deaths by firearms are very high in South America and are equivalent to war zones (Ferreira 2017; HIIK 2019; Perea 2019; UNODC 2019). This violence is regularly linked to social inequality and is alleged to be driven by international factors such as drug and arms trafficking, setting up a transnational and structural problem domestically. This scenario contributes to a violent social setting, resulting in violent deaths and high criminality rates. In the following sections, we will focus on the contemporary violence and

conflict setting in South America. First, we will explain how the absence of political conflicts does not mean peace in the region. Subsequently, we will explore the cases of Colombia, Brazil, and Venezuela, three nations that share in common non-war neither peace societies.

Social Violence and Conflict in Today's South America

While Latin America's understanding of peace by governments highlights the peace between countries and the democratic character of politics in the region (Kurtenbach 2019, p. 11), to assert that South America is a zone of peace seems illogical when such statement is compared with the indicators related to the region's levels of violence.

As Jenny Pearce, one of the main Peace and Conflict Studies in Latin America researchers, states, when we regard the region, it is "increasingly difficult to 'name' its violences; they are violences outside of war, but with comparably high levels of casualties[. . .]." Regarding these violences, she explains that "some talk of armed social violence or non-conventional violence. More than any other region, Latin American violences require us to think about the meanings that our 'naming' of violence seeks to clarify and why" (Pearce 2020, p. 8). Furthermore, the annual death toll far exceeds those on conventional battlefields (Perea 2019), which constitute a key obstacle to the development of the region (Heinemann and Verner 2006, p. 2; Ferreira 2017).

Supported by chaotic urbanization and high levels of poverty (Briceño-León 2008; Imbusch et al. 2011), the homicide rate in South America stands out as the highest among all regions of the globe, together with Central America (UNODC 2019, booklet 2, 11). The homicide rate among males aged 15–29 in South America and Central America is more than four times the global average for that age/sex group (UNODC 2019, booklet 4, 34). Furthermore, the increase of almost 20% in per capita income has not influenced the homicide rate, which has remained virtually static since 1995 at an alarming average of 25 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants (UNODC 2011, p. 35, 2019).

While the homicide rates are quite different among the South American countries, the statistics regarding the high presence of diverse kinds of violence are clear. ("While homicide data is typically more accessible than other types of armed violence measures, it does not reflect non-fatal types of violence and crime, such as armed robberies, kidnappings, assaults, sexual violence, or non-fatal firearm injuries [. . .]. Furthermore, homicides are rarely recorded as such if the body is not found[. . .]. Thus, although homicide rates are useful proxies, they frequently under-count the actual numbers of deaths and only provide a partial picture of armed violence victimization" (Small Arms Survey 2012, p. 10).) According to UNODC, at one extreme, we can find Brazil, Colombia, and Venezuela figuring strongly in the top homicide rates. In the middle, but with higher rates than the global average, there are Bolivia, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, and Suriname. The countries of Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, and Peru present lower homicide rates, slightly below or around the global average (UNODC 2019, booklet 2, pp. 26–27).

Even if we regard countries with low homicide rates in the region, like Argentina and Chile, criminal violence is growing consistently according to indicators like robbery and car theft (UNDP 2013, pp. 52–67). The perception that violence is present in daily lives is also rising, reaching almost 50% of the population (UNDP 2013, p. 70). Moreover, as explained by Perea (2019, p. 255), the rates of armed robbery are the highest in the world. In his surveys on victimization, "65% mentioned violence against women and 63% against girls and boys." Perea estimates that this security crisis requires that "3.5% of Gross National Product be used to combat violences' lethal effects on collective life in the region." Thus, it is clear Latin America confronts a serious problem of violence that goes beyond direct violence.

This setting may indicate the need for understanding the region in terms of the concept of structural and cultural violence, as introduced in the 1960s and 1990s by Johan Galtung (Galtung 1969, 1990). On one hand, there was an uncontrolled growth of urbanization, going from 20% to over 80% in some countries in the last

50 years. Moreover, the Gini index that measures social inequality shows that an increasing income did not align with less structural violence. This ratio remained stable or even decreased in some countries from 1990 to the present day. Therefore, the unequal growth of income only maintained the high rate of violent deaths. Thus, social inequality clearly has a robust link to criminal and social violence (Adams 2017, p. 12; Kurtenbach 2019, p. 10; Kassab and Rosen 2019, p. 123).

At the same time, state violence is very significant, beginning from the very first years of European colonization and hampering the public's confidence in political institutions. Police officers have responded to criminality through the unwarranted use of lethal force (Adams 2017; Huggins 2002; HRW 2009). Torture and beatings are common in prisons even in countries with low homicide rates, like Chile and Peru. As Rodriguez (2014) comments, "[t]he region's prisons are notoriously brutal and overcrowded. The homicide rate in prisons in Latin America is three times higher than it is in the general population."

The social violence in the sub-continent is interconnected with another global phenomenon: the international trafficking of narcotics and humans (Kassab and Rosen 2019; UNDP 2013, p. 44). In the 1990s, it was not only lawful activities that gained momentum due to economic globalization but also criminal groups trying to develop several illicit activities, such as the trafficking of drugs, arms, and humans (Zabyelina 2009). Monica Herz argues that the tension between the domestic and the international levels reproduced by the Westphalian system promotes the notion that the region is peaceful. The domestic front, however, is marked "(. . .) by intra-state war and transnational criminality. The reality is insulated from the peaceful international realm where peace prevails. The region thus is peaceful as an international space" (Herz 2010, p. 603), but not domestically in the daily lives of most of South Americans. In this regard, the drug trafficking crisis has a key role.

Besides the high degree of social inequality and the normalization of violence generated by historical reasons such as a violent colonization, the region also has favorable climatic conditions

and extensive farmland for the cultivation of the raw material for two of the most commonly used drugs in the world: cocaine and marijuana. Adding the deprivation to which these groups are subjected and the result could not be different. The growth of crime operates in a supply chain model, starting with the producer of coca or marijuana leaf, passes through to purchase of illegal weapons, uses the fragility of borders to get into different countries, and culminates with the consumption of a new addict or the death of another youth linked to the drug war (Ferreira 2019).

In this chain of violence, there are a significant number of financial flows feeding the crime. According to UNODC, US\$72 billion – the equivalent to 320 tons of cocaine – is moving annually from South America to Europe and North America. While the estimated numbers of arms smuggling are scarce, it is known that US\$20 million in small arms are trafficked every year to Mexico (UNODC 2011), and a growing market remains strong in countries like Argentina, Colombia, Brazil, and Mexico (Kassab and Rosen 2019, pp. 139–140). Most of these are light weapons employed daily in organized crime (Geneva Declaration 2011).

The combination of these elements creates in the region a zone with several outbreaks of conflict. The Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research (HIIK) has shown that the inter-state and subnational conflicts have been ascending annually over the last decade (HIIK 2019). Among the countries in South America, only Suriname and Uruguay have not presented a relevant social conflict. In all others, there are indicators of violent crisis, and two countries (Brazil and Colombia) have limited war (HIIK 2019), while Venezuela shows alarming violence indexes according to more recent analysis on South America violence (Perea 2019; Perea and Pearce 2019; Kurtenbach 2019; Pearce 2020).

The data presented here not only indicate the barriers to reaching peace in the sub-continent, they also demonstrate how the flow of drugs, weapons, and money linked to transnational crime are important for understanding the atmosphere of conflict existing in countless suburbs of South America. To comprehend the conflict

linked to transnational issues and impelled by structural and cultural violence can be a new step to grasp the patterns of violent conflict seen in some corners of the planet and, in particular, the long path ahead for the peacebuilding in South America. In this sense, Pearce and Perea (2019, p. 6) highlight the importance of perspectives not often taken into account by peace scholars, such as “reducing violence and addressing the conditions of its reproduction, including the criminal economies that have emerged in the region and deeply penetrated many social and political as well as economic spheres of life, generating violences of all kinds.” Furthermore, as indicated by Jordan Ryan, new conceptualizations are required to understand cases like South America, given that conflict has changed and needs to be reflected in the future development agenda (Ryan 2013).

Non-war Neither Peace Societies: The Cases of Colombia, Brazil, and Venezuela

Another key element to understanding the violence in the region is the overlap between politically motivated violence and organized crime that began during the Cold War (Moser and McIlwaine 2006; Rubio and Ortiz 2005). Albeit with different degrees of violence and contexts, the clash between right-wing dictatorships supported by the US and guerrilla or insurgent groups with logistical and financial support from USSR was common in Latin America in the 1960s to 1980s. In some cases, the logic was reversed, and political left-wing entities were confronted by right-wing guerrillas – as was the case with the *Autodefensas Unidas* in Colombia.

Later, the end of the bipolar era and the recent transition to democracy in several countries provided as an outcome a contingent of thousands of armed men aware of their power and the possibilities that power unlocked for new illegal businesses. Soon these men entered the economic drug chain, as seen with the Shining Path in Peru and FARC-EP (*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia – Ejército del Pueblo*) in Colombia. Where the former left-wing guerrillas lay down their weapons peacefully, the difficulty they faced

in rejoining the market economy led them to return to their arms but this time to achieve economic gain from illegal activities (see more about this in Themner 2013; Sampaio 2014; Ferreira 2019; Peña and Dorussen 2020).

In this sense, the Colombia is a *sui generis* (unique) case. The country lived in civil conflict from the period of the Cold War (1960s) until a Peace Accord was signed in November 2016. It still struggles against high chronic violence today. It is clear that, currently, organized crime related to drug and arms trafficking is interconnected with guerrillas’ activities, as well as with demobilized troops, creating an environment of limited war (HIIK 2019). While the FARC-EP is engaged in easing drug trafficking, the former *Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia* (AUC) is the main group engaged in violence that is cooperating with drug cartels (HIIK 2015, p. 97). Furthermore, in 2014, neo-paramilitary groups like AUC were responsible for about one quarter of the country’s internal displaced persons, which totaled nearly 100,000 (HIIK 2015, p. 97).

More recent data shows no changes. While in Colombia the homicide rates declined after the Peace Accord, 130 demobilized FARC-EP combatants, and 300 social leaders were killed (Pearce 2020, p. 8). In an in-depth analysis conducted by Peña and Dorussen (2020) into the links between reintegration programs of former combatants and crime rates, they found that “the presence of former paramilitaries [mostly AUC members] who are not in a reintegration program is linked with increased homicide and robbery rates,” while “former guerillas, regardless of whether they are in or out of a reintegration program, are associated with increased robberies, but when they are in reintegration, guerrillas are associated with fewer homicides” (Peña and Dorussen 2020, p. 18).

However, beyond the cases of civil conflict – as seen in the clashes between FARC, ELN, paramilitary groups, and/or the Colombian government, as well as between Shining Path and the Peruvian state in the 1980s – the main factor victimizing thousands of people in South America is organized crime-related violence. Among them, Colombia, Venezuela, and Brazil have the higher homicide rates in the region.

In Venezuela's case, the country is first in homicide rates in the world (Kurtenbach 2019, Table 1), experiencing both criminal and political violence for different reasons. First, historically, there is a spillover from Colombian drug production into the country, in which the porosity of Amazon borders allows criminal organizations to enter into Venezuela to hide from authorities and to expand illicit networks. Moreover, Venezuela is also an exit point for Colombian production (Perea 2019), which over the years has triggered a better structuration of criminal organizations and an increase in their activities (OVV 2015, p. 3). The involvement of paramilitaries or their former members not involved in reintegration programs is also an important variable for detecting the extent of deterioration of the social fabric in the country. This is because groups comprising such individuals often use coercive means to perform drug trafficking business, as seen in the killing of eight people in November 2014 in Zulia state.

Second, the radicalization of Venezuelan politics, with clashes between leftist government supporters and right-wing groups, added more victims to the violence statistics, with more than 40 people dead and 675 injured in 2014 (HIIK 2015, p. 106). Just 3 years later, the violence between government and opposition worsened, reaching 120 killings in 2017; 15,890 deaths were related to delinquent and police violence (Pearce 2020, pp. 7–8). Despite its polarization and social crisis, Venezuela is not in a sustained armed confrontation between state and opposition groups (Perea 2019, p. 5).

Similar to the Venezuelan case, violence in Brazilian is complex and has multidimensional justifications. In the 1970s, the contact between criminals and political prisoners allowed for an exchange of experiences within the cells. Political prisoners were converted to organized crime, making possible the success of gangs like the Comando Vermelho – one of the most powerful Brazilian criminal groups that controls drug trafficking in parts of the country and even coordinates shipments abroad. Today, Comando Vermelho continues to be powerful, but other groups have emerged and compete for drug

trafficking in border areas, such as Primeiro Comando da Capital – currently the most powerful criminal organization in South America, with branches in Paraguay, Bolivia, and Peru – and Família do Norte (see Ferreira and Framento 2019). This emerging violence in the last three decades had generated clashes not only in urban areas but also in areas that had previously low violence rates.

One of the most comprehensive reports about violence in Brazil is the *Mapa da Violência* [Map of Violence], published annually by the Presidency of Brazil. According to the report, there are new configurations of violence beyond subnational capitals and metropolitan areas (Waiselfisz 2015, p. 55) that continue to contribute more significantly to criminal rates.

First, new economic growth areas attract investments to the countryside, but law enforcement resources do not increase at the same pace, leading to gaps for criminal individuals and drug trafficking gangs to exploit. Second, municipalities in border areas are located in areas that are strategically important for drug, arms, and smuggling activities. Third, cities in the arc of Amazon deforestation experience social challenges due to conflicts between native people and landowners, modern forms of slavery, and illegal timbers that create an atmosphere for violence and homicides. Fourth, predatory tourism in coastal cities provides a context for sex work and the drug market. And fifth, traditional violence persists in areas like the “polygon of marijuana” (located in the limits of the Pernambuco and Bahia states) (Waiselfisz 2015, pp. 55–56).

As seen above, while the violence concentrates in urban areas, a comprehensive analysis of Brazil's social violence indicates a more complex scenario, in which variables like inequality, crime, and deprivation are key to understanding the country (Schwarz 2019). Consequently, the statistics also reveal numbers similar to war zones. A study commissioned by the Brazilian government covering the period between 2001 and 2011 shows that, in that country alone, there were an alarming number of homicides – more than 500,000 – most of them linked to organized crime (Waiselfisz 2013). Brazil, which comprises

half of South America's population, currently still presents a brutal homicide index: 65,602 killings in 2017, according to the Brazilian Forum of Public Security and Institute for Applied Economic Research (FBSP/IPEA 2019).

Beyond non-war neither peace scenarios, in the cases of Venezuela, Colombia, and Brazil, elements of both the liberal and the authoritarian approaches can be found, in which elections are more or less fair and free but coexist "alongside high levels of impunity and clientele politics, corruption and discourses of fear" (Kurtenbach 2019, pp. 8–9). Political settings like this, in addition to creating high levels of social violence, lead to societies that experience non-war neither peace scenarios that are plagued by a chronic violence – a violence that not only "reproduces through all those spaces in lethal and non-lethal forms, but the levels of homicide are at least double the global average for five years or more" (Pearce and Perea 2019, p. 2).

Summary

Regarded in some academic literature as a zone of peace, due to its low incidence of armed conflicts and civil wars in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the nations of South America in fact experience a paradoxical context of non-war neither peace. Rule of law, democratization, and free elections do not guarantee a peaceful society with reduced violence levels. In some countries like Chile and Uruguay, the direct violence indexes (like homicides) are low; however, the sense of security and the violence against women and other minorities are high (Perea 2019, p. 255). In particular, Brazil, Colombia, and Venezuela are cases that present a blend of high direct, structural, and cultural violences that results in thousands of deaths every year.

In this context, a strict adherence to traditional assumptions of conflict circumscribed to political violence can cause a limited view of South America, in which the sub-continent can be considered as a zone of peace (Kacowicz 1998; Holsti 1996). The inequality, direct violence, and authoritarian rule by some states actually

indicates the opposite. In fact, the violent conflict in the region is not traditional, involving belligerent armies or groups, but is grounded in social inequality. The "zone of peace" perspective can generate imprecise analysis and the absence of more research on violence and conflict in non-war scenarios like South America. Moreover, it also affects the building of international public policies to overcome a social context of chronic violence.

Thus, while the peace among nations is a fact empirically demonstrated if violence is only regarded as being between South American states, we cannot neglect the perspective of everyday violence seen in urban and rural areas, stimulated both by a historical background of structural violence and transnational variables such as arms and drug trafficking. One cannot ignore the necessity of devising tools to build peace in this scenario, even if it is not configured as an environment of conflict in the traditional sense. Unfortunately, we all have a lot to learn about South America in this regard.

The quest for a positive peace is a dynamic process to overcome the structural violence; it will take decades – perhaps centuries – to reach a fair society. It cannot be settled abruptly through formulaic approaches but must be considered within the social context of South America. In an analysis that covers also Latin America, Perea (2019, p. 14) is precise in affirming that "the very unequal distribution of material and symbolic goods feeds violence, conflictivity and criminality in Latin America. The networks of illegality offer money, opportunities and status (amongst peers), which an unjust and unequal society cannot. Inequality feeds a profound sense of injustice."

To comprehend this kind of conflict linked to transnational issues and impelled by inequality, it is necessary to grasp the long path ahead for peacebuilding in South America. While the concept of peacebuilding can be regarded as out of context when the main concern is criminal violence, the statistics show a violence toll higher or equivalent to that of war zones. This leads to demands for the use of peace studies concepts in the study of violences like crime and endemic

homicides (Banfield 2014; Kurtenbach 2019). In this context, thorough interpretative analysis and ethnographies of violences are key to providing responses for a comprehensive peacebuilding for more than 400 million South Americans.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Colombian Peace Agreement 2016](#)
- ▶ [Peace and Conflict in Brazil](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding and Postcolonial Subject](#)
- ▶ [Search for Peace, the](#)
- ▶ [Social Capital and Peace](#)
- ▶ [Urban Peacebuilding](#)

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Visual Peace and Conflict Research

- ▶ [Auto-photography](#)

Voting Methods

- ▶ [Voting Systems](#)

Voting Systems

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Synonyms

[Electoral manipulation and prevention](#); [Electoral methods](#); [Electoral systems](#); [Refugee voting](#); [Voting methods](#)

Definition

A voting system specifies when, how, and for what purposes elections are conducted and how winners are determined.

Voting systems are procedures specified for conducting and determining results of elections and referendums primarily but not limited to selecting among candidates for office in governments, organizations, and companies. They specify when elections occur, for what purposes, how ballots are cast and counted, qualifications for candidacy and for voting (such as age, citizenship or organizational membership, identification, and residency), and details such as campaign spending, contribution limits, compulsory vs. voluntary voting, selection and responsibilities of observers, absentee or proxy voting, polling locations, access, electoral security and integrity, auditing, certification of results, and protests (Churchman

2013; Colomer 2004; Encyclopedia Britannica 1966 Vols 8 and 23; O’Conner and Robertson 2002).

Most voters want elections to be “fair” – but what does that mean? Apart from the obvious such as counting every legitimate ballot, Marquis de Condorcet (1785) suggested that a fair election winner should be able to defeat all other candidates one-on-one. Consider three voters choosing among three candidates for a single office:

Voter 1: Prefers the Candidates in A B C order

Voter 2: Prefers the Candidates in B C A order

Voter 3: Prefers the Candidates in C A B order

In this situation, there is no clear winner nor a way to reduce the candidates for a runoff election – the “Condorcet paradox.” Of course, such an outcome is unlikely in an election with a substantial number of voters, but it leads to a widely accepted definition of fairness that no method of determining winners should result in the defeat of a Condorcet winner.

Kenneth Arrow (1950) demonstrated that election results can change depending on how elections are conducted. Furthermore, when there are more than two voters and three candidates for a single position, it is impossible to design a voting system that meets all five criteria he proposes for rationality and fairness:

- The vote must assign all candidates the same rank no matter how votes are counted.
- Each vote should have equal weight.
- Every [serious] candidate should have a chance to win.
- A voter should not be able to hurt one candidate by promoting another.
- If every voter prefers a certain candidate, so must the result.

The conclusion follows that there is no single perfect system for conducting a fair vote. This explains at least in part why several major systems and variations have evolved, each with its own strengths and weaknesses (Brams 1982, Nurmi 1987; Saul and Johnson 2017).

Approval voting requires voters to rate each candidate either as “acceptable” or “unacceptable” or in some systems to abstain from voting either way on some candidates. Depending on the scoring method, either the candidate with the most “acceptable” votes wins or the candidate with the highest median score wins. It is easy to understand and use and works on existing voting machines. It eliminates the dilemma faced by members of minor parties of wasting their vote to express their true opinion. Claims that it will reduce negative campaigning or increase voter turnout are unproven, the opposite seeming equally plausible. It may produce a profusion of candidates, such as the California 2003 gubernatorial recall election with over 200 candidates, most running only in hope of gaining a little publicity and ego-gratification. It increases the chance of a tie. The most prominent use is the selection of the United Nations Secretary General.

Cumulative voting gives each voter a fixed number of votes, usually equal to the number of seats at stake, to distribute among candidates in any way desired, including giving all of one’s votes to a single candidate. Cumulative voting offers minorities the potential for proportional representation without creating special districts, but the complexities of real life do not ensure that result, primarily because everyone is the member not of one but of many groups (e.g., age, education, ethnicity, occupation, political viewpoint, religion, sexual orientation, and wealth). The only existing examples identified are in Delaware corporations that have specifically adopted the system in their charter.

Majority voting has two main forms: *single transferable vote* (see below) and the more common *two-round* system that requires a winning candidate to have a predetermined number of votes cast to win, most often, 50% + 1 of the votes cast. In some cases, a “double majority” is required both of the number voting and the number of votes required to win. Sometimes, usually for specific issues such as taxes or removal from office, supermajorities usually of 60% or 66.66% of votes cast are required to win. If no candidate receives the required majority in the first round, a runoff election occurs with a predetermined

number of candidates (usually the top two). Strategic voting (see below) in the first round is common. Majority voting is used in over 80 countries for electing a president and in 20 countries for electing the legislature.

Ordinal voting requires voters to rank candidates from most to least preferred. Calculating a winner can be complicated. One method was devised by Jean-Charles de Borda (1781) for electing members to the French Academy of Sciences. Each voter assigns 1 point to the least preferred candidate, 2 to the second lowest, and so on up to C points for the top candidate where C is the number of candidates. Points are summed and the candidate with the highest total wins. The method is particularly useful if there is a need to order all the candidates, such as the items for a meeting agenda, or simultaneously determining both membership and leadership of a board of directors. The Borda method tends to select generally acceptable candidates rather than the Condorcet winner. Voters are likely to rank candidates strategically by giving their lowest ranking to the most powerful rival of their preferred candidate. It is used to elect the Heisman Trophy recipient in American college football and to select the Most Valuable Player in American professional baseball.

Plurality voting, also known as *first past the post*, requires a winning candidate to have more votes than any other candidate, but not necessarily a majority. Unless there is a tie, it produces a winner in the first round every time regardless of the number of candidates. In multicandidate elections, approval voting (see above) is more likely than plurality voting to select the Condorcet winner. Fifty-eight countries use the system to elect their national legislatures, 19 use it to select their president, and it is common in US elections at all levels of government.

Range voting, also known as *ranked voting*, requires voters to rate each candidate by assigning each a score within a predetermined range from lowest to highest approval such as 0–5. The voter may give the same rating to several candidates. Range voting has potential for reducing two-party domination, eliminates cloning, and can run on many existing voting machines. Some argue

ranking will increase voter turnout and some that the complexity will reduce it. It increases the advantage of strategic voting (see below) and becomes confusing to voters as the number of candidates and allowable ratings increase. In some versions, voters may express no opinion about a candidate. This both makes ballot manipulation (see below) possible and necessitates establishing quorums to prevent a candidate with a few high scores and a large number of abstentions from winning. Common approaches include mean score, median score, and number of top ratings received. Abstentions either are ignored or included. Eleven additional, potentially contradictory, scoring methods have been used at one time or another. Range voting is used in Olympic diving and gymnastic competitions.

Single transferable vote, also known as *instant runoff*, is a scoring system applied to ordinal voting devised by Carl Andrae in 1855 and by Thomas Hare in 1857. It often is used when at-large votes are held for multiple seats. Election requires surpassing a quota determined only after all votes have been cast using a preset formula. The most common, the Droop quota, is $1 + \text{votes}/(\text{seats} + 1)$. For example, if 1000 votes were cast for 9 seats, winning would require $1 + 1000/(9 + 1)$ or 101 votes. A predetermined number of low-ranked candidates then are eliminated, and all of their votes are transferred to the first-round totals of the remaining unelected candidates based on the rank indicated by each voter. All candidates who now have 101 votes are elected. The process is repeated until all seats are filled. Party-controlled strategic voting is unlikely because the calculations required are complex and the needed control of voters unlikely. In some versions, all votes in each round above the number needed to win a seat are transferred to the remaining candidates. Which ballots are selected for the transfer seems ripe for corruption. First tried in Denmark in 1856, it now is used for some elections in Australia, Fiji, Malta, Nauru, Northern Ireland, Papua New Guinea, and the Republic of Ireland.

Weighted voting, also known as *statutory voting*, similar to cumulative voting, gives each voter one or more votes based on some predetermined qualification. Results usually are determined by

either majority or plurality rule. Corporate election in which individuals get one vote for each share of stock held is a form of weighted voting as is that in the UN Security Council, in which each member has one vote but any of the five permanent members can veto all the rest.

Electoral Manipulation and Its Prevention

Before an election, manipulation may involve redrawing electoral district boundaries either to concentrate or to diffuse the vote of the other party so that it wins fewer offices. “Cracking” aims to divide it among several electoral districts. “Packing” aims to put most of their voters into the smallest possible number of districts. Eliminating or imposing requirements such as literacy, requiring proof of eligibility and identity, and simplifying or complicating absentee voting or poll taxes have been used for the same purpose (Ellis 2007). Voting can be made more or less convenient by where polling places are located or even distributing false information about the times or places of polling.

During elections individuals may vote strategically to encourage a major party to take up a cause (Social Security and prohibition started that way in the United States) or, particularly in primary elections, to vote so as to weaken the opposition party in the general election. This becomes more likely when one party has an uncontested and another party a contested primary, whether by crossover voting if allowed or by encouraging party members to temporarily change their registration for the purpose. This is the potential flaw in allowing nonpartisan or crossover participation in primaries (Tideman 1987).

Voters often of an identifiable group such as a particular race or religion may be threatened physically or with legislative reprisals. Polling places in an area known to support a particular party or candidate may be vandalized or destroyed. Some voters may be intimidated by real or implied authority figures who suggest that they have no right to vote and will be imprisoned

or deported if they try. Attempts can be made to buy votes with offers of clothing, food, money, or a job, although ensuring people vote as paid often is difficult. There have been cases of retirement home residents being helped to fill out “absentee voter” forms, a practice known in Great Britain as “granny farming.” Such electoral corruption is common if government resources are dispensed through state patronage.

Turnout buying by providing transportation to and from polls and get-out-the-vote [GOTV] campaigns by political parties that consist primarily of phone calls to registered voters without suggesting how to vote are more ambiguous, perhaps politically neutral, perhaps designed to give voters a feeling of obligation to the party helping or encouraging them. Blind, illiterate, or otherwise handicapped voters who require assistance to cast their votes are vulnerable to having their votes miscast.

After the vote but before the counting, a candidate’s total can be reduced by marking some ballots for more candidates than allowed, spoiling them in some other fashion, or by destroying ballots completely. Its opposite, inflating the vote for a favored candidate sometimes is achieved by ballot stuffing or by individuals voting multiple times at different polling places while posing as voters still on the rolls despite having moved to another jurisdiction or by persons with a supply of falsified ballots and access to unwatched ballot boxes. Where votes are recorded through electronic or mechanical means, the voting machinery may be altered so that a predetermined percentage of the votes for a candidate are not recorded or are changed. Election results that are sent over the Internet to a center for counting are vulnerable to diversion to an intermediate website where votes are flipped and then forwarded to the counting center.

During the counting, selected ballots can be declared invalid or miscounted. In dictatorships and corrupt regimes, the voting process may be nothing more than a sham, officials announcing whatever results they want, sometimes without counting the votes.

Defenses against electoral manipulation of varied efficacy are available (Rominee 2018). They begin by cultivating a communal culture intolerant of and willing to report suspected electoral corruption. Secret ballots reduce the effectiveness of intimidation and vote buying. Transparency and strict custody at each phase of the election process from nomination of candidates to tabulation of votes are vital, and exit polls can serve as a deterrent to electoral fraud despite their imprecision, some voters being reluctant to admit how they voted. Not just totals but results from each polling place including numbers of invalidated ballots should be available for review using statistical methods available to identify results warranting investigation. National or international observers at polling places or during ballot counting help prevent fraud and reassure voters, although they are unlikely to spot voter suppression or manipulation of voting machine software. Machine accuracy can be tested using a simulated set of ballots before and after an election, and code signing can identify changes made to the software. Running several independent simulations can verify the integrity of those testing the machines.

Elections in War-Torn Countries

Participation in free and fair elections is widely if not universally recognized as a fundamental human right but is highly problematic for refugees who have fled their country or become internally displaced persons [IDP] because of war. Refugee and IDP right to vote in their country of origin regardless of location are recognized by 172 countries that have ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights [ICCPR]. Beyond being a right, voting reaffirms citizenship, maintains individual interest in the home country, improves the odds of their eventual return, and increases confidence in the likelihood of a stable peace (Goldsmith n.d.; Mandal 2003; Milner 2009; Shacknove 1985; Zolberg 1989).

Conducting refugee and IDP elections often faces unusual difficulties. Fighting often has

damaged or destroyed the physical and administrative infrastructure necessary to conduct elections – which in some cases never existed. Voting in person offers a clear target to any remaining dissident groups. Instead of bringing people together, elections sometimes exacerbate differences and prove harmful to peacemaking processes (Fisher 2007; Grace and Mooney 2009; Koser 2009).

Refugee and IDP voting rights stem partly from having been forced to flee rather than depart voluntarily. However, it is not always easy to distinguish them from voluntary migrants with less of a claim to vote in their former home country. The extent the right to vote rests upon intent to return to the home country or for how long intent qualifies a refugee to vote is unsettled. Elections for national office are far easier than subnational ones to organize because the latter require getting different ballots to different voters. Two solutions are common. First, refugees can be treated as a distinct constituency with its own representatives, risking creation of a special interest group at odds with the need to reintegrate those displaced and those who remained and depending on the nature of the refugees some possibility of entrenching ethnic, linguistic, or religious divisions (Kumar 1988; Lacy 2004). Second is doing everything possible to connect refugees to their home municipality, often without the customary documentation required. The number of polling stations required, their locations, and staffing them properly are problems to be solved given the number of refugees of a particular conflict and the number of countries hosting them. Finally, the refugees must be informed in advance of registration as to who may access their personal information and provided access to all campaign materials from all competing parties and candidates.

Some states hosting refugees may lack their own democratic traditions and contest the very notion of popular sovereignty. They may fear that providing voting rights to foreign nationals not offered to their own citizens may fuel unrest among their own citizens. Other hosts may seek to influence election outcomes based on their own national interests.

Summary

Voting using one of the systems discussed above is an excellent tool for making choices by groups ranging in size from a few people to many millions. It is intuitively understandable and results usually are accepted even by the losers. It has desirable side effects such as encouraging constituent interest and involvement in all levels of government. Election campaigns often provide new ideas and interpretations that improve government responsiveness, legitimize its actions, and thus improve its stability. These same effects extend beyond government to corporate, labor union, civic, nonprofit, and social organization elections.

However, voting is not suitable for all decisions, particularly those requiring technical expertise, privacy, rapidity, or matters that do not warrant the time, effort, and expense involved in holding an election. Among them are personnel decisions such as whom to hire, promote, or fire, whom to care for first in mass casualty emergencies, and routine managerial decisions such as purchase of customary supplies or maintenance, repair, or replacement of equipment.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration \(DDR\)](#)
- ▶ [Post-Conflict Elections](#)
- ▶ [Secession and Self-Determination](#)

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W

Waithood

- ▶ [Youth Bulge and Conflict](#)

War

- ▶ [Different Layers of the Afghan Conflict](#)
- ▶ [Peace Journalism](#)

War and Peace in Somalia

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Synonyms

[Civil war](#); [Conflict resolution](#); [Counterterrorism](#); [Organized crime](#); [Peacebuilding](#); [Traditional peace approaches](#); [Transformation of conflict](#); [Violence](#); [Xeer](#)

Definition/Description

This chapter examines how and why peace has remained elusive in the Somali crisis following

the events that marked the collapse of Siad Barre's regime in 1991. Although several studies have been undertaken on this case and a number of recommendations suggested, limited attention has been placed on the transformation of the conflict and the need to modify some of the peacebuilding strategies to cope with the changes. This study discusses how the conflict in Somalia has evolved, weaknesses in the previous peace efforts, and provides recommendations. It looks at the traditional Xeer practices in Somalia and its relevance in solving contemporary conflict.

Introduction

In 1960, Somalia (*Jamhuuriyadda Soomaaliyeed*) joined the category of the first African countries to gain independence following the unification of the previous State of Somaliland (Controlled by the British) and the Trust Territory of Somaliland (previously under the Italians) (Reyner 1960, p. 247; Lewis et al. 2008). The new state experienced a blowing wind of hope for new dawn after approximately seven decades of European imperialism. The early years after independence were marked by blossoming political, economic, and social growth. However, this would be short-lived as the impact of uniting the previously divided regions, colonial legacies, and the emerging economic challenges facing the new state combined with other political and social factors laid the foundations for preceding disasters.

In 1969, a successful military coup was orchestrated by General Mohammed Siyad Barre, who took control of the country and plunged it to further crisis (Ingiriis 2016; Ghalib 1995; Mazrui 1997, p. 6; Knight 1998). During his rule, Siad Barre made enemies both at home and abroad. He did not only emerge as a ruthless dictator known for fiercely dealing with anyone threatening his grip on power but also, Siyad Barre thrust Somalia into three major conflicts (Greenfield 1987, p. 65; Clark 1992, p. 110). These include the Ogaden war (1977-78) with Ethiopia, the Somali national government forces against Somali National Movement in 1988, and intense conflicts between several liberation movements composed of different clans and the Somalian national government between 1978 and 1991. Internationally, Barre's government was conspicuously involved in the Cold War rivalry between the Soviets and the United States. By 1991, a civil war erupted leading to his overthrow and the subsequent collapse of the Somalia government. Some scholars believe that Barre played a significant role in the events that followed his removal from power and the civil war (Ingiriis 2016; Doornbos and Markakis 1994).

Since 1991, the conflict in Somalia has evolved in nature, actors, strategies, and even objectives (World Bank 2005; Lewis 2008, p. 72). Such transformations have hindered peacebuilding efforts and continue to elevate the suffering of millions inside the country and across the Horn of Africa (Menkhaus 1996, pp. 43–45; Menkhaus 2009; Nyadera and Bincof 2019; Bowd and Chikwanha 2010). From the onset, militia groups from various clans have been engaged in the conflict, foremost against the government, and later after the disintegration of state institutions, civilian violence has been witnessed between clans with very severe impacts on the majority of the civilians.

The scramble for the limited state resources left behind after the collapse of the government in 1991 has created an environment whereby only the strongest can survive. Consequently, this paved the way for the rapid expansion of organized crime with new areas continuously being explored (Shortland and Varese 2016, p. 811).

Over the last two decades, Somalia has been on the spotlight for being a hub for terrorism, piracy, kidnappings, smuggling, child soldiers, and assassinations. Various local and foreign-based groups continue to profit from the instability. Territorial control, hijacking relief products, and illegal taxation have characterized the contemporary Somali society and became an important source of projecting one's power among the nonstate actors (Møller 2009, p. 12). While economic, political, and material stakes are high in the Somali crisis, clan alignment is still visible in the way the war is being perpetuated today. The chart below indicates that over 11,000 acts of violence carried out by different actors between 1995 and 2019.

From the second half of the 1990s to date, there have been changes in nature of the conflict in the form of a shift from the sporadic attacks between different clans and subclans, to a state of lawlessness and disorder. This has been facilitated by the infiltration by criminal groups who use the less governed territories to launch local and regional attacks (Shortland and Varese 2016, pp. 811–814; Menkhaus 2003, p. 406). During certain periods, regions such as south-central part of Somalia witnessed prolonged stability with the introduction of the Sharia courts which had been founded on Islamic teachings and principles as alternative to the mainstream judicial system (Møller 2009, p. 13; Barnes and Hassan 2007, p. 152; Murphy 2011). However, with time, the same Islamic Courts and its leaders became leading actors in the country's struggle for power (Lewis 2008, p. 85; ICG 2008, p. 2; Shay 2017). By the year 2010, a vast part of Somalia became subjected to the sphere of influence of radical militia wings previously affiliated with the Islamic Courts such as the *Hizbul Islam* and *al-Shabaab* but who opted to use force in implementing the Sharia Law (Dersso 2009, p. 6; Floudiotis 2010).

During the 2000s, increased efforts by regional and international actors saw the establishment of a Somali government referred to as the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) with the hope that a central authority which had been lacking since 1991 would help restore stability to the war-torn state. The mandate of the TFG was envisioned to extend through 2012 to establish some

fundamental institutions such as the Federal Parliament, an Executive, Public Service Commission, and others. The federal government was not however able to impose its authority in the whole country as the Islamic Courts which controlled the Southern parts of the country were reluctant to surrender power to the central government. In fact, it was the attempt by the TFG with the support of the United States, Ethiopia, and African Union troops to forcefully overrule the sharia law-controlled parts of Somalia that saw militia groups such as the al-Shabab emerge (Shay 2017, pp. 21–26; Mwangi 2010, pp. 88–90).

In 2008, there was a coalition government formed after a peace talk was brokered by former UN envoy, Ahmedou Abdallah. This agreement saw representatives of the moderate Islamist group; Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia and the government representatives agree to expand parliament to 550 members and provide room for ARS representatives and allow for the appointment of Sheikh Sharif Ahmed as the president and the appointment of Abdirashid Ali, as Prime minister. In 2009 an announcement was made by the government regarding its intention to reintroduce Sharia law as the basis upon which the official Judiciary would be founded. Despite this announcement, the violence did not stop in the Southern part of Somalia, which was under the control of radical militia groups that were in support of Sharia law. The government lost 80% of the territory; it was previously controlling in South-Central Somalia to different warlords and militias (Nyadera and Salah 2019).

As a provision in the “Roadmap for the End of Transition,” the transitional government paved the way for institutionalization of the Federal Government together with permanent institutions of governance (Bryden 2013; Hesse 2010, pp. 245–248; Cornwell 2006). The parliament was given the mandate to elect the president, and since 2012, two presidential elections have been conducted. Despite the impressive efforts that have seen Somalia establish a government today, attempts to end the conflict have not been very successful as the country continues to be involved in an intense intrastate cycle of conflict (Nyadera

et al. 2019). Between 2011 and 2018, there have been two presidential elections, efforts to reconstruct the national army ongoing, significant loss of territory by al-Shabab as well as other institutional reconstructions. Nonetheless, despite these efforts, attacks on key state installations have continued, calls for independence by some starts have persisted, civilians continue to be attacked in major cities, and governments operations are yet to be fully felt.

Key Peacemaking Efforts in Somalia

The conflict in Somalia has not gone unnoticed and has attracted the attention of both local, regional, and international actors who have embarked on several efforts to broker peace among the warring parties. However, these efforts have largely been unsuccessful as a result of several reasons some of which include the top-down approach that does not include the people, the failure of these agreements to address the root causes of the conflict as well as their inability to provide deals that all clans feel satisfied. Similarly, the peace efforts were marred by mistrust and lack of compromise among the different clan representatives. Below are some of the efforts made to bring the warring factions on the chart to discuss peace.

Djibouti Peace Conference (1991)

When delegates representing different groups sat on 1991 in Djibouti, marking the first peace efforts, many were optimistic that peace was on the horizon. The Djibouti Peace Conference was convened by the Djiboutian government to mitigate on militia activities in Mogadishu between the factions of General Aideed and Ali Mahdi. The conflict between these factions is estimated to have claimed 14,000 lives at the time, and 42,000 people were maimed (Lewis (2002, p. 264). Egypt, Italy, and other states in the Horn of Africa provided support in different capacities to the Djiboutian government (Lyons and Samatar 1995, p. 29). However, diplomacy reached hiatus when the peace conference was held, and this was attributed to the militia war between General

Aideed and Ali Mahdi and an absence of a strategic framework addressing the conflict between the two Hawiye militia leaders in Mogadishu.

Moreover, Mogadishu was thrown to the abyss due to the full-scale civil war driven by the militia leader who did circumvent the law because he was not accountable to any government institution. Indeed, the absence of government structures was a haven for impunity among the third-generation civil militia groups. Due to the nonexistence of a social contract between the state and its citizens, the Somali state disintegrated and completely collapsed, and a banana republic is sprouting.

Djibouti Peace Conference did abort because of the failed framework and principles of mediation. The mediation process did breach the elementary rule of mediation, which clearly states that mediation should not quest to promote one person or group's interests at the expense of another (Mayer 2004, p. 85). Fundamentally, the conflict had not reached Mutually Hurting Stalemate (MHS) where actors involved in the conflict see no chance of victory, yet the current situation is causing pain for both parties (Zartman and Berman 1982; Zartman 1983; Touval and Zartman 1985). General Aideed was still hoping to win the war, thus making it difficult for the process to achieve sustainable peace (Bercovitch et al. 2008, p. 54). The timing of the peace conference was not the best given that some actors (General Aideed) were still hopeful of a military victory against Ali Mahdi and forces loyal to Siad Barre. General Aideed had no incentives to attend a peace conference that could reduce his political, military, and economic influence in the civil militia conflict (Zartman 2000, p. 291).

Mogadishu was at that stage Balkanized into political and military fiefdoms of Third Generation Militia Groups, with General Aideed controlling a large part of the capital city. The Djibouti Peace Conference lacked credibility both within Somalia and internationally. Djibouti process did not have the aegis from Somalis who were polarized along with clan militia affiliations; some militia groups saw it as a plateau before initiating the next stage of the conflict. The international community was not ready to underwrite the

peace process politically as reflected in Sahnoun's (1994, p. 10) argument that when the government of Djibouti requested UN's support for the peace process, it was refused with no explanation except that the matter of Somalia was too complicated.

The Addis Ababa Peace Conference (1993)

The Addis Ababa Conference (1993) on National Reconciliation was convened by the UN based on what Bradbury (1994, p. 22) contends was an analysis of the ORH dramatic changes in Somalia brought about by the US Military presence. Lewis (2005, p. 270; 2010, p. 129) goes further and suggests that the UN Secretary-General at that time, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, took advantage of the relative lull in fighting which the US presence had produced and pressed ahead with the so-called "reconciliation" process. This analysis presumes that the Addis Ababa peace conference did not emanate from rational diagnostics of the conflict because the decision was informed by UN expediency. The failure of this peace initiative could have been sowed from the beginning. First, the arbitrary manner in which delegates to the conference were selected, which resulted in a dominant representation of the Mudug region, there was disagreement between the UN and the militia on the selection of delegates. This isolated General Aideed from the peace process, although his group controlled a larger part of Somalia. The remaining 15 militia groups signed a peace agreement that saw the creation of the Transitional National Authority.

The Transitional National Authority did not last long as the Addis Ababa process failure to place the root causes of the conflict on the negotiation table with issues, such as the fight over grazing land in the Mudug region, were not taken into consideration in favor of political expediency owing to the establishment of a central government. Conversely, an agreement on a ceasefire without a clear structural framework for the implementation was a shortcoming of the process; the peace process should have developed concise modalities for the cantonment of militia groups. A strategy of the cantonment and eventual disarmament should have been negotiated with all

the militia leaders, taking into account the security dilemma among the clan affiliated militia groups, and clan elders would have played a pivotal role in this regard. The approach ought to have been different from the tactics of isolating and marginalizing General Aideed's militia group (Lewis 2010, p. 132; Adam 2008, p. 99; Rutherford 2008, p. 146).

The Cairo Peace Conference (1997)

The governments of Egypt, Libya, and Yemen did co-sponsor the Cairo peace conference and was attended by 28 warlords and factional leaders. Elmi and Barise (2006, p. 40) observe that at the time, Somalia's warlords and factional leaders were separated into two groups: The Ethiopian-supported Somali Salvation Alliance (SSA), which consisted of 15 factions and the Somali National Alliance (SNA), which consisted of 13 factions and received limited support from Libya (Elmi and Barise 2006, pp. 42–46).

Ali Mahdi and Hussein Mohammed Aideed led the SSA and the SNA, respectively. The main objective of the Cairo peace process was to re-establish the nonexistent central government. The form and type of a future Somali government was a bone of contestation space by the international community, and no due consideration was given to Somalis. Elmi and Barise (2006, p. 40) allege that the act of walking out of the conference and rejecting its outcomes by Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed and General Adam Abdullahi Nur was motivated by Ethiopia. These two militia leaders were deemed to be critical role-players at the conference. These actions led to the collapse of the conference.

The Arta Peace Conference (2000)

The Arta Peace Conference was held against the background of the successive failures of the Addis Ababa and Cairo peace processes, and the hacking of the Somali state by a plethora of militia groups often supported by their clansmen. Ismail Omar Guelle, President of Djibouti, in January 2000 embarked on what Lewis (2002, p. 291) describes as a more ambitious, new and in many respects novel Somali peace plan. It was well received by the IGAD countries and was endorsed by the

USA, Italy, Egypt, and Libya. The peace process was named Arta, after a city in Djibouti.

It is estimated that 60% of the 245 members of the Transitional National Assembly came from Siad Barre's former members of parliament (Lewis (2008, p. 82). The legitimacy of the Arta process was questioned before its implementation began owing to several dynamics. Both the TNG and TNA did lack the support of the Somalis, recalcitrant warlords, such as Mohammed Qanyere Afrah, Musa Saudi, Ali Osman Atto, Hussein Aideed, Mohammed Dhere, and Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed. The parochial clan political focus of the TNG had been attested to be a phenomenon in its failure and reinforced by the perception that the TNG serves the interests of the subclan that gave it political backing (Dagne 2009, pp. 95–98).

The crumble of the Arta peace process lay in its lack of focus on conflict resolution and failure to create a mechanism to ensure that the underlying causes of the conflict were addressed systematically and coherently. The conference's central government creation before the resolution phase of the conflict was a short-sighted approach to the resolution of an intractable conflict which had shown resistance to military resolution. The conceptual framework for creating a government before making peace has become a defining feature of international diplomacy in the resolution of the conflict since the Arta Peace Conference, despite its shortcomings and failures in the Somali context.

The Mbagathi Peace Conference (2004)

The Mbagathi Peace Process sponsored by the IGAD was convened due to the failure of the Arta Peace Conference (2000). Lewis (2008, p. 91) observes that the Mbagathi process had repeated all the major mistakes made during similar and unproductive Somali peace processes. The most critical mistake was the unavailability of a roadmap for tranquility and reconciliations before the establishment of a central government. The Mbagathi process took place in a period of challenging international security threats posed by global terror groups, characterized by the 11th September 2001 attacks on the USA. The fact

that Somalia terrorist groups had begun taking advantage of the instability in Somalia to set up bases meant the US government would have an interest in the direction of the peace process was going, mainly due to the Bush Administration's global strategy and the war on terror.

Menkhaus (2003, p. 19) argues that for external actors, conventional wisdom holds that a responsible and effective state is an essential prerequisite for development and peace, a reasonable position enshrined in virtually all World Bank and UN strategies on development. For Somalis, the state is an instrument for accumulation and domination, enriching and empowering those who control it, while exploiting and harassing the rest of the population (Menkhaus 2003). Møller (2009, p. 14) observes that the relentless quest for state-building in the Somali conflict resolution process is predicated on the entire international system constructed around states to such an extent that it cannot handle stateless territories inhabited by people who cannot be classified as citizens of any state. Somali's case can be solved from a bottom-up approach where the unity needs to be forged among the people before embarking on state building. Somalia has relevant historical structures such as the diya – paying system that can be useful towards this course.

The Mbagathi peace process was compromised by a relentless emphasis on clan formula representation in the process. Innocuous clan identity became a cornerstone of instrumentalist politicians in their quest to occupy positions with the perceived proximate to wealth accumulation because ethnic conflict is all about political, economic, social, cultural, or territorial issues between two or more ethnic communities (Brown 2001, p. 211).

Several Scholars have attributed a number of factors as having led to the failed peace efforts. Nyadera et al. (2019) identify clan interest as a big obstacle to peace in Somalia. They opine that as long as clans continue to exercise the narrative of, we against they with no room for consensus then peace will remain elusive. Menkhaus (2010) argues that the Transitional Federal Government failure to take advantage of local structures established between 2002 and 2006 also

weakened the peace process as those institutions (including the Sharia courts) played an important role in enforcing peace at the local level. Other scholars have argued that the lack of funding to implement peace agreements in Somalia is also a serious challenge to the successful peacebuilding. Emphasis on top-down approach to peace is also poses a challenge in the Somali peace process as most view the efforts as externally imposed and not homegrown. This makes the locals less committed to the peace efforts.

The Promise of Traditional Peacemaking Approaches in Somalia

In several societies, the role of the tribal socio-economic, political, and cultural systems or community elders has been very critical and instrumental in solving and mediating a variety of social problems and disputes between local communities (Avruch 1998; Holt and DeVore 2005; Deutsch et al. 2011). The role of clan elders has been identified as a human source and a great advantage throughout history (Brock-Utne 2001). Equally, Tadesse et al. (2010) and Jama (2010) suggest that other members of society, particularly women, can also play a vital role in conflict resolution.

Indeed, the traditional Somali approach to mediation and conflict resolution, known as Xeer (customary law), has a long history and existed before the modern laws were introduced to Somalia during the colonial era. Since then, the traditional model of mediation (Xeer) has been identified by many scholars and within the Somali communities as the paramount justice system suitable for Somalia given the current orientations whereby the clan has become the main political organization unit, and the authority of the state has been lost. Xeer is an unwritten law which focuses on creating a long-lasting relationship among the communities by providing alternatives solutions to conflicts (Aden 2011; Prunier 2015). It is a unique yet very effective way of conflict resolution dating back several thousand years (Loubser and Solomon 2014; Hofmann 2002). However, the traditional approach of mediation is one option for stateless societies due to the

absence of formal law to address specific circumstances (Abdile 2012; 88). Given the complexity of the current circumstances in Somalia, customary law may be able to offer some critical contributions to solve and mediate the conflict, for instance, the case of Somaliland which unilaterally declared its independence from the rest of Somalia and Puntland an autonomous administration but claims to be a member of the federal state (Aden 2011; 3; Nyadera 2018).

In this section, the role of traditional or clan elders, their effectiveness in solving socio-economic and legal conflicts, as well as the mechanisms employed by the traditional elders to deal with these dispute processes will be examined. Sorts of conflicts and how (traditional elders) interpret and construe these unwritten laws will be extensively analyzed. Nevertheless, as the topic of this chapter highlights, we will also examine how this traditional approach helps to overcome the current conflict and their role in reestablishing such key norms such as trust and cooperation which are very fundamental in the establishment of an inclusive and more comprehensive Somali state.

The Configuration of Somali Traditional Structure

Existing literature on Somali society considers Somali people as one of the most homogenous societies in Africa characterized by one ethnicity, culture, common language (Somali), history, and the Sunni-Islam religious orientation (Aden 2011, p. 5). For this reason, many scholars and writers who studied Somalia during the period of trusteeship from the 1950s to 1960s argue and ostensibly believe that Somalis had a golden opportunity to establish one of the strongest and stout nation-states in Africa (Davidson 1975). Unfortunately, this has not come to pass. Since the collapse of state institutions, the indigenous instruments and mechanisms of conflict resolution and management have been in place and have saved the lives of many people. However, why these methods have been effective and did not collapse in conjunction with state institutions seems to be a legitimate question that needs to be addressed profoundly. Understanding the traditional Somali

societal structures, therefore, might help us find an answer to a part of the question.

According to British anthropologist, Lewis (1999), his studies on the Somali culture and history pointed out that the traditional structure of Somalis is systematically divided into three core features: clan (traditional social structure), customary law (Xeer), and clan elders (traditional authorities). These three are interconnected and interrelated with each other. Clans are the main source of traditional authority, which means each clan has its traditional elders or authority, while customary law stands as the common law which these elders or traditional authority use to solve disputes and conflict among the clans. However, it is important to point out that this three-fold traditional justice system existed before the arrival of the Europeans and has endured since then primarily because of their critical role in the lives of ordinary people. Before the introduction of colonialism, Somalis were a nomadic society in nature and with a simple life. Every person and family belonged to a certain clan, which was ensured survival in a nomadic atmosphere and culture. Clannism, therefore, stands as the definitive source of both identity and security. It is important and essential to many Somalis for security and social welfare. Hence, it is compulsory and obligatory to the member of the clan to safeguard and protect the dignity and honor of the clan (Putman and Noor 1993).

The clan unit has remained the most important bond and basis for identity among Somalis living in the rural and urban areas. Gundel (2009, p. 21) argues that the nomadic way of life creates a strong conscious and sense of attachment to kinship as they see this as a prerequisite to overcome existing and unforeseen challenges. It is this same way of life that also necessitates constant movement in search for grazing fields, pastures, and water, increasing the possibility of conflict between different clans. In order to ensure that such potential for conflict is regulated, traditional conflict prevention and resolution strategies were put in place. These traditional mechanisms are based on traditional authorities and unwritten laws that ensured not only prevention of conflict but also punishment and justice for perpetuates

and victims of violence respectively. Additionally, traditional approaches to peace in Somalia allowed for the formation of coalitions (gaanshaabuur) between weak or minority clans or the protection of minority clans by the dominant ones in exchange for loyalty (Gundel 2009, p. 22). Some scholars have also argued that clans facilitate not only one's sense of identity but also enable people to trace their decedent and primary lineage. In Somalia, this is done by following the male line from their father's name. The clan structure in Somalia is illustrated below;

Among these categories, the Mag-paying group is the most relevant to the ordinary individual's social and political life. This category stands as the organizational basis of lineage members that provides and ensures economic viability, social security, and physical protection. Additionally, it is the most stable and permanent unit in the traditional social system with the existence of an informal and unwritten contractual understanding among its members regarding payments such as fines and compensations. They tend to support each other in these sorts of payments, usually in the form of camels without conversing with whomsoever it is levied. The general principles and rules of mag-paying are known and fixed throughout clans and aim at maintaining and guiding the conduct of the members of the clan. For instance, the fine or payment for killing a man is a hundred camels, and that for killing a woman is 50 camels. Every member of the clan is obligated to obey the mag-paying system. It is a collective action, and compensations are paid collectively. The customary law (Xeer), carried out by traditional authorities or elders, is the main source and reference of this mag-paying system that governs and guides the norms, conducts, and interactions within and beyond the mag-paying community.

The Xeer System

The Xeer is defined as socially constructed norms aimed at safeguarding the social justice and security of Somalis including those in the diaspora (Fox 1999, p. 13) and essentially has commonly recognized principles that emphasize on protecting individual rights and requirements to

family and clan (Notten 2005, p. 375). The Xeer is mainly instigated as a mechanism to control and manage social relations and has two main units: *xeer guud* (generally accepted laws that has nation-wide applicability) and *xeer sokeye* (kin law that is employed and adopted by individuals or members of certain clans or subclans). Nevertheless, Xeer aims to provide law and order, to manage issues related to marriage, to establish reasons for war and peace, and most importantly, to establish agreements between families and clans that can facilitate the distribution and allocation of resources peacefully.

However, Xeer is supplementary with blood compensation (*diya*), and as such, both provide rules and regulations of punishment for misconduct (Leeson 2007). In the meantime, these principles and rules are obeyed by all Somali families and clans as a mechanism to overcome and end traditional disputes and conflicts between clans and for blood compensation (Kusow and Mohamud 2006). However, it is indisputable that Xeer has been and yet remains a core principle in forming social norms, obligation, and most importantly, expectations of the Somalis before and during the processes of state formation. Nevertheless, Xeer, along with Islamic laws, has remained the only legal structure in place for a long time in Somalia (Zartman 2000, p. 186; Notten 2005, p. 375). It is believed that previously, Xeer was secular, but has greatly been influenced by the arrival of Islam over time and now included various Islamic legal codes, principles, values, and norms.

Considering the maturity of Xeer and how it has been practiced, as well as its main principles and values, its origin can be traced to the Somali history or custom locally known as (*dhaqan*), cultural habits and behavior, and Islam. Furthermore, since its formation, Xeer has succeeded to maintain its two primary enactors: traditional authority (*odayaal*) and wise man (*waxgarad*). For a long time, these two institutions have had the responsibility and power of enacting Xeer laws (Abdile 2012, p. 88). In the first epoch of the nineteenth century, Xeer institution came under threat and begun weakening for three

reasons; first, the arrival of the European colonialization as they introduced western laws and rules meant to replace Xeer which also impacted the status and power of the institution. Secondly, the formation of the modern state in Somalia, particularly the creation of modern courts which have taken over the powers and duties of all customary institutions, including Xeer. The odayaal and waxgarad were replaced by contemporary judges. Thirdly, the continuing competition between Xeer and Sharia laws have also significantly challenged Xeer legitimacy and debilitated its lawfulness within the Somali society. However, the collapse of military state and government institutions such as the legal system in 1991 has brought about the rebirth and revitalization of the customary institution once again to fill the power vacuum and replace the modern laws.

Henceforth, the Xeer system has been regaining its power and status and has become the central tenet for law and order in some parts of Somalia. This revitalization marked a transition of the Somali social and political structure from modern systems of law to traditional version anchored in the Xeer system. For that reason, Xeer is the only source of justice that all Somalis agree upon, therefore, can be significantly influential and decisive when dealing with the current conflicts in Somalia (Zuin 2008, p. 94).

Xeer as an institution of conflict management and resolution offers three models to deal with any encounter: negotiation, mediation, and arbitration. Often, traditional meetings meant to solve customary disputes take place under the tree, and all the male adults in the clan can attend as the audience. However, negotiations involve straight communications or direct talks between the disputing groups without any interference from the third party and are intended to avoid further traditional conflict resolution meetings (Farah and Lewis 1997). If this fails, the Xeer system allows the involvement of a third party to mediate an end to the dispute and prevent further conflicts (Moore 1996, p. 15). Should there be any further need to break the deadlock in conflict resolution, then the parties can move to an arbitrary model of solving

their dispute, and together, decide a tribunal which commences the arbitration from scratch. New terms of engagement in the dispute, the mechanism for choosing the arbitrators, and the procedure of the arbitral tribunal are outlined before a new commencement for dispute arbitration (Zartman 2007, p. 199). Nevertheless, arbitration seems to be the most widely used in Somalia to deal with disputes and conflicts between families and communities, yet this has not received enough scholarly attention within the Somali studies (Abdile 2012, p. 90).

Conceptually speaking, these three traditional conflict resolutions mechanisms have both similarities and differences. In terms of similarities, foremost, they are voluntary (Moore 1996), negotiations and mediation share the same outcome which is nonbinding (Wall and Lynn 1993), and all three mechanisms share similarities regarding producers, responsibilities, and duties of the arbitrators and mediators. More comprehensively, these mechanisms, therefore, allow parties to enter into solutions and agreements freely, as well as implement compensations and fines voluntarily. Despite these similarities, there are also some distinctive differences. Arbitration is distinct from the other two models (negotiation and mediation) both which require that discussions be conducted smoothly and simply. On the contrary, arbitrators are tasked with establishing solutions to the conflict, which makes their job harder and difficult.

The uniqueness of the Xeer system is that it is guided by clan agreements, an oral agreement memorized and passed on from one generation to the other through different ways such as poems (maanso), songs (gabayo), proverbs (mahmahyo), and storytelling (sheekoyin). Consequently, the Xeer mechanism remains very significant in conflict management and resolution method in Somalia. The survival and endurance of the Xeer system is founded on several reasons. Foremost, the conservative nature of Somali society and societal structure which makes family and kinship ties the basis of building sustained relationships, alliance, and friendship. Secondly, there is a lack of confidence for modern secular

laws and the modern state's failure to govern society and ensure justice, which depends on compensation and reconciliation. Thirdly, is the previous failure of the colonial powers to adopt modern laws in large parts of Somalia, specifically in rural and remote areas in which the Xeer institution was the only recognized system of providing justice. Fourth, there is a belief among Somalis that their culture is superior to the white Christian culture. The term "white Christian" itself is a deliberate sign of resistance against the modern laws and portrays Xeer system as being under attack from western culture. More significantly, it promotes the institutionalization of cultural differences and portrays what can be Somali and what cannot be. Despite Xeer's survival in contemporary Somalia, it encounters several challenges and limitations among these: the lack of central power or authority; it diminishes individual rights and an overemphasis on societal order and lacks adequate and effective conflict prevention and enforcement methods and mechanisms (Abdile 2012, p. 107).

Summary

This entry sought to revisit a conflict in the Horn of Africa that has overstayed its time even in the standards of a region vulnerable to conflict. The Somali conflict is now nearly three decades old, with very little progress in terms of sustainable peace. The chapter examined why and what can be done to achieve peace and stability in the violent ridden nation. It examined the background of the conflict, how it has transformed over time, and some of the previous peace efforts. It establishes that the crisis in Somalia in 2019 has very little semblance to what it was in 1991 in terms of actors, objectives, and strategies. However, what remains constant in the two periods is that they both have inflicted huge suffering and misery on the people of Somalia. The legacy of this conflict has left thousands killed, millions displaced, and economic instabilities and hopelessness, especially among the young people, have left them with little choice than to join criminal gangs.

The chapter also establishes that the previous peace efforts have fallen short of bringing peace in the country because of failing to address some pertinent issues such as legitimacy, unity, inclusivity in the process and focusing more on a top-down state-building approach without ensuring the people on the ground are well consulted and deep-rooted grievances addressed. In other words, the previous peace efforts appear to have rewarded only top-ranking members of the groups involved in the conflict with government positions without a clear blueprint on how justice, economic equality, good governance practices, as well as organized crime will be tackled. The result has been continued violence, destruction, and suffering. That is why this chapter suggests that where the crisis in Somalia has reached, peacebuilding efforts will need to be robust, address broader aspects of the situation, and adopt multidimensional strategies to address the root causes of the conflict as well as the emerging criminal activities.

One of these strategies is to reflect on traditional conflict resolution strategies and modify them to fit into the contemporary setting. Xeer is one of the most promising approaches that we recommend because it tackles microchallenges that other resolution strategies have not addressed. Secondly, in the spirit of Xeer, a conducive environment from which other conflict resolution strategies can be implemented will be created. Some of the current problems facing Somalia today emanate from clan settings. Xeer has the required tools to reach deeper into the society and act as a catalyst in solving the crisis. More specifically are the attributes of consensus building, transformational aspects, and forgiveness that Xeer brings forth will play an important role in the peacebuilding process. Xeer will also influence other factors such as the success of a potential truth and reconciliation process, new constitution writing, and the construction of a Somalia national identity. This chapter, therefore, hopes to encourage stakeholders to look at multiple sources for a solution to the crisis. This approach, we believe will take more time, will need more commitment from the citizens and actors involved in the peace process but will have a significant impact over time.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Assessment of Peace Operations](#)
- ▶ [Negotiation](#)
- ▶ [Peacebuilding and Spatial Transformation](#)
- ▶ [Search for Peace, the](#)

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Women and Peace Negotiations in Cyprus

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Synonyms

[Cypriot women in peacebuilding](#); [Cyprus UNSCR 1325](#); [Feminist agenda in the Cypriot peace negotiations](#); [Gender and peacebuilding in Cyprus](#); [Gender in the negotiations in Cyprus](#)

Introduction/Definition

Conflict is a gendered phenomenon and affects women and men differently. This is true of the Cyprus conflict as well, where men have dominated the political sphere in conflict and peace times throughout the island's modern history. Attempts to resolve conflict, through political negotiation and peacebuilding efforts, are also gendered, as men and women involved in them tend to have different roles. In Cyprus, all the negotiators at the highest official levels in the last decades have been men, but women have begun taking on roles in negotiating teams since the 2000s. While official negotiations consisted of male majorities on the whole, the peacebuilding work that was carried out after the end of hostilities in 1974 was more inclusive of women. This developed into more coherent groups and structures in the 1980s and 1990s and was recognized as "track II" diplomacy. The proliferation of these groups also allowed room for a greater spectrum of themes to be addressed, among them gender concerns. However, effective implementation of the parameters of UNSCR 1325 which require substantive representation and meaningful participation of women in

peace processes remains a major concern for Cypriot women's organizations and international observers.

Women and the Conflict in Cyprus

In ethno-national conflicts, like the Cyprus conflict, populations of opposing sides are called upon – through dominant national narratives, which are patriarchal, militaristic, and oversimplified – to choose their side and locate themselves on the conflict map (Hadjipavlou 2006, 2010). In the case of Cyprus, events that have marked different conflict stages, according to the dominant narratives, are mostly those of violent confrontation (Anthias 1989). December 1963 marks the time when Turkish-Cypriot parliamentarians protested against the Greek-Cypriot president's amendments to the constitution to diminish their rights and withdrew from office. Segregation ensued and violence spread when Greek-Cypriot police killed a Turkish-Cypriot man and a Turkish-Cypriot woman during an identity check in a mixed urban area. In 1967, violence flared again, and a Greek-Cypriot paramilitary commander was ordered to leave the island. The Greek junta with the Greek-Cypriot National Guard carried out a coup in July 1974, and Turkey intervened by invading the island and capturing its northern part, into which Turkish-Cypriots were encouraged or forced to move. The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus was unilaterally declared in November 1983, but it has failed to gain recognition by the UN since then. These events are contested and form the bedrock of differential readings of history, which mire the negotiations for a peace settlement to this day (Vassiliadou 1997). These negotiations have taken different forms over the decades but have been carried out officially under a UN mandate since 1974. They have thus far yielded high-level agreements in 1977 and 1979, which aim at setting up a bizonal bicomunal federation on the island, and a comprehensive peace plan (known as the Annan Plan) with detailed power-sharing arrangements, which was signed in March 2004 but rejected at referendum by the Greek-Cypriots the following month.

Women have largely been written out of these accounts of history, except for their roles as victims of the conflict and aides to military men (Agathangelou 2004). In the anti-colonial struggle that preceded the conflict (1955–1959) and which was waged by the Greek-Cypriot nationalist organization EOKA (*Ethniki Orghánosi Kypriou Aghonistón*), women in secondary roles served as helpers, carrying messages and hiding men in their houses, and exceptionally as officers in the organization. Turkish-Cypriot women were similarly involved in support roles in the Turkish-Cypriot paramilitary organization TMT (*Türk Mukavemet Teşkilatı*) which fought for the division of the island in the wake of EOKA's call for union with Greece. During this first period of violence, large numbers of the population across the ethnic and gender divides faced physical insecurity and economic hardship. Leftists were particularly targeted and inter-ethnic relations were viewed as undesirable. This was also a period, however, when women's education became valued, they began to enter the labor force after the WWII, and family structures modernized, especially following independence in 1960. Feminist discourses also arose in this period, mostly in the field of education and the letters, and were separated across the ethnic binary. This continued in the 1960s, when inter-ethnic violence perpetuated a general insecurity and communal separation.

In the war of 1974, the experiences of men and women were highly differentiated, most military casualties being men, while women fled their homes and were tasked with making new homes in refugeehood. Conflict imagery in Cyprus centers heavily still on the feminization of victimhood on both sides, depicting strong images of women in desperation mourning their husbands, and sons, or looking for relatives who went missing (Roussou 1986). This imagery accentuated a concept of female vulnerability that was often belied by the strength that women had to exhibit in rebuilding their lives postwar and becoming wage earners in the conditions of impoverishment that ensued: in the south because of the loss of the north and in the north because of international isolation.

The impact of the conflict on gender equality is evident in two particular examples of legislation: the marriage clauses of the Constitution of the Republic (1960) and the abortion law of 1974. The first stipulate that married women belong to the community of their husbands and that family life is the domain of Communal Chambers which regulated community affairs before 1963. Effectively, until 1990 when civil marriages were recognized, only religious marriages were allowed, and initially civil marriages were recognized only among Greek-Cypriots. The law on abortion, on the other hand, was passed in November 1974 as an emergency measure to stop pregnancies coming to term that had been the result of war rapes and is pervaded by a discourse of “honor and shame.” It was only amended in 2018, which allowed abortions under more lenient terms and on the basis of women’s human rights (Demetriou 2018).

In effect, the conflict has had a profound impact on women’s lives in Cyprus, affecting not only their social positions and the roles they have performed as homemakers and workers but also their legal rights as citizens of the Republic. Turkish-Cypriot women and minority women were multiply affected by this situation, since they have had to face intersectional forms of discrimination (Vassiliadou 2002; Lisaniler and Bhatti 2005).

Women and Peacebuilding

Women’s peace efforts have taken multiple forms over the years and have encompassed variable understandings of “peace” (Hadjipavlou 2010). Since the de facto division of the island into north and south, there have been different independent women’s initiatives aimed at raising women’s voices and desires for peace and demilitarization and expressing the desire to “return home.” One of the first such groups was the “Women Walk Home” march organized by educated, mainly middle-class women from the Greek-Cypriot community. The first “Walk” along the dividing line in the spring of 1975 was organized soon after the war and partition of 1974

and articulated the desire of Greek-Cypriot women to return to their homes peacefully, now within the zone occupied by the Turkish military. This was the first women’s peaceful resistance to the division of the island. Thousands of Greek-Cypriot women and many invited female personalities from abroad participated in that first Walk (Kamenou 2019). The Walk grabbed the attention of international media and was followed by other Walks, in 1977, in 1987 (June and November), and in March 1989. After that, the group became inactive as different political parties tried to appropriate it. Yet, many of the women who participated continued to take an active part in politics, either as members of political parties or as civil society actors. Perhaps the most well-known follow-up activity from the Walk was the lawsuit against Turkey at the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR), brought by Titina Loizidou, a woman who had been detained and ill-treated by Turkish police during the Walk, after she attempted to access her house. The *Loizidou v. Turkey* case is a landmark case in litigation on property rights and on the responsibility to protect in refugee legislation.

From the late 1990s onward, other women’s groups began to appear, which were intercommunal and more focused on rapprochement and cooperation. They included the “Metamorphosis Cypriot Women’s Group” established in 2000 by professional women, which worked on joint projects and produced an important video of ordinary women from both communities who had struggled to bring about social change and challenge social and cultural taboos in their communities.

“Hands Across the Divide” (HAD) was another such group, established officially in 2001. It was the first organization to bring UNSC Resolution 1325 to the attention of the Cypriot leaders and talk about the relevance of the Resolution to the peace process. HAD works for reconciliation and social justice at the grassroots level. HAD was unique in its establishment because it registered officially as an NGO in the UK, at a time when there were legal barriers in being recognized on both sides. It also made a point of holding frequent, face-to-face

meetings in locations where women from both sides could meet (the village of Pyla). The group has a dual goal: (i) political intervention, bringing out statements on the process of the negotiations and holding activities and events at crucial points before and after the Annan Plan referendum, and (ii) providing a safe space for women to share their thoughts, feelings, and experiences, about the effects of patriarchal and nationalist dynamics on their own lives (Hadjipavlou and Mertan 2019).

FEMA is a Turkish-Cypriot feminist organization working on gender equality and against gender-based violence in the Turkish-Cypriot community, as well as on reconciliation and peace but through focusing its work in the northern part of the island and lobbying authorities there. FEMA has a keen interest in engaging women to claim their rights. It has organized workshops and training events focused on education, empowerment, and activism. It has also produced a journal, *Gaile*, with the aim of reaching a wider audience. Its view has often been internationalist in scope, making connections between global and local realities. FEMA has crucially been a key collaborator with women's organizations on the other side of the divide.

The "Gender Advisory Team" (GAT), which was established in 2009, was the first to focus exclusively on UNSC Resolution 1325 and its implementation in Cyprus and, more specifically, in the Cyprus peace process (Demetriou and Hadjipavlou 2016).

Women's Participation in Politics and the Negotiations

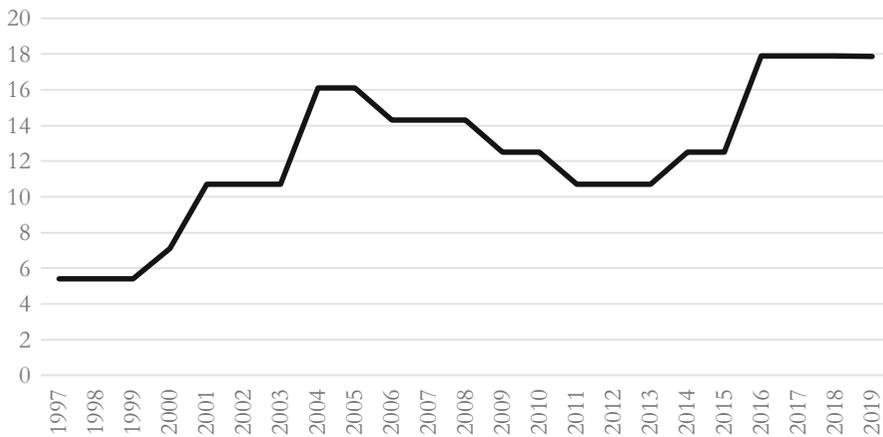
On both sides of Cyprus, women's participation in political life is noticeably low. Suffice it to say that the first female member of parliament in the Republic was elected in 1982, while Turkish-Cypriot Kadriye Hacıbulgur was the only woman to be elected to the Turkish-Cypriot Communal Chamber in 1960. In the Republic of Cyprus, according to World Bank statistics, women's

participation percentage in parliament ranged between 5% and 18% since 1997. In the north in 2018, there were 9 out of 50, equaling 18% up from 8% in previous years. The single time in which a woman held the highest post was in 2013 in the north, when the ruling Turkish-Cypriot party appointed a governmental council for a short pre-election period, headed by Sibel Siber. In 2013, Praxoulla Antoniadou contested the Republic's presidential elections unsuccessfully, and in 2015 Sibel Siber did so in the north. Women ministers have been appointed sparingly since the 1960s, reaching a percentage of 18% in the late 2010s on both sides. Such appointments have tended to be in ministries for issues considered gender-relevant or secondary, such as social welfare, health, education, and transport, except in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where Erato Kozakou-Marcoullis has served twice. Emine Çolak was appointed to a parallel post in the north between 2015 and 2016. Two women have occupied Cypriot MEP positions among seventeen men since accession in 2004, Antigoni Papadopoulou and Eleni Theocharous, and two have been appointed EU Commissioners out of four Cypriot Commissioners in the same period: Androulla Vassiliou (2008–2014) and Stella Kyriakidou (2020). All of the major parties on both sides have women's branches, and there has often been criticism of their work from feminist circles. Such criticism focuses on the sphere of priorities of these organizations, which remain secondary to the activities of the "main," male-dominated party machinery.

Stella Soulioti (1920–2012) was the first woman to participate in the negotiations for a political settlement to the conflict, in an advising role to Archbishop Makarios since 1968, while she also held the position of Minister of Justice (1960–1970) and Minister of Health (1963–1970). She was Adviser to the President on the Cyprus issue since 1975, and she retained a Special Adviser role to all presidents of the Republic until 2008, serving also for parts of that period as Law Commissioner and Attorney General. Within a revised negotiation frame after 2008, women were appointed to a number of

| | |
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| 1960s | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiations held with view to manage inter-ethnic violence • Female Minister of Justice also acting as adviser to President |
| 1970s | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiations post-1974 yield 1977 and 1979 agreements on Bizonal Bicomunal Federation • Female chief adviser on Cyprus issue in Republic's MFA |
| 1980s | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace talks freeze and climate worsens after unilateral declaration of independence of the north (TRNC) • Peace efforts become difficult, particularly for women |
| 1990s | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement is initially reached in 1992 over a UNSG frame (Ghali Set of Ideas) as basis for settlement but eventually rejected • No substantial inclusion of gender concerns or women in the talks |
| 2004 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiations yielded Annan Plan with minimal explicit attention to gender aspects • Technical Committees working on provisions of the plan included one woman in senior role |
| 2006 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New frame for negotiations agreed without timeframe and based on local ownership • Structure of working groups and technical committees set up but with little gender balance |
| 2008 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct talks initiated between leaders • Women's civil society stepped up lobbying efforts for women's inclusion |
| 2015 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Technical Committees set up in efforts to include peacebuilding civil society • Technical Committee on Gender Equality appointed |
| 2017- | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiation round failed but structures remained in place • Funds for Technical Committee work released but gender mandate remains unclear |

Women's presence in Cyprus negotiation phases



Proportion of seats held by women in the Republic of Cyprus parliament (%)

technical committees and working groups that evolved from older structures set up in the early 2000s in the framework of developing the Annan Plan. Leading among them was Erato Marcoullis who headed the Greek-Cypriot working group on property.

Until the early 2010s, gender had not been addressed as an issue in the negotiations, even though women's groups had raised concerns over this omission at least a decade earlier.

These calls were noticed by international scholars and practitioners, and over the next years, efforts were made to support the budding women's peacebuilding civil society, which coalesced around a small group of professionals and activists, Hands Across the Divide (Cockburn 2004). In 2008, the UN mission on the island engaged a conflict assessment and participation expert, Joyce Neu, to report on the situation on gender inclusion in Cyprus. A wide range of political

actors were engaged, and some of the women who came together in these meetings formed the Gender Advisory Team (GAT), an informal network of academics and experts that provided recommendations on gender inclusion in the negotiations in 2012 and 2014. The issue gained further prominence through references to reports of the UN Secretary General on Cyprus, while other civil society organizations took up the call and conducted research (SeeD, FES, MIGS, AHDR). In 2015, the Technical Committee on Gender Equality was set up to provide formal feedback to negotiators and act as a bridge with civil society. However, since the breakdown of the negotiations in 2017, opportunities for intervention and input have been minimized. Meanwhile, the Mediterranean Women Mediators' Network established an antenna group in Cyprus in 2019, with the goal of highlighting and bolstering women's mediation efforts in regard to a political settlement.

Women's Inclusion in the Peace Process and the Negotiations

The calls for inclusion of women and gender perspectives in the peace process and the negotiations have varied over the years and have encompassed different issues and agendas (Demetriou and Hadjipavlou 2018). On a minimum level, they have agreed on the need for women to be present at the negotiating table, in visible roles, and with decision-making powers. Whether an explicitly feminist negotiation agenda is pursued by such women or not is a moot point, as is the question of which women would be suitable candidates for such roles and who should decide. A number of proposals for including women in the negotiations have also raised the issue of equitable representation, calling, for example, for all teams related to the negotiations (including technical committees, working groups, advisers, consultants, etc.) to be gender balanced, a minimum ratio of 1/3, and to include gender focal points to ensure that all measures, policies, and suggestions take account of gender implications. Yet other proposals have centered on the

need to take account of women's needs across the island who are marginalized and not at the center of attention by peacebuilding efforts; these include minority women, women who are migrants, women who live away from urban centers, women in poverty, young women, women with disabilities, and women subject to multiple forms of discrimination (Aliefendioglu 2012). Various initiatives have sought to record the views of such groups, focusing primarily on geographical distinctions thus far, e.g., women in rural communities. However, as of 2020, concrete proposals about ensuring representation or regarding specific demands and concerns have not been put forth.

GAT's recommendations remain one of the most concrete set of suggestions for integrating gender-sensitive provisions in a future peace plan and constitution. They contain suggestions in the areas of governance, property, economy, and citizenship. On governance, the recommendations center on integrating up-to-date best practices into the legal instruments that will arise and on introducing gender quotas throughout the governance structures and setting up monitoring systems. On property, they aim at gender proofing property rights clauses by paying attention to property clauses in family law, considering specific needs of displaced and resettled women, and taking into account women's perspectives on communal property including of minority groups and on ensuring women's representation in wealth management institutions and in wider post-agreement reconstruction and development initiatives. On economy, they aim to ensure gender-sensitive economic planning and resource allocation post-agreement and on implementing gender budgeting. On citizenship, they suggest disentangling citizenship rights from ethnically determined power-sharing so that voting is disentangled from other rights, including residency; the general philosophy behind this is that citizenship rights are not treated as a unitary bundle but as transferable between the two constituent states, which is a novel way to conceptualize citizenship in Cyprus and one that has not thus far been part of negotiation discussions.

These recommendations build on longer efforts to bring about a transition from a patriarchal, nationalist, and militarist culture to a peace culture, in which many women have been involved, yet without articulating an explicitly feminist agenda. Intersections in these efforts exist in the call to reform the military or disband it altogether, to revise the educational system, and to reposition the role of religion and the Church in social and political life. All these recommendations, which were also shared with the UN Good Offices personnel in Cyprus and references to which appeared in the UN Secretary General's reports on Cyprus, cover a broad spectrum of political positions, ranging from accepted liberal equality standards to more radical demands for changing local traditional structures and adopting feminist principles.

In other words, women's inclusion in the negotiation process and in post-conflict reconstruction in Cyprus has been interpreted in very different ways, from minimal demands for presence to maximalist demands for an overhaul to the conceptual premises on which the negotiations are conducted. Within this range of possibilities, concrete steps for inclusion have been rudimentary until 2020 and have focused mainly on presence at the fringes of the negotiations in the form of the Technical Committee on Gender Equality. However, this limitation must be understood within a wider context of successive failures of the negotiation process to deliver a concrete agreement and a general sense of resignation among both politicians and the population that it can do so. Consequently, it is more likely for the negotiation process to be affected from efforts and processes external to it, rather than arising and nurtured within it.

Summary

The Cyprus case exemplifies some of the key issues that surround the implementation of the Women, Peace, and Security agenda that has developed since UNSCR 1325. It shows that the adoption of UNSCR 1325 has created opportunities for inclusion of women and for women's

civil society to be recognized. It also shows, however, that the limitations of UNSCR 1325 and its follow-up resolutions are bound to the wider environment within which negotiations are conducted. Radical change is impossible to effect in a climate of distrust and stalemate, and it is very difficult to effect in situations where key parameters of an agreement (such as citizenship) have already been fixed. It is possible, however, to create structures (committees, consultative bodies, etc.) that remain alert to the situation and the issues and that can be mobilized once the negotiation dynamics improve. In other words, UNSCR 1325 is not about putting women in the driving seat but about involving them in processes already in train (Table 1).

In terms of mobilization, the case of Cyprus also holds lessons for women's solidarity strategies within the Women, Peace, and Security agenda. It shows that while disagreements on the scope of the agenda and demands within it can enrich the landscape of women's activism, it is only baseline demands around which everyone coalesces, and which also enjoy the support of international actors (such as presence of women at the table), which are more likely to be answered. From then on, solidarity behind specific goals can make the difference between what is taken up and what is not, while hints of fractures in those solidarities can gravely undermine goals. This means that structurally, there is a higher premium on consensus demanded of women's civil society than of other groups seeking representation (youth, religious groups, minorities, etc.).

Within this landscape, perhaps the biggest obstacle facing women's effective inclusion in the Cyprus peace process today, barring the indigenous problems of the process itself, is resourcing. This stifles progress on the other two fronts because it means that women across various groups do not have the resources to engage in an in-depth and sustained exchange to formulate the content and structure of their demands and to build a platform on which all concerns will be taken into account and a consensual strategy built on addressing those concerns in a post-agreement environment as well as the post-conflict situation that pertains today.

Women and Peace Negotiations in Cyprus, Table 1 Application of UNSCR 1325 to the case of Cyprus

| Pillar | UNSCR 1325 article | Main implementers (Cypriot negotiators and politicians/UN) | Cyprus applications | Progress (yes/no/some) |
|---------------------|-----------------------|--|---|----------------------------|
| Participation | 1, 2, 8b | CY | (i) Women in key positions at negotiations (ii) Consideration of input on gender dimensions by negotiators (iii) Quota systems in make-up of negotiating teams (iv) Direct consultation channel between women's civil society and negotiators | N N N S |
| | 3, 4, 5 | UN | (i) Appointment of women to top positions in UNFICYP and UN Good Offices missions (ii) Appointment of gender focal points for coordination with civil society and across the mission (iii) Appointment of gender and law experts in facilitation teams | Y Y N |
| Protection | 5, 6, 7 | UN | (i) Direct communication of peacekeepers with women's civil society and individual women on the ground (ii) Involvement of Cypriot women in UN training | N N |
| | 8c | CY | (i) Use of gender-sensitive language in the constitution (ii) Inclusion of gender-balanced articles in all areas, for example, special measures in governance, flexibility on internal citizenship, uniformity in family law, coordination of all authorities under federal umbrella, coordination in prosecuting gender crimes (iii) Centralization and reach of gender equality mechanisms in a system that is both networked (from grassroots to government) and coordinated (through a single top-level federal body like a ministry) | N N N |
| Prevention | 1, 9 | CY | (i) Fostering of a peace cultures and support of peace initiatives in education and public discourse (ii) Awareness raising about gender equality, women's rights, and sexual rights | S S |
| | 7, 14, 15 | UN | (i) Support for awareness raising and peace initiatives with a gender perspective (ii) Support for coordination activities between women's groups | N N |
| Relief and recovery | 7 | UN | (i) Support of UN bodies for Cypriot initiatives in relevant areas (box below) | S |
| | 8a, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 | CY | (i) Investigation and prosecution of gender crimes in the history of the conflict (ii) Measures for women refugees (iii) Coordination of justice and police mechanisms to deal with gender crime (iv) Gender balance and women's effective representation in reconstruction bodies (v) Gender balance and women's effective representation in economic development institutions | N S N N S N |

(continued)

Women and Peace Negotiations in Cyprus, Table 1 (continued)

| Pillar | UNSCR 1325 article | Main implementers (Cypriot negotiators and politicians/UN) | Cyprus applications | Progress (yes/no/some) |
|--------|--------------------|--|---|------------------------|
| | | | (vi) Monitoring and combating of situation in relation to trafficking (vii) Inclusion of minority women in decision-making structures on communal property | |
| All | 16–18 | UN | (i) Systematic research, reporting, and monitoring on all of the above | N |

Cross-References

- ▶ [Civil Society](#)
- ▶ [Everyday Peace](#)
- ▶ [Human Security](#)
- ▶ [Liberal Peace](#)
- ▶ [UNSCR 1325](#)

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Women in War

- ▶ [Women, Peace and Security Agenda](#)

Women, Peace and Security Agenda

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Synonyms

[Feminist peace activism](#); [Feminist peace research](#); [Feminist security studies](#); [Gender mainstreaming](#); [Global governance](#); [UNSCR1325](#); [Women in war](#)



Definition

The signing of Resolution 1325 by the UN Security Council on 31 October 2000 has marked the development of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda (WPS). The agenda has emerged as the dominant normative framework for the articulation of a gender perspective in the context of crisis management and security, conflict resolution, and peacebuilding. Essentially the agenda acknowledges that gender matters in conflict and in peace-making and signals commitments to center the role of women in peace and security. It sets out aspirations and recommendations for mainstreaming gender in all aspects of conflict management, prevention, and peacebuilding. These include reform of peacekeeping and other security forces, inclusion of women in all level of decision-making, responses to the diverse impact of conflict on women and men, strategies to address conflict-related sexual violence, to name but a few.

Introduction

The signing of Resolution 1325 by the UN Security Council on 31 October 2000 has seen the development of the so-called Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda as the dominant normative framework in which gender dimensions of conflict, crisis management, and peacebuilding gain articulation in the arena of international security.

This entry traces the institutionalization of the agenda through the UN Security Council and its proliferation across national governments and the architecture of international security and peacebuilding. It interrogates the role of feminist activism in initiating and shaping the agenda, as well as the relevance of WPS for feminist efforts “on the ground.” This entry maps out the emergence of a multidisciplinary research agenda in this field and outlines challenges and new directions in the assessment of WPS two decades since the signing of UN resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security. It also traces ongoing critical engagement with the colonial hierarchies and erasures reproduced through the

institutionalization of WPS, as well as through academic inquiry.

The signing of UN SCR 1325 was the result of ongoing feminist transnational organizing and advocacy efforts to lobby the UN. It reflected conversations and aspirations expressed in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action as well as principles underpinning the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

The campaign for the passing of the resolution was led by a coalition of NGOs, which had been meeting informally since 1998 while working on the implementation of the Beijing Platform and its strategic objectives on Women and Armed conflict. As the idea for lobbying the UN Security Council emerged, the Working Group on Women, Peace, and Security was created. The group worked in cooperation with UN agencies and missions to campaign members of the Security Council and proposes the initial draft of the resolution (Cohn et al. 2004).

The signing of UNCSR 1325 is considered as a highly significant moment. Not only was it the first time that the UN Security Council had a session entirely dedicated to discussing the experiences of women in armed conflict and post-conflict settings, but the resolution also set out actions to be taken by the Security Council, UN departments, and member states.

Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security

The Women, Peace and Security Agenda currently comprises of ten UN Security Council Resolutions.

| UN SC Resolution | Overview |
|------------------|---|
| 1325 (2000) | Acknowledgment of disproportionate and unique impact of armed conflict on women; women’s contribution to conflict prevention, peacekeeping, conflict resolution, and peacebuilding; the importance of women’s equal and full participation as active agents in peace and security |

(continued)

| UN SC Resolution | Overview |
|------------------|--|
| 1820 (2008) | Acknowledgment of sexual violence as war crime and setting of legal parameters/calls for training of troops on prevention & response to sexual violence in conflict |
| 1888 (2009) | Strengthening peacekeeping mandate of protection from sexual violence/ Establishment of reporting system |
| 1889 (2009) | Focus on the obstacles for women’s full participation in peace processes and peacebuilding/Establishment of indicators for tracking implementation |
| 1960 (2010) | Affirming the value of collecting, monitoring, and analyzing sex disaggregated data on sexual violence in conflict/Processes for addressing the impunity gap/measures including report to ICC and sanction committee, international condemnation |
| 2106 (2013) | Strengthening and operationalizing measures for addressing impunity and accountability for sexual violence in conflict, including support for recourse to justice |
| 2122 (2013) | Concrete Actions to increase women’s inclusion and participation in governance/inclusion of civil society through integrated approach |
| 2242 (2015) | Deepening implementation and integration across units and contexts/ Women’s roles in Counter Terrorism and Countering Violent Extremism |
| 2467 (2019) | Strengthening actions in prosecution and prevention of sexual violence in conflict, including survivor-centered approach and national accountability |
| 2493 (2019) | Strengthening implementation and accountability measures on women’s full participation/specific mention of funding in support of women’s inclusion |

Source: www.peacewomen.org

The Pillars

The agenda acknowledges the necessity to employ gender-sensitive approaches and expresses a commitment to the inclusion of women as key agents in the context of peace-making and peacebuilding.

These objectives are articulated along four interlinked pillars.

The **Participation** pillar sets out interventions aimed at increasing women’s participation at all

levels of decision-making, for example, in peace negotiations and field missions. The **Protection** pillar involves actions in the context of sexual and gender-based violence, including in emergency and humanitarian situations, such as in refugee camps. The **Prevention** pillar envisages intervention strategies in the prevention of violence against women, including prosecution through international law. The **Relief and Recovery** pillar sets out measures to address the diverse gendered impact of humanitarian emergencies.

The WPS architecture is binding on the UN member states. The implementation of WPS provisions has been operationalized through the use of National Action Plans. Analysis by the ► [Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom \(WILPF\)](#) illustrates that, as of August 2020, 86 UN Member States have ratified National Actions Plans (NAPs). There are also 11 Regional Actions Plans (RAPs), for example, that ratified by the European Union (source: www.peacewomen.org).

Since its inception, UNCSR 1325 has become a tool for strategic lobbying and organizing for women’s and feminist organizations, see also ► [Women’s Organizations in Post-conflict Contexts](#). Crucially, the Resolution paved the way for the articulation of gender expertise and demands at UN Security council, in field missions and for member states. The signing of successive sister resolutions is an indication of ongoing efforts to express a commitment to gender-sensitive analysis and policymaking in peace and security. Overall, however, there is a sense that the agenda has not yet lived up to its transformative potential. Furthermore, recent developments at the UN Security Council have seen attempts to restrict and water down the agenda. For example, in 2019 the passing of Resolution 2467 on sexual violence was possible only after difficult negotiations which saw the US administration (as well as Russia and China) impose a veto on the inclusion of references to sexual health and reproductive rights, an aspect that it still insufficiently addressed in WPS (Thomson and Pierson 2018). Similarly, in October 2020, the twentieth anniversary of UNSCR 1325, Russia proposed a new resolution deemed as an attempt to reverse some

of the WPS commitments. While the resolution did not gain sufficient votes, these instances reflect ongoing threats against women's rights and the rise of anti-gender politics seen globally.

Researching Women, Peace and Security

Welcomed as a landmark moment for women's and peace activism, the institutionalization of the agenda into the architecture of international peace-making has become the focus of intense critical scrutiny (for an up to date overview see: Basu et al. 2020; Davies and True 2019). As the normative framework of WPS proliferates across multiple institutional and activist spaces, a multi-disciplinary research agenda has emerged. Scholars have analyzed different aspects, ranging from its discursive framing and implementation to the actors and institutions involved in shaping and operationalizing the agenda in different contexts.

Underlying this work are ongoing questions about the complex relationship between the emergence of WPS and different ideological feminist perspectives; the location, "ownership," and translations of the agenda, as well as the gaps, silences, and marginalization that work on WPS produces in peace and security practices, as well as in research. Two decades since its inception, scholars and activists alike have highlighted several tensions in the framing and implementation of the WPS agenda that undermine a feminist transformative ethos. More damningly, post-colonial feminist scholars draw attention to the reproduction of colonial logics and neoliberal feminist perspectives through WPS practice and research. Providing a comprehensive overview of the ever-growing field of inquiry on WPS in one single entry would be impossible. Outlined below is a selection of thematic trajectories and debates that underpin research on WPS.

Critically Examining the Resolutions

From the outset, important scholarly contributions have examined the formulation of gender-

sensitive actions in UNSCR1325 and the following resolutions. A key theme running through this work has been an underlying tension between the apparent commitment to deploy gender sensitive analysis of conflict and peace-making and the reproduction of essentialist ideas about women's and men's roles in conflict, peace, and security (Puechguirbal 2010; Shepherd 2008). While acknowledging the importance of women's agency, the language of WPS has reproduced familiar scripts that, conceptualizing women as victims of conflict and men as combatants, fail to address gendered complexities of conflict, as well as the multiplicity of roles women play in conflict and peace. Crucially, through this logic, WPS has reproduced gendered hierarchies that frame women as vulnerable individuals, often grouped with children, while envisioning international actors as protectors. One consequence of this framing is that, irrespective of the commitments set out in WPS, a resistance to view women as key actors in conflict or crucial interlocutors in the negotiations of ceasefires and peace settlements is still at play.

While changes in the discursive framing of the agenda since UNSCRs 1888/1889 (2009) and UNSCR 2122 (2013) have seen more references to women as agents of change, these shifts have often paid less attention to the structural inequalities and ideological constraints that must be addressed to create conditions for meaningful participation and political transformation. Women thus have been instrumentalized as untapped resources for peacebuilding (Gibbins 2011) and peacekeeping (Karim and Beardsley 2013) and/or conceived as super heroines tasked with their own salvation, representing others and effect change (Shepherd 2011, 511). For example, strategies envisioned as part of WPS often focus on the logic of capacity building, implying that women must be better equipped to be included in the process, rather than tackling the deep-seated and structural processes leading to gender insecurities and discrimination (Hudson 2012; Deiana and McDonagh 2017). While we might see a more promising lexicon that pays attention to women's active roles in peace and conflict, this articulation implies women as homogeneous groups and does

not go far enough to challenge existing gendered structures.

Furthermore, scholars have traced the progressive narrowing down of the agenda's scope to questions such as gender balancing of peacekeeping missions, gender-based violence, and sexual violence in conflict (Kirby and Shepherd 2016; Meger 2016). An assessment of these shifts produces an ambivalent picture. On the one hand, this framing operates to privilege the logic of protection rather than participation and conceptualizes gender mainstreaming as a technical tool that can problematically bolster the role of Western states and international institutions as the "right" interveners. On the other hand, the focus on sexual violence, while disproportionate, has also seen some concrete developments in addressing and preventing the issue, such as commitments to the use of reporting and specific references to sanctions (Basu et al. 2020). Overall, ongoing research and activism on WPS reveal some positive openings for integrating a gender analysis and gender-sensitive measures in international peace and security. At the same time, painful trade-offs have accompanied the intersection between different feminist projects for political transformation attached to WPS and the more stark realities of international security confronting feminist actors involved in policymaking and institutions (Basu et al. 2020).

More damningly, postcolonial and other critical feminist scholars have raised concerns about the hierarchies of knowledge and feminist perspectives produced through the agenda. Researchers have interrogated the feminist norms and visions that were privileged through UNSCR1325 and its subsequent institutionalization, for example, by showing the marginalization of the anti-militarist ideals that were at the core of feminist peace activism (Cohn 2008; Pratt and Richter-Devroe 2011), and the resistance at the UN toward voices that were critical of the politics of international intervention such as during the invasion of Iraq (Gibbins 2011). Feminist scholars have thus complicated celebratory narratives of WPS by drawing attention to the changes in global governance that made UNSCR1325 possible. Such interventions

illustrate that the path to WPS grew in parallel with the emergence of the post-Cold War liberal agenda which saw the instrumentalization of women's rights and empowerment as a "benchmark" of progress and civilization and strengthened the role of the USA and other Western allies as democratic leaders and defenders of women's rights (Harrington 2011). As WPS progressively emerged as a global norm, Swati Parashar writes, the Global South has problematically appeared as a space of intractable conflict, as a recipient of norms, best practices, and liberal notions of empowerment, as well as a site for innumerable case studies for WPS researchers and policymakers (Parashar 2019).

While feminist scholars are aware of WPS as an uneasy, yet potentially productive, compromise that can only be imperfectly navigated (for example, see Cohn 2008; Otto 2009; Kirby and Shepherd 2016), there is also some ideological skepticism. For some, the commitment to gender mainstreaming at the core of WPS can be seen as a tool deployed to support the changing scenarios of international security, rather than to transform and challenge security and peace-making practices (Harrington 2011; Pratt and Richter-Devroe 2011). Post 9/11, the invocation of women's rights to support international military intervention raised alarms about the usage of UNSCR1325 in tandem with dominant security practices that furthered the violence of counterterrorism and counterinsurgency measures (Pratt 2013; see also Cohn et al. 2004). These concerns are as valid today particularly as WPS explicitly includes actions on the sphere of Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) with the passing of Resolution 2242 which envisions women's pivotal role in fighting radicalization (Ni Aolain 2016). This development has been met with opposition from women's organizations in the Global South, often the "targets" of CVE interventions, who experience the unintended consequences of such priorities (Coomaraswamy 2015; see also Aroussi 2020). Arguments against this uneasy coupling point out that instrumentalizing women as actors for international security and counterterrorism can contribute to engender further militarization and insecurities for women who

navigate complex situations shaped by political violence and competing narratives of conflict, security, and terrorism (Parashar 2019).

Through critical postcolonial insights then, WPS is best understood as “a contested site of feminist political struggles” (Parashar 2019, 837). As Soumita Basu has argued, feminist narratives that locate the conceptual, material, and institutional ownership of the agenda in the Global North erase the contribution of key actors of the Global South in conceptualizing WPS, as well as resisting its neoliberal agenda (Basu 2016). For example, this is attested by the role of states such as Namibia, Vietnam, and Azerbaijan which hold the UN Security Council presidency during the ratification of UNSCR1325 and subsequent resolutions. It is also attested by state actors and organizations that resist the agenda, such as India which holds reservations about international interference by the Security Council. The work of local organizations in both interpreting WPS and resisting pressures to redirect their activities to fit its priorities is another example (Basu 2016). This argument is echoed by Haastrup when showing the influence of African feminists in shaping the agenda from the outset and in its institutionalization and interpretation (Haastrup 2019; see also Hudson 2016). Without an appreciation of the knowledges, practices, and contestations in the Global South, as Basu contends, our understanding of WPS as global currency and multi-sited political terrain will be limited.

Overall, such interventions suggest that interrogating the uneasy entanglements between WPS proponents and international security and making visible actors in the Global South as knowledge producers and political agents of WPS must be at the center of ongoing research and activist efforts.

The Challenges of Implementation

Another research trajectory focuses on the implementation of WPS. Since its emergence, extensive scholarship has highlighted a number of policy failures and tensions ranging from implementation and national ownership, to international peacekeeping, security, and conflict management

practices that continue to undercut WPS’ more ambitious and transformative claims (Coomaraswamy 2015; Kirby and Shepherd 2016). Crucially, despite the diffusion of this international framework, a reluctance to see women as co-architects of peace is still at play. Between 1992 and 2019, on average women were 13% of negotiators, 6% of mediators, and 6% of signatories in major peace processes. As of 2019, peace agreements with gender equality provisions increased from 14% in 1995 to only 22% (source: UN Women). Research also indicates that even when women are included through international efforts or National Actions Plans, obstacles remain for their influence in shaping peace agreements (Paffenholz et al. 2016). Furthermore, gendered exclusions, stereotypes, and insecurities in post-conflict scenarios have proved to be resilient, as these are reproduced or emerge anew at different stages of a peace process in spite of institutional commitment to implement WPS (Deiana 2016; George and Shepherd 2016).

On the 15th anniversary of UNSCR1325, the UN launched a global study that assessed and critically reflected on the implementation of the Agenda in response to the Security Council invitation in Resolution 2122. Among its findings, the Global study highlighted the necessity to pay close attention to contextual factors that shape implementation, acknowledging that a one-size-fits-all approach and the transferring of best practices might be counterproductive (Coomaraswamy 2015, 16). As mentioned, National Action Plans (NAPs) are the main mechanism used by member states as well as regional organizations to express commitments to translate WPS into localized actions. While researchers acknowledge the significance of these instruments as important mechanisms of accountability and transparency and norm diffusion (Swaine 2009; True 2016), there are also concerns about the state as key actor for positive change and “owner” of the agenda. As research has shown, National Actions Plans especially of states in the Global North or powerful states in the Global South are mostly outward facing (Shepherd 2016; Motoyama 2018). These often rely on militaristic and interventionist logics and reproduce racialized hierarchies, while

lacking sufficient commitment to address WPS in their domestic context (Haastrup and Hagen 2020). For example, the UK NAP is a case in point. Despite the official commitment to a National Action Plan, the British Government does not acknowledge “the Troubles” in Northern Ireland as a case of armed conflict, thus leaving Northern Ireland out of their WPS remit while supporting interventions “conveniently” located “out there” in contexts of the Global South.

Some studies also point out to post-conflict contexts where NAPs have reproduced international driven and technocratic scripts that constrain rather than support meaningful local participation, without addressing structural inequalities and cultural norms that impinge on women’s political agency (Björkdahl and Mannergren Selimovic 2015; Deiana 2018). The case of Liberia and Sierra Leone are illustrative of these tensions. Basini and Ryan (2016) found that, in these contexts, consistent evidence of the women’s movements efforts and localized work on gender equality got lost in the statist and international priorities detailed in the NAPs. While evidence indicates the contribution of women’s organizations to the development of the respective NAPs, the invocation of local ownership in these contexts is driven by a technocratic approach. This logic favored internationally driven ideas and set indicators that are difficult to monitor and realize due to lack of resources, political will, and institutional capacity while meaningful interventions and knowledge at the local level failed to be acknowledged and lifted up.

Overall, research on implementation draws attention to the complexities undercutting the translation of the agenda into actionable plans. In an attempt to enhance accountability for implementation, scholars have also explored opportunities to increase synergies with other international mechanisms, for example, by strengthening linkages with CEDAW (O’Rourke and Swaine 2019) and through the development of a WPS index in connection with the Sustainable Development Goals (Klugman 2019). However, mapping the opportunities, challenges, and trade-offs that the formulation and implementation of WPS in local contexts entails remains ongoing.

The “Global” and the “Local” in WPS

Another thread of research seeks to examine the “localisation” of WPS norms. Since its inception, different scholars have highlighted the need to critically interrogate UNSCR1325 in terms of its applicability to widely different conflict and post-conflict scenarios and in relation to its relevance to women’s activism and everyday life in these contexts (e.g., Farr 2011; McLeod 2011; Hoewer 2013; Deiana 2016). A key contribution emerging from this strand of research is that, while the adoption of the agenda by different institutions and actors might suggest a positive example of norm diffusion, in practice the effects of such translation are more ambivalent, not only as a result of structural constraints but also of different visions of WPS and feminism as political project. At the same time, evidence suggests that feminist activists are mobilizing, reinterpreting, as well as contesting, WPS as a strategic tool for their political demands and activism, see also ► [Women and Peace Negotiations in Cyprus](#).

For example, Laura McLeod’s research in Serbia has shown antagonist understandings of security and post-conflict figurations that attach different meanings and actions to WPS (McLeod 2011). While anti-militarist feminist activists mobilized WPS as a tool to acknowledge Serbia’s responsibility in the conflict, state actors and other stakeholders involved in the creation of Serbia’s NAP or in its implementation used this opportunity to reframe Serbia as a liberal nation that can contribute to international security or as a nation that can move away from the legacy of conflict through support and capacity-building. McLeod’s article thus underlines the importance of paying attention to multiple and contradictory visions of gender, security, and post-conflict at play in the translation of WPS into localized actions.

On the other hand, Vanessa Farr’s research in the context of Palestine draws attention to the sustained struggle of women’s groups to mobilize in a complex terrain shaped by imbalance of power with the Israeli government, the everyday experiences of occupation and the legacy of local and international patriarchal structures (Farr 2011). Farr highlights how women’s groups have mobilized

the language and spirit of UNSCR1325 to articulate their demands. However, the structural inequalities and endless constraints on the ground have undermined the potential of the WPS framework to meaningfully transform women's lived experiences and activism.

More recent interventions continue to draw attention to the persistent gap between the translation of WPS norms and the possibilities to engender change and transformation on the ground (Shepherd 2020). Such contributions reiterate the importance of theorizing that takes seriously local knowledges, contexts, and experiences (see for example: Madsen and Hudson 2020; O'Sullivan and Krulišová 2020; George and Soaki 2020; Drummond and Rebelo 2020; Tamang 2020).

For example, Shweta Singh investigates the obstacles underpinning the realization of WPS' transformative potential in the context of Afghanistan (Singh 2020). These emerge from a complex entanglement between cultural and religious norms, and the legacy of international intervention, conflict, and militarization. As Singh demonstrates, WPS has been mapped onto the institutional context but this move falls short of meaningfully supporting women's agency and transforming their experiences of everyday insecurity. Grounding the analysis in the everyday reveals how women activists and human rights defenders navigate a complex web of cultural, religious, and community practices that regulate gender relations and prescribe norms for women's behavior, for example, through gender segregation. Furthermore, Singh's research illustrates intersecting factors that reproduce women's insecurities and impinge on women's participation irrespective of the national-level institutions tasked with implementation of WPS principles. These include the militarization of communities – a legacy of the conflict and the counterinsurgency efforts led by NATO, the USA and the Afghan government, the effects of demobilization, and the persistence of patriarchal norms. Despite this evidence, Singh argues, the voices and experiences of Afghani women too often remain marginal in ongoing research and institutional fora. As the case of Afghanistan attests, without paying attention to the complex web of insecurities that women

navigate in scenarios shaped by conflict and international intervention, WPS research and practice will be limited to tracing processes of translation, rather than meaningful transformation.

Translating WPS into Security Institutions and Practices

As the normative framework of the agenda proliferates across different institutional and policy contexts, another research trajectory has examined how different entities have taken on board and developed WPS. For example, research includes analyses of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (e.g., Wright et al. 2019), the European Union (e.g., Guerrina and Wright 2016), the African Union (e.g., Haastrup 2019; Hendricks 2017), and the Pacific Island Forum (e.g., Rolls and Rolls 2019). While the articulation of the agenda in different organizational territories is an important indicator of multi-sited institutionalization and emerging communities of practice, feminist scholars have also shown that WPS' traveling across the architecture of international peace and security is not a straightforward process.

For example, Toni Haastrup's research on the African Union (AU) complicates linear and unidirectional understandings of norm diffusion from the UN to other institutional contexts (Haastrup 2019). To the contrary, developments around WPS in the African continent reveal the long-standing contribution of activists and institutional actors in the African Union to conceptualize WPS and embed it in regional and localized implementation. By paying attention to the interaction of different knowledges, practices, and actors, it becomes clear that the AU is not merely a recipient of global norms. Rather, Haastrup demonstrates, the AU is a site wherein learning, contestation, and implementation of the different meanings attributed to WPS coexist.

On the other hand, Katharine Wright's research on NATO demonstrates how the adoption of the WPS agenda is translated through an operational language of efficiency that mutes its more radical and transformative aims (Wright 2016). This is echoed in studies of the implementation of WPS

in the context of EU security and peacebuilding missions wherein openings for institutional implementation through robust gender mainstreaming mechanisms are also met with a resistance to alter and transform existing security practices (Deiana and McDonagh 2018). In these contexts, arguments about the inclusion of women and/or gender perspectives are made on the grounds of operational effectiveness that eschew wider questions of gender equality and transformation.

Overall, as these studies testify, WPS' articulation across different institutional territories produces a variety of interactions and frameworks that impact implementation in specific contexts, while also running the risk of being diluted and co-opted within practices which might be at odds with feminist principles.

Summary and Future Directions

The signing of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in October 2000 is considered an important landmark for feminist peace research and activism. The subsequent emergence of the Women, Peace and Security agenda has set in motion opportunities for the articulation of feminist demands for political transformation and for the inclusion of gender-sensitive perspectives in international peace and security practices. At the same time, assessing the development and institutionalization of the agenda across different organizational and activist spaces reveals a complex set of trade-offs and tensions that complicate, and often undermine, a feminist transformative ethos. As this entry has outlined, the WPS agenda has been the catalyst of wide-ranging scholarship and intense critical scrutiny on the strategic interpretations and contested meanings of the agenda, the practices of and failures in implementation, as well as on the global hierarchies reproduced through both research and policymaking. Two decades of intensive feminist study have also opened up new directions for research that are likely to animate ongoing critical engagements with the meanings, potential, and pitfalls of the agenda. For example, these have included analyses of WPS informed by queer scholarship and

LGBTQ studies – see also ► [LGBTQ Perspectives in Peacebuilding](#), as well as studies that attend to the role of masculinities – see also ► [Masculinity and Conflict](#). Recent interventions also begin to analyze WPS' entanglements with border and asylum regimes and the missed opportunities within (Holvikivi and Reeves 2017; Kirby 2020).

All in all, research on WPS is illustrative of the ongoing and complex journey of feminist ideas into the architecture of international peace and security. At the same time, it is worth acknowledging that feminist engagements with peace are not confined to the study of WPS. While WPS is an important site of analysis, feminist peace research entails a much wider set of methodological and interdisciplinary perspectives that seek to transform and re-imagine established practices of peace and security beyond the institutional realm and statist conventions (Lyytikäinen et al. 2020; Wibben et al. 2019,) see also ► [Feminist Peace Research](#).

Cross-References

- [Feminist Peace Research](#)
- [LGBTQ Perspectives in Peacebuilding](#)
- [Masculinity and Conflict](#)
- [Women and Peace Negotiations in Cyprus](#)
- [Women's International League for Peace and Freedom \(WILPF\)](#)
- [Women's Organizations in Post-Conflict Contexts](#)

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Women's Community Peacebuilding in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT)

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Synonyms

Civil society organizations (CSOs); Empowerment; Human rights; Occupied Palestinian Territories; Peacebuilding; Women's engagement

Description

This chapter discusses women's engagement in community peacebuilding in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT). It also considers the importance of women's community-based and participative education as an agent of peacebuilding. Palestinian women have been subject to various cycles of political violence and remain among the most vulnerable groups confronting domestic and political violence as a serious threat to both their civic engagement and community participation. The chapter also examines the relationship between women leaders and Palestinian civil society organizations (CSOs) in trying to eliminate the phenomenon of domestic violence against women in the OPT. The chapter concludes that the challenges of foreign occupation and political and domestic violence hinder the progress of women's efforts to contribute to community peacebuilding including education development in the OPT.

Introduction

Palestinian women actively participate in popular, community peacebuilding education and collective public activities to try to shape their own future in the context of occupation and colonization (Jad 2018, pp. 31–39). The power of

participatory civil society is reflected to meet the vision of engaging women in civic actions and freedom of expression. Their narratives and roles also contribute to the introduction of long-term changes in attitudes, stereotypes, and prejudices and to promote women's rights and foster tolerance and understanding of the "other" by applying lessons learnt from other conflicts in the world (Paffenholz and Spurk 2010, pp. 66–76). Women, however, may view their representation as an outcome of empowerment according to the cultural context of their society. This chapter shares case studies of women with lived experiences of grassroots community peacebuilding education and development activities in the OPT. A teacher, for example, employed peacebuilding education; a specialist/leader employs active listening and mediation to solve family and social problems; and two civil society activists engage in community development and human rights programs, implementing community participatory approaches to grassroots peacebuilding education. These stories of women community peacebuilders, their challenges, and achievements introduce the grassroots approach to civil society peacebuilding rather than top-down formal state institutions (Noma et al. 2012, pp. 7–32).

To what extent women's community peacebuilding programs delivered by local CSOs has altered the ways that women think about their way of life? These programs have made significant headway in changing women's attitudes in terms of grassroots and community peacebuilding. Women contribute to community peacebuilding and education activities, to enhance their participation in decision-making processes and increase their power to decide on future change. The example of women empowerment projects funded by Western donors in the OPT is used to clarify the linkages between women's activities in grassroots community peacebuilding via civil society organizations (CSOs).

Definitions

To understand the active participation and power of women in community peacebuilding activism

and engagement, it is essential to study (Aragones and SánchezPagés 2009, pp. 56–72), who define participatory democracy as a process of collective decision-making where citizens have the power to decide on change. Women's active participation and engagement in local organizations, student unions, political groups, movements, and CSOs was a form of "participatory democracy" responding to the shifting political landscape in the OPT. The article also considers the Palestinian civil society organizations (CSOs) in delivering women's community peacebuilding and development activities. The article is based on research which analyzes the role of CSOs in promoting women's contribution to community peacebuilding and development in OPT. Intervention by civil society organizations in community peacebuilding is considered where the core approach of active engagement of women is identified from democracy theory (Paffenholz and Spurk 2010, p. 65).

Activation of participatory democracy of civil society is to promote community peacebuilding engagement. This approach is to draw upon the theory of "participatory democracy" based on "civil society intervention" in order to examine the impact of civil society programs (Paffenholz and Spurk 2010, pp. 66–76). Some Palestinian civil society organizations (CSOs) are involved in promoting citizens' engagement in grassroots activism. Women's engagement and empowerment, however, in OPT have been an important topic for international organizations for several years (Baliamoune Lutz 2016, pp. 320–341). This empowerment can be understood through the lens of security, transformative change, and participation (Porter 2013, pp. 1–14). Women, Michael Porter (2007) writes, have long been distinguished at the forefront of peacebuilding efforts. Their engagement in grassroots peacebuilding is much more visible, while men take part in the formal political process (Potter 2008, pp. 142–143).

The new social media tools and older forms of communication are employed in civil society activities to promote and encourage active participation, tolerance, better understanding, balanced reporting, and objectivity and end the

violence against women. Women's community peacebuilding activities of CSOs also aim at rebuilding mutual trust through capacity building, activating marginalized groups of young people, and launching joint development policies and strategies (Paffenholz and Spurk 2010, pp. 66–76).

Practice and engagement take place through a transparent and effective political system where young people can participate and engage freely without any social or political restrictions. Power intervention by civil society organizations is a participatory process reflected by different mechanisms and processes, for example, through CSOs, universities, public institutions, local councils, political parties, and the decision-making process (Paffenholz and Spurk 2010, pp. 66–76).

In the early months of the Oslo Peace Process, CSOs participated in the early days of "state institution building," hoping for peace and prosperity based on human rights and for democracy, justice, and the rule of law. The PA, however, was unable to respond rapidly to the social and economic demands and the needs of desperate residents of the OPT; it was dramatically weakened by Israeli activity as well as by the deteriorating economic situation (Natil 2015). CSOs, on the other hand, proved that they could deliver a model of services managed by professional teams. CSOs have been considered crucial stakeholders in the Palestinian territories, mobilizing and empowering society as key drivers of political and societal change processes. They deliver actions in the fields of human rights, community development, conflict resolution, sports, and women's empowerment (Natil 2014).

This approach is tested by conducting ten interviews with activists who have already worked for and engaged in community peacebuilding activities. Also considered is the existing literature's emphasis on a narrow, classical definition of civil society and young women's activism and participation in community peacebuilding. There are specific studies in the context of civil society activism and peacebuilding in the conflict area (Paffenholz 2010). The author also used participatory observation, in addition to reviewing the existing literature, to enrich the argument and to

understand the historical approach of women and their civil society's engagement in community peacebuilding.

Historical and Political Violence Context

The grave situation of women in the OPT has been increasing, owing to the various cycles of violence mentioned above, since the establishment of the Israeli State and the violent expulsion of Palestinians from their homeland in 1948 (Farah 2006, p. 231). The creation of Israel and its ethnic cleansing of more than 750,000 Palestinians from their homes and land forced them into the life of a refugee (Bastaki 2017, p. 5). These Palestinians became refugees in different locations and today are mostly located in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, and the Gaza Strip (Hulal 1992, pp. 33–74). The Palestinian refugee population grew up naturally in these locations, and, as the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) indicates, “some 5 million Palestine refugees are eligible for UNRWA services in its area of operations” (Natil 2016b, pp. 78–82).

Political violence represents a major challenge for women's integration, advancement, and engagement in the development of their society in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT). Violence also limits women's access to resources and prevents them from enjoying their rights as human beings. It obstructs their contribution to development and empowerment. Violence against women is a widespread phenomenon in all countries of the world, owing to a range of cultural, educational, environmental, and economic factors and causes. The UN General Assembly defines violence against women as:

any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life. (UNGA 1993)

Since this recognition, the UN, as well as several governments, INGOs, and CSOs have increased their efforts toward the elimination of

violence against women and gender inequality, highlighting a woman's right to be free from violence. There have been many CSOs supported by some technical support and funding from some international donors that represent a safe place for many victims and marginalized and vulnerable groups including women in many conflict zones. Women living in the OPT, for example, have been subject to various cycles of violence under Israeli occupation as the first Intifada (uprising) (1987–1993), the second Intifada (2000–2004), and three different wars on the Gaza Strip in 2008–2009, 2012, and 2014 (Natil 2015).

Women have remained the most marginalized group confronting violence in the OPT, and it has weakened their civic engagement and community participation (Jad 2018, pp. 31–39). This violence remains a major challenge to women's social and political engagement and empowerment as Randa Siniora general director of the Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling in Palestine said before the UN Security council:

The Israeli occupation and the resulting humanitarian crisis are deeply gendered and exacerbate existing gender inequalities. Women disproportionately endure the violence of occupation borne by all Palestinians, and often with gender-specific consequences. (Ratcliffe 2019)

In addition to the human rights abuses suffered by Palestinian women as a result of Israeli violence, they also are subjected to a system of laws and norms that result in them becoming marginalized within Palestinian society (Jad 2018, pp. 31–39). According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, about 37% of women who ever been married were exposed to one form of violence by their partner – 29.9% in the West Bank and 51.1% in Gaza Strip (PCBS 2017). This had already made some women to live with their situation and life with their violent intimate partner because of their failure to alter their partner's behavior (Baloushah 2019, pp. 2332–2336). This suffering has increased in the Gaza Strip since the 2014 Israeli war named “Operation Protective Edge.” 26,733 women with their families lost their homes because of the Israeli-wrought destruction (Koek et al. 2015). Nickolay Mladenov, the United Nations Special

Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, following his first visit to the Gaza Strip on 29 April 2015, said:

No human being who visits can remain untouched by the terrible devastation that one sees here in Gaza, and as shocking as the devastation of the buildings might be, the devastation of people's livelihoods is 10 times more shocking. (UNRWA 2015)

This operation created a new environment of destruction, family displacement, and overloaded surviving families with devastating psychological problems. It damaged or destroyed 17,800 housing units and left 100,000 Gazans displaced and more than 2251 dead (UNOCHA 2017). The majority of those killed were Palestinian civilians, compared with 66 Israeli military fatalities, 5 Israeli civilian casualties, and 1 Thai civilian killed (UNOCHA 2017). Those displaced Palestinians lost not only their homes but also their dignity, when they found themselves without any shelter. In addition, they also suffered from serious psychological problems because of the three large Israeli military offensives that caused a major loss of life and the destruction of an already impoverished infrastructure (Koek et al. 2015).

This created a massive challenge for local CSOs as they struggled to meet citizens' needs and demands, not least because resources are sorely lacking after 13 years of Israeli blockade on the Gaza Strip. The blockade was imposed in response to the election of a Hamas government following Palestinian elections in 2006. A subsequent internal Palestinian feud resulted in Hamas taking control of the Gaza Strip and the Fatah movement of the West Bank (Natil 2015).

Throughout the blockade, CSOs have struggled to deliver a range of services, aimed at the promotion of women's engagement in participatory grassroots processes despite living in a high level of violence under foreign occupation, poverty, and conservatism in the OPT. The Palestinian CSOs represent various spectrums of social, cultural, and political backgrounds that have already delivered a range of actions to eliminate violence against women despite a shifting political landscape. They hope to increase women's resilience and civic engagement via a process of

participatory grassroots activities in decision-making to help integrate them into the development of their society. They also try to enhance awareness of citizens in response to violence, in order to assist policy-makers in planning and resource allocation. Some CSOs also cooperate with international organizations and donors to identify possible points of intervention by examining factors associated with a heightened risk of violence. They test and employ tools and information that contribute to evaluation efforts of eliminating violence by peacebuilding education and practices.

Peacebuilding Education

Women are often described as victims and marginalized in leading formal political and institutional processes (Jad 2018, pp. 31–39), but they are powerful agents for community peacebuilding education in the context of conflict (Arostegui 2013, pp. 533–549). Hanan Hroub, a teacher from Dheisheh refugee camp in the West Bank, for example, promoted practices and concepts of peacebuilding education and practices in her class. Education is a significant tool for the Palestinians to struggle peacefully and represent their identity and society in the international arena. The Varkey Foundation, an international organization that supports education worldwide, awarded Hanan Hroub the Global Teacher Prize for her teaching excellence on 14 March 2016. Hroub employed a technique of “play and learn” to provide peace, harmony, and security to her students who had special education needs owing to the long foreign occupation (Natil 2016a).

Based on participatory approaches, the priority of young women and the entire female community in the OPT is now to accommodate and provide the basic needs for their families and children who witnessed the many cycles of violence and subsequent military operations under the occupation of Palestine. They are encouraged to emulate Hanan Al Hroub in her success story of employing new techniques of community peacebuilding. She competed against 8000 international applicants to win the \$1 million prize, presented to her at a

ceremony in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). She grew up in Dheisheh Refugee Camp, and her family suffered from the violence of occupation when her husband, Omar, and two of her daughters were shot by Israeli soldiers at a checkpoint near Bethlehem. Dheisheh Refugee Camp is located in the West Bank City of Bethlehem. Hanan's husband, a lawyer, was injured in the shoulder, and her daughters were traumatized. She won the global prize, owing to her philosophy to influence the children in her own classroom.

In addition to Hanan's story of success at the international platforms, there have been a number of female teachers who promote values such as tolerance, human rights, and conflict resolution at UNRWA schools in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. UNRWA is the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, which was established on 8 December 1949 to support Palestinian refugees. UNRWA manages schools, food aid, clinics, and hospitals as it strives to deliver vital services to refugees (Gunnarsdóttir 2006, pp. 10–12). In order to assist in social healing, UNRWA mentors a network of 104 grassroots centers, managed by volunteers, 63% of whom are women (Gunnarsdóttir 2006, pp. 10–12). These centers continue to deliver support to women refugees in the form of activities related to socializing and culture, and they also provide education and recreation services. UNRWA is mandated to provide social, health, and education services for all Palestinian refugees. It delivers operations under the aegis of its "human development and humanitarian services" (UNRWA 2016).

In 2001, UNRWA introduced its Human Rights, Conflict Resolution and Tolerance (HRCRT) Programme for delivery across all grades and schools in each of UNRWA's five fields of operation in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon. UNRWA developed textbooks that promote concepts of conflict resolution through school programs which teach human rights, tolerance, and conflict resolution. HRCRT relies upon international human rights codes including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the World Programme for Human Rights Education, which is coordinated

by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (Pinto 2014, pp. 57–74). Human rights education (HRE) plays an essential role in establishing the structure and bases needed for a proper transition to a stable society (Bar-Tal and Rosen 2009, pp. 557–575).

Implementation of UNRWA's human rights and conflict resolution program involved the training and hiring of female teachers charged with implementing it in schools (Natil 2016b, pp. 78–82). Despite these strenuous efforts, UNRWA has still drawn criticism from local groups in the Gaza Strip which claim that the program ignores Palestinian suffering. However, despite these challenges, some local CSOs have sought to implement informal grassroots activities of education including training and awareness of community peacebuilding and conflict resolution in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Those organizations have succeeded in working with a number of international organizations and donors to implement community peacebuilding and conflict transformation activities. This was a help to engage young women in community activities that train them in dialogue and peacebuilding (Natil 2016b, pp. 78–82).

Foreign aid remains essential for civil society, peacebuilding, and development programs' implementation (Balioune Lutz 2016, pp. 320–341). UNRWA, however, has been dealing with the most severe financial crisis since its establishment after the Trump administration withdrew its contributions to UNRWA which amounted to \$359.3 million in 2017 (Zanotti 2018). This included \$231.5 million of 2017 bilateral economic assistance that was originally intended for the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, including \$25 million for East Jerusalem hospitals. USAID also ended its assistance to the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip (Zanotti 2018).

This funding cut has had a very serious impact on UNRWA and the local Palestinian CSOs. This cut has increased challenges of CSOs to respond to new massive challenges as they struggle to meet citizens' needs and demands efficiently, not least because resources are sorely lacking after

years of blockades in the Gaza Strip (Srouf 2018). As Al samak suggests:

[The] aid cut will increase citizens' suffering and the pressures on the PA, and UNRWA, but the solidarity among various categories of the society may ease pressures for political causes and this may encourage the international community to get engaged once again. (Samak 2018)

UNRWA and CSOs cannot implement its programs or operations without international aid and assistance.

Participatory Approach

UNRWA has particularly implemented programs with a participatory approach to learning which aims to raise women's awareness "with an understanding of their place in the world and a common set of key values, including women's empowerment and gender equality" while also "helping them develop the skills to thrive as adults in an evolving, challenging landscape" (UNRWA 2016).

Local CSOs have implemented civil society activities to target and educate a large number of young women on the values and community education of democracy, human rights, and peacebuilding. Meanwhile, some CSOs are trying to engage young women via a holistic approach which combines discussions and dialogue, coalition-building, interviews, and various interactions between the young people themselves and other stakeholders. These select initiatives are informed by need-based design processes, and so they are responsive to the broader political changes taking place around them and able to adapt to the specific requirements of the younger elements within the population. Politicians often mobilize women and their CSOs to get elected and to achieve very narrow political interests regardless of good governance practices, active grassroots engagement, and community participation (Amer 2018). Women's activists, leaders, and/or CSOs have no real influence over public policies and record a very low level of civic participation. Women who call for change, improving human rights, democracy, and peacebuilding face a number of social

and political threats (Jad 2018, pp. 31–39). Women are banned from freedom of expression, media freedom, the right of association, and the right to organize peaceful actions and marches (Siam 2016).

There has been, however, an increasing number of women who challenge the social and cultural context and who are willing to claim their inheritance rights as a result of awareness-raising and assistance through the lawyers of CSOs. Women are entitled to inherit valuables such as money, property, jewelry, etc. from a deceased parent. There have been a number of cases in which women were deprived of their inheritance. The Palestinian Centre for Democracy and Conflict Resolution (PCDCR), for example, uses an approach which fosters mediation and negotiation techniques with women's *mukhtars* together with legal experts to attempt to resolve community disputes between women and their families (Koek et al. 2015).

Mukhtars is a traditional conflict resolution specialist, not elected, or a professional mediator/arbitrator. These women's initiatives aim to transform conflict through methodologies of education and training, and they seek to empower young people and women by engaging them in community participation actions. Some CSOs use education to promote reconciliation and dialogue within the community between various competing Palestinian groups. Women's involvement in community activities is a core principle of conflict resolution and community peacebuilding approaches which also promote dialogue and other peacebuilding mechanisms and tools (Jad 2018, pp. 31–39).

These CSOs' operations contribute to women's defiance, resilience, and public freedoms, for example, the Society Voice Foundation's project titled "Empowerment of women's civic engagement and public freedoms" funded by a German-based organization, Women's Prayers Committee, and delivered in the Gaza Strip (Amer 2016). This project targeted 120 women aged 22–35 and trained them in the techniques of empowerment and participation such as radio programs, awareness sessions, writing media outlets, and monitoring local councils' activities from a

gender perspective (Amer 2016). Fida Amer led the project, and a local evaluator assessed the impact of the project on the target group, which received positive feedback from participants. In 2016, she also led a local project, in partnership with the Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (IHL) Secretariat, to raise the voices of internally displaced persons (IDPs) who lost their homes during the 2014 war. The project aimed at working with displaced families and understanding their issues. Active listening to displaced women is a crucial point of understanding their needs and voices (Amer 2016).

This project's activities, for example, could provide a real indication of changes occurring in the lives of young women leaders who are empowered in the techniques of leadership capacity with emphasis on freedom of expression, community/voluntary work, elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, and engagement in community peacebuilding. Palestinian society in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank has been living in very severe circumstances with a lack of human security at different levels, owing to the absence of peace process and economic development and internal Palestinian division. Palestinian women, during this period, therefore, have witnessed an unprecedented state of poor public freedoms and sociopolitical deadlock at all levels, owing to the paralyzed political system, social and geographic division, and the hardship of poor economic life (Al Mour 2016). Despite women's engagement in community peacebuilding activities through CSOs, there have been some local criticisms from activists and professionals.

Local Criticism

There have been, however, a number of women activists who believe that international funding has promoted the concept of women's community participation (Samak 2016). Some donors, however, have special agendas and conditions attached to specific community activities and do not support some women's organizations that sympathized with certain political groups (Al

Mour 2016). However, there are some donors who have no political or conditional agendas. Foreign aid also made limited contributions to women's political participation because the projects' funding, target groups, and duration were limited (Amer 2016). These projects, however, raised women's awareness of issues during elections such as laws, campaign management, advocacy, and building alliances between various political and social groups of mutual interest (Siam 2016).

Gender awareness has not been a Palestinian priority as it is imported from international donors and CSOs responded to the call of proposals, launched by donors (Murad 2015). It also redirected the priorities of women according to the donors' agenda, and women's organizations wasted time and resources in seeking funding to remain in operation rather than focusing on women's needs (Al Mour 2016).

These concepts enlighten and raise women's awareness of modern issues of empowerment, organizing themselves and participating in social and political activities; however, these women's organizations have been unable to influence marginalized women and introduce a positive change (Al Samak 2016). CSOs have limited capacity to challenge and contribute to the policy-making processes that could tackle poverty alleviation and civil society empowerment, and this is because they face an unstable political environment and funding crises. In addition to these challenges facing CSOs in the field of women's empowerment, major INGOs often control and monopolize resources. For example, both local and INGOs often submit applications in response to the same funding calls made by major international donors such as the European Union (EU), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and other governments and agencies (Natil 2016b, pp. 78–82).

INGOs often prove more successful than their local counterparts in bids to secure funding because they can draw on advanced technical capacities and expertise as well as significant established networks of contacts to win over donors. Similarly, it is easier for INGOs to acquire funding for its programs and overheads from

donor governments than it is for CSOs to achieve the same results. As a result, many INGOs work directly with the beneficiaries of aid and avoid direct partnership with CSOs, and highly trained staff are recruited from outside the region. This situation weakens the capacity of local CSOs which, when they are involved at all, are treated as subcontractors rather than as partners (Murad 2015).

These challenges influence the sustainability of CSOs, for example, working for women's community peacebuilding and development. They also affect their capacity to provide rapid responses to women's need in general and to cater for women's social and political participation empowerment in particular. Many donors, for example, who pledged to donate \$5 billion to the Palestinian territories, of which \$3.5 billion intended to support rebuilding the Gaza Strip at the Cairo conference of October 2015 (World Bank 2018). Delays in receiving foreign aid also affected women's humanitarian circumstances who have been waiting to rebuild their houses since 2014. This delay in foreign aid to women CSOs has already negatively affected the capacity of women to influence and participate in political structures. Fida Amer, a civil society activist, said:

the aid cut has already left a negative impact on cooperation between UNRWA and wide spectrums of CSOs and NGOs as thousands of target groups were deprived from services in the refugee camps in the Gaza Strip. (Amer 2016)

Women's CSOs could not take a role in the reconstruction process of the Gaza Strip after the destructive war of 2014, despite the fact that the process was controlled by few officials without the real participation of women (Siam 2016). Major INGOs continue to have a limited impact on women's empowerment and incur high operational expenses. Some INGOs also play a role in weakening the women's movement by relying on international donations and its leaders, despite having aims of promoting the concepts and values of women's social and political participation (Jad 2018, pp. 31–39).

Local women who work on civil society issues as community peacebuilding and development, however, form an integral part of the local context

and contribute to the delivery of important developmental and nation-building agendas. It is crucial that local communities endorse women empowerment programming that is designed to help young women to better understand their rights. It is also important that internationally funded projects do not ignore the Middle East conflict's historical and political context and the contribution of women to the Palestinian cause. It is hoped that these programs will provoke the transformation of women into peacebuilders and advocates for human rights practice and education both before and after any comprehensive peace agreement prevails. The funded work with young women will continue to have very limited impact on the peace and development agenda for as long as the occupation and division maintain a status quo that is characterized by violence and fragmentation.

Conclusion

This chapter examined the efforts and endeavors of CSOs to support women's community peacebuilding by organizing activities for capacity building training, community education, monitoring and advocacy, research and field studies, awareness, and media outlets. However, there are still women who have been neglected and excluded from community development and democratic participation including peacebuilding at the formal institutional level.

Sharing information about their achievements and challenges in peacebuilding at the grassroots and national and international context of conflict is relevant to women's social and political empowerment. Documenting and sharing their stories through well-designed platforms at grassroots and international level show how they become agents for empowerment, change, peace-making, and peacebuilding in their own communities. Social cohesion and active political participation in a pluralistic society are essential components of stabilization and peacebuilding. Cultural diversity and the political participation of various social and political actors, including women's engagement, also enrich social cohesion

in accountable and transparent political systems of democratic societies. These societies are also arguably strong enough to withstand new challenges and changes. Divided and undemocratic societies, however, are unable to absorb sudden and shocking challenges like those which have occurred in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT) of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank including Jerusalem.

Many Palestinian women, however, have made an exceptional contribution to their society through practices and concepts of community peacebuilding, development, and education. Despite the absence of peace, ongoing foreign occupation, and conservatism, some women still challenge the complicated circumstances to contribute to social change and development process based on community peacebuilding and human rights education and practice. Community peacebuilding, however, involves community and individual grassroots creative initiatives by ordinary people caught in the Palestinian conflict context, and their voices are seldom heard beyond their communities.

This empowerment can be a part of the change process and impact on the coordination and cooperation of women's groups in undertaking effective actions and campaigns, in order to make change a reality in terms of community peacebuilding education, practices, and development. Women have the power to contribute to the development of their society by participating in community education and in nonviolent actions, as well as being part of organizations for nonprofit activities.

The tradition of the policies is to empower women, and the major foreign funding for many civil society organizations is based on women's empowerment in the areas of intervention and delivery. CSOs learn the importance of women's participation, and their taking part in community activities has an impact on the development and social change process. CSOs participate in civic activities to learn about the needs of women, and again their taking part is important because it contributes to the transfer of women's empowerment concepts to male groups, helping to increase support for women in society.

Peace, relief, and development operations of CSOs, therefore, face a variety of serious challenges owing to the highly hostile political environment and absence of peace and human security at all levels. The inhabitants of the Gaza Strip have been living in inhumane circumstances since 2006. The region is isolated from the rest of the world by closure and a complicated range of restrictions on the movements of both people and goods. This environment with escalated violence from time to time has already made women's grassroots participation in empowerment activities impossible, as the local organizations need time to assist women and their families to recover from and accommodate each cycle of violence. CSOs increased the number of women leaders who contributed to their society and achieved a number of successful stories in different fields. Their contributions have already made a huge difference in that they encourage more women "participation" in the development of their society living under the longest occupation in contemporary history.

CSOs have attempted to create a new space for women's social and political engagement by managing community development, post-conflict reconstruction, democracy, and good governance as well as improving humanitarian lives and empathy with other cultures. It has been a huge challenge to run community participation programs in a highly politicized and polarized society, such as that of Palestine. Thus, they seek to use civil society values to enhance engagement of the marginalized groups to gain a voice and participate actively in proposing and implementing public policy agenda. CSOs also aim at promoting local networks among CSOs to stimulate a national debate between young people and decision-makers, focusing on themes of active participation and civic engagement. These community activities have been challenged by a number of internal and external circumstances and factors that have included violence and occupation.

Young women use social media to raise awareness of their problems and rights, bringing them into line with respective international standards, as well as establishing networks of information. Another aim of the CSOs is to promote freedom of

expression through new media and advocacy campaigns including preparing, designing, broadcasting, and circulating materials and organizing activities to foster a free press, in order to eliminate technical and cultural obstacles facing women's contributions to a peaceful public life. The activities aim at promoting active participation with emphasis on their freedom of expression. They also aim at strengthening the basis for civil society dialogue, community peacebuilding practices, and democratic discourse, with particular emphasis on women in media environment.

These activities, within which the target groups raise their voices, contribute, therefore, to institutionalize active civic participation, engagement, and good governance practices. For example, young trainees attempt to put their new skills and knowledge of community participation into practice by engaging and leading community actions. They elect their representatives to assess and monitor the performances of local councils in their districts from a community participation perspective. These young women have had a worthwhile opportunity of enhancing civic engagement practices in addition to participating in social accountability campaigns. To this end and in keeping with these principles, many civil society organizations ensure that the implementation of activities remains inclusive and as broad-based as possible.

Women activists also adopt a consensus seeking active participation in implementing the major phases of this process by seeking the input and engagement of young people, grassroots network members, and other partners at the various phases of implementation of community projects. They consider the methodology of active participation that entails understanding the beneficiaries' needs by being on the ground and introducing change incrementally. They sometimes use a holistic approach combining discussions and dialogue, coalition building, interviews, and a variety of interactions with the target groups and other stakeholders. For example, civil society organizations endeavored to make training and campaigning activities as creative and engaging as possible, without duplicating previous efforts.

The international community must, therefore, renew its efforts to increase support for women as

agents for peacebuilding and human rights education and practice in the OPT. The international community must exert significant influence over decision-making policy to work creatively to achieve justice and establish human rights which include respect for the rights of women and their movement according to international law. Within the OPT, international donors must prioritize female empowerment that is centered on social and economic development community. In their funding of such initiatives, they should also address the shortage of funding provided to local CSOs that work with women.

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Women's Engagement

- ▶ [Women's Community Peacebuilding in the Occupied Palestinian Territories \(OPT\)](#)

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)

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Description

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom is the longest-operating and one of the

most influential international women's peace organization in the world. Created in 1915 by women from the suffrage, social work, and socialist movements with the goal to stop World War I, it now has members in over 40 national sections in all continents. Its headquarters are located in Geneva, Switzerland, and New York, United States. With consultative status first at the League of Nations and, since 1948, at the United Nations, it has engaged with and challenged the international governance system to advocate for total and universal disarmament, a system for the peaceful resolution of conflicts, the establishment of an economic system based on human needs, and women's right to fully participate in peace processes as well as political institutions. It has been an important organization in the disarmament movement, creating its Reaching Critical Will program to offer feminist advocacy for disarmament and the reduction of global military spending and militarism. It has also played a leading role in the creation and support for the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda of the United Nations, which it follows through its PeaceWomen program. Its work has earned the organization three Nobel Peace Prizes: in 1931, to Jane Addams (WILPF's first International President); in 1946, to Emily Greene Balch (first Secretary General); and in 2017, to Reaching Critical Will as part of the Steering Committee of the International Coalition to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN).

Introduction

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) is the longest-operating women's international peace organization in the world and one of the most prominent NGOs associated to the international governance system. It has engaged with governments and intergovernmental organizations to inch toward its twin goals of peace and gender equality through reformist efforts and mainstreaming strategies (Stienstra 1994). But it has also worked outside and sometimes in outright opposition to official structures, pushing the system for more radical changes,

through a politics of protest, activism, and movement-building (a strategy of disengagement – Stienstra 1994). These two modes of working have coexisted uneasily but productively within the organization since its creation, as had the tension between essentialist and rights-based arguments for its existence and work. WILPF has continuously interrogated itself about the reasons for organizing for peace as women, and about the meaning and content of peace for women from different backgrounds, economic positions, geographical origins, histories, and political opinions. An organization formed primarily by European and North American middle-to-upper class white women, WILPF has struggled to concretize its theoretical visions of peace and freedom into political and policy stances that would benefit all women equally. This paper will trace the history of WILPF and its internal tensions in three sections: The first will cover the period from the organization's founding to the Second World War; the second will be devoted to the Cold War and post-Cold War periods; and the third will be devoted to the new millennium, starting with the passage of UN Security Council Resolution 1325.

The Beginnings

WILPF has its origins in the International Congress of Women for Permanent Peace, an assembly of about 1,200 women from belligerent and neutral countries, who gathered at The Hague in 1915 with the ambitious goal to stop the ongoing World War I. Prominent, middle-class, white social reformers and suffragettes of the progressive era led the group: Jane Addams and Emily Greene Balch from the United States, Aletta Jacobs from The Netherlands, Rosika Schwimmer from Hungary, Crystall Macmillan and Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence from the UK, and Anita Augspurg and Lida Gustava Heymann from Germany (Bussey and Tims 1980). The origins of the effort in the suffrage, social work, and socialist movements situated the group at the border between conflicting ideological strands, but the urgency of the immediate goal united the women.

At the end of this first assembly, the women issued a statement directed to warring nations that outlined the terms of a future international order based on arbitration, equal rights for women, free trade, total and universal disarmament, and national self-determination. They already envisaged an international organization that would establish the conditions for permanent peace, and “gradually adjusted” the interests and rights of great powers, as well as “weaker countries and primitive peoples” (WILPF 1915). Despite the failure of their wartime efforts, the women met again in 1919 in Zurich, Switzerland. It was there that they constituted and named the organization, with headquarters established in Geneva, the home of the nascent League of Nations, to which they later formally affiliated. The final statement of that Zurich Congress reiterated more in detail the principles set in 1915 and decried the terms of the peace deal as overly harsh economically on the losing nations and as sanctioning a unilateral arms’ buildup. They predicted that such arrangements would only ensure the continuation of the “rule of force,” at the expense of the principle of justice in international relations (WILPF 1919). Significantly for the time, the 1919 resolution also included a formal statement on racial equality, thanks to the tireless advocacy of Mary Church Terrell, an African American civil rights activist and the only woman of color present at the meeting (Terrell 2005; Plastas 2011; Blackwell 2004).

The new organization was organized into national sections, with an international congress as its agenda-setting organ meeting every 3 years, and made up of section representatives. Executive bodies – which over the years changed in name, composition, and numbers — were elected by the congress and included an international president. They were tasked to make political and organizational decisions in between congresses. A Secretary General was to be at the helm of an international secretariat at headquarters. On the one hand, WILPF reflected in this form and mode of organizing the kind of internationalism that remained linked to the state system and nationalism (Sluga 2013). On the other hand, its members also saw themselves as cosmopolitans, whose allegiance was to the international

organization, rather than to their countries of origins. Melinda Plastas (2011) calls this “community internationalism.”

In this way, the tension between conformity to and rejection of the state system manifested itself since the very beginning of the organization. Moreover, if *modus operandi*, authority, and accountability structures were and continue to be debated (sometimes intensely so), so did WILPF’s constitution. From the very beginning, it unambiguously stated that WILPF stood for total and universal disarmament; the support for international law; the peaceful settlement of conflicts; the development of a world organization; an economic system based on human needs, rather than profit; and gender equality in international and national politics. The ways in which these general principles have been outlined and operationalized, however, have changed over the course of WILPF’s existence, reflecting partially changing international conditions and partially internal struggles, developments, and self-reflection (Confortini 2012).

As the organization started working, with Jane Addams as its first International President and Emily Greene Balch as Secretary General, the competing rationales for the work of a women’s peace organization continued to coexist in productive tension. WILPF engaged in both mainstreaming and disengaging initiatives – advocacy at the League of Nations, activism and protest, petition, and information campaigns – alone or in coalitions with other organizations. The organization survived but struggled during the Red Scare of the 1920s and 1930s, when many members in different sections were targeted for radical organizing and alleged Communist activities. Notable among its activities were “fact-finding missions,” to US-occupied Haiti (Plastas 2011; Confortini 2021), Palestine, and Indo-China (Bussey and Tims 1980). In this period, WILPF advocated against chemical warfare, in support of the rights of minorities in Europe, and to demand the diversion of military expenses to economic recovery. In its work for disarmament, it often argued for arms embargoes to parties in conflict (for example, during the Sino-Japanese dispute over Manchuria, the Italian

invasion of Ethiopia, and the Spanish Civil War), but many within WILPF noticed how arms embargoes could easily be sidestepped and ultimately favor invading or fascist regimes. It supported the Gandhi-led Indian nonviolent struggle against British imperialism. African American women from the US Section, however, insisted in differentiating Gandhian method of nonviolence (see Chap. 97, ► [“Nonviolence and Civil Resistance”](#)) from what the organization called nonresistance (Blackwell 2004; Schott 1997) – again an instance of productive debates over both methods and goals of a women's peace organization.

In the 1930s, Gertrude Baer – who had joined WILPF at the Zurich Congress as a 19 year-old German Jewish delegate – stepped in as Secretary General, taking refuge from Nazi persecution in Switzerland. Baer was to shape the organization's work more closely in collaboration with international organizations, even as the League of Nations gradually became irrelevant and eventually dissolved. As Germany started to rearm, WILPF debated the appropriate response and came to be denigratingly associated with a politics of appeasement (for a careful dissection of those arguments and a more nuanced analysis of peace organizations' actions of the time, see Lynch 1999). World War II put the organization in a hiatus: Gertrude Baer moved to the United States, where she kept WILPF alive. The war decimated WILPF's members, many of whom died, some in concentration camps. The surviving WILPFers were able, nevertheless, to meet again in 1946 in Luxembourg and started planning for a postwar world.

The Postwar World: From a Hot to a Cold War

In Luxembourg in 1946, the women's faith in the possibilities of peace was shaken but not defeated: Many of them had fought and died alongside men and now questioned WILPF's reasons for existing as a women's organization. Others felt that WILPF's existence was more necessary than ever. Ironically, the explosion of the atomic bomb seemed to represent for them an opportunity to

make total and universal disarmament a reality: who in their right mind could support rearming with weapons that could destroy the entire planet? The goals they had worked for since 1915 now seemed both necessary and achievable. They resolved to continue working, but in the next two decades, they rarely discussed the relationship between women and peace. Nevertheless they remained committed to work both on peace and women's rights, particularly on equal representation at the United Nations, as soon as they became one of the first NGOs (see section Actors, Institutions and Networks) with consultative status with ECOSOC and other UN agencies in 1948. At the height of the modern liberal era – the late 1940s and through the 1950s – WILPF participated in the international system in ideologically ambivalent ways, working within the UN but never trusting the organization fully, seeing the faults in its Great-Power-dominated structure. This skepticism translated in cautious positions toward UN initiatives, especially around questions that were also fiercely internally debated.

For example, when Gertrude Baer became WILPF's representative to the UN, she initially trusted and supported the Trusteeship Council to move the territories under its jurisdiction slowly toward independence. As the decolonization movement grew, Baer attended the First Asian–African Conference in Bandoeng in 1955, the First All-African People's Conference in Accra in 1958, and the 2nd UN Conference of Non-government Organizations on the Eradication of Prejudice and Discrimination in 1959. These meetings of recently or soon-to-be decolonized states, as well as more informal conversations on the ground, bolstered her critique of colonial powers' engagement with the UN as imbued with racist paternalism, a critique that eventually was shared by WILPF. WILPF's initial cautious optimism toward the decolonization process, the Trusteeship system, and the future of world community in the wake of decolonization was replaced with a consensus in support of struggles for independence, declaring it “a human right to resist injustice and to be neither silent witness nor passive victim of repression” (WILPF 1971). The process of getting to this statement is indicative of the edge WILPF constantly

negotiated, within itself and with the world around it, between liberally-aligned positions and more radical, transformational ones (Confortini 2012).

Beginning in the 1960s, WILPF intensified its disengaging strategies as well as its cooperation with other organizations, whether or not affiliated with the UN, including those from beyond the Iron Curtain. WILPF's statements in the 1970s condemned both racial injustice and "an economic system based on production for profit rather than production for human needs" as ultimately responsible for both "cold" and "hot" wars. They also linked more explicitly women's emancipation with "the achievement of peace and the relaxation of international tension" (WILPF 1974).

The UN Women's Conferences

The reflection over women's responsibilities, aptitudes, rights, and roles in bringing about peace went hand-in-hand with WILPF's participation in the UN decade for women (1975–1985) and its associated conferences, as well as its attendance to conferences organized outside of and as an alternative to the UN system. Participation in the international women's rights movement (see Chap. 72, ► "Intersectionality and Peace", and Chap. 53, ► "Gender Justice and Peacebuilding") represented a watershed for the organization, which eventually led to its rise as agenda-setting leader in women, peace, and security issues. In Mexico City (1975), Copenhagen (1980), Nairobi (1985), and in the World Conferences against Racism (Falcón 2016), tensions arose visibly and forcefully between women of the global south and north, around questions of difference and marginality (Garner 2013). Feminists from the global south emphasized the connections among different forms of oppression, whereas those in the north argued for the specificity of women's experiences vis-à-vis men, but downplayed or ignored the differences among women, in regard to race, geopolitical location, and class in particular. Despite its own structural and collective shortcomings in these regards, WILPF joined global south women in criticizing the depoliticization of women's conferences and the marginalization of

global south women's concerns. In WILPF's view, women's oppression could not be isolated from other forms of injustice, including imperialism, racism, and an international economic system based on profits rather than human well-being.

At the same time, these international exchanges provided WILPF with the opportunity to bring peace and disarmament to the women's agenda. WILPF spearheaded, for example, Peace Tents at the 1985 Nairobi and 1995 Beijing Conferences, drawing women together to share experiences of conflicts in their societies. Both Nairobi's and Beijing's resulting documents explicitly linked the achievement of peace with women's rights (United Nations 1985 and United Nations 1995).

Notably, WILPF also worked with organizations that refused to be part of the UN framework (for example, the Women's International Democratic Federation and the Pan African Women's Organization) and remained active in anti-militarist and disarmament movements, from Women Strike for Peace in the 1960s to Women's Pentagon Action and the women's peace encampments and marches of the 1980s (see section "Actors, Institutions and Networks; also Eschle 2018), consistently denouncing the human and developmental costs of arms manufacturing and use, global militarization, and war. WILPF supported but also critiqued forcefully several arms control treaties for not going far enough or equitably enough toward universal and total disarmament. The organization's main message emphasized the human and environmental costs of the development, testing, and deployment of nuclear and other types of weapons, as well as their differential gender, race, and class impacts.

Out of the need to coordinate NGO actions around the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty following the failure of its 1995 review conference to reach agreement on a number of contentious issues, WILPF created Reaching Critical Will (RCW) in 1999, the program which would lead WILPF's "analysis and advocacy for disarmament, the reduction of global military spending and militarism, and the investigation of gendered aspects of the impact of weapons and of disarmament processes" (RCW n.d.).

The New Millennium

From women's mobilization at the turn of the millennium came the impetus to influence the UN Security Council in feminist directions by forming a coalition of women's organizations that eventually succeeded in having the UN Security Council adopt its Resolution 1325 in October 2000. UNSCR 1325 was a landmark achievement of feminist activism, acknowledging women's roles and vulnerabilities in armed conflict and their contributions to peace (see section Peace Operations and Missions). It also affirms the need to mainstream gender in peace operations as well as other aspects of UN programming. To monitor the implementation of the resolution and disseminate it across the world, WILPF created the PeaceWomen program, which has coordinated and facilitated information-sharing among women's groups and between them and the UN, translating the resolution in over 60 languages. WILPF and other women's organizations' continued pressure on the UNSC has led to numerous follow-up resolutions, which together now make up the Women Peace and Security Agenda of the UN (WPS).

At the same time as WPS is hailed as "both the product and the armature for a massive mobilization of women's political energy" (Cohn 2004: 8), feminist critics lament its shortcomings. Since the Security Council's initial refusal to contemplate a commitment to disarmament among the resolution's provisions, WILPF in particular has noted that, in the implementation of WPS, feminist analysis has been side-stepped in favor of an agenda dominated and co-opted by states and their militarized security system (see also Chap. 105, ► "Peace and Feminist Foreign Policy"). WILPF claims that women's inclusion in peace processes is important and necessary, but the goal of feminist peace cannot be achieved without a solid critique of the gendered power relations embedded both in armed conflicts and contemporary UN-led peace processes. Moreover, the WPS Agenda fails to address the role of neoliberal capitalism and neocolonial exploitation in creating the conditions for armed conflict. Finally, incorporating WPS into military institutions,

such as NATO and domestic militaries, through a focus on the inclusion of women, ends up co-opting the women's agenda for the militarist purposes of states (Onyesoh et al. 2020; Basu et al. 2020). Aware of the dangers of co-optation, WILPF has opted nonetheless to continue its engagement with the UN, believing it to be one of the ways for pushing the limits of what is possible within liberal structures, and open avenues for broader transformation. WILPF has also worked with other organizations to have a gender provision included in the 2014 Arms Trade Treaty. As part of its work in the Steering Committee of the International Coalition to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), RCW coordinated the effort for the drafting and adoption of the 2017 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, arguably a significant step toward the destruction of all nuclear weapons and a ban on their use (Acheson 2021). This achievement has earned the organization (via ICAN) a third Nobel Peace Prize in 2017 (two of WILPF's founders – Jane Addams and Emily Greene Balch – were respectively the first and second US woman to be awarded the Prize in 1931 and 1946).

WILPF's current internal tensions and struggles partly reflect a difficulty on the part of older white members to relinquish leadership and control of an increasingly diverse organization. The rapid growth of sections and leadership from the global south culminated in the election of the first African International President, Joy Onyesoh, from Nigeria in 2018. This growth, in turn, has been made possible by WILPF's greater financial stability and professionalization of the organization, since the appointment of Madeleine Rees, a human rights lawyer, former UN officer and whistleblower, as Secretary General in 2011.

Summary

WILPF is the longest-operating international women's organization in the world. Born in 1915 with the aim of stopping World War I, it has become one of the most influential NGOs associated with the UN system. With headquarters located in Geneva and New York, where it holds

consultative status with the UN, and organized in 40 national sections in all continents, it works to “study, make known the causes of war and to abolish the legitimization and practices of war” (WILPF 2018). WILPF’s vision of feminist peace includes the realization of justice in gender and other relations of power, recognizing that violence, militarism, and war are rooted in economic and political structures and processes undergirded by gender and racial oppression (see Chap. 49, ► “Feminist Peace Research”). WILPF’s influence on many areas of international governance related to peace and security is remarkable considering its relatively small size. Its strength lies in its ability to navigate the tension between strategies of collaboration with and strategies of challenge to global governance institutions. It has also been able to hold in productive tension the difficulties of working as women across geopolitical and identity lines. Because of this constant self-questioning, the organization sits uneasily in its position of moderate influence in the avenues of power. As it moves between these interstices, WILPF remains conscious that the structures within which it operates are those that, in many circumstances, support and/or cause the violence the organization abhors.

Cross-References

- [Feminist Peace Research](#)
- [Gender Justice and Peacebuilding](#)
- [Intersectionality and Peace](#)
- [Masculinity and Conflict](#)
- [Nonviolence and Civil Resistance](#)
- [Peace and Feminist Foreign Policy](#)
- [Women’s Organizations in Post-conflict Contexts](#)

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Women's Organizations in Post-Conflict Contexts

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Synonyms

[Inclusion](#); [Gender](#); [Conflict](#); [Militarism](#); [Violence](#); [Peace](#); [UNSCR 1325](#)

Description

This chapter discusses the role and main features of women's organizations in post-conflict contexts, taking as a starting point both the gender order shaping women's experiences in post-conflict societies and the main features of peacebuilding processes and entities in these settings. After discussing the sidelining of women's organizations in post-conflict contexts, the chapter focuses on the main features of these groups, as well as the major international funding dynamics regulating their activities and the consequences of these dynamics for the work and activism of such organizations.

Introduction

The aftermath of conflict is a messy space. The features and dynamics of what is often identified as liberal peace and the initial context of its construction encompass different and layered top-down interventions through actors with different roles, such as international missions under the United Nations (UN) umbrella, with their own organisms and internal and external dynamics; international peacekeeping forces; International Financial Institutions (IFIs); International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs); local political elites; local civil society organizations; political parties; etc. The multilayered interrelationships and power relations that evolve from this entanglement aim to build, after conflict, not only peace but also functional states through liberal democracy and governance, market liberalization, and post-conflict reconstruction, based on specific gender norms and with specific gendered consequences. Both conflicts and post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding were identified as gender-neutral processes, as were international relations. However, during recent decades, and more visibly from the 1980s onwards, feminist activists and researchers have shown how the escalation and outbreak of conflicts, as well as post-conflict contexts and spaces, are gendered and have very different effects on women and men, girls and boys, as well as other gender identities.

Within this gendered space of action, feminist activists and researchers have demonstrated that women's organizations have a central role in the defense of gender equity and women's rights, although their capacity to act within post-conflict societies can be hindered. Even though these operate in different conflict and post-conflict contexts, women's organizations share similarities in relation to their actions, goals, and characteristics. Although their work is in some ways promoted by international peacebuilding institutions and structures, they are at the same time marginalized and identified as accompanying or secondary actors, meaning their space for action is both limited and conditioned.

The aim of this chapter is to introduce the main gendered dynamics of postwar societies and the overall peacebuilding framework in which the women's organizations that the text discusses operate. It begins with the identification of the main common features that shape the spaces of action where women's organizations locate within, in order to focus on these organizations' features, objectives, work and activism, as well as the conditions under which they function, the funding dynamics involved, and some of the subsequent obstacles that such organizations face.

Gendered Dynamics and Women's Experiences in Post-conflict Contexts

The constant transformation of gender-based power relations in conflict escalation, open conflict, and post-conflict contexts has been increasingly researched (Zarkov and Cockburn 2002; Anderlini 2007; Eifer and Seifert 2009, etc.). Traditional gender-based power relations have been central in conflict and post-conflict settings, following the dichotomy of peaceful women and violent men. Collective notions of women within such contexts are usually closely linked to traditional gender-based roles, which portray women as caregivers, mothers, sisters, and daughters, usually anchored to the private sphere. Women have been – and still are – generally seen as victims and as holders of certain patriarchal values and roles. Likewise, international institutions have usually responded according to the traditional understanding of the public and private spheres and, consequently, gender roles and women's social, political, and economic place and have acted accordingly in post-conflict contexts. However, feminists have contested these notions about women, exposing how they can also be active perpetrators of violence (Henshaw 2017; Sjoberg and Gentry 2007; see also ► “Female Combatants and Peacebuilding”), actors in the peacebuilding sphere (Porter 2007; Anderlini 2007; see also ► “Gender Justice and Peacebuilding”), or central political figures, among many other roles. Feminist activists and

researchers have long indicated the influence of gender power relations in such contexts, expressing how women do not necessarily act following a feminine gender identity and how men do not necessarily act according to hyper-masculine-gendered modes. However, they have emphasized the fact that the persistence of militarization in postwar societies privileges certain kinds of masculinities – usually associated with hyper-masculine values. Cynthia Enloe has warned that this has direct effects on women, as it is “a form of masculinity (. . .) requiring a feminine complement that excludes women from full and assertive participation in postwar public life” (2002, p. 23).

Conflicts can have a twofold effect on women: they can be contexts of regression in relation to their situation and rights and can also hold potential spaces for a positive transformation of gender relations and roles, offering room for women's social, political, or economic advancement (Zarkov and Cockburn 2002). In this regard, violence-torn social fabrics might offer cracks where, paradoxically, opportunities can open up for the development of gender equality amidst hardship and deprivation in post-conflict settings. While positive gender-role transformation is more likely to occur at grassroots than at elite political levels, women are excluded from top levels of power although their role in peacebuilding has proven substantial (Mazurana et al. 2005; Porter 2007; Anderlini 2007). Nevertheless, marginalization from official peacebuilding and decision-making bodies and spaces can act as a catalyst for women's activism. In general, more women than men tend to become active in informal processes. This offers women an opportunity to enter the public sphere and become organized (Bouta et al. 2005, p. 65) but does not ensure their participation in official processes, reaffirming the sexual division of peacebuilding, as often the newly opened space for change is not used for “genuine and lasting gender transformation” (Cockburn 2004, p. 41).

Researchers have also pointed to the violent dynamics that women and girls are subjected to, which can be notoriously exacerbated in post-conflict contexts. The continuation of violence

against women – both in the private and in the public spheres – has been a matter for study by feminist researchers, offering evidence of how the path from conflict to reconstruction and peacebuilding is also a gendered process. This *continuum* can be identified as a result of the combination of new political incentives and the opportunities of war legacies, which can take much more subtle forms in the public sphere but keeps being a constant – or increases – in the private sphere (Cockburn 2004; Kelly 2010; Barry 2005) as a mechanism of patriarchal control over women. Violence against women may increase and acquire different levels of intensity, from the personal to the interpersonal levels: beatings, rape, confinement, genital mutilation, abduction, forced prostitution, etc. (Giles and Hyndman 2004). In a related way, feminist researchers have also focused on the different forms that sexual violence against women perpetrated by international security forces can take. The arrival of international security forces – in the name of safety – can also increase the use of violence: the disproportionate power over citizens and resources that these actors have, combined with impunity, opens the way for soldiers and international agency staff members “to abuse” women, usually understood as sexual violence against women (Barry 2005, p. 43).

Overall feminist research indicates that the relationship(s) between post-conflict reconstruction, peacebuilding, and gender power relations is still complicated and ambiguous for women and other gender identities. These relationships are also influenced by the roles, spaces taken, and impacts of international organizations, agencies, and peacekeeping missions at the local level. The role of international actors has been ambivalent: while they have broadly understood gender power relations linked with traditional values and have mostly acted accordingly, they have also been responsible, since the mid-1990s, for the response to changing gender-based power relations and gender equality at the international level, responding to the requirements of feminist and women's organizations worldwide.

International Interventions as Gendered Encounters

The gendered nature of international interventions and institutions creates a “gendered contextual landscape” (Klein 2004, p. 279) in post-conflict areas, with direct gendered consequences for women as political subjects. The design of the post-conflict peacebuilding architecture is marginalizing for women *per se*. This can be seen through their sidelining in several ways: the consequences of conflict and the transformation of gender roles for women are widely ignored; women are generally treated as unseen actors without agency; gender issues usually go unnoticed; and international organizations themselves generally fall short in applying a minimum gender perspective. They can be, as Cockburn states, “themselves sometimes a problem” in terms of the defense of women's rights (2004, p. 41).

As mentioned above, recent decades have shown an increase in awareness of gender equality and the defense of women's rights and empowerment. This awareness can be seen at the international level through the adoption of several resolutions by the United Nations Security Council since October 2000, with what is known as the international Women, Peace and Security Agenda, and the implementation of different international gender equality measures – such as the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) – and subsequent resolutions. These tools for gender equality, after two decades functioning, have become part of reconstruction, peacebuilding, and development programs. They are increasingly referred to and in many cases are used in post-conflict contexts by international institutions, local organizations, or both, but the claims of women activists and feminist researchers – as well as women's organizations – in this regard usually point towards a lack of real implementation and consequently to the effects of this lack of implementation on women's everyday lives. UNSCR 1325, for example, is a mandatory tick in most post-2000's postwar contexts, but its implementation is far from being palpable and real. Lack of economic resources and will from

international and state organisms has been identified as one of the main sources of non-implementation by women activists. This is the case of Kosovo, for example, where the National Action Plan (NAP) for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 was adopted in 2014, more than a decade later since women's organizations started advocating for it and 15 years after the end of the war. Iraq, for example, adopted its NAP in the same year, becoming the first country to launch such a plan in the region, but several years after the end of the war. As of 2019, 83 (43%) UN Member States had NAPs, although only 28 (34%) had allocated budgets for its implementation. (For more information, see: <http://peacewomen.org/member-states> (accessed on May 15, 2020).)

As post-conflict contexts are becoming increasingly liberal, the strategies promoted also have a marked liberal nature. Despite the discursive efforts by international institutions to promote gender equality and women's rights and empowerment in post-conflict settings, these efforts are embedded within the global liberal peace agenda. Although for the so-called liberal peacebuilding apparatus, in general, equality between men and women is something to be institutionalized, feminist activists and researchers have long emphasized the risks of mere institutionalization if it is not accompanied and supported by meaningful, real, and palpable equality through radical changes that extend to all social, political, and economic arenas and at structural, interpersonal, and individual levels.

The Emergence, Contributions, and Struggles of Women's Organizations in Post-conflict Spaces

Any postwar setting, as Cynthia Enloe stated (1993, p. 252), "is fraught with questions." She was referring to the post-Cold War period, but the statement could easily be a description of any post-conflict context. The official arrival of peace and the end of the conflict and of direct and open violence is a signal of permission for normal life to start to settle. However, feminists have challenged the concept of post-conflict peace

– and, for that matter, the concept of peace itself – through questions such as: When does the conflict end, and when does the peace start? Does the end of the conflict equal the end of violence (Enloe 2002, 2014)? Here, one of the main contributions relates to how the end of conflicts is also a time of violence and insecurity for women (McLeod 2011).

One of the main goals of gender mainstreaming and gender-balanced decision-making policies and programs in post-conflict settings has been, in many cases, as in East Timor, Bosnia, and Kosovo, to foster an active civil society with the aim of promoting lasting peace and ensuring development (Hall and True 2009, p. 159), encouraging the participation of women within this civil society. However, this can lead to women being sidelined into civil society, instead of actively promoting their participation in the political and economic spheres as well. This marginalization of women from formal peace negotiations and top decision-making levels both in state and international bodies can foster their activity at the grassroots level. However, it leads to what can be identified as the "sexual division of the labor for peace" (Mendia Azkue 2014, pp. 142–150) based on two main characteristics: the exclusion of women from political negotiation and the feminization of grassroots activist peacebuilding. In post-intervention Bosnia-Herzegovina, for example, Maria Andreana Deiana identifies how women's collective action and women's experiences were translated "into a politics of small steps" that could re-imagine citizenship for women (2018, p. 139). In Kosovo, for example, the retraditionalization of gender power structures brought the overall of women back to the private sphere after the war – although there were exceptions. Civil society was a space where they could politically articulate their needs and claims, as the political sphere was mainly occupied by men. While women were denied the access to power and to decision-making processes, they saw a bigger space for influence and change in civil society than inside the government, which was subject to male leadership and political platforms (Kosovar Gender Studies Center 2008, p. 170).

While post-conflict contexts feature a marked division between the public and the private spheres – both strongly characterized by gendered power relations – women's activism in post-conflict settings has specific features, marked by two factors. These factors are the overall situation of women and the effects of conflicts on them and the gendered character of civil society itself, which can be more pronounced in post-conflict settings. As stated above, civil society can become the space for the increase in women's participation in the public sphere, but this participation can also be gendered. As Jude Howell explains, as women are usually "excluded from state institutions and male-dominated politics," they may find easier to be active in civil society or community-based organizations, for example. It is precisely in this context and level that most feminist and women's articulations and demands have developed in postwar contexts. To this regard, while civil society can be "excluding to women," it can also "have an emancipatory potential, which feminists can and do make use of" (2005, p. 5).

Women's organizations are usually created with certain common goals. Carmen Magallón identifies seven reasons why women decide to organize in women's grassroots organizations or groups (2006, pp. 70–71): (a) to oppose war or the military policies of governments; (b) to bring together people from opposing groups of which they are part; (c) to find non-military solutions to structural conflicts; (d) to protest the existence of impunity; (e) to support and advocate for women in war contexts or situations where they lack freedom and/or human rights in other countries; and (f) to ensure that women's work and activism will be part of decision-making processes. Women, broadly speaking, follow these general motivations to organize themselves before, during, or after conflict scenarios, but an increase in women's groups and organizations is particularly visible in post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding processes with the aforementioned characteristics. In these contexts, women's main motivations to be active and organize seem to be, as Cynthia Cockburn identified them in the Bosnian post-conflict scenario, to confront their own fears, to escape confinement and the

continuous attachment to the private sphere, and to regain their own agency (2002, p. 72). At the same time, Cockburn also identified several central subjects or themes that tend to form a focus for women's organizations in post-conflict settings (2002, pp. 71–72): the defense of women's economic independence, the fight against violence against women, offering legal advice to women, the promotion of the participation of women in the political sphere, and the work of reconciliation or building bridges between communities previously in conflict.

Women's organizations in post-conflict settings function not only as part of new social, political, and economic contexts that are being rebuilt after wars and conflicts, but they usually work within a broader concern: a general setback or stagnation of women's rights and gender equality, and/or their marginalization from certain public spaces, as well as the reinforcement of the assumption that they belong to the private sphere. In many places women's organizations were already functioning successfully before the outbreak of conflicts, and awareness of women's rights and gender equality might increase during the conflict. In other cases, even if women's groups may be active before conflicts, these mushroom after the outbreak, due to the incentives international institutions offer for the defense of women's rights. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, for example, between 1500 and 8000 organizations emerged after the war (Simmons 2007, p. 175 and IBHI 1998 in Berry 2018, p. 159). In Kosovo, civil society organizations increased from 25 registered before the war to more than 2500 in the first 5 years after the war, and about 600 (25%) were directed by women or focused on women (Kosovar Gender Studies Center 2008, p. 167). The sudden increase of women's NGOs after war and intervention was partly motivated by international funding, but there were also other significant reasons that affected this phenomenon: to address new and/or different needs within their various communities after the war; to be able to have a broader space for action, having been marginalized from political and decision-making spaces; and in order to be able to sought job opportunities, as the NGO sector was the only

sector that offered most jobs, and women were highly unemployed after the war (Kosovar Gender Studies Center 2008, pp. 169–170). However, in most post-conflict settings, women organize motivated by a specific situation – that of women's everyday and multiple constraints after conflicts, their marginalization from decision-making spaces, as well as a strong awareness on the general consequences of conflicts and their specific effects on women.

However, and as mentioned above, a common challenge experienced by women's organizations in post-conflict settings is the loss “of their democratic space.” The entry of international forces marks new dynamics for local forces, and within these dynamics, women's organizations, those that are the main agents responsible for the defense of women's rights, are usually marginalized. There can be several reasons for this, but these tend to be entrenched in the interrelationships between globalization, political violence based upon ethnic-cultural conflict, and social transformation (Klein 2004, pp. 292–295): while international institutions themselves are deeply rooted in a culturally constructed and gendered context, their diplomatic and administrative strategies are unlikely to expand the democratic space without a close relationship to civil society. While women's organizations do not have a central space within civil society, gender issues are not only marginalized, but their integration does not figure on the post-conflict peacebuilding agenda, and therefore, women are treated as “silent victims” in need of “special services,” and thus women's organizations are seen as representatives of these notions.

These dynamics are especially noticeable under the umbrella of liberal peacebuilding. Here, gender becomes a contested terrain: the range of actors participating under the liberal agenda has a certain similar attitude towards gender and gender equality, but this can clash with local actors' visions or needs; the international community usually defends gender equality as part of the same liberal path it follows and through a diverse international system of tools, but this may not be the most suitable background for the defense and construction of gender equality.

As Ruth Seifert points out, “conflicting and contending forces” might be at work: international liberal policies are not necessarily in harmony with the gender policies developed at a central level and therefore not necessarily in harmony with local dynamics and/or requirements and claims by local women and women's organizations. What is more, (neo)liberalism not only produces gender boundaries but also feminine qualities as central to women's individuality and a dramatization of gender differences. Women are encouraged to “individualize,” claim their human rights, and become competent actors in the liberal scenario. At the same time, as the new social conditions may consolidate women's traditional gender roles and obligations, this can create and reinforce a class system between those women who profit from these new conditions and challenge conservative gender roles and those women who do not have this privilege and who have to re-adopt traditional gender roles (Seifert 2009, pp. 35–36). This scenario does not usually involve the consideration of all women but only those women who fit on this agenda, which represents a selective and discriminatory gender equality, not equality for all women – and for all men. The rural and urban division in post-conflict settings, for example, can be illustrative of this dynamic. As most international organisms are settled in capitals – or big cities – in many cases they lack accessibility to remote villages and communities, therefore having a difficult access and knowledge in regard to their situation and needs. These difficulties increase in relation to the situation of women in very patriarchal societies, as the ones communicating with representants of international organisms are men, and they do not necessarily translate – or even know – which are the needs and claims of the women in their communities. International actors tend to shape their programs according to the information they have gathered from those spaces they have access to and tend to address women as an homogeneous social group, omitting diversity, intersectionality, and heterogeneity based on class, ethnic origin, race, or location, for example.

Feminist activists have become indispensable actors for social change “by developing a method

of social criticism” that is inclusive and critical. At the grassroots level, they have continuously put into practice what Susan Okin and Brooke Ackerly identify as “deliberative inquiry” and self-knowledge; internationally, they have created networks that convey this knowledge worldwide (Ackerly and Okin 1999 in Tickner 2001, pp. 96–124). This has been key in all contexts but specifically in post-conflict situations, and creating-networks between organizations in different contexts has proved to be a motor for the creation of knowledge and how-to for women’s organizations working under similar conditions. A common point is the defense of women’s rights and gender equality, which often falls on women’s organizations, although they are not identified as central actors in peacebuilding. As Heidi Hudson argues, “then those groups’ strategies, successes, and shortcomings are important factors in the success of peacebuilding processes” (Hudson 2010, p. 262), which still barely happens. International peacebuilding actors have generally “ignored the work of women activists, particularly once the conflicts were perceived as ‘internationally important’ and thus triggered larger international responses” (Barry 2005, p. 69), which directly increases the challenges that women’s organizations need to confront in their everyday peacebuilding activism.

Despite this, international cooperation, usually in the form of development aid or funding, is one of the main supports for women’s organizations in post-conflict contexts, which creates a complex relationship between international institutions and women’s organizations in these situations.

Funding for Women’s Organizations: Between Dependence and Autonomy

Although feminist research within International Relations and Peace and Conflict Studies has persistently revealed the role and importance of women as well as their labor and activism in armed conflicts and wars, their relationship to international cooperation and the dynamics of this relationship in the global peacebuilding

apparatus has been less studied. During the 1990s, research into the role of women in development and gender in development from a feminist perspective started to gain centrality (Parpart et al. 2000; Marchand and Parpart 1995; Momsen 2003, etc.), while less information was available about the same dynamics in post-conflict peacebuilding settings. However, the 2000s opened a research space in this regard, especially in relation to international cooperation with women’s groups and organizations in post-conflict areas, due to the changing dynamics in the sector, especially attitudes towards women’s rights and women’s organizations.

This relationship has proved to be a troubled one: activism for the defense of women’s rights and gender equality “rarely factors into international actors’ strategies to tackle deadly conflict,” and in the best case, “it is considered as an afterthought, once hard core peace negotiations are complete” (Barry 2005, p. 5). This has, again, led to the lack of recognition of women’s organizations in these contexts. At the same time, this lack has provoked the growth of women’s organizations outside formal political channels but inside “a transnational linkage around issues related to women’s subordination” (Tickner 2001, pp. 96–124).

The Association for Women’s Rights in Development (AWID) identifies the funding field with respect to local women’s rights groups and organizations as “a complex terrain with limited available information, shifting priorities and interests” (2006, p. 1). Although women’s organizations are key actors for the development and sustainability of gender equality, especially in post-conflict areas, their work and activism are constantly challenged by a lack of funding and a declining relationship between international donors and women’s groups. Bilateral and multilateral aid agencies that used to support women’s rights groups and organizations are cutting their direct funding to these organizations and funding national governments. Although this is done with the goal of gender equality (AWID 2006, p. 2), it notably reduces the funding capacities – and, therefore, acting capacities – of women’s groups.

The main donors for women's rights worldwide, and especially in post-conflict areas, have traditionally been INGOs, development aid agencies, independent foundations, and women's funds. However, this funding is closely related to local post-conflict funding shifts and changes, which can affect the capacity of women's rights groups and activists through the lack of stable and flexible funding. In general, mainstream donors' funding is directed through bilateral arrangements with governments instead of funding local women's organizations directly, which fosters a lack of access of women's organizations to international funding (Barry 2005, pp. 15–16). This creates “a tension between the long term goals and values of conflict transformation” (Francis 2004, p. 11), translated into a blurred space in which women's rights, interests, and demands are marginalized. This tension is reflected in the everyday relationship between women's organizations and donors: local women's groups generally have scarce access to information about funding resources and very often face cultural barriers when communicating with institution's representatives – usually foreigners – including barriers created through a lack of linguistic or technical understanding when it comes to application processes or other bureaucratic operations (Barry 2005, pp. 16–17).

In this regard, AWID also identifies three principal features that women's organizations face in relation to funding, which also include women's organizations in post-conflict contexts: (i) most women's organizations receive less money than in the previous years of activity; (ii) women's funds, INGOs, and bilateral and multilateral agencies are the biggest funders of women's organizations at the global level; and (iii) it is becoming more difficult to raise money, and in this respect, the most difficult step is finding funding for staff salaries, administration expenses, and capacity building (2006, pp. 11,12). One of the factors behind this change in tendency is a change in “fashion” or trends in funding: it can be understood that in the 1990s, with the development of UN conferences on women and especially the organization of the Beijing conference, women's rights and activism gained importance, and

specifically in post-conflict settings, UNSCR 1325 became a key document for feminist activists. In Kosovo, for example, high quantities of funding were directed in relation to the implementation of the resolution's main points such as women's political participation or their integration to the security sector. However, other areas which were of importance for women and therefore for women's organizations, such as improving their economic or health situation, were sidelined in comparison. This trend has changed in the last decade, and overall – albeit exceptions – support towards women's organizations has dropped worldwide, specially funding coming from international organisms and agencies.

As a research project conducted by the Kosovo Women's Network in close cooperation with seven women's organizations exposes, funding for women's organizations in the Western Balkans decreased between 2014 and 2016, and some organizations have worked without any kind of funding in different periods of time. 82% of organizations, for example, appear not to have enough funding for the development of their work and activism, and 35% did not even meet their planned budgets in 2018 (Kvinna till Kvinna 2020, p. 7).

One of the main criticisms regarding the funding dynamics of women's organizations – in general but also specifically in relation to post-conflict contexts – relates to the disconnection from the local, national, and global realities and, thus, the reinforcement of political and social hierarchies that instead of strengthening women and women's organizations has weakened them. These dynamics have formed a common situation for local women's organizations working on post-conflict areas: they are usually small organizations working with minimal staff, small or non-existent salaries, enormous workloads, and developing practices of resistance towards not only international and liberal peacebuilding apparatuses but also the dynamics of international funding for gender equality. Their general situation tends to be precarious, and the everyday problems that women face in terms of peace and security are still a challenge both locally and globally.

Summary

This chapter has provided an overview of the role of women's organizations in post-conflict contexts. After an initial identification of the principal features of gender-based power relations and women and their situation in the aftermath of conflicts, the chapter has focused on the general features of women's organizations, as well as the characteristics of their work and activism under so-called liberal peace. In post-conflict contexts, the peacebuilding umbrella – institutions, politics, policies, etc. – does acknowledge gender equality and the defense of women's rights, but according to the liberal agenda. Therefore, it reproduces a liberal notion of gender. One of the main features of these contexts is the situation under which women's organizations function, which is featured by the lack of sufficient funding, which also affects their work as well as their relationship with peacebuilding actors. Although it has been demonstrated by research and is acknowledged by international institutions that women's organizations are key actors in post-conflict societies and in peacebuilding efforts, they are still sidelined in most spaces and at most levels, which creates a blurred space in which it can be difficult and challenging to operate.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Civil Society Inclusion in Peace Mediation](#)
- ▶ [Female Combatants and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Gender Justice and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Women, Peace and Security Agenda](#)

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Women's Participation in Peace Processes

- ▶ [Gender and Mediation](#)

Women's Participation in Transitional Justice

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Y

Yemen Conflict

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Yemeni conflict · Mediation · Gulf security ·
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Synonyms

Armed rebellion; Conflict resolution; Fragile peace transitions; Foreign mediation; Gulf security; Military coalitions; War and peace in Yemen

Definition

This chapter unpacks how the Yemen conflict evolved from a set of largely deep-seated, multi-faceted, and unresolved issues during Saleh's 33-year tenure into a complex armed conflict and foreign military intervention, passing through a fragile transitional peace process that ended with a Houthi coup d'état on September 21, 2014. Interestingly, the internal issues that made Yemen receptive to the Arab Spring continue to aggravate, deepening grievances and local fragmentation, let alone that the combination of domestic and external factors that jeopardized

the UN-endorsed, Gulf-backed transitional process continue to reoccur, albeit differently, posing serious wonders to a forthcoming peace agreement. The UN mediation's departure from status quo ante bellum to the normalization of status quo, evident in the Stockholm Agreement, only rewards violence of armed groups and sows seeds of conflict rounds to come, risking to keep the country in fragility trap at best, or a cycle of endless conflicts at worst.

Introduction

The end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union marked a new phase in the history of Yemen. Nearly 6 months after the fall of Berlin wall in November 1989, the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR) and the only Marxist–Leninist country in the Arabian Peninsula – the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY) – unified on May 22, 1990. This, as a result, reunified Yemen, formed the Republic of Yemen and stretched the rule of President Ali Abdullah Saleh (1978–2011) to over 527,968 km² but not without major challenges that, directly and indirectly, culminated into an Arab Spring uprising, a subsequent fragile peace process, a continued Houthi rebellion and ensuing regional military intervention (Popp 2015).

The Houthis' resort to violence and insurgency against the authority of President Abed Rabbu Mansour Hadi jeopardized the transitional peace

process and National Dialogue Conference (NDC) reconciliation efforts but also laid grounds for the subsequent military intervention of the Saudi-led Arab Coalition. Though Iranian-Saudi rivalry is a layer of the multilayered conflict, the conflict is a byproduct of the country's accumulated internal challenges and unresolved grievances piling up, mainly under President Saleh, who ruled Yemen for 33 years. These issues passed through conflict junctures, both latent and manifest, and evolved into a complex cycle of manifest, multi-scale armed conflicts. The web of active actors transcends binary characterization, and their internal re-alignments and association with foreign countries further polarize conflict dynamics, thus complicating sustainable resolution prospects and risking further local fragmentation in the foreseeable future.

This chapter asks a simple question: how has the conflict in Yemen become this complex, multilayered, and blurry? In answering so, it proceeds in six primary sections, passing through episodes of armed rebellion since 2004, the resurgence of secessionist sentiments since 2007, the 2009 deadlock in the political system, the Arab Spring uprising in 2011, the collapse of the transitional process (2011–2014), the regional military intervention of the Arab Coalition, and United Nations-led (UN) mediation efforts. The first section unpacks the Houthis' ideology and reflects on their characteristics by revisiting the insurgency's six Sa'adah wars (2004–2010) and beyond; the second section explores the country's internal landscape, showing the collapse of Saleh's regime was a question of time, which the Arab Spring uprising hastened; the third section analyzes the pitfalls and implementation hurdles of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) initiative that turned the uprising into a political crisis, hoping to put Yemen on a sustainable transitional trajectory that, however, ultimately collapsed for several reasons, including continued armed rebellion; the fourth section briefly examines the formation of the Arab Coalition 6 months after the Houthi-Saleh coup d'état and investigates lack of tangible progress; the fifth section addresses the Southern question and fall of Aden by addressing key attributes and recent developments; and the final

section delves into the UN mediation efforts that will conclude a fragile peace agreement at best. The conclusion then summarizes key trends and issues discussed.

Six Wars and Beyond: The Houthis from Sa'adah to Sana'a

This section defines who the Houthis are, unpacks their ideology, and reflects on the insurgency's key attributes. First, the Houthis, a primary party to armed conflicts since the new millennium, are a sectarian movement that evolved into a complex, an adaptive, and a cunning armed insurgency that primarily believes in violence as means to achieve factional ends. A tribal clan from Maran in the mountainous governorate of Sa'adah, the group is guided by a religious ideology that ostensibly claims practicing Zaydism – a moderate Shia sect in Yemen's highlands accounting for 35% of the population – but pursues a Zaydi-Hadawi (Hadawiya) doctrine, a close sect to the Twelver Shia in Iran (Salmoni et al. 2010, p. 65). “Hadawiya” and Twelver Shia sects broadly presume the descendants of Prophet Mohammed – or more accurately his daughter Zaynab – have the divine right to rule and theorize for the formation of Imamate, where its leader is known as (Imam). Socially known as “Sadah” (masters) in Yemen, their self-fulfilling rule prophecy is precisely what dictated the Imamate in Yemen before the 1962 Republican Revolution that ended the monarchy in Yemen, and therefore the Houthi six wars can be viewed – in part – as an attempt to revive the supremacist legacy of Imamate.

Second, the Houthi ideology is distinct, violent, and seemingly anti-Western. Like religious ideologies, including Salafi Jihadism, it has a death slogan, an actionable cause, specific enemies, and recruitment means, including indoctrination, support networks and/or enabling communities, and exploitation of grievances (Moghadam 2008). Its enabling communities and primary beneficiaries are the Hashemites, support networks are aligned tribal Sheikhs through fear, enticement, and/or intimidation, and the internal enemy has been the elected

regime – under both Saleh and Hadi – embodying the Republican system. The insurgency’s publicly declared cause – reversing grievances and injustices – is a means to recruit new members and contradicts actual practices evident in, for example, the dominance of Sadah in key offices during the war, an attempt to empower a faction and to revive *Hadawiya*, which restricts rule to the Hashemites. “The timing of the fall of Sana’a . . . five days before the date of the revolution against the Imamate in 1962 was carrying a clear indication of the intent against the Republic system and its leaders” (Alogail 2015, p. 426).

The Houthi slogan – “God is great! Death to America! Death to Israel! Curse upon the Jews! Victory to Islam!”, known also as “the scream” (Sarkhah in Arabic) – embodies the group’s political culture and worldview. “Death” manifests Houthi belief in political violence as a legitimate means to achieve whatever objectives, where six wars against the state between 2004 and 2010 are a case in point. Houthi external enemies, namely, the United States and Israel as well as their regional partners, grasp enmity philosophy and so does President Saleh, who the Houthis condemned for cooperation with the United States (Zimmerman and Harnisch 2020). The Houthi insurgency shares Iran’s anti-American posture in the Middle East, capitalizes on Palestine’s rights, and was formed during the Second Intifada (2000–2005) and the US invasion of Iraq. Its leaders Badr al-Din al-Houthi and his sons, Hussein (the group leader who died in the first Sa’adah war in 2004) and Abdul Malek (current leader since around then), studied Islamic Studies at Qum Seminary, Iran, after the 1979 Iranian Revolution and derived inspiration from Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini (Ardemagni 2017, p. 5).

Doctrinal nurturing in Qum laid grounds for subsequent covert ties with Iranian leaders and political recruitment, which marked a significant departure from peaceful to radical, armed struggle after developing a growing sectarian base in Maran. Hussein, who had co-founded the “Believing Youth” with Mohammed Azan to revive the Zaydi sect, counter growing Saudi-sponsored spread of Salafism, mainly through summer schools and teaching circles, quit in 1997 for

establishing the “Houthi” and “Ansar al-Houthi” movements in 2001 (Ardemagni 2017; Porter 2018). Through teaching Houthi handouts (Malazem in Arabic), speeches of its leaders, and indoctrination processes, Houthi followers pay allegiance to the group’s leader and filter the surrounding world through a sectarian, factional discourse (Alogail 2015, p. 417).

Third, the Houthis demonstrated a set of characteristics far above and beyond the six Sa’adah wars. These include the insurgency’s ability to reconfigure leadership at the hardest of conditions, expand public mobilization and recruitment through playing the “hearts and minds,” and attacking the center of gravity in a cost-effective approach that discourages potential resistance. In the first Sa’adah war (June–September 2004), the governmental elimination of the Houthis’ leader, Hussein, failed to put an end to the insurgency, like the capture of Osama bin Laden, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, and Anwar al-Awlaki, for instance, did not terminate the activities of Al-Qaeda, the Islamic State, and al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) (Kenney 2007; Jordan 2019).

In the following five Sa’adah wars, the Houthi rebels exploited local grievances, such as underdevelopment and decline of Zaydism, to gain credibility and public trust, thus able to recruit thousands of fighters (Knights 2018, p. 15). The indiscriminate destruction of property and associated displacement of 250,000 people during the six wars played out to the group’s advantage, helping them convince Sa’adah public that the war is an all-out-war against all (Boucek 2010, p. 3). War framing and exploitation of grievances eventually created a common sense of frustration and threat that Zaydi-Hadawi indoctrination became a function of regular interaction.

Throughout the armed conflict, the Houthi insurgents emerged stronger emergence from each asymmetric warfare waged. They, for instance, departed from small-scale ambushes against military forces to “guerilla warfare and urban terrorism” by launching concerted attacks on government supply lines and a 240–360-person battalions as well as deploying sleeping cells in, say, Sana’a (Freeman 2009, p. 1013; Knights 2018, p. 16). Almasdar Online (2020) released

exclusive evidence suggesting Abdullah Yahya al-Hakem, the Houthi Military Intelligence Chief since 2017, was tasked with assassinating military commanders in 2005, using remote explosives. The group also extended the geographical scope of firefights. In the sixth Sa'adah war (August 2009–February 2010), the firefight was in the outskirts of Sana'a in Bani Hushaysh and transcended Yemeni borders to have Houthi-Saudi skirmishes.

On mediation, ceasefires, to the Houthis, have been tactical means to gain time, capture more territory, infiltrate rivals, sideline potential resistance, and/or defeat enemies. The 2007 ceasefire and subsequent 2008 Doha Agreement was a recovery transition from the fourth Sa'adah war (January–June 2007) to the fifth war (May–July 2008) (Brandt 2017). Renewed Houthi firefight against the Salafis in Dammaj, Sa'adah, in October 2013 despite ongoing ceasefire and reconciliation efforts at the NDC allowed the Houthis consolidate power in Sa'adah (Ardemagni 2017, p. 9). Their surprise attack vis-à-vis Sheikh Yasser al-Awadhi in Bayda governorate – who protested the rebel's "grave violation of tribal customary law" by killing a woman – allowed the Houthis to thwart growing tribal resistance in June 2020 (Al-Dawsari 2020).

The Houthis masterfully geared political divides for their advantage, using several actors for factional strategic ends. While the insurgency appealed to opposition factions, such as Islah who rebuked Saleh's counterinsurgency campaigns (2004–2010) and the Southern Hirak (al-Hirak al-Janoubi), a peaceful secessionist movement gathering several groups, that endorsed the 2014 coup, it aligned with the old enemy, Saleh, to access military hardware, tribal network, and Republican Guards before they assassinated him on December 4, 2017 (Shuja Al-deen 2020). Using intimidation, the Houthis tamed potential opponents by attacking leading figures and propagating psychological defeat, such as targeting al-Ahmar family – tribal figures of Hashed tribal confederation – and videotaping the bombing of Sheikh Abdullah al-Ahmar's house in Amran in 2014. Between late 2014 and 2018, the Houthis detonated 833 private properties, including those

of opponents "in an ugly act of revenge" to instill fear, humiliate enemies, and deter potential popular resistance (Yemeni Coalition to Monitor Human Rights Violations 2018, p. 5). Rebellion barely succeeds without penetrating the enemy. The Houthis have increasingly pulled more Hashemites overtime, infiltrating Yemeni institutions from within. For example, Major General Yahya al-Shami, an astute politician who served as the governor of Sa'adah and was sacked in 2007 for collusion with the Houthis, is the assistant to the Houthi Commander of Armed Forces in 2020. To that level, Yemeni institutions were penetrated, and loyalties changed. Combined, these characteristics, coupled with Zaydi-Hadawi ideological ideals, help to put Houthi activities in perspective. The next section explores the country's internal landscape, before the Arab Spring uprising.

Yemen: No Gray Zone Forward

In the late 2010, a group of experts produced "Yemen 2020: Future Scenarios," a forward-looking book that, among its outputs, had two – Green and Black – scenarios. Titles of sections – the Green "Seizing Opportunities" and the black "The Hands of Sheba Scattered" – reflected Yemen's possible future. Fakirah (2010, pp. 35–38) then noted that the GPC's (General People's Congress) inability, under Saleh, to make "bitter strategic decisions that reformulate governance equation," coupled with the opposition's unwillingness to make trade-offs to nurture democratic processes overtime, eventually took the "democratic experience to closed doors." There was no gray zone in Yemen simply because the country was on a two-way highway – it either addresses an array of political, socioeconomic, and security challenges to move forward or ultimately slips backward to a cycle of manifest, endless conflicts.

The political system, under Saleh, reached a deadlock and for several reasons. First, Yemen's longest-serving president adopted mediocre management than a governance approach throughout his 33-year tenure. Since ascendance to power in 1978, Saleh heavily relied on managing the post-1962 order that derived its legitimacy from the

republican revolution, where the role of Sheikhs was in upswing that it became the incubator of the state, directly and indirectly. Key to Saleh's political survival was his ability to sustain "dancing on the heads of snakes"; snakes encompassed influential Sheikhs, political dissidents, armed non-state actors and the opposition, however barely included public intellectuals, and the civil society (Whitaker 2010). A year after the assassination of Lieutenant-Colonel President Ibrahim al-Hamadi on October 11, 1977, Saleh ultimately ironed out an informal power-sharing formula with influential Sheikhs that continues, albeit differently, to dictate Yemeni internal politics hitherto and how many Sheikhs think during peace and wartime conditions (Day 2012, pp. 65–70).

Second, the maturity of democratic processes was heavy-footed, largely due to Saleh's dancing model. This left little room for political pluralism, power shifts, and checks and balances in the political system to nurture. Although the parliament passed a new law in 1991 to allow forming new political parties and organizations in a bid to deepen the political participation, the ruling party – the GPC formed in 1982 and chaired by Saleh ever since – fully dominated the political landscape until 2011. For example, the GPC's parliamentary share, through elections, expanded from 123 seats in 1993 to 187 in 1997 and 226 out of 301 seats in 2003 (Al-Yemeni 2003, p. 19). Such overwhelming majority excused the president of parliamentary accountability and therefore undermined checks and balances in the political system that would have effectively monitored, questioned, and restrained the power and progress of the president and the executive branch.

Third, the stability of Yemen depended on a few influential figures rather than robust, inclusive national and local institutions. This resonates with Acemoglu and Robinson's (2012) key explanation to "Why Nations Fail," pointing they do because some states pursue unsustainable extractive and monopolistic governance modalities. Due to Saleh's military background, elementary education, rise to power following multiple coup d'états, and survival through internal balancing and dancing, building strong, equitable institutions was secondary at best. The resurgence of

secessionist sentiments in the South and the deadlock in the political system in 2009 were direct results of failure to build inclusive, robust state institutions and a healthy political system but also the retreat of two influential personalities from Yemen's vanguard (Boucek 2010).

The replacement of Prime Minister Abdul Qadir Bajamal (2001–2007), a shrewd Hadhrami politician whose diplomatic skills contained opposition and separatist leaders, caused a clear vacuum in the political spectrum, allowing latent issues to surface. Only in mid-2007 was the Southern Hirak formed. The death of Sheikh Abdullah bin Hussein al-Ahmar – the Sheikh of Hashed tribal confederation and the paramount Sheikh of Sheikhs, the chief Islah party, and Parliament Speaker (1993–2007), in 2007 shook Saleh's system (Day 2010). It prompted Islah, who is a leading member in the Joint Meeting Parties (JMP) of the opposition, to escalate position vis-à-vis the Saleh regime and deepened intra-elite competition over wealth and power. Al-Ahmar, whose multiple roles compounded his influence, was a restrainer of Islah. Only after he died did Islah and the JMP announced boycotting the 2009 parliamentary elections.

Fourth, the array of internal challenges piled up unresolved. Security-wise, the emergence of the Houthi rebellion in 2004 and resurgence of Southern separatist views in 2007 questioned the legitimacy of the regime and shape of the Yemeni state, respectively. It was the unresolved Houthi rebellion in Sa'adah that have, directly or indirectly, prompted communities in the south to protest deep-rooted horizontal inequalities, more importantly, the Saleh regime's inability to genuinely address and fix perceived grievances and resentment, including unequal distribution of power, political marginalization and hegemony of highlands, and economic alienation across the country beyond the capital, Sana'a. Politically, discontented with the GPC's long-standing dominance since 1997 and poor record of institutional reforms, the JMP boycotted the April 2009 parliamentary elections to push for electoral reforms and secure greater concessions from President Saleh (Feierstein 2019, p. 12). The European Union's (EU) support evident in conditioning its

oversight of the parliamentary elections on the JMP's involvement eventually emboldened the latter's position. This, as a result, pressured Saleh, in agreement with the opposition in February 2009, to postpone the elections for 2 years, at which the Arab Spring uprising broke.

Economically, the Saleh regime was not progressive enough between 1990 and 2010 that the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) 2010 Report concluded the country was "off track" and cannot meet many MDGs (Pournik and Abu-Ismaïl 2011, p. 2). The Yemeni economy was and remains traditional, heavily reliant on oil exports, where the sector accounted "for about one-third of economic growth" and over half government revenue came from oil and gas sector (World Bank 2015, p. 5). Growth in gross domestic product (GDP) was volatile, declining from nearly 6.2% in 1991 to 3.8% in 2009 (World Bank 2020). The currency, Yemeni Riyal (YER), sharply depreciated vis-à-vis the USD, from approximately 12 in 1990 to above 200 by 2010, inflation that considerably increased living costs for the average Yemeni citizen (Department of Treasury 1990, p. 4; World Bank 2015). Unemployment, corruption, and poverty rates continued to rise, especially in view of rising armed conflicts and political instability (World Bank 2015).

Overall, Saleh's failure to build strong, functioning state institutions and resolve an accumulating set of issues throughout his 33-year tenure, coupled with the demise of political and social stabilization forces as well as unsustainable "political dancing" approach, simmered political adversities for Saleh but, most importantly, deepened the breadth and depth of country's long-term challenges. The next section delves into the Arab Spring and the ensuing transitional process that collapsed chiefly due to the Houthi coup d'état.

The Arab Spring: From an Uprising to a Political Crisis

The December 2010 revolutionary uprising, known also as the Arab Spring, in Tunisia stretched to Egypt, Syria, Libya, and Yemen.

This regional phenomenon catalyzed the Yemeni public, including the JMP, to protest accumulated issues in the streets, caused a political divide that chiefly distracted attention from the Houthis' armed rebellion, and eventually marked the end of Saleh's 33-year tenure but not entirely his regime (Salisbury 2015). Unlike Syrian and Libyan uprisings that directly turned into blurry wars, the Yemeni uprising had a transit point, that if successful would have averted the country a full-scale war, and became a paradigm of peaceful transitional processes in the Middle East and North Africa.

On November 23, 2011, the Yemeni parties – the National Coalition (the GPC and its allies) and the National Council (the JMP and its partners) – signed the GCC initiative in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia (Rashad 2011). Backed by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 2014 (2011), the Gulf initiative charted a two-phase transitional roadmap but eventually crumpled. What are the flaws of the peace agreement? And what were the challenges during the implementation stage?

Pitfalls in the Agreement

There are several pitfalls in the Agreement. First, the GCC sought to contain the Arab Spring uprising, which constructed an ideational threat to the very foundation upon which the Gulf monarchies stand on. All Gulf countries, except for Qatar, had a strategic interest in containing the Yemeni Uprising for regime security and geographical proximity concerns (Kamrava 2012, p. 96). Yemen, which connectively overlooks the Arabian and Red Seas through the strategic strait of Bab al-Mandeb, is the heart of Gulf security. Therefore, the eruption of a liberal uprising could have a domino effect given proximity, having the Arab Spring proved transnational. Second, the fact that the formerly competing political parties – the GPC and the JMP in particular – signed the agreement eventually meant that the uprising somewhat appeared as a political crisis, leading to elite reproduction, and traditional intra-elite competition while sidelining youth – who ignited the uprising – and potential spoilers (i.e., the Houthis) (Heydemann 2016).

Third, short implementation timeline marked a major challenge to the success of the agreement. The first phase, which encompassed the transfer of power from President Saleh to his Vice President Hadi, the formation of a power-sharing government and a Military Affairs Committee, and holding early presidential elections, materialized by February 21, 2012. However, the great share of hurdles lied in the second phase, which envisioned substantive reforms and national reconciliation. A 2-year set of laborious processes comprised constitutional drafting, convening the NDC to resolve major issues (i.e., Southern question, Sa'adah wars, the shape of state), electoral reform, and organizing parliamentary and presidential elections (Feierstein 2019). Largely because the constitutional reform, for example, was incomplete by the end of the 2 years, the UN-monitored NDC extended the presidency tenure of President Hadi (Day 2014).

Fourth, the deal granted security guarantees (i.e., accountability immunity) to the two signatories but neither limited Saleh's political activism nor preconditioned his isolation overseas to avert misusing security guarantees. By maintaining a political space for the 33-year president, who retained the GPC's chairmanship, the GCC initiative, deliberately or inadvertently, allowed Saleh to pursue political maneuvering with assurances and weakened unaccountability, thus overlooking the possibility of Saleh becoming a spoiler (Petschulat 2012, p. 6; Salmutter 2017, p. 8). The Houthis-Saleh covert alliance, which was reportedly formed following the conclusion of the NDC in late January 2014, to oust President Hadi and revenge from the JMP is a case point. Not only did Saleh use his wide tribal network to facilitate Houthi advancements from Sa'adah to Amran, but he also deployed Republican Guard forces and funneled medium and heavy arms (Shuja Al-deen 2020; al-Jazeera 2016).

Hurdles During Implementation

The shortcomings of the GCC initiative's design surfaced during the second phase of the transition. Poor management of potential and de facto spoilers, coupled with dwindling regional and international commitment to the transitional

peace process, cordial/antagonistic geopolitical vicinity, and intra-government competition, heavily contributed to the collapse of the peace process and resumption of hostilities.

Domestic Hurdles

First, peaceful transition processes occurred in concurrence with military incursions and destabilizing activities, without credible local and external opposition. For example, the Houthi displacement of the Salafists in Dammaj – a district southeast Sa'adah – in January 2014 occurred, while the former's delegation participated in Yemen's largest and most inclusive reconciliation platform ever: the NDC (Popp 2015). The Houthis had used the Arab Spring distraction to impose autonomy in Sa'adah, thus separating it from the central government, and the 10-month conference to expand territorial control in the periphery and thus increase their bargaining chips vis-à-vis all actors. Add to that the sabotage of oil and gas pipelines became “more frequent, more regular and better organized since President Saleh stepped down from office in 2011” by “those seeking to derail the NDC outcomes” (UNSC 2015b, p. 36). The absence of a spoiler management mechanism, together with the fragility of the interim regime that left Dammaj takeover uncontested and ambiguous political rhetoric of the UNSC, the EU, and the GCC, sanctioned further destabilization.

Against this backdrop, the UNSC Resolution 2140 (2014a) belatedly formed a Panel of Experts – an investigatory committee to identify, report, and blacklist destabilizing actors – to control spoilers after the completion of the initial transitional duration. However, failure to assess, pinpoint violations, exercise pressure, and timely respond to alarming security developments in a country with deep divisions has contributed to the collapse of the transitional process, undermined the central authority, and reassured armed groups. Saleh, for example, had only been put on the list of targeted sanctions by November 2014, 2 months after he facilitated the Houthi takeover of Sana'a (UNSC 2014b).

Second, the 50/50 power-sharing formula resulted in intra-bureaucratic rivalry within the

National Unity Government (NUG), deepening intra-elite power struggle. This turned state institutions ineffective and therefore doubled burden on President Hadi's fragile transitional regime, creating a power vacuum (Lackner 2016, p. 66). Asseburg and Wimmen (2016) and Heydemann (2016) pointed that the failure of post-Arab Spring transformation broadly stems from the reproduction of ruling elite, thus stretching their influence over, if not hijacking, transitional peace processes. Caught in the middle between his ruling party and post-Arab Spring revolutionary forces, President Hadi – who was the Vice President of Saleh and the GPC – experienced mounting pressures that limited his regime's autonomy but ultimately increased Hadi's quest to tighten power grip.

To restructure the local power balance and minimize the number of active forces, the president, as a result, overlooked Houthi firefight in, for example, Amran governorate, including against state military establishments. A good illustration is describing the battle between Brigade 310 Armored, under the command Major General Hamid Al-Qushaibi (aligned with Islah), and the Houthis as rebellion outside state's jurisdiction (Neubauer 2015, p. 3). Furthermore, the Houthis could not win their march from Sa'adah to Sana'a without Saleh's military and logistical support in Amran; Saleh tactically aligned with the Houthis to covertly revenge from Islah; meanwhile, the Houthis used Saleh to access the Republican Guards, tribal network, and military assets (Al-Madhaji et al. 2015). As such, sustained intra-elite competition, coupled with poor governmental measures, continued Houthi armed rebellion, the complicity of Saleh, and ineffective UNSC management of spoilers, crippled Yemen's peaceful transition.

External Issues

Third, regional and international economic commitment to the peace process did not match diplomatic and political support, driven by ideational threats. Throughout the transitional duration, there has been barely any long-term Gulf and international investment to stabilize and reform Yemen to genuinely tackle corruption and offset domestic socioeconomic and security challenges

(Abo al-Asrar 2013). Between 2012 and 2014, wealthy GCC monarchies alongside international actors pledged \$10.9 billion to the transitional government of Yemen, mainly through the Friends of Yemen (FOY), to tackle immediate priorities but disbursed less than half, averaging at \$4.9 billion (Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation 2016). While Saudi Arabia deposited \$1 billion at the Central Bank of Yemen (CBY) to stabilize monetary measures and granted \$2.2 billion in forms of food aids and petroleum commodities to cover local energy and humanitarian needs, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), for instance, disbursed 0% of \$150 million pledged (Foreign and Commonwealth Office 2014).

Largely because international donors had preconditioned disbursement of aid to immediate domestic reforms, including good governance, greater accountability and transparency measures, and more liberal economic policies, limited aid was disbursed, and more interestingly, tight measures deepened insecurities (Abo al-Asrar 2013). In reaction to increasing World Bank pressure, the NUG announced partial removal of fuel subsidies in mid-2014, thus sharply increasing fuel prices and local frustration due to mounting economic hardships, which the Houthi insurgents opportunistically instrumentalized to gain public support given opposition vacuum (Feierstein 2019, p. 15). Not only have fuel protests allowed the Houthis to temporarily fill the political vacuum given their manipulative claim to defend public demands but also expanded their public base before their takeover of Sana'a. Therefore, short-term, dependency-based, conditional foreign interventions maintained, if not deepened, the fragility of the transitional regime, contrary to clause 12 of UNSC Resolution 2051 (2012) that accentuated the significance of bolstering foreign aid to help the country overcome security, political, and macroeconomic challenges (Sharp 2015, p. 24). It can be inferred that regional and international actors adopted short-sighted measures that merely mitigated and/or delayed the intensification of the conflict.

Fourth, the rising role of the GCC's regional rival, Iran, also sabotaged the peace process.

While the Arab Spring triggered regime security concerns in the Gulf, it opened a window of opportunity for Tehran to use the 2011 geopolitical distraction to strengthen the Houthis' foothold in Yemen, expand its regional influence at cheap cost, and instill long-term Gulf instability (Esfandiary and Tabatabai 2016, p. 165). Notwithstanding that the scale of Iranian military, financial, advisory, and logistical support to its partner, the Houthis – if not proxy – remains highly classified and therefore unmeasurable; the US Navy and Yemeni Coast Guards' January 2013 interception of "Jihan 1" ship carrying surface-to-air missiles (SAMs), radar systems, 2.6 t of explosives, anti-aircraft missiles, and Katyusha rockets off the country's coast shows that the Iranian role to support the Houthis has been largely underestimated (Knights 2016). Worth noting, multiple illicit arms consignments were detected and intercepted throughout the conflict, aside from the US Department of State's \$15 million bounty offer on information leading to the capture of Abdul Reza Shahla'i, a high-ranking commander in Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps operating in Yemen (Sharp 2020, p. 10).

Fifth, heightening geopolitical rivalry between GCC member states made Yemen's neighborhood less cordial to the peace process. While Qatar reinforced support to Islah to stretch its sphere of regional influence, the UAE and Saudi Arabia maintained ties with Saleh, demonstrated antagonism toward the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) by channeling aid, for example, to install President Abdel-Fatah Al-Sisi in Egypt as a replacement to President Mohammed Morsi, and designated MB a terrorist entity in 2014 (Khatib 2013, p. 419; Matthiesen 2015, p. 4). Although GCC countries had earlier accepted Islah, who dominates the JMP, as an indirect party to the GCC initiative due to perceived ideational threat, the Islamist party, which is perceived as an MB affiliate, remained a source of concern (Yadav 2015, p. 9).

In late 2013, Sheikh Hameed al-Ahmar, a business tycoon, an Islahi politician and one of the ten sons of the gone Sheikh Abdullah, tacitly accused Saudi leadership of supporting regional coups from the hospital's emergency room – in reference

to King Abdullah on Egyptian developments (Shabwaah Press 2013). Not only has this political rhetoric led to a degree of estrangement and further tensions between al-Ahmar family and the Saudis – which have sporadically piled up since the death of Sheikh Abdullah and most significantly surfaced after the Arab Spring uprising, but it has allegedly triggered covert Gulf policy to weaken al-Ahmar as a traditional center of power in the post-1962 order and the growing influence of Islah alike, including through unexplained underestimation and disregard of Houthi capture of territory throughout 2014 despite having a record of hostile intentions (Hearst 2015). A series of leaked calls between Saleh and GPC-loyal tribal Sheikhs, such as Sheikh Mabkhoot al-Mahsreqi and Sheikh Mojahed Abu-Shoareb, establish that the ex-president played a major role in the fall of Amran province to the Houthis – with or without coordination with anti-Islah regional actors (Al-Jazeera 2016; al-Jazeera Arabic 2016). Anyhow, intra-GCC competition laid the red carpet for Iran to deepen and broaden its involvement in Saudi backyard, Yemen.

The Houthi Coup d'État: A Gateway to Military Intervention and Beyond

On September 21, 2014, the Houthis, in liaison with Saleh, stormed Sana'a and imposed the National Peace and Partnership Agreement (NPPA), not without covert coordination with UN Special Envoy for Yemen Jamal Benomar who visited Sa'adah around then, thus taking Yemen's transitional process to the unknowns (Al-Muslimi 2015). The NPPA dissolved the NUG, formed a new cabinet, heightened friction between the two signatories of the GCC initiative, and enervated the interim regime. The Houthis immediately formed revolutionary committees to shadow state institutions and deployed militias and Saleh's Republican Guards to several Yemeni cities, including the port city of Hodeida and Bayda, to stretch territorial control. In the first quarter of 2015, developments unfolded quick. The Houthis house-arrested the president and

newly appointed Prime Minister Khaled Mahfoudh Bahah, forced both to tender resignation and announced the so-called constitutional declaration on February 6, 2015, instead of pushing the parliament to accept the resignations and legitimize the coup d'état. The insurgency that marched from Sa'adah to Amran dismissed then UNSC Resolution 2201 (2015a) that deplored Houthi unilateral actions, demanding their withdrawal of forces from cities captured, surrender from state institutions and handover of heavy arms seized, unconditional engagement in peace talks, and release high-level officials on February 15.

On February 21, the president fled to Aden, and withdrew resignation, thanks to lacking parliamentary endorsement. The Houthi-Saleh alliance deployed ground and air forces to hunt President Hadi. On March 21, Hadi announced Aden an interim capital, and GCC Defense Ministers discussed potential courses of action should Houthi-Saleh forces march to the strategic city of Aden (WAM 2020). They did. The Houthi armed rebellion and Saleh's complicity in the process launched a new chapter in Yemen's modern history.

The Arab Coalition

On March 26, 2015, Saudi Ambassador to the United States Adel al-Jubier announced the dawn of an ad hoc military campaign – known as the Arab Coalition – to deter the Houthi aggression, reinstate the Hadi regime in Sana'a, and curb Iranian influence in Yemen. Fearing the development of a Hezbollah-like hostile actor by its Southern backdoor, Saudi Arabia preemptively replaced its 2011 mediation role with coercion that is often characterized by military adventurism (Hokayem and Roberts 2016). Structurally, the coalition comprised over 10 Gulf and Sunni-led Muslim countries – Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Sudan, Jordan, Morocco, Egypt, Pakistan, and ambiguously Malaysia – and enjoyed strategic UK and US support. While the participation of Morocco, Malaysia, and Pakistan, for instance, were symbolic to render international legitimacy to the coalition and largely driven by economic pragmatism to reap benefits

from Riyadh, intelligence, diplomatic, and logistical contributions made by the United Kingdom and the United States were relatively associated with increasing arms procurement in Riyadh and Abu Dhabi (Jalal 2020).

The coalition's proclaimed accomplishments include foiling the Houthis' full control of Yemen, pushing AQAP out of Mukalla, liberating the country's coast except for Hodeida, and – temporary – the restoration of the Republican Government of Yemen (RGOY) to Aden. Although the coalition pursued a battlefield denial strategy through ensuring air superiority and excessive reliance on airpower, the overall operational military effectiveness appears mediocre at best (Shield 2018). By examining the distribution of power on the ground, it can be observed that the Yemeni regime in 2020 is far weaker than in 2016 and faces UAE-sponsored menaces alongside the Houthi rebellion. In the first quarter of 2020, the Houthis reversed gains in the sluggish frontline of Nihm near 40KM east Sana'a; meanwhile, the UAE-backed STC and its military affiliates forced the government of the interim capital, Aden, in August 2019 and announced self-administration in April 2020 under the purview of the coalition. Overall, the “current geopolitical map of Yemen effectively sums up the results of the five-year war” (Nagi 2020b).

Issues Within the Arab Coalition

Several setbacks stem from inherited vulnerabilities within the coalition and developments during the long-drawn-out conflict. First, although the coalition has a Joint Forces Command to manage the operational, tactical, and strategic theaters of war, the lack of institutionalizing such multilateral structure enabled coalition partners to navigate in uncharted waters and ultimately caused incongruity. For example, the April 2018 uncoordinated UAE deployment of troops and tanks in Socotra island – some 950 km from Aden – instigated an official Yemeni complaint at the UNSC, describing it “unjustified military action” (UNSC 2018). This came a few years after the UAE had invested in training, financing, and arming over 100,000 personnel outside state command-and-control structures, for which the UN Panel of Experts

concluded Abu Dhabi has been “undermining the authority of the legitimate government” in liberated territories (UNSC 2018a, p. 19; 2019, p. 20). This episode of tensions between the Yemeni and UAE governments exemplifies poor coordination mechanisms, manifests intra-coalition cracks, and reveals Abu Dhabi’s questionable intentions that the “continuation of . . . misunderstanding . . . can no longer be concealed” (UNSC 2018b).

Second, leading coalition partners has varying intensities of interests. Riyadh, who shares the Southern border with Yemen, has both vital and strategic interests. While Saudi’s vital interest lies in protecting the country’s bordering region and critical infrastructure from Houthi infiltration, and drone and ballistic missile attacks, its strategic interests included the construction of an oil pipeline in al-Mahra to divert oil supplies from Hormuz strait, thus gaining direct access to the Arabian Sea and bypassing Iranian threats (Nagi 2020a). Needless to point, having a cordial regime in Sana’a is another Saudi strategic interest. By comparison, Abu Dhabi has a geo-economic interest in reconrolling Yemen’s port of Aden since the abrogation of the rental agreement in 2012 and a geo-strategic interest in controlling Yemen’s Socotra archipelago for tourism and military purposes to stretch influence on the two edges of the Gulf of Aden, thus cementing the UAE’s geopolitical role in the Horn of Africa and Arabian Peninsula. Such diverse regional interests, albeit with potential tacit understanding, transpired in emerging spheres of influence in Yemen, where the UAE enjoyed greater clout in, say, Aden and Hadramawt, meanwhile, KSA in al-Mahra (Ulrichsen 2018, p. 31).

Third, the two allies – Abu Dhabi and Riyadh – have not only had overlapping and divergent interests but seemingly several battles within a predefined battle. In addition to countering the Houthi threat with its ally – Saudi Arabia – the UAE waged two additional battles. While it engaged in trilateral counterterrorism campaigns with the United States mainly against AQAP, the deputy chief of staff of the UAE’s armed forces, Lt. Gen. Eisa Saif al-Mazrouei, revealed a third battle vis-à-vis “the Muslim Brotherhood and their fifth column” (WAM 2020). For instance,

the UAE feared that liberation of Taiz – a key province that connects Dhale and Lahj provinces and directly overlooks Bab al-Mandeb strait and Perim Island – would empower Islah (Bonneyoy 2019, pp. 25–26). Such tripartite threat perception manifests that an examination of the coalition as a monolithic entity yields inadequate analytical power of developments on the ground, assuming the coalition has merely fought the Houthis and not also turned the battle within the coalition and imposed caveats – whether to pursue its interests or accommodate big power reservations.

Fourth, the poor performance of the Yemeni regime and its inability to build a functioning model in the interim capital has been problematic. Widespread corruption made the situation worse (Said 2019). Since the liberation of Aden in July 2015, successive wartime governments have been preoccupied with conflict dynamics rather than robustly establishing their respective ministries, improving service delivery, and building the capacity of civil servants in Aden. The appointment of public officials who lack both practical expertise and political astuteness has been a leading cause to failure; the absence of effective oversight by the Anti-Corruption Committee and Central Organization for Control and Accountability left such problems intensify unchecked. For instance, mounting levels of corruption in the Army exemplified in, say, tens of thousands of “ghost soldiers” or in the most lucrative sector, fuel imports and exports, by awarding fuel contracts to actors tied to warring parties deepened war economy and patronage dynamics (Sana’a Center for Strategic Studies 2018, pp. 29–34). These issues, as a result, caused relative power vacuum and ultimately eroded the authority of the government as intra-coalition dilemmas increasingly surfaced, while considering the shortage of resources had put succeeding governments in an unfavorable position.

Fifth, coupled with the quest to preserve remaining autonomy in decision-making while manifesting unclouded resistance to accommodate regional interests through diplomacy and compromise, divisions within the coalition surfaced, and government insecurities deepened to the point that the UAE, directly and indirectly,

constrained its presence in Aden. The April 2016 appointment of Lt. Gen. Ali Mohsen al-Ahmar, who is perceived as pro-Islah, replacing Vice President and Prime Minister Bahah, who enjoyed regional and international support, has amplified discontent and distrust in Abu Dhabi, and less Riyadh. From the coalition's perspective, power asymmetry should have led the Yemeni leadership to consult high-level appointments with coalition lead. Furthermore, Essam Shuraim, a member of the Consultative Council, pointed President Hadi's rejection of the UAE's proposal to control Socotra under a 99-year lease prompted the latter to establish counterbalancing proxies to achieve its strategic interests, undermining the mandate of its intervention as per UNSC Resolution 2216 (Shuraim 2020).

Militarily, several high-level statesmen and military commanders exposed the coalition's reservation to autonomously arm the Yemeni Army and deal with the Hadi regime as an equal, contrary to Iran that has illicitly supplied rockets, drones, and missiles to the Houthi rebels. For instance, Maj. Gen. Mohsen Khasrouf, the former chief of Yemen's Armed Forces Moral Guidance Department, pointed the coalition's hesitancy to equip the army with heavy arms stems from ambiguous intentions and accused the UAE of instrumentalizing the guise of countering Islah to achieve its strategic ambitions along Yemen's coast (Khasrouf 2020). A UN Panel of Experts 2020 report further concluded that "coalition support to regular forces of the Government of Yemen has been inadequate, leading to an incapacity of the Government to conduct significant military operations" (UNSC 2020, p. 9).

Paradoxically, the UAE had transferred western heavy arms, including armored vehicles, anti-tank missiles, thermal missiles, G6 howitzers, tanks, and Mine-Resistant Ambush Protected to non-state actors, in potential violation of "end-user" guidelines of western governments (David et al. 2019, pp. 31–32; Sharp 2020, pp. 11–12). Recipients of mainly UAE-diverted western arms include its proxies that opposed the Yemeni regime under coalition's sight, such as the Security Belt Forces, who assumed security control of Aden. Far and beyond sponsorship of

counterbalancing actors, the pinnacle of enmity between the UAE and Yemeni regime manifested in late August 28–29, 2020, when the first launched airstrikes on the latter's forces – under flawed claims of counterterrorism – to prevent its recapture of Aden, killing and injuring over 300 personnel (Sharp 2019, p. 8).

Fort these reasons, a military victory under the coalition's command is likely out of sight, especially that coalition's power has considerably dwarfed. The suspension of Qatar involvement in June 2017 followed by the withdrawal of both Malaysia and Morocco in 2018 and 2019, respectively, alongside significant Sudanese military drawdown – reportedly on a UAE request – from nearly 30,000 to 657 troops as of mid-January 2020, substantially weakened the coalition (Al-Ashwal 2020; Jalal 2020). The alleged withdrawal of the UAE in February 2020, under which the UAE departed from strategic direct to indirect engagement as it retains a small military presence in several positions, continues to flag many concerns, including on the future shape of Yemen.

The Southern Question and Fall of Aden

The formation of the Southern Hirak in mid-2007 marked the resurgence of secessionist sentiments in the country's south, demanding secession and therefore challenging the shape of the modern Yemeni state. This came after retired military and security commanders, who voluntarily left or were forcibly removed from service following the 1994 war, demanded their reemployment and payment of salaries. Although the government allocated YER 27 billion (around \$128 million) and rectified the status of 74,457 personnel and retirees, perceived local grievances continued to spiral (Fakirah 2008, p. 10). Issues of unequal distribution of power and wealth, political hegemony of the highland in North, corruption, and poor development agenda outside the center are certainly sources of frustration.

Post-Arab Spring developments that placed Hadi, a southern political figure from Abyan governorate, as a transitional president offer a generic

account of primary characteristics in secessionist movements or separatist strategic thought. First, communities in Yemen's south thought that rising instability in the country's political system would pave the way for self-determination and independence (Gaston 2014, p. 5). By boycotting the 2012 presidential referendum as per the GGC initiative and under Yemeni laws – or endorsing the Houthi armed rebellion in September 2014 – separatist factions and influenced communities attempted to challenge the legitimacy of Yemen's southern president and undermine formal, constitutional processes of power transfer (France24 2012).

Second, it is noteworthy to point there has been barely tangible compromises to reduce the country's many problems forward, despite increased representation across domains. The NDC, for example, allocated 50% quota for Southerners across the public sector, to resolve the long-standing issue of unequal distribution of power – despite the colossal disparity in population, noting the North is more populous by over threefold. The NDC Outcomes document states “the South shall have a 50% representation in all leadership structures in the executive, legislative and judicial bodies, including the armed and security forces, and in levels where appointments are made by the President of the Republic or the Prime Minister” (Comprehensive National Dialogue Conference 2014). Despite corrective measures led by President Hadi, the Southern struggle was not over, nor satisfied at least.

Third, several groups in the HIRAK boycotted political processes and reconciliatory efforts, such as the NDC (Zyck 2014, p. 7). This drawback exhibits a hardline position and a failure to constructively engage in addressing accumulated grievances to identify a win-win solution that improves living conditions and service delivery, pushes for equitable distribution of wealth, and deepens political participation and decentralization processes. Yemen's unitary structure and kleptocratic dominance of Saleh's regime, as well as the Southern' resistance to cooperate in developing corrective measures during President Hadi's tenure, have together “added an extra layer of complexity to the country's problems” (Feierstein 2019, p. 3).

Fourth, political alignments of Southern factions have been very volatile that some entities are likely to cooperate with any actor supportive of their endeavor or at least pretend to. Aidarous al-Zubaidi, who now leads the Southern Transitional Council (STC) – a UAE-sponsored secessionist entity formed in May 2017 – publicly endorsed the Houthi ascent to power through armed rebellion and acknowledged receipt of Iranian support in the name of Southern Resistance (Aden News 2017).

Fifth, the secessionist cause became a tool for external actors to increase their regional influence and a bargaining chip for local actors to achieve political objectives and share power. Regionally, the UAE had organized the Southern Resistance under security and regional belts outside the auspices of the Yemeni establishment it came to aid to pursue its strategic interests and geopolitical ambitions. Iran, according to some Southern leaders, had ties with and given support to HIRAK's leaders, including former President Ali Salem al-Beidh (Stille 2017, p. 121).

Domestically, Maj. Gen. Ahmed bin Buraik, who adopted federalist rhetoric when President Hadi appointed him as a governor of Hadramawt in 2016, later vowed support for the separatist STC. The formation of the STC itself came after the president sacked Aidarous and Hani bin Buraik in April 2017, who were the governor of Aden and a state minister, respectively, for collusion with foreign powers (Al-Haj 2017). The STC presidential commission comprises two former ministers and five governors, whose performance was mediocre. It can be inferred that changing loyalties and fluid realignments have been problematic for the government and the southern cause alike, a reflection of the prevalent opportunistic competition over wealth and power.

Sixth, there are multiple actors in the South, but there is no representative for the secessionist cause. In addition to a multitude of southern and eastern entities – such as the Southern National Coalition, Reference for the Tribal Alliance of Wadi Hadramawt, Coalition of the Southern Revolution Forces, and Southern National Salvation Council, the UAE-backed STC might be the most powerful militarily and despotic politically but

remains only one of many actors (Lackner 2016, p. 27). According to a Yemen Polling Center 2019 survey, only 37% of Southerners support the STC, with Lahj as a strong foothold (Transfeld 2019). This indicates that neither the STC nor other actors represent the southern question in isolation, contrary to the mainstream assumption that oversimplifies the complexity in Yemen's south.

Seventh, microlevel dynamics suggest that the southern region has yet to be a single front or, more accurately, has different aspirations. Hadramawt, a rich and vast province in the east, has a Hadhrami vision isolated from the pre-1990 or the post-British decolonization order, most evident in Hadramawt Conference's desire for the province to be a federal region (Al-Dawsari 2017). Al-Mahra, next to Hadramawt, leans more toward federalism and is largely preoccupied with navigating its border security with Oman and increasing Saudi activities through a long-nurtured "Mahri code of conduct," and widely opposes the UAE-backed STC (Nagi 2020a). On the other hand, Abyan, President Hadi's hometown, and Dale and Lahj, the base of STC's chief and his deputy, respectively, embody ongoing tensions, where "the alignments of the 1986 conflict largely overlap with the current rivalry" that resulted in a bloody conflict, killing over 10,000 people within days (Al-Hamdani and Lackner 2020, p. 25). Tensions on who controls the South seem to be centered in the South's center.

Against these attributes, the fall of Aden for the first time since 1994 to the UAE-backed STC following its armed rebellion that forced the government out of Aden in August 2019 and its subsequent announcement of self-administration from Abu Dhabi in April 2020 are signs of further state erosion, growing regional intervention, and rising domestic instability in the south. Contrary to most secessionist factions that upheld peaceful political rhetoric and protests, the emergence of the STC marks a departure from peaceful to armed struggle for separatism, an indication that the situation will likely get more complex given incompatible aspirations and views. Its reliance on foreign support, coupled with an unprecedented diversion of state revenues in Aden and theft of CBY containers, speaks volumes on the region's

future and sparks doubtful questions on whether it can unify the Southern movement or revive a cycle of violence.

Crisis Management or Conflict Resolution Efforts?

Having explored the issues and challenges to the UN-endorsed, Gulf-sponsored peace agreement (2011–2014) and the multifaceted layers of the conflict, this section briefly unpacks the UN-led peace process past the intensification of the conflict in March 2015. Broadly, there has been barely any tangible progress despite continuous engagement, coupled with a major departure from guided, nationwide peace talks to piecemeal consultations that normalized evolving realities, including recent armed activities of non-state actors, and remains driven by a reactionary sense of crisis management rather than conflict resolution efforts. In reaffirmation of its February resolution 2201, the UNSC unanimously adopted S/RES 2216, a resolution that arguably put forward the contours of mediation for UN envoys. Acting under Chapter VII, it decried the Houthi coup d'état, called them to "relinquish all additional arms seized," to "refrain from further unilateral actions," to "withdraw...forces from all areas...seized," and urged all groups to engage in peace talks (UNSC 2015c).

Between 2015 and 2016, UN Special Envoy Ismail Ould Cheikh hosted talks in Switzerland and Kuwait, with the latter discussing substantial issues around UNSC resolution 2216, including transitional security, military and political measures (i.e., unity government, disarmament, withdrawal of militias, relinquishing heavy arms), and prisoners' release. The envoy then pointed out that the sequencing of the political roadmap presented was problematic; however, the parties developed a broader understanding (United Nations 2016). While the Houthis and Saleh's GPC prioritized political measures to reach a comprehensive agreement, the government put military and security measures first to ensure that a reconciliation government does not become a victim of retained forces and militias – largely

reminiscent of the Houthi-imposed NPPA (Al-Dawsari 2017). From the viewpoints of the UN, the coalition, and the Yemeni regime then, UNSC Resolution 2216 and relevant peace references marked the contours of discussions in a bid to restore status quo ante bellum; meanwhile, the Houthis believed the de facto status quo should change negotiations framework. Eventually, the warring parties and the international community lost confidence in the envoy, and talks never resumed until Ould Cheikh was replaced in February 2018.

Toward Piecemeal, Fragmentary Peace Efforts

The appointment of Martin Griffiths, a former British diplomat and a muscled mediator, as the third envoy for Yemen marked a departure from comprehensive to piecemeal peace approach and a restart from the “zero point.” First, instead of building on evolving common ground that collapsed but remains a good resumption point, Griffiths rebooted the process and started from square zero, dedicating the first few months to re-map the conflict, meet Yemeni groups in and outside Yemen, and understand developments after the assassination of Saleh in 2017 (McElroy 2018).

Second, with the battle for the port city of Hodeida intensifying, Griffiths, in cooperation with bigger powers, UN agencies and advocacy groups, attempted to constrain the battle and revive the peace process, eventually falling into the crisis management trap. In August 2018, Griffiths made clear to the UNSC that Hodeida is the “center of gravity of the war,” alluding to the battle’s strategic significance from a military standpoint, however used potential humanitarian semblance of the battle to arouse international public opinion and secure greater diplomatic support that ultimately gave peace elusive chances (Office of the Special Envoy of The Secretary-General for Yemen 2018). The Houthi conditional abandonment of Geneva consultations in September – despite the arrival of government delegation to Geneva and the coalition’s military advantage on the ground – is a case in point.

Following the collapse of Geneva consultations due to Houthi inflexibility, the UAE-led

Joint Forces renewed the military campaign to capture Hodeida ports. Thanks to unmatched diplomatic and political support Griffiths enjoyed from London, the UK Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt shuttled between Riyadh, Abu Dhabi, and Tehran to freeze the battle for the Hodeida and pave the way for piecemeal talks again (Sanchez 2018). For its part, the UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Yemen, Lise Grande, visited the port of Hodeida during the firefight to advocate humanitarian costs, a bold signal of international rejection of the battle for clear and obscure motives (Xinhua 2019). These efforts eventually culminated in the December 2018 Stockholm Agreement, where UK and US pressure made it possible, not local consensus (Salisbury 2018). The Agreement comprised three subsidiary documents: the Hodeida Ceasefire Agreement – a deal characterized by strategic ambiguity open to multiple interpretations, a nominal half-page document on Taiz, and a mechanism on swapping 15,000 prisoners. The latter issue has been ongoing and not new. In fact, a local tribal mediator, Sheikh Naji Murait, facilitated the release of over 2500 prisoners, a figure many times over that of the UN (Al-Jabrani 2019).

Third, by focusing mainly on Hodeida, the UN envoy froze the quest for a nationwide negotiated political settlement between February 2018 and at least June 2020, getting lost in the ambiguous provisions of the Hodeida Agreement, which remains unrealized hitherto. Fourth, the Hodeida deal, endorsed by UNSC resolutions 2451 and 2452, contradicts S/RES 2216 that reinforces the right of the Yemeni government to regain control of all captured cities, including Hodeida and its strategic ports, through which majority of imported goods flow to the country (Jalal 2019). However, Palik (2019) pointed that UNSC “resolution 2216 is not a viable framework for negotiations” largely because it “limits the Special Envoys’ bargaining space and it does not address the influence of other conflict parties,” let alone that the Houthis consider it a “setback.”

Fifth, although the 2018 Agreement led to a temporary de-escalation in Hodeida due to a reduction in heavy firefight, violence in several other frontlines (i.e., Taiz, Dale, Abyan)

intensified, with rebel groups becoming more emboldened, and increasing their presence at the expense of the government (Blaxter 2020). In the north, the Houthis captured Hajjur, Hajjah, a few months after the agreement and militarily took over Nihm and the capital city of al-Jawf, al-Hazm, in the first quarter of 2020, following an unannounced de-escalation with Saudi Arabia in late 2019 that led to a significant reduction of air raids, and enabled the Houthis to regroup, rearm, and redeploy forces. Southward, KSA brokered the Riyadh Agreement on November 5, 2019, between the UAE-backed STC and the Yemeni government after the STC forced the government out of Aden, and firefight extended to the governorate of Shabwa, an extension of intra-coalition flaws and current estrangement between Emirati and Yemeni governments. While the Riyadh deal may have solved representation issue for the STC in UN-led peace talks, it, however, marks a continuation of fragmentary peace and crisis management processes, questioning whether inclusion in peace processes is a byproduct of violence, at the expense of peaceful actors. Al-Dawsari (2017) noted that the “peace process must depart from elite-focused affair into an inclusive process,” where the inclusion of marginalized actors like peaceful southern groups, the Tehami Hirak, women, and youth remains crucial to address the array of issues the country is facing.

Overall, Griffiths’ piecemeal approach has, directly or indirectly, contributed to the longevity of conflict whose active players on the ground have proliferated beyond the traditional binary of when the conflict intensified. While rising armed rebellion continues to weaken the fragile authority of the last elected Yemeni regime, division in the coalition’s front cedes greater leverage for the Houthis after they consolidated power in Sana’a. This puts Yemen at a dangerous juncture, considering the multifaceted layers of the conflict, changing distribution of power on the ground and the current mediation trends under Griffiths, of having a fragile peace agreement – under international pressure – that ultimately normalizes armed rebellion, thus continuing in a cycle of endless conflicts.

Summary

This chapter explained how the conflict in Yemen evolved from an accumulated set of deep-seated, multifaceted, and unresolved issues during Saleh’s 33-year tenure into a complex armed conflict, whose local, regional, and international contours are increasingly blurry. The reason why Yemen failed is no secret: Saleh failed to build robust state institutions when he had the golden chance to do otherwise. And the reason why the country’s transitional peace process collapsed and entered a full-scale armed conflict is also no surprise: the continuation of Houthi armed rebellion under conditions of central authority’s fragility, poor regional and international timely stabilizing measures, enduring intra-GCC and intra-elite competition, the instrumentalization of grievances, and fluid alignments and re-alignments in the country. These factors continue to dictate and redefine the breadth and depth of current conflict dynamics and fragile peace trajectories.

The following points sum some of the ideas presented. First, the security and political challenges that questioned the legitimacy of the country’s longest-serving president as well as the shape and political system of Yemen continued to play out hitherto, with rising Gulf and Iranian roles. Of all, the Houthi rebellion that artfully expanded since 2004 and seized state military capabilities after 2014, capitalizing on the political divide to use its adversaries for its strategic ends and exploiting peace agreements and ceasefires to develop realities on the ground, offers a good understanding of the insurgency’s intentions. Second, lack of credible, strategic international and regional support to stabilize the country’s transitional authority only delayed the outbreak of a full-scale war, after the GCC initiative collapsed when the Houthi rebels resorted to violence while they were negotiating details at the NDC. Interestingly, these flaws stretched throughout the military intervention of the Arab Coalition, thus contributing to the polarization of the conflict, further fragmentation, and a second coup d’état in Aden, contrary to the coalition’s proclaimed objectives.

Third, the proliferation of armed groups as the conflict dragged on unresolved, both militarily and politically, poses long-term challenges to post-war recovery and reconstruction, disarmament, and establishment of a national army. Fourth, the Southern question has dragged without compromises for years despite reconciliatory attempts, but the evolving landscape in the South during the conflict will likely increase the complexity of dynamics. Fifth, the role of UN Special Envoys appeared more successful when Yemen's vicinity, GCC countries, was diplomatically rather than militarily engaged. Certainly, the Stockholm Agreement gave the Houthis a chance to not be weakened militarily; however, unfolding events played to rebel groups' advantage. Finally, the future of Yemen is quite cloudy but can be imagined in its recent past and its regional neighborhood in the Arabian Peninsula and the African Horn, especially if the war were to end through a politically negotiated settlement. Between separatist and Imamate advocates, as well as rising foreign interference and exploitation, wartime fragmentation is likely to continue, until the distribution of power changes in favor of one at the expense of others. For now, Yemen has been in a cycle of seemingly endless conflicts, until the causes of conflict cycles and fragile peace processes are addressed equitably.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Intractable Conflict](#)
- ▶ [Peace Agreements](#)
- ▶ [Peace Measuring Approaches](#)
- ▶ [Search for Peace, the](#)
- ▶ [Troubles, The: The Northern Ireland Conflict](#)
- ▶ [War and Peace in Somalia](#)

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Youth and Peacebuilding

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Description

The practice of building peace is slowly becoming more inclusive. Youth have proven to be integral to this development as their contributions through formal and informal networks have challenged how we understand substantive participation and representation within this space. However, young people's visibility and inclusion within the peacebuilding discourse has been hard fought and slow to evolve as narrow social constructions of youth continue to determine how they engage with other actors, particularly at the institutional level. Youth often are characterized as potential threats or passive recipients of peacebuilding. However, youth are active peacebuilders who

negotiate systems of insecurity and risk to work for peace in their communities and countries and on the international stage. This chapter examines the evolution of youth's inclusion in peacebuilding discourse and practice. It considers the theories, norms, intersections, and classifications that have informed understandings and engagements with youth in both scholarship and practice. It then turns to examine the factors that enable and constrain youth's participation: gendered challenges, the securitization of youth, and the vexed question of youth's participation and inclusion in peacebuilding. This chapter highlights the evolving role of youth advocacy in continued efforts to ensure that their engagement with the peacebuilding discourse is substantive and meaningful.

Introduction

Youth constitute a growing portion of the global population with 1.8 billion individuals aged between 10 and 24 years old (UNFPA 2014; Simpson 2018, p. 12). Of these, approximately 408 million live in regions or states affected by violence (Hagerty 2017). Youth also disproportionately bear the consequences of conflict as over half of those forcibly displaced by conflict are under 18 (UNHCR 2019). In 2015, for example, 90% of direct conflict deaths were young men (UNFPA 2015); between 2013 and 2017, there were more than 12,700 attacks on education (including against buildings, teachers, and students) globally (GCPEA 2018); and conflict and displacement exacerbates sexual and gender-based violence faced by young women (UN SG Report 2019). Despite young people's pervasive presence in conflict-affected areas, their experiences and contributions continue to be overlooked or mischaracterized, particularly at the institutional level. The prevalence of the youth demographic in post-conflict communities is employed both as a call to action, most notably by youth activists, and as justification for intervention, in particular by those looking to "manage" young people's perceived capacity to spoil peace.

Given this, understanding the origins of these representations is central to broader discussions of youth in peace and security contexts.

Framings of youth often rely on simplistic tropes of youth as victim or, more often, as potential threat or risk. This has meant that when youth are considered at all in peacebuilding discourse, they are often excluded or engaged only as a problem to be managed. While some young people do engage in violence, it is curious that we rarely ask why a majority of young people remain peaceful even in violent contexts. Young people are also rarely asked about their contributions to peace. Just like gendered assumptions structure and enable conflict (Sjoberg 2014; see chapter ▶ "Gender Justice and Peacebuilding"), youthed tropes of young people as either passive victims or threats to contain limit our ability to fully account for their efforts to build peace (Berents and McEvoy-Levy 2015: 124). Broadly speaking, three themes underpin scholarly and policy engagement with youth in peacebuilding: youth are political actors in formal spheres of politics such as elections, youth can be conflict actors who participate in or support violence, and youth contribute productively to peacebuilding (Özerdem and Podder 2015, pp. 4–8). Even at this macro level, it is evident how diverse young people's experiences can be.

It is undeniable that youth suffer in multiple ways due to war and violence. However, formal and informal structures of power exclude multiple experiences of youth from consideration. Youth are active peacebuilders who negotiate systems of insecurity and risk to work for peace in their communities and countries and on the international stage. Commonly, they work in diverse ways: on training and capacity building, advocacy, events, dialogues, alliances with other peace actors, networks, and specific projects (UNOY and SFCG 2017, p. 27). A few indicative, but not exhaustive, examples here help set the context and frame the work youth peacebuilders do that is discussed through this chapter. Youth work creatively to encourage peers away from violence, such as through nonviolent hip-hop collectives in response to gang violence in Colombia

that have helped transform previously highly dangerous communities (Garcés Montoya 2011), through Luta pela Paz (“Fight for Peace”) which teaches martial arts and boxing in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro in Brazil (Simpson 2018, p. 57), or through music and dance in Northern Ireland (Pruitt 2013). Youth communicate constructively with their peers; for example, young Yemenis use radio, social media, and peer networks to explain “viable alternatives” to extremist violence and prevent recruitment (Simpson 2018, p. 48). Youth also participate in and lead short- and long-term post-conflict peacebuilding efforts: in Cameroon, former violent offenders are offered capacity-building training to support their reintegration (Sanyi and Achaleke 2017), while organizations such as Jovenes Contra la Violencia (Youth Against Violence) Guatemala work in communities on violence prevention initiatives. Monitoring and participation peace processes and reconciliation efforts also are sites where youth involve themselves: in Somalia, the Joint Galkayo Youth Committee is a formal, elected structure that channels youth opinions into peace negotiations (Altiok and Grizelj 2019, p. 24), and in the Solomon Islands, youth actively contested and negotiated their absence and representation in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Mollica 2017). At the micro level, young people also involve themselves in informal, community-level efforts to foster resilience and security within everyday routines in the absence of state care such as in informal communities of internally displaced people in Colombia (Berents 2018). Despite exclusion, in post-conflict contexts, young people have been operating largely from the margins of their communities, developing and implementing positive practices intended to build more secure and peaceful societies.

Young people’s contributions to peace have received increased attention within the formal structures of the international community, including the establishment of an emergent Youth, Peace and Security Agenda (see Simpson 2018; Altiok forthcoming; IANYD 2014; Youth4Peace n.d.). In 2015, after successful lobbying and advocacy by youth-led and adult-led organizations, the UN

Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security (YPS). Building on established norms around children and youth rights, Resolution 2250 recognizes youth (defined as 18–29) as having significant roles in building peace and security. It requires international actors, states, and other groups to meaningfully include youth in peacebuilding practice. The resolution established a YPS agenda that has seen a subsequent UN Security Council Resolution 2419 (2018) on youth participation in peace processes, as well as an independent progress study on YPS mandated by resolution 2250: *The Missing Peace: Independent Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security* (Simpson 2018). It also has led to the establishment of formal programs, funding streams, and commitments by states and INGOs to better include youth in peace and security programming, policy, and practice. The establishment of a YPS agenda seeks to institutionalize an understanding of youth as peacebuilders and thus challenge “contagious stereotypes” (Simpson 2018, p. x) of youth as violent that contribute to “policy panic” (Simpson 2018, p. 30). McEvoy-Levy notes that understanding youth as peacebuilders often “underestimates the structural challenges and asymmetries of power between youth and political elites that make peace action [for youth] very difficult” (2011, p. 169). While there are important cautions with the YPS agenda, it nevertheless presents an opportunity to strengthen young people’s already-existing peace work through institutional support and engagement.

This chapter first examines how “youth” is conceptualized in peacebuilding. It then introduces the scholarship and practice on youth and peacebuilding, building a rough chronology of work highlighting the emergence of attention on youth, efforts toward youth participation, and youth as partners and active agents for peace. After this brief overview, the chapter explores three contemporary thematic areas of relevance to those interested in youth and peacebuilding: the intersections of age and gender, the tensions presented by securitized discourses of youth, and the complex pursuit of substantive participation of youth.

Considering Youth: Classifications and Intersections

Interactions with youth in peacebuilding contexts are informed by three overarching discourses: the “age-defined perspective,” “the social construct,” and the “physiological approach” (Özerdem and Podder 2015, pp. 6–7). Taken together, these discourses provide a comprehensive framework for conceptualizing youth and their participation in peace and conflict practices. However, when employed on their own, these discourses perpetuate barriers to youth’s engagement, in part due to their failure to consider youth’s unique voices and experiences. Within the physiological field, biological and cognitive markers are employed to distinguish youth from children and adults. In contrast, numerical classifications reflect predetermined and static turning points in a young person’s development (Özerdem and Podder 2015, p. 6). Missing from these approaches is the recognition that cultural “rites of passage” including marriage, childbirth, and spiritual initiation often determine “youthhood” and thus transitions into and out of this phase are rarely uniform and cannot be predetermined (Hansen 2008 cited in Özerdem and Podder 2015). Durham suggests “youth are social shifters” situated in constantly evolving political contexts where knowledge, rights, power, and culture influence their identity, roles, and status (2004). As such, their experiences do not exist in a vacuum; rather, they occur in response to a range of intersecting factors including gender, ethnicity, age, class, and race (see chapter ▶ “Intersectionality and Peace”). Given this, our understanding of young people’s contributions to building peace should be seen through a more expansive lens that acknowledges their diverse social and political experiences.

Socially constructed classifications of youth commonly emphasize “who they are not” by situating their experiences within the broader context of the generational attributes assigned to children, adults, and the elderly (Furlong et al. 2003; Durham 2004, p. 593; De Waal and Argenti 2002). These social constructions often perpetuate marginalizing cultural stereotypes that cast youth

as passive observers and thus obscure their unique social and political contributions that are derived from their experiences *as* youth. In practice, youth are individuals whose identities are transitioning through stages of development ensuring that their capabilities are heterogeneous and responsive to external factors. These constantly evolving social representations further contribute to the contested nature of youth within the peacebuilding discourse. At any given time, youth are an age group, a social demographic, “a political group or a group in-between children and adults” (Özerdem and Podder 2015, p. 4). These shifting identities are significant obstacles to youth’s participation in formal peace practices as classifications often determine the character and extent of an individual’s engagement.

Strict adherence to numerical definitions produces barriers to youth’s participation due to the lack of consensus between institutions and among states. Illustratively, the Solomon Islands defines youth as those aged 14–29, while in Timor Leste, youth is any individual between the age of 16–30. At the institutional level, the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY) defines youth as those aged between 15 and 24 years old, while the African Charter defines youth as 15–35. Reflecting the heightened visibility of young people, the ratification of Resolution 2250 (2015) introduced the age range of 18–29 into the discourse while also acknowledging that classifications might vary in different contexts. Institutional definitions that adhere to narrow classificatory boundaries lack the nuance necessary to represent the experiences of youth, which has implications for how their role as peacebuilders is conceptualized. In addition, the voices of youth are absent from these structural discourses, and thus they reflect external perceptions of youth rather than youth themselves. The 2005 World Youth Report sought to address this silence, defining youth as “an important period of physical, mental, and social maturation [where they] are actively forming identities and determining acceptable roles for themselves.” This classification frames youth as competent social agents, whose perspectives offer valuable insights. In doing so, it recognizes that youth are a unique demographic of

individuals who transition into and out of “youthhood” at different paces.

The increased visibility of youth advocates has produced limited opportunities for young people to claim these transitional spaces (Sommers 2006; McEvoy-Levy 2006). A youth representative of the Network for Empowerment and Progressive Initiatives in Liberia explains “the issue of self-identity. . . is very important. Once [youth] understand what [they] can offer society, [they] will find opportunities” (Maclay and Özerdem cited in Simpson 2018, p. 110). Despite this, widespread realization of this agency, particularly within the formal peace architecture, remains constrained by the persistence of institutional classifications. For example, despite acknowledging that “variations exist at the national and international level,” Resolution 2250 employs numerical boundaries that begin at 18. Codification of this numerical definition reflects institutional attempts to avoid definitional overlap with the Convention on the Rights of the Child. However, introducing a static numerical starting point for “youthhood” also perpetuates tensions between these complementary agendas and individual’s younger than 18 who may self-identify as youth, not children. While it is now increasingly acknowledged within the scholarship that uniform classifications of young people obscure the complex and fluid reality of their experiences, these issues persist and, as discussed below, are often employed to frame the relationships between youth and other actors in peacebuilding practice.

Understanding Youth in Literature and Practice

While there has been growing recognition of the complexity of youth’s experiences and capacities, attention to “youth” has long often been marginal and limited in both academic and policy contexts. Where young people, and issues of concern to youth, have been engaged these engagements have often reiterated binaries of victim/delinquent (often in profoundly gendered ways) and have been narrowed by adherence to ideas of the limitations of young people’s capacity and

understanding. Such characterizations have been challenged and resisted for decades, with scholars and practitioners arguing for recognition of the complex lives youth live in conflict-affected contexts and their capacity to contribute to positive peacebuilding efforts. More recently, growing attention on youth, as evidenced by the establishment of the YPS agenda in 2015, has further expanded and formalized considerations of youth as positive actors in peacebuilding.

Understandings of young people’s involvement in peace and conflict have always been informed by multidisciplinary perspectives, including scholarship from sociology, international relations, anthropology, and peace studies. These diverse perspectives shed light on the complexity of youth experiences of conflict and peace. Because of the diversity of work on youth, it is difficult to succinctly characterize research and practice. Organized as two broadly chronological phases, this non-exhaustive overview provides a guide to some of the key arguments and developments.

Children and Youth as Categories of Concern

In the 1990s, “child soldiers” became a prominent category of concern to the international community. With the emergence of “new wars” and attention on intrastate conflicts, children associated with armed groups were highlighted as a feature of conflict but also a problem to be solved in the process of building peace. Anxiety about children participating in armed conflicts sensationalized media coverage, particularly in Africa and Eastern Europe. This sometimes sensational coverage was challenged by scholars, often working in anthropology and sociology. Groundbreaking reports such as the Machel Report “The Impact of Armed Conflict on Children” commissioned by the UN and presented to the General Assembly in 1996 and the work of Brett and McCallin (1998) and Cohn and Goodwin-Gill (1994) brought comprehensive attention to the experiences of child soldiers. The work of Boyden (1994) and Boyden and de Berry (2004) expands recognition of diverse social experiences of young people in conflict and their varied capacities for responding to violence. In Uganda, for example, young

women who were victims of conflict-related sexual violence responded to the “consequences” of this experience in ways that challenge the dominant perceptions of vulnerability traditionally assigned to them (de Berry 2004, p. 61). De Berry concludes that the ability of these women to rebuild their lives in constructive ways, through the creation of business opportunities and safe social spaces, challenges homogenous victim narratives and suggests that young peoples’ responses to the trauma of conflict are nuanced and multifaceted. Other literature in the late 1990s drew on established work in previous decades in sociology and psychology to young people affected by conflict (see Cairns 1996).

In practice, the normative framework for children and youth in peacebuilding was being established, as evidenced by key UN documents from the late 1980s onward (Lee-Koo 2018). The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), ratified in 1989, placed an emphasis on victimization and protection, rather than active agency. However, as Holzscheiter observes, “the CRC enshrined for the first time in international law, the right of the child to express his or her own views” (2010, p. 2). Building upon the norms established in the CRC (1989), the Machel Report (1996), and the Paris Principles (2007) recognized the diversity of children’s experience in conflict and provided a foundation for the inclusion and recognition of children’s voices in post-conflict practices.

Children’s experiences occupy a central (but limited) place in peacebuilding, while recognition of youth as a distinct demographic remains sporadic. In international policy spaces, the UN General Assembly established the “World Programme of Action for Youth for the Year 2000” in 1995 (WPAY). Youth, in the WPAY, are largely seen within social and economic development frames, rather than having a stake in peace and security. Although focused attention on young people in peace and conflict was a welcome development in the 1990s, including critical attention from scholars on young people’s experiences, adherence to notions of victim/delinquent and passive recipients of peacebuilding dominated.

Participation and Partnership

The second broad phase of attention emerged in the late 1990s and into the 2000s, characterized by increased recognition of young people’s participation and the complexity of young people’s experiences of conflict and peace. Broader recognition of young people’s capacity has been limited, and youth continue to be marginal in peacebuilding. Despite this, informed by developments in the sociologically oriented “youth studies” more broadly, scholarship reflects a more nuanced understanding of young people’s agency and lifeworld in conflict and peace. This work demonstrates the value of inclusive approaches to youth, as McEvoy-Levy (2001) argues: “a neglect of adolescents and older young people is shortsighted and counterproductive in terms of peace building particularly in the crucial post-accord phase with its twin challenges of violence prevention/accord maintenance and societal reconciliation and reconstruction.”

Scholarship reveals that youth occupy a broad range of identities in post-conflict communities and demonstrate agency in ways that challenge traditional notions of youth as passive subjects. Contributions to the edited volume *Troublemakers or Peacemakers?* (McEvoy-Levy 2006) demonstrate across a variety of contexts how young people respond to insecurity and contribute to peacebuilding, including the challenges of reintegrating child soldiers in Sierra Leone (Wessels and Jonah 2006), the social and cultural difficulties facing young people in post-genocide Rwanda (Sommers 2006), and young people’s role in transforming education systems in post-conflict Bosnia and Herzegovina (Cilliers 2006). Attention to young people’s capacities and agency characterize work by Borer et al. (2007), Schwartz (2010), Del Felice and Wisler (2007), Schnabel and Tabyshalieva (2013), Berents (2015), and Özerdem and Podder (2015) among others. Contributors to the edited volume *Makers & Breakers: Children & Youth in Postcolonial Africa* explored childhood and youthhood in the contexts of post-colonial Africa (Honwana and de Boeck 2005). Work has also focused on the importance of including youth in formal peace and justice processes (see chapter ► “[Transitional Justice](#)”

and Peacebuilding”), including Mollica’s work with youth in the Solomon Islands (2017). The UN-supported research policy paper *We Are Here: An integrated approach to youth inclusive peace processes* proposed understanding youth engagement with formal peace negotiations as “at the table,” “in the room,” “around the room,” and “outside the room” to more fully map the diverse ways youth participation already takes place and how it can be productively engaged (Altiok and Grizelj 2019). Attention to youth within the “everyday turn” of peace studies (see chapter ▶ “Everyday Peace”) has shown the value of local-focused or ethnographic approaches that uncover youth’s political agency in peacebuilding (Berents 2018; Berents and McEvoy-Levy 2015; Turner 2015). Illustratively, in Supingstad, rural black South African youth mobilized collectively to achieve better provision of basic services from the state, more economic opportunities, and participation in civic life (Turner 2015). The intersections of age and gender have also revealed important sites to consider young people’s role in peacebuilding including the exclusion faced by girls and young women in peacebuilding programs (Pruitt 2013, 2015) and the ways in which socially constructed expectations of masculinity intersect with peace efforts (Kent and Barnett 2011). In practice, youth’s engagement with current global political challenges, including the 2010–2011 Arab Spring (see Honwana 2013), the 2019 political actions in Chile and Hong Kong, and the global movement for climate justice, demonstrates their social and political capital and their ability to mobilize for substantive change.

In the early 2000s, civil society, the UN, and policy think tanks turned their attention to how young people could be supported in times of transition (e.g., see Ackermann et al. 2003, Bidwell et al. 2008, and UNICEF 2001). Simultaneously, the “War on Terror” saw certain youth repositioned as “threats” (see Maira 2016). Youth, particularly young men in the Global South, became identified in policy and discourse as indicators of potential civil unrest through the wide adoption of the problematic “youth bulge theory” (Urdal 2004). These racialized and gendered frames (see Pruitt et al.

2018), underpinned by biologically essentialist assumptions (Pruitt 2020), have had a pervasive negative effect on efforts to institutionalize and meaningfully include youth in positive peacebuilding practices. Issues with the securitization of youth in peacebuilding are discussed below in more details. While academic and practitioner work had expanded recognition of young people’s capacities in peacebuilding, continued tensions in portrayals of youth persisted.

Until recently, recognition of the contributions of youth to peace existed almost exclusively in informal spaces on the margins of post-conflict states. Today, however, there is greater recognition of the importance of creating inclusive formal structures to support their peacebuilding initiatives and amplify their voices (Berents and McEvoy-Levy 2015). Broadly speaking, current attempts to create sustainable peace emphasize the importance of the youth demographic and thus prioritize as a critical imperative the need to “invest in young people’s capacities” in ways that “prioritize partnerships and collaborative actions” and recognize the diverse experiences of youth (Simpson 2018, p. xiii). While this growing attention includes establishing formal mechanisms and roles such as youth envoys to organizations such as the UN or the African Union (OSGEY n.d.; OAUSEY n.d.), youth participation in parliamentary processes (Spark 2014), or peak representative bodies such as the European Youth Forum (EYF n.d.), fundamentally, these practices need to support and develop already-existing youth efforts for peacebuilding that may not be connected to institutional processes. Youth in conflict and peace are political actors, advocates, agents of resistance, negotiators, mediators, combatants, and victims, yet despite this, formal structures often fail to provide substantive and diverse opportunities for engagement.

Within the formal peacebuilding discourse, interactions with youth often reinforce the idea that “youth” as a category is static and their needs and interests are homogenous (Aguilar 2007; Özerdem and Podder 2015, p. 5). Challenges of meaningful participation of youth in formal and informal processes are discussed further below. Yet, as youth peacebuilders slowly

penetrate institutionalized peacebuilding structures, these classifications are increasingly challenged. Given this, young people's engagement with peacebuilding reflects an inherent tension between old classifications derived from collective, external perceptions of who youth are and new, responsive representations, which reflect their lived experiences and capabilities. Our understanding of youth and peacebuilding today is informed by how "young people creatively seek ways to prevent violence and consolidate peace across the globe" despite persistent rhetoric which cast their experiences as a "problem" to be managed or solved (Simpson 2018). The inclusion of youth's voices in the development and implementation of peacebuilding practice is "pragmatic and constructive" as it encourages ownership and buy-in (Drummond-Mundal and Cave 2007, p. 67).

Engagement with youth in peacebuilding has matured and expanded in recent decades. Careful academic work and thoughtful policy efforts have seen the space of recognition for young people's capacity and participation expand dramatically. Despite this, youth remain peripheral to many considerations in peace and conflict studies or invoked only in limited and problematic binaries of delinquent or victim, resulting in scholarship and practice overlooking the positive potential of younger generations to contribute to building lasting peace in conflict-affected contexts around the world.

Thematic Consideration for Youth in Peacebuilding

For those willing to take youth seriously as both a category of analysis and a demographic to meaningfully engage with, there are several key issues that need careful consideration: first, attention to the gendered dynamics of youth in peace and security practices; second, consideration of the (re)securitization of youth through discourses that reaffirm their status as risky and potentially dangerous; and, third, the significant challenges of ensuring meaningful participation for youth in formal and informal peacebuilding efforts.

Gendered Challenges

Gender norms inform the character and extent of young people's participation in peacebuilding. Where girls are concerned, socially constructed conflict identities often result in the development of peacebuilding programs that misrepresent their needs or exclude them entirely from the process. Young women are traditionally cast through a narrow lens as the "super-victim": an inherently peaceful, vulnerable group that the international community is obligated to protect (Park 2006, p. 316). This framing becomes problematic when it is relied upon to inform how they engage with peacebuilding practices and other actors following conflict. For example, in Sierra Leone, all young women were assigned "follower" status by the international community, despite occupying a wide range of roles, including combat positions (McKay and Mazurana 2004). Formal peacebuilding practices rarely account for the "gender differences" in participation or acknowledge the agency of girls, instead of relying on old tropes which cast girls as apolitical (Pruitt 2015; Harris 2004). These representations present a significant challenge to young women's participation as they tell only part of the story of how they participate in both conflict and its aftermath.

The homogenization of "youth" within the peace and security discourse creates practices which overlook the gendered dimension of conflict participation and thus fail to pursue the substantive engagement of young women. Youth as a category is typically employed to represent the "boys and young men" that the formal systems must manage to avoid spoiling the peace process (Pruitt 2015, p. 161). Discussions of child soldiers, for example, perpetuate gender stereotypes of deviance and violence as they are dominated by depictions of young African or, more recently, Middle Eastern boys (Lee-Koo 2011, p. 726). Missing from this portrayal of the child soldier are young girls who join rebel groups in conflicts around the world (Mazurana and McKay 2001, p. 33). Despite occupying active roles in conflicts, young girls are often excluded from decision-making and the implementation of peacebuilding practices, including demobilization, demilitarization, and reintegration efforts, as narrow ideas

about who fights render their experiences invisible (Coulter 2005; see chapter ► “Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR)”). In practice, girls are excluded from institutionalized peacebuilding programs more than any other demographic as the intersection of age and gender produces marginalizing conditions that perpetuate a cycle of exclusion (Sommers 2006; Pruitt 2015). At the same time, representations of “youth” that assume young men are combatants driven by deviance also neglect their potential victim status, as evident in Liberia and Uganda where boys were often forced to participate in sexual acts (Mazurana and McKay 2001, p. 33). Broadly speaking, narrowly constructed gender representations present a significant challenge for the development of meaningful peacebuilding practices, particularly when employed to predict the roles youth occupy in these contexts. Moreover, they perpetuate inaccurate assumptions about why youth choose to engage in conflict and pursue peace.

Similar representation challenges persist within peace and conflict around notions of the masculine identity. The belief that young men are “bad boys [who] need to be contained due to their propensity for violence” informs the character of their engagement within the international community (Burman 1994, pp. 244–245; Pruitt et al. 2018, p. 694; see chapter ► “Youth Gang Violence in Honduras”). This is evident in the dominance of young men in deradicalization programs and the emphasis on masculinity within the securitization discourse (discussed below). These classifications derive, in part, from the notion that “war is men’s business,” and thus presume a relationship between risky and violent behavior and masculinity (Large 1997, p. 28). Similarly, militarized rhetoric that frames vulnerability as weakness informs beliefs among boys in conflict contexts that being a man requires “the need to be tough” (Harland 2011, p. 417). This is further reinforced by the scholarship of the 1990s on youth culture and masculinity, which argued that structural conditions, including a lack of employment opportunities, coupled with a propensity for deviance, motivated young men’s participation in conflict (Large 1997, p. 27; Bradbury 1995). The

complex relationship between violence and structural inequality is also evident in the Solomon Islands, where young men joined rebel groups on the promise of goods and services and the opportunity to escape the idleness of unemployment (Allen 2013).

The belief among young men that they are the providers and protectors of their communities derives from normative stereotypes that militarize the male identity. However, these perceptions often fail to reflect how ideas about young men are informed by intersecting notions of class and age. Ashe and Harland suggest that “while men as a group benefit from the social organization of gender, particular groups of men are located in socially subordinated positions” (2014, p. 750). This is particularly relevant in communities where cultural hierarchies determined by age inform the political and social roles that men occupy. Despite the emergence of critical masculinity scholarship, which seeks to challenge these linear notions of the male identity, and how they are employed to conceptualize young men’s participation in violence, the perception that young men are troublemakers persists within the peacebuilding discourse and continues to inform how the international community responds to their participation (Barker 2005; Hall 2002). This is evident in the emphasis on securitization within peace and security discourses.

Securitization of Youth

Despite evidence of young people’s overwhelming nonparticipation in violence, characterizations of youth as a threat or a “problem to be solved” endure. These dominant discourses frame youth as risky, as potentially delinquent, and as spoilers to peace efforts, and they legitimize the exclusion of youth from peacebuilding. In the mid-1990s, claims of the dangers of “youth bulges” – that large populations of youth, particularly in African countries, increased a country’s risk of violence or conflict (see Urdal 2004 and 2006) – had a significant influence on policy and public discourse. Kaplan described youth in Africa as “loose molecules in an unstable social fluid, a fluid that was clearly on the verge of igniting” (1994). In these representations of young people, agency is

acknowledged strictly in pejorative terms and assumes a causal connection between violence and a large male youth population. Like the youth-as-victim classification, they remain a social and political challenge, yet rather than protecting them, the deviance lens calls for youth to be managed. This characterization is built on both gendered and racialized assumptions of youth and the global order (Hendrixson 2004; Pruitt et al. 2018). Despite the pervasiveness of these understandings, evidence does not support claims made by adherents to the “youth bulge” theory (Pruitt 2020), yet they’ve had a disproportionate impact on the exclusion of youth from peacebuilding. The Global War on Terror strengthened attention on youth as a security threat (Maira 2016). This understanding of youth as a risk to be managed, rather than potential contributors to engage and include has been evident in policy responses to terrorist threats by Islamic State, Boko Haram and others.

This framing of certain youth as a risk places youth in a securitized position – youth have been positioned as a marginal group to be contained (see Pugh et al. 2013 on securitization of peacebuilding). This has occurred as development and peace programs have become more closely linked to neoliberal goals and influenced by globalizing nature of security concerns (Sukarieh and Tannock 2018; Distler 2017). The rise of Preventing/Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE) approaches within peacebuilding architecture has often had the effect of further securitizing youth (Altiok forthcoming). Youth are targeted for surveillance, stereotyped, and offered limited ways of responding to such framings (Altiok et al. 2020). Sommers argues that CVE programs that target youth can often encourage rather than prevent violent extremism (2018). Increased focus on youth through P/CVE returns youth to securitized frames of a “problem to be solved,” limiting the space for youth to be seen as positive contributors to peacebuilding.

The UN YPS agenda embodies the tensions between the securitization of youth and efforts to see them as positive peacebuilders. The resolution emphasizes young people’s positive roles but also reproduces language that returns youth to a risk

frame. Sukarieh and Tannock argue that the YPS agenda is neoliberal and reproduces frames of youth that are productive for the “current global economic order” (2018). Altiok argues that while youth are securitized, they resist this through local, national, and international efforts, resulting in a “squeezed youth-led peacebuilding agency” (forthcoming). While countering violent extremism is an important goal, youth peacebuilding faces challenges as it narrows the legitimate spaces they can work. With funding often tied to P/CVE approaches and projects, youth peacebuilders and adult-led organizations that work with them have to navigate these tensions carefully to deliver successful projects that meaningfully support youth peacebuilders in contexts around the world. *The Missing Peace: Independent Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security*, mandated by the 2015 UNSC resolution 2250 on YPS, highlights the danger of negative understandings of youth as they can result in “policy panic” (Simpson 2018, pp. 30–31). Such panic reduces youth to reductive and harmful stereotypes and limits the space to recognize the diverse and extensive ways youth already are contributing to building peace and responding to violence.

Meaningful Participation

The 2015 Global Forum on Youth, Peace and Security in Amman, Jordan, marked a significant turning point in the character of youth participation. This international conference and the resultant Amman Youth Declaration called for a framework for the meaningful participation of youth in peace. Moreover, the visibility of the agenda facilitated by youth’s advocacy within the formal systems of the UN architecture shifted the discourse on substantive participation and compelled the international community to adopt youth engagement as a key strategic priority. There are growing calls for the international community to take youth seriously and to “tap into the peacebuilding potential of youth organizations” by providing “improved access to funding, technical support and capacity-building” (UN Secretary General 2018, p. 62). This approach to youth

engagement envisages an active role for youth in the programming and implementation of peacebuilding practice, which highlights “the unique contributions of youth-led organizations” already occurring within informal peacebuilding spaces (Simpson 2018, para. 22). For example, in Uganda, the development and implementation of social cohesion programs, such as the Reformed Warriors Program, has been instrumental in mitigating ongoing violence. This program provides peer mentorship to youth “cattle raiders” and aims to “disengage” these individuals while rebuilding trust between them and the broader community. In addition, youth-led reintegration and diversion programs, which offer capacity building and training for former fighters and young offenders, have been established in Sierra Leone, Somalia, Cameroon, and parts of Central America (Simpson 2018, p. 47). Youth-led organizations have also taken a leadership role in humanitarian efforts, particularly in the absence of international programs. In Yemen, for example, youth “baked and delivered bread to more than 12,000 families in San’a” while the violence was occurring (Simpson 2018, p. 47). These youth-led initiatives, which demonstrate capacity building, mentorship, and leadership, reveal that young people have the will and capability to actively participate in community efforts to build sustainable peace.

Sustained advocacy efforts by youth and an emphasis on alliance building with civil society resulted in the institutionalization of a participatory framework within the UN architecture. Resolution 2250 establishes guidelines for the interactions between donors, institutions, states, and youth in the peace and security space. Among the key action items for the international community within this document is the creation of “measures that support local youth peace initiatives” and “empower youth” (UNSC 2015, p. 1). The importance of meaningful participation is reinforced by Resolution 2419 (2018), which further embedded youth within the formal peacebuilding architecture. The rhetoric within these resolutions reflects broader trends within the discourse on peace and security, which cast youth as key actors whose ownership is necessary

for the maintenance of peace and stability and shifts away from tokenistic engagement.

Since 2015, youth-led organizations and their allies have worked extensively on implementing the mandate set out in Resolution 2250 to varying degrees of success. As a result, there has been a noticeable shift in the nature of youth’s engagement with peacebuilding. Within the international architecture, youth are increasingly sought out to engage in commentary on global challenges and to provide recommendations for how to mitigate the specific harms they face. However, the participation pillar remains one of the central challenges for the YPS agenda, due in part to the emphasis on securitization which produces narrow systems of engagement and limits the character of their participation (Altiok et al. 2020; Altiok [forthcoming](#)). Well-worn identity classifications which cast youth as vulnerable to recruitment, while important, only represent part of their conflict experience. Given this, a more nuanced framework for understanding youth’s participation is needed to ensure inclusion is representative of the on-the-ground realities of how young people engage in both violence and instability (Simpson 2018; Altiok [forthcoming](#)).

Heightened attention on youth’s role is underpinned by the growing prominence of the youth agency lens within the peace and security literature (as discussed above). This framework is informed by evidence-based research, which highlights the ability of young people to act to facilitate change, both positive and negative, independent of external actors (e.g., McEvoy-Levy 2011, p. 168, and Schwartz 2010). Drawing on data collected in Mozambique, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Kosovo, Schwartz reveals that youth are important actors in the reconstruction process, who actively pursue ways to participate in peacebuilding (Schwartz 2010, p. 155). Utilizing interviews with youth, she demonstrates that predetermined ideas about their capacity, which perpetuate deviance stereotypes, fail to reflect how programs and practices established within post-conflict communities empower youth and harness their political will (Schwartz 2010, p. 156). Similarly, citing examples from her edited volume, such as “. . . youth in

the Colombian Peace Communities. . . and young activists at peace centers” in Bosnia and Herzegovina, McEvoy-Levy concludes that “youth are powerful as conflict transformers” (McEvoy-Levy 2006, p. 287). She suggests that these examples of activism and engagement highlight youth’s capacity to be “creators of peaceful culture,” as well as symbols of trauma and instability (McEvoy-Levy 2006, p. 287). Increased engagement with youth in peacebuilding contexts demonstrates that their participation and leadership is essential for sustainable peace as not only can they “mobilize their peers and other community members” but they also have the capacity to “understand local dynamics and priorities” that other actors may overlook (Simpson 2018, para. 24). As demonstrated throughout this chapter, including the voices of young people in the development of peacebuilding practices ensures that they are holistic, inclusive, and responsive to the diverse needs of a wide range of conflict participants.

Inclusion and involvement are key characteristics of participation; however, the nature and extent of this engagement matters. Substantive forms of participation are informed by the notion that youth possess agency and thus their contributions are innately valuable. As demonstrated throughout this chapter, meaningful participation for young people relies on institutional recognition that they “have been and are actively involved in emergent, innovative, experimental and substantive forms of solidarity and coexistence” (Oswell 2013, p. 6).

In addition, peacebuilding practices that are meaningfully participatory must acknowledge that all youth are equal partners who inform and shape political structures, knowledge, and relationships. Recent examples of consultations with youth, including the consultative research conducted for the progress report *The Missing Peace*, mandated by Resolution 2250, demonstrate an emerging commitment toward substantive participation (Simpson 2018, p. 5). This consultative process aligns with evolving trends that are increasingly informing the relationship between youth and the international community, which now aims to “reach out beyond easily accessible and elite youth, to young people who

would not ordinarily have a say in. . . global political processes” (Simpson 2018, p. 3). Efforts to encourage youth participation and to reframe the political interactions between states and young people are also evident in the development of National Action Plans for the implementation of the YPS agenda, the renewed commitment to developing youth parliaments, as well as the appointment of a UN Special Envoy on Youth. Youth’s political participation in these spaces provides them with opportunities to reframe the narratives of engagement in ways that enhance their identity as peacebuilders and positive social agents (McEvoy-Levy 2006; Kwon 2019; Sukarieh and Tannock 2018).

Despite recognition that youth are political agents whose participation is necessary for sustainable peace, structural conditions still produce significant challenges for the nature of this engagement. Youth-led peacebuilding organizations were instrumental in shaping the public facing “youth as peacebuilders” narrative central to the YPS agenda. The impact of these interactions, however, was limited as, while the rhetoric around youth participation evolved as a result of advocacy efforts, it did not initially produce meaningful structural change within the formal peacebuilding structures (Altiok forthcoming). The absence of meaningful implementation with respect to the participation rhetoric results in part from the persistence of traditional power structures within the UN architecture, which determine political and social capital. As Altiok argues “youth. . . are neither powerful nor connected enough to shift the policy orientation of the Security Council on youth related issues” (forthcoming: 11). Kwon’s research on global youth forums echoes this sentiment, as she demonstrates that within the international architecture, “institutionalized spaces of power regulated by the politics of consensus” persist which determine the character of youth’s participation (Kwon 2019, p. 930). Although these global forums, including the Amman Global Forum on Youth, Peace and Security in 2015, were envisaged as a way to create space for youth leadership within the international peace architecture, in practice, the agency of youth was constrained by the persistence of

traditional hierarchies, which prioritize the voices of “high-level” speakers (diplomats, UN agency representatives) and state representatives (Kwon 2019, p. 930). Formal networks that engage with youth often envisage a type of interaction that is performative where youth represent the “good global citizen” fulfilling their right and duty to participate. Yet adherence to these archetypes for participation and the persistence of power hierarchies within these sites of engagement fails to reflect the diverse and innovative ways that youth engage to facilitate sustainable peace. To that end, rather than amplifying youth’s voices and contributions, these formalized spaces perpetuate an environment where the perceptions of external actors are framed as legitimate surrogates for youth voices.

While much attention has been on youth participation in formal structures, youth leadership in the peacebuilding space has also allowed for increased recognition of their contributions to sustaining peace through informal networks. Youth peacebuilders effectively utilize informal systems such as protests and harness non-traditional social and political networks, including social media, to facilitate change. Informal networks allow youth to maintain ownership of the peace process to ensure that it is responsive and representative of their interest. By engaging with peace processes through these informal spaces, they are able to maintain autonomy over their ideas and experiences. Altiok and Grizelj (2019) suggest that avoiding “programmatisation” of youth political participation in peace processes ensures that all forms of youth engagement are included, even those that do not adhere to emerging ideas about what “effective” participation entails. Notions of how youth contribute to peacebuilding should acknowledge the complex interplay between these informal and formal networks and recognize that youth have the capacity to move between these networks.

The increased acknowledgment that youth participate in peacebuilding in diverse ways through a wide range of systems reflects an evolution in the discourse away from approaches that prioritize top-down decision-making and implementation and toward processes that encourage the

development of practices which are widely consultative (Autesserre 2014). This shift highlights the relationship between political will, inclusivity, and durable peace. As recent empirical scholarship demonstrates, social and political stability are more likely when a wide cross section of the community has ownership over the development of peace practices as this encourages sustained participation (Autesserre 2014; Barnes 2009). This expansive approach to participation, which emphasizes collaboration and partnership, emerged largely in response to the increased complexity and scale of current global challenges. As the UN Secretary General noted in his 2018 address, “it is high time that the contributions of young people to sustaining peace were recognized and supported” (para. 28).

Summary

Despite demonstrating agency in their communities, youth have long been marginal and marginalized within formal peacebuilding networks. Since 2015, due to concerted efforts by youth and allies, there is now growing institutional recognition of their capacity to positively contribute to build peace and respond to security challenges at the local, national, and international levels. This increased academic and policy attention does not come without practical and normative challenges. To ensure youth engagement continues to evolve, it is crucial that those working with and for youth in peacebuilding are aware of these tensions and commitments.

In practice, how youth substantively participate in peacebuilding and engage with the UN peace architecture remains a primary challenge for practitioners and scholars. Youth are often framed as holding “potential” and “power” for positive change; but as Özerdem and Podder note, there is still limited literature that analyzes and explains the “mechanisms through which this potential can be operationalized” (2015, p. 7). This gap is not just theoretical but has practical implications. If there is limited attention to this cohort – who are known to disproportionately suffer from violent conflict and be marginalized

in post-conflict contexts – this has an impact on how societies rebuild after violence. There is an opportunity for more research that pays attention to the practical, implementation-focused aspects of youth peacebuilding.

While there are many well-intentioned efforts to meaningfully include youth, these can reproduce hierarchical or tokenistic relationships between adults and young people. For youth-focused programming to be successful, actors must ensure that youth's own identities and ownership are harnessed in ways that allow them to speak for themselves. Too often, the political will and agency of youth are silenced within formalized structures as others – often with good intention – speak for youth. As discussed, the complex relationships between formal and informal networks in youth peacebuilding are key to producing the substantive and inclusive form of participation that is widely acknowledged as essential for sustaining peace. To that end, research and practice needs to work as a mechanism for amplifying the voices and work already being done, particularly by youth-led organizations in their own communities.

As attention to youth-led dimensions of peacebuilding grows, recognition of the intersections between gendered and racialized dimensions of peacebuilding must be incorporated into analysis and practice. As the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda has highlighted, women and men experience conflict and peace differently, and thus programming that overlooks gendered dimensions will be unresponsive and ineffectual. The path paved by the WPS movement provides important lessons for YPS as age, class, race, and gender similarly intersect to create unique challenges and opportunities. Given this, recognition of young people's own conceptions of themselves must underpin programming and engagement.

If peace is built collectively from communities and social movements (Jabri 2007) and supported through structures and institutions, then our conceptions of peacebuilding are inadequate if a constituency is not being taken seriously. Youth are positioned as both potential risks and as potential positive contributors to peace; the liminality and

temporality of youth hold in tension these contrasting positions. There is increased attention on youth leadership and advocacy. This is occurring both in noninstitutional spheres, such as the global climate justice movement and local context-specific actions by youth around the world, and in institutional spaces, such as the YPS agenda. It is evident that to think productively about peace, youth have an important role to play in peacebuilding and responding to insecurity and violence.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration \(DDR\)](#)
- ▶ [Everyday Peace](#)
- ▶ [Gender Justice and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Intersectionality and Peace](#)
- ▶ [Transitional Justice and Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Youth Gang Violence in Honduras](#)

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Youth Bulge and Conflict

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Synonyms

Demographic dividend; Demographic gift; Demographic window; Political demography; Waithood; Youthquake

Definition

Youth bulge refers to the phenomenon of rapid growth of the young population of a country relative to its general population, causing considerable impact on its economy and politics. While youth bulge is characterized as a negative development for its potential to cause upsurge in social unrest, violence, and conflict, it is also viewed positively as an opportunity for economic growth, captured by the associated term “demographic dividend,” a situation where a country sees expansion of its young working-age population accompanied by the relative decline in the dependent population (i.e., people above 65 and below 14 years old) due to low rates of fertility and mortality.

Introduction

The idea of youth bulge was first proposed by French sociologist Gaston Bouthoul (1896–1980), who looked at the demographic causes of war and aggression. Bouthoul saw war as *deferred infanticide*, i.e., the elimination of surplus young men. Nine years before Salvadorans started killing each other in a civil war, Bouthoul had predicted that El Salvador’s large young population (of over 30%) would potentially become a cause of the conflict in that country. In his 1968 article, *Youth as Force in the Modern World*, Herbert Moller placed youth at the center of historical changes,

stating that “Social change is not engineered by youth, but it is most manifest in youth” (p. 260). Later, in the 1970s, scholars like Nazli Choucri, who saw limitations in the analyses that separated “politics from its demographic context,” attempted to systematically analyze the connections between the eruption of interstate violence and dynamics of population. Such studies are now part of the incipient subfield within political science called “political demography,” a term associated with its foremost scholar Jack Goldstone (1991, 2012). The concept of youth bulge is a core component of this area of study, which explores interlinkages between shifting age structures and politics.

What Is Youth?

While youth bulge is a significant concept in political science, the term “youth” itself lacks definitional consensus. Definition of youth varies between societies and regions, and institutions. For example, United Nations defines youth as people between the age 15–24 years, while as European Union has divided youth category into three age brackets to account for contextual differences or indicators: 15–19, 20–24, and 25–29. Variations in definition of youth have implications for the validation of youth bulge theory, because if you consider a narrower age bracket as youth, then results might show that there is no youth bulge, i.e., percentage of young people relative to the general population. For example, for Gunnar Heinsohn, youth bulge exists when a country has 30–40% of males aged between 15 and 29 years. But, a narrower conception of youth cohort (15–24) would affect the percentage proposed by Heinsohn.

What it means to be youth has undergone a significant change as we transitioned from agrarian societies to modernity (which promoted mass education) and capitalism (which changed the labor market and economies). Young people stay in educational institutions for an extended period and thus remain in a dependent position for a lengthier time. Unlike 50 years ago, they enter job late, they marry late.

Legal definition of maturity also differs between countries, so while you can drive or marry at certain age in some countries but cannot do so in certain others. Such legalities also define youth age (Heinz 2009: 4). Thus, scholars see youth as a social construct and some argue that the notion of youth emerged in the modernity when bureaucratic processes for social provisions (such as education and welfare) started defining populations as per the age (Wallace and Kovatcheva 1998). Scholars disagree with the age-based conceptualization of youth, as across cultures and societies there is dissimilarity in what it means to be youth. Thus, for Andy Furlong (2013: 3), youth is “a period of semi-dependence that falls between the full dependency that characterizes childhood and the independence of adulthood.”

Youth Bulge as Demographic Gift

Since youth bulge have implications for politics and economy, it has gained wide currency in policy, security, and developmental studies. Governments seek to invest in youth to reap benefits of demographic dividends or “economic miracle,” which occurred in East Asia where the working-age population grew faster than the dependent population between 1965 and 1990 and expanded “the per capita productive capacity” (Bloom and Williamson 1998). This demographic-driven economic growth is, however, linked as much to the lowering fertility rates as to the educational attainment which leads to enhanced human capital and contributes to productivity of age structures. Cuaresma et al. (2014) calls it “educational dividend.”

Emphasis worldwide is on integrating schemes and programs for young cohorts of the population into developmental policies so that they are offered opportunities for gainful employment. As knowledge-based economies require a steady stream of skilled labor, youth are expected to acquire relevant skills. Moreover, governments, especially in Europe and North America, also try to make politics attractive to young people, as there is growing anxiety among the political elites

about young people displaying apathetic attitude towards representative democracy by remaining absent from polls and not joining political parties. Some scholars believe that growing disenchantment of young people with electoral politics threatens to undermine liberal democracy, as broad base of public support for its legitimacy would shrink if the current trend is not reversed. However, recent scholarship counters such arguments, arguing that the contemporary young people are not politically apathetic rather they are engaged in newer forms of political participation in the digital era (Pickard and Bessant 2017). These political engagements are pursued through what Pippa Norris (2007) calls *cause-oriented* repertoires, which focus on influencing policies of local and national governments as well as multinational corporations and international organizations in terms of environmental protection and social justice. Young people's impact on modern societies is well captured by the new term "youthquake," (Sloam et al. 2018), which was inducted into Oxford English Dictionary in 2017 and defined as, "a significant cultural, political, or social change arising from the actions or influence of young people."

Crisis of Youth Bulge

In the absence of opportunities, aggrieved young people are prone to engage in rioting and street protests. These engagements may be less threatening as they happen at a smaller scale. However, as Urdal (2011: 118) shows, "youth bulges may also increase the risk of more organized forms of political violence like internal armed conflict." Growing young population tend to strain state resources and put pressure on its institutions, which cannot easily meet the demands of the bulging youth cohorts, who turn into an aggrieved sector of the population with festering grievances. Existence of such grievances itself does not pose a threat, because they are not a sufficient condition for the outbreak of violence. The young population first grows negatively predisposed toward their political system when alternatives for employment and income shrink and such a situation

leads to weakening of the political system's legitimacy (Braungart 1984: 16). Persistence of precarious situation creates conditions for radicalism for the aggrieved young, who do not have much to lose. If a country is facing economic slump, this will further exacerbate the situation, as in the despairing times youth would be more inclined towards extremism (Choucri 1974: 73).

There is an incentive for the underprivileged in taking part in rebellion as the rebellion itself provides an opportunity to gain income in the absence of alternatives (Collier and Hoeffler 2004: 94). However, as income-opportunities for the young people with high level of education remain relatively high, such segments are less likely to embrace the path of rebellion and thus reduces the risk of violence. They will be constrained by high cost of rebellion. Bricker and Foley (2013), however, disagree with this view, arguing that high educational qualification does not lower the risk of outbreak of violence.

But, economic factors alone do not explain the youth bulge theory. Where a government or a regime imposes authoritarian rules and curbs on political and civil freedoms, youth-led political violence is likely to happen. This is, however, more likely in semi-democratic countries than highly autocratic ones (Urdal 2011: 4). So regime types and their capabilities and resources of control will matter. What may also mitigate the risk of youth-led unrest is the migration to other countries for economic opportunities that lessens the strain on state institutions and resources of the home country.

Nevertheless, as Urdal (2011: 131) says, "there is very limited micro-level evidence explaining what motivates youth who engage in political violence." So, to address this problem, studies examining interlinkages between age structures and politics need to refine their explorations by incorporating subregional and microlevel studies, which can strengthen the existing theoretical models.

Yet, there are critiques of youth bulge framework, especially of the type propounded by scholars like Heinsohn, whose 2003 book *Söhne und Weltmacht: Terror im Aufstieg und Fall der Nationen* (Sons and World Power: Terror in Rise

and Fall of Nations) has been criticized for decontextualizing historical demographic trends and extrapolating that data to contemporary geopolitical situation, as well its strong undercurrents of Islamophobia as, for example, evident in his problematic phraseology, such as “demographic armament,” which he uses to frame high fertility rates among Palestinian women. Heinsohn’s idea of demographic determinism predicts that the growing population of young Muslims in the Middle East (and Muslim countries) poses a serious security threat to the Western world and this threat should be tackled based on his four principles, which include both (western) nonintervention and intervention. Sociologist Göran Therborn (2009) sees Heinsohn’s ideas as “pseudo-deterministic predictions” and argues that:

The youth-bulge argument can tell us nothing of the oppressive character of the Shah’s regime in Iran, the terror of the Zionist occupation of Palestine, the horror of the US wars in Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan, the insults of the Islamophobes, the hypocrisy of capitalist liberalism, or the stifling closets of patriarchy.

Key Empirical Examples

Youth Bulge and Political Violence

In his 2006 study, “A Clash of Generations? Youth Bulges and Political Violence,” Urdal (2006) empirically tested the youth bulge theory through a time-series cross-national statistical model. He took two set of data to test the dependent variables of internal armed conflict (between 1950 and 2000) and terrorism and rioting (between 1984 and 1995). His finding strongly suggested that youth bulges “increase the risk of political violence [...] for all three forms of violence.”

Urdal’s claims were confirmed by the 2007 study conducted by Population Action International, which found that the majority of the civil conflicts that occurred in the four decades between 1970 and 2007 were concentrated in countries where at least 60% of the general population was under 30. Following on this PAI study, Madsen et al. (2010) examined the cases of youth bulge in three African countries (Haiti, Yemen,

and Uganda) and suggested that there is a correlation between large young population and instability in those countries. They reached the conclusion that the countries which have very young age structures (with 77% of the population under the age 30) have high probability of experiencing conflict. Their study also accounted for the gendered aspect of the phenomenon, looking at how balanced age structures are linked to gender equality, family planning and reproductive health. These aspects effect fertility rates, which in turn effect age structures. High fertility leads to increase in dependent age structures (below 14 years). Based on cross-national study of 175 countries, Urdal and Malmberg (2008) had also showed a strong correlation between high growth in the population of children and the onset of armed conflict. High number of children and large youth bulges were shown to be “strongly associated with the onset of armed conflict” (Urdal 2011).

Conclusion

When a country or region has a pool of young people of working age (growing) larger than its dependent population, then it is experiencing youth bulge, which can have a significant impact on its politics and economy. Harnessed properly to supply the labor market, youth bulge can be beneficial for economy and become a demographic gift. But, if the institutions are unable to absorb abundantly available working age population, youth bulge can pose serious problems. Longitudinal, cross-national studies have provided evidence that youth bulge is a contributing factor to the outbreak of different forms of violence and conflict. For example, scholars and analysts attribute recent political developments, such as the Arab Spring, to the factor of youth bulge in the Middle East. The post-2008 anti-India uprisings in Kashmir are also attributed to the region’s youth bulge. All these data and insights make it possible to reasonably predict which countries and regions are at greater risk of experiencing conflict in the coming decades. High level of fertility accompanied by youth bulge is expected

to lead to turmoil and potentially a violent conflict if good governance and economic opportunities are lacking. Based on current population data, countries with high youth population will be mostly located in Asia, Africa, and Middle East in the next two decades.

While youth bulge may be a contributing factor in a conflict, it is difficult to predict future based on this factor alone. For example, in 2008, Gunnar Heinsohn had predicted that Kenya might see a wave of violence as, over the next 15 years, its young male population of fighting age would reach eight million amid dwindling economic opportunities. Kenya, however, has remained relatively calm and its GDP has doubled from 45 billion in 2010 to 85 billion in 2018. Its young workforce has stimulated this economic growth. Therefore, while instability may be linked to imbalanced age structures, conflicts arise due to all sorts of factors. As Madsen et al. (2010) says, “There is no single cause of conflict, and precipitating incidents are built on a constellation of deeper issues, of which age structure can be a part.” Cincotta and Doces (2012) also cautions us to see demographic models as statistical rather than deterministic. These models can be useful tools if studies based on them also incorporate contextual qualitative analyses. Demographic factor may have a marginal or significant influence on the outbreak of violence and conflict, but what subjective experiences make youth walk those dangerous paths need to be understood first.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Culture and Conflict Resolution](#)
- ▶ [Hybrid Political Orders and Hybrid Peace](#)
- ▶ [Perpetrator Research](#)
- ▶ [Security-Development Nexus in Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Youth Gang Violence in Honduras](#)

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Using a conceptual approach, the issues and problems in developing a definition of a gang, and with that of gang violence, are examined. Despite controversy, a number of common gang criteria are prolific in the existing academic gang literature, and four of the most common criteria are presented and elaborated upon in this entry: a collective identity, high levels of violence, youth membership, and urban activity. Subsequently, the society-wide approach is used to explain the presence of youth gangs in Honduras. It becomes clear that to explain gang presence in a specific setting, it is important to take various contextual levels into account, among others the global, regional, and national context. Lastly, building on existing ethnographical research, the community approach discusses the influence of youth gangs on the everyday life in Honduras. In doing so, the four common gang criteria are used to determine gang presence on a community level.

Youth Gang Violence

► Youth Gang Violence in Honduras

Youth Gang Violence in Honduras

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Synonyms

Honduras; Normalization of violence; (state-) security; Urban violence; Youth gang violence; (Youth) gangs; Safety perceptions

Definition

By building on existing research, this entry discusses the controversial concept of a youth gang and with that the presence of youth gang violence. In doing so, a specific focus on Honduras is applied. Three different approaches are used to provide a comprehensive overview of the existing academic research on gangs: a conceptual approach, a society-wide approach, and a community approach. Consequently, the entry is divided following the three approaches.

Introduction

Despite a slight decrease measured by the UNODC over the last 5 years, the homicide rate in Honduras remains among the world's highest (Human Rights Watch 2018; OV-UNAH 2019; Palencia 2018; UNODC 2019). The presence of youth gangs, and therewith of youth gang violence, is considered to be the most important reason for this (Gutiérrez Rivera 2013; Palencia 2018; OV-UNAH 2019). The violence in Honduras is primarily prevalent among young adult males between the ages of 15 and 34 (Jütersonke et al. 2009). Despite an increase in gender violence against women, young men living in urban areas in Honduras are more “likely to die a violent death than any other gender or age combination” (Wolseth 2011, p. 11). Youth gang violence holds many Latin-American cities in a grip: a clear sign of the persisting insufferable situation is the migrant caravan travelling in October 2018 from Central America to the USA in search for a better life (Albaladejo 2018). From the more than 7000 people participating, a big part

originates from Honduras – fleeing, among others, the high numbers of gang-related violence.

Not unlike other social concepts, the concept of a “gang” is a widely contested one. This entry discusses the ongoing academic debate on youth gang definitions and on the presence of youth gang violence, with a specific focus on Honduras. To present a comprehensive overview, this entry uses three different approaches to understanding youth gangs and youth gang violence: a conceptual approach, a society-wide approach, and a community approach. First, conceptual approaches are used to present a theoretical background on youth gangs and the importance of violence within gang life. This part hence highlights the ongoing debate within the gang research present, including the persisting definitional issues. Subsequently, the society-wide approach incorporates various contextual levels, i.e., the global, the regional, and the national context, which are necessary to understand the gang presence and high levels of violence in Honduras. Lastly, using a community approach, the influence of gangs and gang violence on the everyday life within the gang-dominated communities in the urban areas of Honduras will be discussed.

Conceptual Approaches to Understanding Youth Gang Violence

Research into the phenomenon of gangs, and into gang-related violence, knows a relatively short history as its origins date back to about a century ago (Decker 1996; Hazen and Rodgers 2014; Kontos and Brotherton 2008; Weerman 2012; Wolseth 2011). During periods of early urbanization, among others as a result of industrialization, gangs came into existence in various places all over the world (Hagedorn 2005, pp. 154–155). While gangs do not specifically originate from the USA, it is widely understood that gang research does. This is because Frederic Thrasher is considered the “father” of gang research: Thrasher and his colleagues at the Chicago School of Sociology conducted one of the first of a long line of research into gang presence in the

USA (Densley 2013, p. 44; Hagedorn 2008, p. 55). Following this research, Thrasher published “The Gang: a study of 1,313 gangs in Chicago” in 1927, which is considered as the start for widespread research into the gang phenomenon (Hazen and Rodgers 2014, p. 9). According to Thrasher (1936, pp. 494–495), gangs were a direct result of “community disorganization,” where gang patterns are largely determined by the social-ecological environment. Throughout the century, different approaches to gang existence however emerged, which portrayed gangs, for example, as a process of male maturation and identity creation (Bloch and Niederhoffer 1958) or as pure economic enterprises (Padilla 1992).

Throughout the second half of the twentieth century, gangs became an important research subject outside of the USA, and gangs are now understood as a global phenomenon (Hagedorn 2005; Hazen and Rodgers 2014; Jones and Rodgers 2009). Due to the high levels of globalization, similarities in gang culture can be found all over the world. The increased connection between societies has enabled gangs, and specific gang culture, to spread over large distances (Hagedorn 2008; Hazen and Rodgers 2014, pp. 1–2). Concurrently, the diminishing of barriers for communication has given rise to similar social phenomenon in similar social context around the world (Kontos and Brotherton 2008, p. x).

Despite the globalization of gang research, the original definition as proposed by Thrasher (1936, p. 57) remains the most commonly accepted:

A gang is an interstitial group, originally formed spontaneously, and then integrated through conflict. It is characterized by the following types of behavior: meeting face to face, milling, movement through space as a unit, conflict, and planning. The result of this collective behavior is the development of tradition, unreflective internal structure, *esprit de corps*, solidarity, morale, group awareness, and attachment to a local territory.

Part of the continuing appeal of Thrasher’s definition is “that it is sufficiently broad to apply to a whole range of social forms” (Hazen and Rodgers 2014, p. 6). The broadness of Thrasher’s definition is however also considered problematic, especially in relation to creation of policy

that counters gang violence (Esbensen and Carson 2017, p. 8; Spergel 1995). Formulating a narrower definition is complicated by the notion that gangs often differ in form and structure (Maxson and Klein 1995). The high levels of gang violence furthermore complicate conducting in-depth research due to safety issues, and there is continuous social reluctance to admit being in a gang (Esbensen et al. 2012, p. 18). Despite this, there is an ever-growing body of literature on gangs, reaching from ethnographic, qualitative research to a more quantitative approach to understanding gang presence (Ball and Curry 1995; Densley 2013; Hagedorn 2005, 2008; Kontos and Brotherton 2008; Rodgers and Baird 2015; Winfree et al. 1992; etc.). There is nevertheless not one widely accepted definition of a gang (Ayling 2011; Esbensen and Carson 2017; Gunter 2017, p. 14; Hagedorn 2008; Hazen and Rodgers 2014; White 2013), or as Greene and Pranis (2007, p. 9) argue, both academics and policy makers “can agree on only one point in this regard: that there is no agreement.” The absence of a dominant academic paradigm, or this kind of “nit-picking” categorization (Hagedorn 2008, p. 145), provides little insight in the gang dynamics. While a widely accepted definition remains absent, various common gang criteria come forward in the existing gang literature. From these, the four most common criteria have been deduced and will be explained here: collective identity, high levels of violence, youth membership, and urban activity.

While the notion of a “group or collectivity” is included in the vast majority of gang research, it is considered controversial as not one gang is the same (Esbensen and Carson 2017, p. 2; Maxson 1998; Maxson and Klein 1995; Klein 2005). In general, gang members do however share a feeling of belonging to their gang. Regardless of the differences between gangs, social rules and expectations play an important role within each gang, which helps to create a collective sense of identity (Papachristos et al. 2013, p. 418). The manner in which this collective identity is expressed and articulated toward society or other (rival-)gangs however differs greatly. While most gangs in Central America have been

known for their use of symbols in the form of tattoos, the use of tattoos has lowered significantly with the aim to become less recognizable for the police or possible “enemies”. Sign and symbols however still play a big role in self-identification, but have become less obviously articulated (Rodgers 2009, p. 16). As with any other identity, the boundaries of a gang identity are fluid and change over time and place. Gangs set themselves apart from the rest of the society precisely because of the production of a collective community feeling. This notion of a collective identity is moreover strengthened as gangs often become *institutionalized* (Hagedorn 2008, p. xxvi); in other words, gangs become embedded in society and show no sign of disappearing. There is hence a continuity of their existence, independent of its membership (Hazen and Rodgers 2014).

A number of authors have made the comparison to the notion of an “imagined community”, as coined by Benedict Anderson (2006). While Anderson refers to a political imagined community, and hence to the relationship between the state and its citizens, there are significant elements from Anderson’s concept that can be relevant to understanding gang dynamics (Davis 2009, pp. 226–227). Anderson (2006), among others, argues that a community is imagined since “the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion” (6); in this same sense, not all gang members belonging to, for example, the Honduran 18th Street gang will ever meet, know, or hear of each other but will still feel connected to one another. This is especially true for transnational gangs, as the blurring of local and national boundaries replaced the notion of physical space with the notion of an imagined community (Gutiérrez Rivera 2010, p. 498). Besides that, an “imagined gang community” often (but not always!) shares the same codes of conduct, attributes importance to same forms of symbols, and collectively stands against (various) common enemies (Collins 2010; Decker 1996; Gutiérrez Rivera 2010; Papachristos et al. 2013).

In contrast to other characteristics which are disputed in gang literature, the use of violence has ubiquitously become associated with the notion of a “gang”. The relationship between gangs and violence is well documented in the literature (Battin et al. 1998; Esbensen and Carson 2017; Cohen 1990; Esbensen et al. 2010; Gutiérrez Rivera 2013; Hazen and Rodgers 2014; Klein and Maxson 1989; Miller 1982; Spergel 1995; Thornberry et al. 2003; Vigil 2003). While already in 1927 Thrasher noted that gangs flourish on conflict, the intensity and amount of gang violence have significantly increased over the last decades due to a variety of reasons, such as an increased access to weaponry (Gutiérrez Rivera 2013; Hagedorn 1998, pp. 369–360; 2008; Hazen and Rodgers 2014; Rodgers 2009). Especially in Central America, gangs are currently considered to be the most important security threat, as the levels of violence even surpass those of the revolutionary conflicts of the 1970s and 1980s that took place in almost the whole region, with the exception of Honduras (Hazen and Rodgers 2014, p. 1). While in general gang members engage in more violence than other youths, delinquent behavior naturally also occurs among non-gang youth. Gang violence is however set apart because the wider society considers it to be an intrinsic feature of the specific gang (Jones and Rodgers 2009, p. 6). Gang violence also serves various functions of gang life. Decker (1996, p. 263) points out that mechanisms of violence “strongly reflect mechanisms of collective behavior” and the use of violence results in increased solidarity or cohesion within a gang as it “unites” the gang against a common enemy.

While gangs are often considered to be inherently violent, the intensity and presence of violence depend on the social context the gang is situated in. Next to the use of violence, gangs are set apart from other groups by their association with illegal and criminal activities. In Central America, drug trafficking is largely controlled by gangs, which leads to serious problems (Gutiérrez Rivera 2013, p. 47). Even though there is no doubt that Central American gangs are strongly related to the high levels of violence and drug trafficking, this relation is not predetermined (Decker and

Pyrooz 2015, p. 479). The relationship between gang presence and organized crime is complex, and the data existing is often contradictory: there are also gangs, or gang members, that do not engage in drug trafficking or other forms of organized crime (Hazen and Rodgers 2014, pp. 4–5; Spergel 1995, p. 132).

When referring to a gang, the majority of academics refer to a group of youth, predominantly under the age of 25. A big part of gang research has therefore been devoted to researching “youth gangs”, in comparison to “street gangs”, or “urban gangs” (Densley 2013; Esbensen and Maxson 2012; Gutiérrez Rivera 2010; Hazen and Rodgers 2014; Jones and Rodgers 2009; Miller 1982; Spergel 1995; White 2013). While it is indisputable that the vast majority of active gangs consist of people below the age of 30, the definition of youth is a problematic one in itself. There are various different definitions of “youth” present. The UN (UNESCO 2019) defines youth as “those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years” but simultaneously states that this definition is flexible when used in different nations. The Honduran government has adopted a much broader definition of youth, from the age of 12 until 30. The boundaries separating “youth” from “adults” are thus considered to vary per social context (Jones and Rodgers 2009, p. 3).

According to an UNDESA report published in 2018, an estimated 68% of the world population will be living in urban areas in 2050 in comparison to 54% in 2014 (UNDESA 2014, 2018). This rapid increase in urbanization raises an array of risks; it has, for example, become apparent that there is an increasing trend of conflict in urban areas (Cockayne et al. 2017; ICRC 2017; Patel and Burkle 2012; UN and WB 2018). Over the last decades however, a shift where gangs have also spread to nonmetropolitan areas has taken place, with gang activity in both urban and rural areas (Esbensen et al. 2010; Klein and Maxson 2006; Wells and Weisheit 2001). Despite this, a US national youth gang survey from 2014 indicates that due to a declining prevalence in smaller cities, “gang activity is becoming even more concentrated in urban areas” (Carson and Esbensen 2017; Egley et al. 2014, p. 2). On top of

that, the youth population under the age of 25 has been growing gradually over the last years, and according to the World Bank in 2017, 42% of the world population is under the age of 25 (WB 2017, p. 44). Especially in times of rapid urbanization, in combination with high levels of poverty, no entry to education, and other forms of social exclusion, the young population is put in an extremely vulnerable position (Hagedorn 2008, p. 4). A combination of these social factors moreover provides fertile breeding ground for the emergence of youth gangs (Hazen and Rodgers 2014, p. 139).

While these four criteria are common in the academic gang literature, it is crucial to keep in mind that these criteria should not be considered as static: they adapt to the social context and fluctuate over time and place. Deducted from the existing literature, it can however be stated that a gang generally (1) knows and articulates a collective identity, (2) engages in (extremely) violent behavior, (3) consists primarily of “youth” under the age of 30, and (4) is most active in urban areas. To provide a more concrete understanding of gang presence and its dynamics, it is important to take both the global, regional, and national context into account.

Society-Wide Approaches to Understanding Youth Gang Violence in Honduras

In order to understand the roots of gang presence in a specific context, different contextual layers, as, i.e., global, regional, and national, have to be taken into account. It is generally assumed that gangs are likely to appear in ghettos or favelas where the state is not present, but there is also gang activity in areas where the state is unquestionably present (Hagedorn 2008). The reasons for gangs to appear are hence deeper embedded in a society, and by using a society-wide approach, it becomes possible to obtain a fuller understanding of the roots of gang presence. This approach will therefore be used to understand the presence of gangs in the Honduran society.

The extreme levels of violence known in Honduras have various roots, of which the most widely agreed upon will be discussed here. First of all, throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Honduras struggled with her state formation, aiming to monopolize her power (Gutiérrez Rivera 2013, p. 2; Koonings and Kruijt 1999). The decline of agriculture and the growth of the urban industry led to rapid urbanization, mostly between 1950 and 1985. While in 1950 only 18% of the Honduran population lived in cities, this rose to over 40% of the population in 1985 (Barry 1991, p. 327) and had increased to 57% in 2018 (CIA 2019). The country experienced major problems as a result, and it appeared unable to regulate the massive flood of people, who ended up “in informal, unplanned, and under-serviced settlements” (Angel et al. 2004, p. 4), lacking basic social services as drinking water (Gutiérrez Rivera 2013, p. 2). Congruently with the high urbanization rate, throughout the 1980s and 1990s, neoliberal policies were introduced in Central America, as part of the “global” transition to democracy (Robinson 2003, pp. 55–56; Wolseth 2011, pp. 17–18). The introduction in 1990 of the *Programa de Ajuste Estructural* (structural adjustment program) under the administration of Rafael Leonardo Callejas (1990–1994) had disastrous results as, for instance, the widening gap between rich and poor. As a consequence of the fragile centralized forms of power, the government proved moreover to be incapable of providing protection and security for the population on a sustainable basis (Gutiérrez Rivera 2013, p. 2).

Throughout the 1990s, the Honduran foreign debt increased by more than a third of what it had been in 1989 (PNUD 1999, p. 95). As a result, education and health programs were budgeted, and youths were “erased from political plans for human and economic development” (Wolseth 2011, p. 10). This coincided with a new policy to fight crime in Los Angeles, USA. It led to the deportation of nearly 46,000 convicts and 160,000 illegal immigrants to Central America between 1998 and 2005 (Jütersonke et al. 2009, p. 380). Before their deportation from Los Angeles, most of the convicted were organized

in two prominent rival street gangs. While there are multiple variations of the names for the two gangs circulating within the academic literature and the media, the most prominent ones are the *MS-13* (short for *Mara Salvatrucha*, a reference to the Salvadorian descent) and the *18th Street gang* (hereafter referred to as the 18th). While both gangs are distinct, and moreover bitter rivals, *maras* is used generically to refer to the both gangs (Hagedorn 2008; Jütersonke et al. 2009; Rodgers 2009; Wolf 2010; Gutiérrez Rivera 2013). El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras received more than 90% of these deportations (Rodgers et al. 2009, p. 8). For various deportees, who were either active or former members of the MS-13 and 18th, it appeared there were no other alternatives but to join the *maras*. While this arrival of deportees from Los Angeles is believed to be inextricably linked to the emergence of the *maras* in Honduras, street gangs had been present in the country for much longer. Scholars distinguish between the existence of “homegrown” street gangs or *pandillas*, which are “loosely organized and highly localized” and had been known to Honduras before the US deportations started, and the *maras* or “transnationalized gangs” (Bruneau 2011, p. 3; Jütersonke et al. 2009). The deportation contributed to transnationalizing both MS-13 and 18th, as due to Honduras’ geographical location the country has become an important chain in the drug trade from South America to the USA (Gutiérrez Rivera 2013; Wolf 2012). This provided the *maras* with easy access to the lucrative business of drug trafficking, therewith significantly increasing the international drug trade. At the same time, scholars spoke of “new violence” in Central America, as opposed to the political violence from decades before, that seemed “to be everywhere, targeting everyone” (Gutiérrez Rivera 2013, p. 49).

Another important factor that worsened the precarious situation in the country is the political coup in June 2009, which caused political turmoil in the whole country. President Jose Manuel Zelaya (2006–2009) had organized polls concerning a variety of issues, including the possibility of modifying the Constitution to allow the president to run for a second term

(Meyer 2010). Dissatisfied with their limited power, the military strongly opposed the organization of the polls. Ignoring the wishes of the military, Zelaya decided to continue the polls, which led to the arrest of the president by the military on the 28th of June 2009, after which Zelaya was expelled from the country (HRW 2011, p. 1). The increased political instability and turmoil became fertile soil for organized crime to grow (Bosworth 2010; Gutiérrez Rivera 2013, p. 133). Especially in the parts of the city where there was barely any state control, the power of the gangs rapidly increased (Gutiérrez Rivera 2010; Wolseth 2011).

While it seems straightforward to conclude that the MS-13 and 18th originate from the deportation policy of the USA, it is not that simplistic. The expansion and rapid increase in gang power are linked to the overall lack of opportunities for youth in Honduras, especially in the more marginalized areas. Moreover, while the two most prominent youth gangs are the MS-13 and 18th, there are various other smaller gangs present in Honduras. The *maras* are however considered to be more organized, having clear lines of rank and well-established leadership roles (Bruneau 2011; Gutiérrez Rivera 2013; Wolseth 2011). The *maras* apply a strict code of conduct, and there is, in comparison to the *pandillas*, a frequent and institutionalized use of violence present (Gutiérrez Rivera 2013, p. 6; Jütersonke et al. 2009, p. 379; Save the Children UK and ACJ 2002). According to Gutiérrez Rivera (2013, p. 77), the use of violence by the *maras* has intensified the last decades, mainly because of “(a) the proliferation of firearms in the local neighborhoods; (b) changes in the economic function of contemporary gangs, for instance, the need to control resources and illicit commerce in the neighborhoods; (c) the effect of prisons on neighborhood gangs; and (d) mainstream cultural values of money and success.”

Aiming to decrease the level of violence, the government has implemented various security policies throughout the last decades. Where in the 1980s the National Security Doctrine proved to be insufficient, harsh *Mano Dura* policies were implemented in the beginning of the twenty-first

century (2002–2006) by President Maduro. The National Security Doctrine placed the notion of “national security above personal security, the needs of the state before individual rights, and the judgment of a governing elite over the rule of law” (Crahan 1982, p. 101). *Mano Dura* refers to the legitimization of the use of state violence, implying that security and law enforcement agents perform raids or police the streets of the gang-dominated areas. This led to the implementation of the *Ley Antimaras* (anti-gang law) in 2003, which authorized security forces and police to imprison maras (and street gangs) on the basis of membership (Gutiérrez Rivera 2013, p. 85). Heavily funded by the US government and the World Bank, these interventions were aimed at establishing a “culture of lawfulness,” with interventions that “transform culture to enable the rule of law” (Chandler 2014, p. 34). According to various scholars, both security policies have however also contributed to the increasing levels of violence (Gutiérrez Rivera 2013; Hagedorn 2008; Hume 2007; Hazen and Rodgers 2014). To be more precise, according to Gutiérrez Rivera (2013), “government stigmatization and criminalization of the maras” (79) has led to a more polarized society, where the actions only fueled the conflict as the maras became more violent. The counter-effect of these policies became all the clearer when, according to the statistics provided by the UNODC (2019), in 2011 the homicide rate hit a high of 85.1 murders per 100,000 people.

Then, however, the homicide rate lowered significantly to 56.6 per 100,000 people in 2016 (UNODC 2019), and according to the Observatory of Violence at the National Autonomous University of Honduras (OV-UNAH), the murder rate even fell to 40 in 2018 (Asmann 2019). While several reasons are provided for this drop, the substantial increase in anti-crime resources and subsequently a thorough national police reform which allowed for a less corrupt and more effective policy force are among the most common (Rísquez 2017). While this seems positive, at the same time, more than 66% of the Honduran population lived in poverty in 2016, and the country faces the highest level of

economic inequality in Latin America (World Bank 2019). On top of that, two million Hondurans have limited access to education and health. While the lowering violence seems optimistic, the more substantial problems the country has been dealing with are not improving (HRW 2018; Tinti 2018). In other words, the roots of the gang violence have not been taken away. A tragic sign of this are the 2019 homicide rates, which have been released by OV-UNAH (2019). These findings show that, while still lower than before, the rate has already increased with 117% in comparison to 2018.

Gangs are deeply embedded in the Honduran society and have a wide variety of roots. While the conditions as presented above are considered to be important incentives for gang activity to appear, it cannot be assumed that gangs are predetermined to emerge in similar situations elsewhere (Jones and Rodgers 2009). The answer to the question why gangs are active and powerful in Honduras is a complicated one, and there is not a straightforward answer. It results from a mix of different factors, including the persisting high levels of inequality and poverty, the social marginalization and weak government presence, in combination with a geographical location conducive to drug trafficking, increased transnationalism of gang life, and the high levels of gang violence, which guarantee a strong and perpetual presence of the maras in Honduras. Gang activity hugely depends on the local context and can therefore be only understood within this perspective. When doing so, it becomes clear that finding a solution to the high levels of violence is further complicated by the varying notions of security that are present on community level. The last part of this entry will incorporate various of these local voices and will apply the four gang criteria to demonstrate whether they prove to be applicable to gang presence in Honduras.

Community Approaches to Understanding Youth Gang Presence

By using a community approach, it becomes possible to analyze the impact gang presence has

on everyday life in a community. This part of the entry is based on various ethnographic research that has been conducted in Honduras (Castro and Carranza 2001; Berg and Carranza 2018; Gutiérrez Rivera 2010, 2013; Luitjens 2015; Pine 2008; Savenije and van der Borgh 2015; Wolseth 2011). Both Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula know extreme levels of gang violence, and as a result, most of the gang research has been conducted in these urban areas. As there is however a lot of controversial information on the functioning of the 18th, MS-13, and other gangs and pandillas in Honduras, this part presents an overview of the most common findings on gang presence in Honduras. The four common gang criteria as presented in part 1 will moreover be applied to discuss whether they prove to be applicable to study gangs in Honduras.

During the initial period of urbanization, numerous neighborhoods in Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula started as informal settlements, referring to a group of people, mostly close families, that moved to the capital in search for work about 60 years ago (Angel et al. 2004). Initially, the communities they formed were illegal ones, where no basic services were provided. Over time however, the communities have become integrated as a part of the city with access to basic public services and infrastructure (Luitjens 2015, p. 20; Pearce-Oroz 2005, p. 108).

Besides the deportation of the maras in the 1990s and the economic and political deprivation over the last decade, hurricane Mitch in 1998 contributed to internal displacement in the country and to the growth of these urban communities (Gutiérrez Rivera 2013, p. 104; Moser and Winton 2002, p. 24; Wolseth 2011, pp. 16–17). While initially everyone within the communities knew each other, over time, more and more people moved to these areas, which coincided with the rising crime rates. Elena, a 50-year-old woman living in a mara-dominated area, explained that “during our youth we were able to go dancing, we danced a lot! Now not anymore, the youth from now can’t go out of the house that much, because yes, that is dangerous” (Luitjens 2015, p. 20). It is an extreme challenge to live an “ordinary life” in a community controlled by gangs (Pine 2008;

Savenije and van der Borgh 2015). The security policies implemented by the state coincide with the lowering security perceptions within the community. This only contributed to the perceptions of community residents that the state is unable to provide public security (Gutiérrez Rivera 2013, p. 9).

Especially for the youth living in the gang-dominated areas, it is a daily challenge to avoid gang recruitment or to stay away from gang activities. Despite the presence of public schools in most urban areas in Honduras, there are various risks and obstacles to attending education. Children in gang-dominated areas are prone to experiencing violence or crime on the way to school; as a result, parents are inclined to keep their children at home. Children moreover often need to help their family with (un)paid labor as caring for younger siblings (Adelman and Székely 2016, pp. 3–4). On top of that, Honduras knows a high level of teen pregnancy which forms a difficult obstacle to obtaining a diploma (Gutiérrez Rivera 2013, p. 66). As a result, there is a high dropout rate, and dropouts are considered to be extra susceptible to joining a gang (Orlang 2012, p. 635; Perez 2013, p. 229). Remaining in school is not always the safest option either, as schools are often a place where active gang recruitment takes place (Alberto and Chilton 2019; Luitjens 2015). Arce (2014) moreover points out that “gangs rule over most public schools in the capital”. Even when residents obtain a school diploma, they generally remain socially excluded from the rest of the society and experience difficulties in finding a job. The high levels of marginalization and social exclusion that many adolescents and young adults from these areas experience lead to feelings of frustration and anger toward the authorities and traditional institutions (Gutiérrez Rivera 2013, p. 72). A mix of poverty, structural exclusion, the overall lack of opportunities, and chronic high levels of violence moreover weaken the capacity of individuals to develop social ties, within and outside of their families. Moreover, as a result of structural poverty, while parents spend the days and sometimes nights at work, children and adolescents are left alone without supervision. It thus becomes more

difficult for parents to engage in affectionate and supportive interactions with their children (Banovcinova et al. 2014, p. 152).

The maras are generally considered to fill the void that these institutions, as, for example, school or family, leave behind (Gutiérrez Rivera 2013; Wolseth 2011). By joining the maras, it is believed that concrete action against these forms of exclusion is taken. In this sense, the gang is understood to compete with natal household. Wolseth (2011, pp. 55–56) indicates that gangs replace “many of the primary functions of the family, providing food, shelter, and protection, yet within a space that, unlike parental authority, allows young men the freedom to dress and behave the ways they want (. . .).” On the other hand, some youth also joins the gang to feel less scared while being out on the streets. Following the words of a 21-year-old ex-gang member, “you either adapt or you die,” clearly feeling like he did not have another choice but to join the gang (Luitjens 2015, p. 27).

Children moreover get familiarized with gang life from a very young age, for example, when acting as a *bandera*. “Banderas” refers to people, mostly young kids, who function as the “watchmen,” standing at the borders of the community, looking for either police or unknown persons (Hiles 2019; Luitjens 2015, p. 34). They are guarding their territorial borders and control every move along the border. Another way to control the neighborhoods’ border and to extend gang power is by extorting money from (non-) residents, taxis, or busses that enter the enclosed area (Gutiérrez Rivera 2013, p. 78; Alberto and Chilton 2019). According to Venkatesh (1997, p. 95), this is also a way to obtain a “legitimate status” in the community, where the maras become accepted and are not perceived as an immediate threat. In the gang-controlled areas of Honduras, the state is mostly absent, which paves a way for residents to accept the gang as a provider of safety and economic prosper (Gutiérrez Rivera 2013; Wolseth 2011). Despite this, the maras have not fully obtained a legitimate status in the community; instead a complex relationship is present whereby safety and security perceptions fluctuate (Luitjens 2015).

As explained in the previous parts of this entry, violence is omnipresent in any gang – notwithstanding, this also counts for the gang members of the maras. Violence is a big part of the “code of street” for the maras, and adherence to this street code “permits gang members to obtain both a positive self-image and resources in the midst of situations of poverty and social exclusion” (Savenije and van der Borgh 2015, p. 96). For both the MS-13 and the 18th, respect is at the heart of their street code, and violence is deemed crucial to obtain respect from peers and the community and to defend the respect of the wider gang (Gutiérrez Rivera 2013, p. 7; Savenije and van der Borgh 2015, pp. 96–97). The notion of respect is deeply rooted in the mara mentality: violent rituals play a big role when becoming part of the maras. These rituals vary from surviving a beating by a gang member, performing extortion, or even killing someone (Gutiérrez Rivera 2013, p. 6; Luitjens 2015). Extreme violence is thus deeply embedded in the mara life, and as Wolseth (2011) refers to it, they foster a “kill-or-being-killed mentality” (58) to uphold the respect. For residents of the gang-dominated areas, it is moreover crucial to show respect to gang members as not doing so might put their own safety in jeopardy (Luitjens 2015, p. 27).

Hence, everyday life is to a great extent controlled by the presence of the maras, and living a normal life is a constant struggle. As Luitjens (2015, pp. 24–25) demonstrates through the use of participatory mapping exercises, residents from gang-dominated areas are prone to adjust their mobility patterns to the high levels of violence. As mentioned, there is moreover a certain level of “normalization”, where people have become used to the presence of the maras (Gutiérrez Rivera 2013, p. 49; Koonings and Kruijt 1999). People adjust their behavior to obey the rules imposed by the gangs. This unconsciously adjusted behavior is what Pine (2008, p. 76) refers to as violence having become a part of the Hondurans’ “habitus”, and to use Gutiérrez Rivera’s (2013, p. 54) words “that is, the structuring and structured system that organizes and gives meaning to agents’ practices”. Luitjens (2015,

p. 3) illustrates this in an interview with Mayra, a 53-year-old woman, who explained, without much emotion, that her day was slightly disorganized as she could not buy tortillas due to the heavy “rain of bullets” in the area. In other words, violence seems to have become “accepted” in society as it is internalized through different processes and experiences, as threats by the youth gangs, muggings, or murders. In a study on the perceptions of violence and exclusion, Moser and McIlwaine (2004, 179–181) discern three individual coping strategies: avoidance, confrontation, and conciliation. While the confrontation strategy is not often used by the residents, both the avoidance and conciliation strategy are common in the urban streets of Honduras. Tactics as taking certain routes, or avoiding certain areas after dark, or hiding money in body parts to keep it safe are well-known to the urban citizens of Honduras (Gutiérrez Rivera 2013, p. 1). It is moreover a shared understanding that it is better to not walk the streets alone. Besides that, everyone is aware of the rule: “ver, oír y callar” [*Watch, listen and be silent*]. This “unwritten rule” is shared among all community members: as long as you keep your mouth shut, you can live in the neighborhood relatively safe (Luitjens 2015, p. 22; Savenije and van den Borgh 2015, p. 98). In other words, the gang won’t bother you, as long as you don’t bother them. Despite this, fear is omnipresent. The “gathering spots” of the maras are very well-known within the communities and are mostly referred to as the *Esquinas* (corners) (Luitjens 2015, p. 25). Residents moreover often stay inside, especially after dark when the situation is assumed to be worse. In the direct period after a violent incident, the streets are often avoided altogether (World Bank 2011, p. 10). When these experiences seem inevitable, a common way in which residents continue their life is by accepting the situation and adjusting their daily patterns in order to avoid complications (Luitjens 2015, 24–25)

The maras have a high visible presence in the Honduran society due to the use of specific iconography, as tattoos or body piercings (Dammert 2017; Gutiérrez Rivera 2013; Luitjens

2015; Wolseth 2011). The use of these cultural signs is crucial for the creation of a feeling of belonging, a collective identity. Despite this, the use of (visible) tattoos has significantly lowered over the last years in order to make oneself, as mentioned before, less obvious to the police (Gutiérrez Rivera 2013, p. 117). As a result, gang boundaries have become more diffuse, and there is more cooperation with non-gang members to extend drug-trafficking business. This indicates an important change in gang life, where non-youth have also become active in drug-trafficking activities (Luitjens 2015). People from outside the gang-dominated areas, with relatively good jobs, also cooperate with the maras in order to gain extra money. This varies from helping to open up new “business possibilities” through expanding the existing network to bribing the police. While the core of the gang is below the age of 25, the maras have become more integrated in the wider society, and gang boundaries seem to have become more diffuse. Despite the gang members becoming more difficult to recognize for a complete outsider, to people who live in the community, or who are part of a gang (either the same or a rival gang), it is often clear who belongs and does not.

The territorial gang borders are moreover articulated through the use of MS-13 and 18th symbols, in the form of, i.e., graffiti or murals (Gutiérrez Rivera 2013, p. 78; Wolseth 2011, p. 27). Besides the more obvious “border articulations,” there is also a figurative big gate around the communities, to bar outsiders from entering. In this sense, banderas, as explained above, shape a strong sense of a collective “us” (Luitjens 2015, p. 35). There is a strong feeling of “belonging” among the members, and through the presence and the use of violence, a feeling of collectiveness is enhanced. When someone would be harmed, or even killed, in one of the communities, other communities controlled by the same gang would gather to take revenge. Besides the shared rules concerning revenge, the maras share a common understanding regarding the importance of religion. The reason for this is that when becoming a part of the maras, one has to sign a pact with the devil (Luitjens 2015, p. 29). This is through

the means of satanic rituals, for example, by sacrificing animals or even human beings. It is for everyone in the community clear that the power of God is greater than the power of the devil. Hence, everyone understands “el poder de dios” (the power of God), and nothing is more powerful than God. This strong religious notion implies that when a member of the maras has “found God”, the maras cannot do anything against it but let the person go. This however also implies that people would place the power over their lives outside themselves; you are either with “God” (and be safe) or with the “Devil” (and be a gang member) (Wolseth 2008). Religion thus offers *real security* and is also visible in the neighborhoods: evangelic conversion is according to various people the only way for gang members to leave the gang (Luitjens 2015, p. 29; Wolseth 2008, pp. 101–102).

Lastly, while not all gang members would know each other in person, belonging to the same gang creates a feeling of unity, a strong connection – as Gutiérrez Rivera (2013, p. 118) argues, the maras see themselves as one big family, one gang. According to various residents from gang-dominated areas, there is a feeling of safety *because* of the presence of the maras. By guarding the borders and making sure no other crime enters the community, not only a feeling of belonging, but also a notion of security within the community borders is created (Luitjens 2015, 21–22) This is again an illustration of the complexity of the concept of security – while at the surface it seems that the maras have obtained a “legitimate status” in the community, this is not the whole story. Suyapa explained that despite the advantages the maras offer, she, along with most others, still wishes to “live a safer life” (Luitjens 2015, p. 22). This indicates that for the majority of the inhabitants, the maras offer the *best possible form of security*, a form of security that the Honduran state has yet to provide.

When using the four definitional criteria as mentioned in part 1, it becomes clear that there is a clear sense of collective identity among the maras and, despite internal fear, there is a notion of shared values, rules, and protection that has to be shared and shown (1). The Honduran

youth from marginalized areas is considered to be most vulnerable and seem to have limited opportunities for other future jobs – as a result, the gang primarily consists of youth under the age of 25 (3). With that, there is engagement in violent behavior (2) to protect their areas of control and strengthen the existing power. While this is not shown on this level, most activity is present in the urban areas (4). The rest of the neighborhood adapts, as the deep fear present in the communities, shown in the notion of *ver, oír y callar*, overshadows other options.

Future Possibilities

While there is an ongoing debate on the definition of a gang and the origins of youth gang violence, gangs continue to form a global phenomenon and a serious security threat. Throughout this entry, four common criteria have been deduced from the academic literature, which can be used to better understand and define the presence of a gang. These criteria are collective identity, high levels of violence, youth membership, and urban activity. There is however not a specific set of reasons that explains gang presence in a certain area. While it is often assumed that a weak government and the existence of a gang are related, this is not always the case. It is therefore important to take various contextual levels, i.e., global, regional, national, or local, into account when explaining the presence of gang violence. By using three different approaches, a conceptual approach, a society-wide approach, and a community approach, the concept, presence, and roots of (Honduran) youth gangs are explained. While the first approach is merely theoretical, both the society-wide and community approaches offer crucial insights that help define gang presence in the specific context of Honduras. By utilizing a society-wide approach, it becomes clear that gang presence in Honduras is a result of a combination of factors, including the persisting high levels of inequality and poverty, the social marginalization, and weak government presence, all combined with a geographical location conducive to drug trafficking and increased transnationalism

of gang life. The community approach indicates that gang violence has become a part of everyday life in the Honduran urban communities. Both these approaches demonstrate the complexity of gang presence in relation to security and peace in areas where violence is thriving.

As the society-wide approach demonstrates, Honduras' state formation process has resulted in fragile state institutions, which appear unable to provide security and protection for its citizens. The security policies that have been implemented seem to have only fueled the conflict or have a positive effect for only a short amount of time. An effective solution, whereby a lasting peace can be achieved, has not been found yet. At the same time, the community approach illustrates that security perceptions within the gang-dominated areas fluctuate. Where the state has left a void concerning the provision of security and opportunities for education or jobs, the maras aim to fill that void. Various community members mention that the presence of the maras offers security which the state does not and thus adapting to the situation appears to be the "safest" decision. When looking beneath this surface, it becomes clear that this notion of security is led by high levels of fear. Consequently, residents have accepted that a form of security where residents can dance on the streets again remains a distant possibility.

Hence, the maras are deeply embedded in the Honduran society and hold a strong power over the gang-dominated areas, where their presence seems to have become normalized. By making use of both society-wide and community approaches to understand the complex situation in Honduras, it becomes possible to better discern and observe the presence of a gang and to expose the roots of gang violence. Doing so is crucial in finding a solution to lowering the extreme levels of gang violence in the country.

Summary

As with most concepts within the social sciences, a gang is a controversial phenomenon: there is not one widely agreed-upon definition of a gang. Despite this, there are various gang criteria

mentioned within the existing academic gang literature. Four of the most common criteria are a collective identity, high levels of violence, youth membership, and urban activity.

There is not a specific set of reasons that explain gang presence in a certain area. While it is often assumed that a weak government presence and the existence of a gang are related, this is not always the case. It is therefore important to take various contextual levels, i.e., global, regional, national, or local, into account when explaining the presence of gang violence. By using three different approaches, a conceptual approach, a society-wide approach, and a community approach, the concept, presence, and origins of (Honduran) youth gangs are explained. While the first approach is merely theoretical, both the society-wide and community approaches offer crucial insights that help define gang presence in the specific context of Honduras. Adopting the society-wide approach, it becomes clear that gang presence in Honduras is a result of a mix of different factors, such as the persisting high levels of inequality and poverty, the social marginalization, and weak government presence, in combination with a geographical location conducive to drug trafficking and increased transnationalism of gang life.

Lastly, the community approach observes the influence of gang presence on a community level and illustrates that gang violence has become a part of everyday life in Honduras. Simultaneously, the complexity of the notion of security presents itself. Where the state has left a void concerning the provision of security and protection for its citizens, the maras aim to fill that void. While for many community members the presence of the maras offers a form of security that the state is unable to provide, it is clear that this notion is mostly led by fear. In other words, in the gang-dominated areas where the state is mostly absent, the maras provide the *best possible security*.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Culture and Conflict Resolution](#)
- ▶ [Nonviolence and Civil Resistance](#)

- ▶ Security-Development Nexus in Peacebuilding
- ▶ Urban Violence and Crime

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(Youth) Gangs

► [Youth Gang Violence in Honduras](#)

Youthquake

► [Youth Bulge and Conflict](#)

Yugoslavia

► [Transitional Justice in Croatia](#)

Z

Zones of Peace

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Synonyms

[Experiencia de Paz \(peace experience\)](#); [Peace community](#)

Definition/Description

Zones of peace (ZoPs) began as geographically based communities of citizens seeking to withdraw themselves from situations of violence in the midst of armed conflict. This definition later expanded to include peace communities in post-conflict areas as well as peace experiences for communities that became displaced due to violence or war. ZoPs are often characterized by a triggering event, high levels of communal participation and cohesion, a wide variety of peacebuilding activities, and the need to continually negotiate their safety by practicing “active neutrality” with respect to groups of armed actors – state supporting, state opposing, or even criminal gangs. First created in the Philippines in the 1980s, ZoPs have been used most widely in Colombia during its civil conflict, but have analogues in El Salvador, West Africa, and elsewhere.

History and Current Uses

One of the lesser-known corners of academic study concerns the efforts of local communities to create islands of sanctuary in the midst of violence, largely known as zones of peace. Some of the original uses of this term stem from classical forms of sanctuary, dating back to the Greek city states and up through the Catholic Church’s use of sanctuary during the middle ages (Mitchell and Hancock 2007). More modern uses have stemmed from state-oriented conceptions such as ASEAN’s 1971 declaration Zone of Peace, Freedom, and Neutrality (ZOPFAN) and the division of the world’s states in zones of peace and conflict based on their alignment with western ideals of liberal democracy (Kacowicz 1998; Singer and Wildavsky 1993), Safe Havens in Bosnia during the civil conflict there (Mitchell 2007), disarmament zones in Aceh, Indonesia (Iyer and Mitchell 2007), days of tranquility or humanitarian aid corridors (Rigalo and Morrison 2007), the Harm Free Zone movement in marginalized communities in the USA ([Harm Free Zone: General Framework](#)), or even personal zones of protection such as the Nepalese/UNICEF project to declare children and schools as zones of peace (Maulden 2018). However, the more common use of the term of zones of peace stems from its use by communities that, trapped in the middle of civil conflicts, have chosen to try and withdraw from that conflict and declare themselves to be “actively neutral” in the struggle between insurgents and pro-government forces.

These “Local Zones of Peace” first cropped up in the Philippines in the 1980s before spreading to Latin America – specifically in Colombia and El Salvador – Africa – specifically, Côte d’Ivoire and Sierra Leone – and developing offshoots in places like Peru, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Belfast (for instance, see Allouche and Jackson 2019; Avruch and Jose 2007; Hancock 2007, 2012; Hancock and Iyer 2007; Idler et al. 2015; Langdon and Rodriguez 2007; Macaspac 2018; Mitchell and Rojas 2012; Mouly 2013; Rojas 2007; Sanford 2003; Santos Jr. 2005). They have come under many guises and have existed in many countries, albeit often under different names. Some of the first ZoPs were territorially defined, such as the Philippine Zone of Peace, Freedom, and Neutrality (also ZOPFAN) declared in Naga City, southern Luzon, in 1988 (Garcia 1992, p. 73). But others, such as later communities in Colombia, began to organize themselves around the notion of communities of peace or peace experiences, recognizing that for those forced to flee their homes, issues of territoriality were only a part of their drives to escape conflict and build more sustainable and positive lives.

In addition to the differences in focus, there are differences in nomenclature. Most of these appear to be driven by members of the local community, or communities, involved and are expressions of local culture, local understandings of what drives conflict or peace, or even responses to how terms used in one locale can have very different meanings in translation. (For instance, while observing a workshop held between North and South Ossetian community members in 2009, this author learned that the Russian translation “zona” was an informal term used to describe Soviet Gulags.) Names for these zones range from the Tabuk Peace Zone’s title of “Matagoan” (meaning “zone of life” in Kalinga) (Garcia 1992, p. 74), to the Constituent Assembly of Mogotes in Colombia (Rojas 2007, p. 78), the Rondas Campesinas in Peru (Langdon and Rodriguez 2007), to Local Peace Committees or informal peace NGOs in various African countries and communities (Allouche and Jackson 2019; van Tongeren *forthcoming*).

One main way that scholars have attempted to define or differentiate ZoPs experiences from one another is to look at them through a temporal lens. This lens differentiates ZoPs into those created and functioning during an active conflict, those functioning during a post-agreement or post-conflict period, and those functioning in a more limited fashion or for a more limited period of time (Hancock and Iyer 2007). This brief overview will largely concentrate on the first two types of ZoPs, reviewing some of the key features of the concept and its application before moving on to the current state of the literature and how the practices of successful zones of peace can or have informed other peacemaking and peacebuilding activities.

Defining Characteristics/Key Features

Given the wide variety in the use of the term, and the even wider variety in names and nomenclature, it is well to take some time to discuss what different authors have suggested or found to be their defining characteristics or key features. One of the main key features that many ZoPs, especially those created by local inhabitants, is the necessity of a triggering event – and usually a violent one – that pushes local organizers to propose and construct the zone. In places like Mogotes, Colombia, the event was an attack on the town by ELN guerrillas, while in El Salvador, the creation of the Local Zone of Peace came about because of a rise in gang violence in the area (Hancock 2007; Rojas 2007). Even when the triggering event is nonviolent – as it was in the case of Belfast – what it does is to provide the impetus, or the realization, that the community can develop the strength to deal with its own problems locally (Hancock 2012). (In Belfast, the Suffolk-Lenadoon Interface Group (SLIG) was formed by two single-community organizations – one Catholic and one Protestant – following a nonviolent intervention event designed to force the city to put up a pedestrian traffic light on a busy thoroughfare.)

A second key feature of successful ZoPs is their grassroots orientation in terms of ownership and control. While many peacebuilding programs

or projects tend to have extensive links with national or international bodies, most ZoPs tend to form out of local communities, and a good many of them manage to retain significant local control over their activities. This second feature links directly to their third feature, namely that grassroots-oriented peace zones tend to focus on a wide variety of peacebuilding projects and programs – which stands in stark contrast to international or state-led peace zones, which tend to focus narrowly upon security issues. For locals, the inclusion of a wide variety of programs has two main drivers. The first is the need to develop and maintain a strong sense of internal cohesion – perhaps among a widely diverse community. This means that projects and programs will have to be devised and carried out to meet the needs of many community members, rather than just select subgroups. Examples of this kind of focus include programs for youth groups (Kaplan 2017), the development of agricultural cooperatives (Hancock 2007; Villanueva et al. forthcoming), educational institutions (Mitchell and Rojas 2012), and many, many others. The second driver is that the ability to direct their own peacebuilding projects gives community members a powerful sense of agency that is not typically available when carrying out peacebuilding projects that are conceived of and funded by external actors (Hancock 2017). This can translate into higher levels of local legitimacy when the zone connects with the needs of the community and remains accountable to community members for its performance (Hancock and Mitchell 2018).

Another key that defines ZoPs is the necessity to continually negotiate the parameters of their “active neutrality” with various armed actors. This is largely the provenance of ZoPs active during armed conflict or manifest violence, when community leaders need to maintain contact with local representatives of all of the armed factions – including government forces, pro-government vigilante forces, insurgent forces, and even criminal gangs. The essence of these negotiations is to ensure the neutrality of the ZoP and assure various forces that the zone itself will not be used as a base of support for the other side (Mitchell and Hancock 2007; Neumann 2010; Rojas 2007; Sanford

2003; Valenzuela 2009). These forms of active neutrality are not without their dangers or drawbacks. One of the primary problems that zones declaring active neutrality have is with the state. Even when local commanders agree to keep their forces out of the zone or to only enter when unarmed, regional or national leaders may balk at such conditions because they argue that state forces should have the right to control all of the country’s territory. In Colombia, in particular, this has extended to attacks on zones by the president of the country, who tried to define neutral zones as guerilla sympathizers (Mouly et al. 2016; Rodríguez 2012). At other times, negotiations with armed actors can fall through, especially when the location of the zone lies upon valuable territory. This most often happens when the zone has military or economic value for one side or the other but can also happen when long-established relationships between locals and military commanders are disrupted. In Colombia, the movement of guerilla leaders or military commanders has disrupted communication channels, and the impact of the 2016 Havana Accords and subsequent demobilization FARC forces created several vacuums, which were then filled by a variety of armed actors, leading to increased violence in several zones (Delgado forthcoming; Iglesias et al. forthcoming; Mitchell and Hancock 2007; Pardo-Herrera and Victorino forthcoming; Rojas 2007). Overall, although the goal of active neutrality is one of the most prominent defining characteristics of a ZoP, it is also one of the most difficult to achieve, requiring a high level of internal solidarity and no small amount of skill to maintain positive relationships with varied armed groups.

Current Uses

Initial interest in peace zones as forms of sanctuary has blossomed into a wider set of analyses of peace zones, and similar entities, as forms of localized and locally owned peacebuilding and sources of civil resistance to armed conflict and violence. Many authors have grappled with different aspects of peace communities and the kinds

of local peacebuilding that they have engendered. Among these four key elements have emerged that help to define what makes these peace communities successful or which could possibly inform broader debates on peacebuilding. These are the impact of local cultures on the development and success of peace communities, the role of peace communities – and their variants – in negotiating the cessation or prevention of violence, the role of peace communities in supporting the empowerment of previously marginalized groups, and peace community processes that encourage the participation of community members and the engendering of local agency.

Cultural Elements

There have been several studies that examined the cultural elements associated with peace communities and zones of peace. The importance of these elements has to do with the need for high levels of internal cohesion, and the cultural elements to a peace community are invaluable when that community transitions from a time and space when they are under external pressure – violent or not – to a time and space when that pressure has been lifted. For instance, one of the earlier examinations of the cultural element comes from the post-conflict Local Zone of Peace in El Salvador. As Chupp (2003) details, their Culture of Peace Program was designed to elicit an indigenous set of processes based on local values in order to transform what had been a culture valorizing aspects of violence into one that supported peaceful interaction on a holistic scale. Likewise, in both the Philippines and in Colombia, indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities have leveraged their cultural traditions in the service of building peaceful communities and encouraging internal cohesion. Macaspac (2018) details how the community of Sagada in the Philippines used forms of indigenous governing structures known as *dap-ay*, to call for the removal of armed factions from the community. The argument for this removal was less directly connected to issues of neutrality, or even security, but was based on the need to undertake onerous rituals to cleanse any areas that might be polluted if the armed groups perpetrated violence upon them (Macaspac 2018, p. 22). They

also used local norms, called *innayan*, to create a set of prohibited practices to assure the neutrality of community members and to forbid the use of violence or other practices that might endanger local inhabitants or force the elders to conduct cleansing ceremonies (Macaspac 2018, p. 23). In Colombia, Iglesias, Rosen, and Masullo (forthcoming) detail how the Afro and indigenous communities of the Chocó region used their cultural distinctiveness and organizing capacities to develop a region-wide peace platform following the signing of the 2016 Havana Accords between the Colombian Government and FARC guerillas. Likewise, Villanueva et al. (forthcoming) detail how in Granada, a region-wide culture of *cooperativismo* “produced a culture that reinforced and regulated bonds between individual people through values that transcended economic, social, political, and cultural identities,” enabling interpersonal and inter-group structures for peace to be developed.

Negotiating and Interventions to Prevent Violence

One of the key goals for peace zones is the prevention of violence directed against members of the community. In many zones, this means that their leaders need to negotiate with armed actors, often from several groups. Extensive reports on zones in the Philippines, Colombia, and El Salvador show that the impetus for ZoP creation is often a violent triggering event, which can include kidnappings, but often involves the murder of one or more civilians at the hands of armed actors (Avruch and Jose 2007, p. 55; Chupp 2003, p. 99; Rojas 2007, pp. 77, 80, 83). Some of the keys for successful negotiation include widespread community participation in the activities of the peace zone (Idler et al. 2015; Kaplan 2013), a collective leadership that is seen as legitimately representing the interests of the community (Mitchell and Hancock 2007), or trusted elders are available to reassure both the community and outsiders that any agreement made will be kept (Mouly et al. 2016; Neumann 2010). These keys help to ensure a high level of internal cohesion, trust in the local leadership by the community, and trust by the external actors that the leadership is

legitimately acting on behalf of the community. As noted in several studies, the lack of a relationship between the community and the armed actors, whether through changes in the community, changes in armed group leadership, or even the withdrawal of one armed actor from the conflict, can have a negative impact upon the ability of the community to successfully negotiate their neutral status (Hancock and Allen [forthcoming](#); Hancock and Mitchell [2012](#); Mitchell and Hancock [2007](#)). Additionally, the position of the peace zone on desired land, whether strategically desired or valuable for economic reasons, can also make it far more difficult to successfully negotiate with armed actors (*ibid.*).

Tools for Empowering Marginalized Groups

Because zones of peace often represent what Richmond ([2014](#), p. 133) describes as localized practices of peace formation, they embody the kinds of empowerment that is often missing from top-down peacebuilding programs. As described above, much of this can be ascribed to the twin drivers of the need for community cohesion in the face of external threats, and the use of local or indigenous cultural forms to give structure and meaning to local peacebuilding efforts. The result is that larger numbers are welcomed to participate in community peacebuilding activities and groups that had been previously marginalized are often provided with seats at the table.

This empowerment of marginalized groups is most evident in Latin American ZoPs, where traditional cultures of patriarchy and ageism have kept women, youth, indigenous, and Afro-descendant communities out of positions of power and authority for much of the region's history. In Hancock's ([2007](#)) examination of El Salvador's Local Zone of Peace, several of that group's projects, such as its, cybercafé, local radio station, youth art project, and in particular, its provision of laser tattoo removal for former gang members, were designed to empower those on the margins of society and to provide opportunities for creative expression, education, and advancement. Pardo-Herrera and Victorino ([forthcoming](#)) relate how women have taken advantage of the provisions of the Havana Accord to seek public office

and to participate more fully in civic life, in particular by contributing to the creation of women's boards and supporting women's economic activities. Several authors have commented on the radical peace community of San Jose de Apartado, which has created a number of initiatives designed to empower its community members, including fair trade economic activities, partnerships with international NGOs like Peace Brigades International to provide accompaniment and security, and not least, the creation of their own educational system, including the university of resistance (Brown [2016](#); Burnyeat [2017](#); Finn [2014](#); Masullo [2015](#)). Not all ZoPs seek to empower broad swathes of the community, but as Idler, Garrido and Mouly ([2015](#)) show us, communities that do not invest in empowerment often fail to engender the kind of cohesion that helps them weather external attacks, whether physical or symbolic.

Processes for Engendering Agency

One of the most important aspects of peace communities, and the one that has the clearest implications for grassroots peacebuilding, has to do with the kinds of governance structures and processes that formalize community participation in decision-making, give community members the ability to hold community leaders accountable, and engender agency in the community, rather than letting it reside in outsiders, whether they are governments or external funding agencies. One of the clearest examples of this kind of participatory governance structure is that built by the Local Zone of Peace in El Salvador. They developed a program of Dialogue and Reflection Circles, designed to open channels of communication between LZP members and community members. In addition, they created a process of election, wherein individual communities would elect members to the circles, who would then elect members to regional circles, promoting grassroots control over the LZP (Chupp [2003](#); Hancock [2007](#)).

Neumann ([2010](#)) describes the governing processes of the GiNaPaLad Ta Ka Space for Peace in Mindanao as based on a series of dialogues between Christian, Moro, and Lumad

(indigenous) communities. She further notes that in stepping away from a western ideal of individual equality, these groups have focused more on community, turning elections into consultative processes wherein the community questions potential candidates and decides who will be allowed to run for office, with the final candidate essentially running unopposed (Neumann 2010, p. 189). This is similar to how Rojas describes the activities of the Constituent Assembly in Mogotes, where candidates for community manager – the office being renamed from mayor – were required to support the community-devised development plan and to give periodic reports to the community (Rojas 2007, pp. 78–79).

Hancock (2017, 2018, 2020) goes into more detail on how governance processes and the relationship between the peace community and those they serve has an impact upon the perceptions of local agency on the part of the community and the legitimacy of the peacebuilding organization. Some of the key elements discovered in an analysis of many peace communities shows that when peace communities meet the tenets of procedural justice (cf. Tyler 2000), even if those are conceptualized in local, folk manners, then they are more likely to display indicators of agency and to have legitimacy conferred upon them by the recipient community. These elements include trustworthiness of the authorities, neutrality of the forum/organization, treatment of the recipient population with dignity and respect, and opportunity for meaningful voice. The presence of these four elements, when combined with democratic governance, broad public participation and what Galtung and Tisné (2009) describe as accountability down make up what is described as deliberative peacebuilding, leading to increased local agency and the legitimacy of the peace community or peacebuilding organization (Hancock 2020, p. 143).

Importance to Peacebuilding

In many ways, the zones of peace movement represents some of what is best and cutting edge in peace studies, and peacebuilding in particular.

When Lederach (1997) points to peacebuilding as being driven by a balance between relationships and structures, he could have easily been describing the dynamics that lie at the heart of the most successful peace zones. Additionally, parts of Richmond's concept of peace formation is highly aligned with principles and practices of successful ZoPs. Richmond (2014, p. 134) describes peace formation as a set of localized practices that can be engaged in by locals but also require networking across multiple levels of action or place. Additionally, ZoPs represent a very early attempt to address some of the problems of peacebuilding that have become more prevalent to study with the advent of the "local turn" (Leonardsson and Rudd 2015; Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013; Paffenholz 2015; Schierenbeck 2015). Some of the practices within peace zones and some of the research seeking to understand them have the potential to improve our understanding of and practices within the broader context of peacebuilding at multiple levels.

The question of *why* some peace communities are successful, and others not, has been partially addressed by the many scholars who have examined them in various contexts. Some of the indicators for success – laid out above – are dependent upon the context, especially for those ZoPs operating in conflict environments. Elements such as whether the locality lies on valued territory or whether local armed-actor commanders are new to the area or long resident with established relationships can be seen as largely out of the control of the peace community. However, those things that are under their control, such as how the peace community engages with its citizens, what kinds of programs it develops, whether it is accountable to community needs and is transparent in its activities, can all have a bearing upon the development of local ownership, indicated by high levels of local community agency, and the receipt of local legitimacy from the community (Hancock 2020).

Problems of local ownership have bedeviled internationally-sponsored peacebuilding programs for some time (Autesserre 2017; Donais 2012; Richmond 2012; Richmond and Carey 2005). This has led some scholars to attempt to move beyond ownership – which has become a

contested term – into trying to define agency in relationship to peacebuilding (Boas and Tom 2016; Kappler 2014; Mac Ginty 2014; Plonski 2005; Pugh 2011; Richmond and Mitchell 2011, 2012). Examinations of ZoPs show that functional and successful peace communities seem to necessarily have high levels of community agency (Hancock 2017, 2020) and that, furthermore, this community-oriented agency often translates into increased legitimacy for the peacebuilding organization (Hancock 2018; Hancock and Mitchell 2018). These issues of agency and legitimacy in peace zones have larger implications for peacebuilding practice. Richmond describes local legitimacy as reflecting “social patterns of identity, history, and culture,” drawing a distinction between it and international legitimacy, which rests upon international law and custom (Richmond 2013, p. 275). He further notes that local ownership is necessary for bottom-up legitimacy, a proposition that is equally in line with key elements of successful ZoPs and peace communities. Richmond (2013, p. 275) also states that peace formation “offers a form of legitimacy that the state and the international cannot do without,” showing the value of the kinds of processes occurring in peace communities that develop the kinds of legitimacy that can, at times, be extended from the community to state-level actors (Hancock and Allen forthcoming).

One key factor that still needs more exploration is the monetary of funding relationships between peace communities and external organizations. As with much else in peacebuilding, these sets of relationships can be difficult and raise the specter of undermining local agency and legitimacy – and hence, the effectiveness of peace communities. Different models of funder/ZoP relationship have included accepting funding with strings attached, to only accepting funding when the community could decide what programs, and projects to work on, to not accepting any external funding, and even to one peace community – the Local Zone of Peace in El Salvador – creating its own funding arm to ensure high levels of independence (Hancock 2007). Some NGOs, such as Tabang Mindanao in the Philippines and REDEPAZ in Colombia, have worked in a highly

elicitive manner, seeking to preserve local control and local agencies. In other cases, the influx of government or foundation funds has been somewhat destabilizing, leading to internal divisions and conflicts about where and how to spend these monies (Avruch and Jose 2007; Hancock 2020). The issue in these cases often has to do with the direction of accountability and the fairly reasonable expectation on the part of funding agencies that when they disburse large amounts of cash, that they should receive some sort of reporting in order to gauge the effectiveness and/or success of their efforts. Unfortunately, as some have described, typical top-down accountability schemes often clash directly with the need to have local ownership and to use indigenous methods of peacebuilding (Galtung and Tisné 2009; Mac Ginty 2010; Wilen 2009). Furthermore, top-down accountability requirements often mean that the peacebuilding organization needs to spend a great deal more time on their reporting requirements than on the actual work of building peace (Hancock 2020; Mac Ginty 2010; Pouligny 2005).

One alternative to this problem rests on suggestions to substitute top-down accountability models with those that are bottom-up (Galtung and Tisné 2009), with community members holding peacebuilding organizations accountable, or to create systems of mutual accountability (Arandel et al. 2015, p. 991), where “key stakeholders” agreed to hold each other accountable and to collaborate to address agreed upon priority issues. These kinds of models – as well as potentially others – need to be explored further both in the context of peace communities and in the wider realm of local peacebuilding.

Contributions to Peacebuilding

The detailed examinations of peace communities by the many scholars and activists reviewed in this entry show that they are heavily involved in examining the everyday instances of peace formation, and that our understanding of both grassroots peacebuilding and peace formation as a concrete phenomenon can be enhanced through this kind of

study of the lived experiences of peace communities across the globe.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Local Peacebuilding](#)
- ▶ [Peace Infrastructures](#)

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