Peace and Conflict Review

Articles

University for Peace

Peace and Conflict Review

ISSN: 1659-3995

Peace and Conflict Review is a peer-reviewed, open-access journal dedicated to the publication of high quality academic articles in the field of peace and conflict studies on a semi-annual basis.

For further information, including guidelines for contributors, please visit www.review.upeace.org.

Peace and Conflict Review is hosted at the headquarters of the United Nations mandated University for Peace (UPEACE) in San José, Costa Rica and is produced in association with University for Peace Press and the UPEACE Research Center.

Research articles published in this journal are submitted for blind review to members of our board of editors or other referees with relevant expertise and may undergo additional editing before publication.

The responsibilities for opinions and conclusions rest entirely on the respective author(s). Publication does not necessarily constitute endorsement of the same by the *Peace and Conflict Review* or the University for Peace.

<center>**Questioning Peace Infrastructure and Peace Formation**</center>

<center>Balázs Áron Kovács and Paddy Tobias[*]</center>

Introduction

The theme of this special collection of articles, drawn from a recent conference hosted by the University of New England (UNE), is a debate that has been dominating the field of Peace and Conflict Studies in recent times. Essentially, there is increasing concern that post-conflict intervention is too often reliant on the very social structures (i.e., political conventions and individuals) that perpetuated the conflict in the first place. This type of institutionally-focused peace intervention has been characterised under the term 'Liberal Peace' by prominent critical social theorists such as Oliver Richmond and Roger Mac Ginty, and their impact in Peace and Conflict Studies has been considerable.

Indeed, it has become fashionable in the academe to be critical of Liberal Peace, levelled mostly at institutions such as the UN, the EU, and the OECD, or theorists like Michael W. Doyle, Charles T. Call, Roland Paris, or World Bank analyst-turned-Afghan President Ashraf Ghani. Whilst the arguments of Richmond and Mac Ginty are not wholly new – John Paul Lederach is arguably the most well-known and earliest proponent of sociological considerations under the notion of 'Conflict Transformation' – these critical theorists have brought a new flavour. For example, they have introduced meta-physical considerations such as discourse analysis (the state according to who?) and reopened the debate around the ontologies and epistemologies that underpin the field of Peace and Conflict Studies (what are the origins and historical assumptions of the statist political system? Who might this advantage and disadvantage?)

The state mechanism in humanitarian interventions has dominated the first 50 years of the approach of the United Nations. One obvious benefit in using the state (and sometimes its political leaders, but not necessarily) would be that the UN appears impartial to local laws and politico-juridical processes. That is, imagined as an empty home that could be refurbished, the state bureaucracy provides the illusion of rationality and constancy, absent of historical interference and personal bias. Another perceived benefit of giving priority to the state would be that once the conflict had abated (taken to be necessarily true, otherwise what is the point?), the new nation-state, preferably democratic by this stage, could participate on the global economic stage and thereby gives its people the greatest possible chance of peace and prosperity. Such political theories have since been challenged and no longer automatically dominate the corridors of New York and Geneva.

The end of the Cold War, and the rise of the New World Order, allowed for substantively new considerations to peace interventions. Starting with Secretary General Boutros Bourtos-Ghali's *Agenda for Peace*, sociological and psychological considerations increasingly influenced conceptions of and responses to violence. A passage from the 1992 *Agenda* reflects the beginning of the zeitgeist of today:

---

[*] Paddy Tobias, University of New England, Australia; Balázs Áron Kovács, PhD candidate, University of New England, Australia.

Peacemaking and peace-keeping operations, to be truly successful, must come to include comprehensive efforts to identify and support structures which will tend to consolidate peace and advance a sense of confidence and well-being among people.

The consensus for peace interventions now includes more on the "local", principally including psychosocial considerations, rather than the "political". Factoring in trauma and intergenerational injustices, as well as dialogue and negotiation as methods for healing, represent important steps forward in the academe and in policy.

For the past decade, Richmond and Mac Ginty have led another surge in accepted thought and practice, taking inspiration from the peripheral works a decade previous of John Paul Lederach.

All have rightly challenged what we might assume as "the local". Many questions they have subsequently posed has relied on "the who": Who possesses legitimacy in enacting peace? and who should determine what peace is or means, or looks like on the ground? Helpfully, these critical theorists have not ended there, but also proffered philosophical and policy guidance, most notably within the grounded prisms of sociology and cultural studies. The new "local" has been founded in the Lederachian concept of peace infrastructure, political hybridity, individual agency and notions of the "self".

Looking for definition

The origin of peace infrastructures is in the tradition of bottom-up peacebuilding, reconciliation and conflict transformation. When Lederach coined the term 'peace infrastructure' in 1997, he proposed to "go beyond traditional statist diplomacy" and creating an enduring infrastructure across society "that empowers the resources for reconciliation from within that society and maximizes the contribution from outside."[1]

While Lederach's work in general has been influential, the concept of a peace infrastructure remained largely unexplored for nearly a decade and a half. In 2010, the United Nations Development Programme convened a seminar in Naivasha, Kenya, with the participation of government and civil society representatives of 14 African countries and UN country teams. The objective of was to address the limits and inadequacies of current peacemaking and peacebuilding efforts.[2] Marking a turning point in the young history of 'peace infrastructures', the UNDP advanced a broadly accepted definition of the term: peace infrastructures counted for "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."[3]

---

[1] Lederach, John Paul. *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*. Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997.: XVI

[2] Kumar, Chetan. "Building National "Infrastructures for Peace": Un Assistance for Internally Negotiated Solutions to Violent Conflict." Chap. 24 In *Peacemaking: From Practice to Theory*, edited by Susan Allen Nan, Zachariah Cherian Mampilly and Andrea Bartoli. Praeger, 2011.

[3] Source: UNDP Bureau of Crisis Prevention and Recovery, Issue Brief: Infrastructure for Peace, 07 March 2013, http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/crisis-prevention-and-recovery/issue-brief--infrastructure-for-peace/, Accessed on 07 April 2014.

With this institutional backing, interest in the concept erupted suddenly. The UNDP has facilitated the creation of peace infrastructures in more than 30 conflict-affected or post-conflict countries[4] and countless CSO conflict transformation and peacebuilding initiatives have been implemented worldwide.

All have been driven by or in turn have influenced a body of literature that has emerged in academic circles, seeking also to advance definitions of peace infrastructures.

In one way or another all conceptions rely on a flavour of structuralism: that is, that interpersonal and intercommunal relationships are to varying extents influenced by positive (and negative) metaphysical realities. For instance, in a Dialogue Series issued by the Berghof Foundation, one of the pre-eminent proponents of peace infrastructures in recent times, Ulrike Hopp-Nishanka defined the concept in somewhat managerial terms:

> 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).[5]

In the same publication, Jeannine Suurmond and Prakash Mani Sharma also provided a definition, however in slightly different language. Peace infrastructure to them was, "the structures, resources, and processes through which peace services are delivered at any level of a society," and made a useful distinction between formal and informal peace infrastructures:

> 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.[6]

The definitions offered by the UNDP, Hopp-Nishanka, and by Suurmond and Sharma represent very different theoretical approaches and, broadly speaking, capture the tussle in the field currently. On the one hand, the UNDP and Hopp-Nishanka rely primarily on the institutionalisation of the

---

[4] Kumar, C., & De la Haye, J. (2012). Hybrid Peacemaking: Building National "Infrastructures for Peace". *Global Governance, 18*(1), 13-20.

[5] Hopp-Nishanka, Ulrike. "Giving Peace an Address? Reflections on the Potential and Challenges of Creating Peace Infrastructure." In *Peace Infrastructures: Assessing Concept and Practice*, edited by Barbara Unger, Stina Lundström, Katrin Planta and Beatrix Austin. Berghof Handbook Dialogue Series No. 10. Berlin: Berghof Foundation, 2013.: 4

[6] Suurmond, Jeannine, and Prakash Mani Sharma. "Serving People's Need for Peace: Infrastructures for Peace, the Peace Sector, and the Case of Nepal." In *Peace Infrastructures: Assessing Concept and Practice*, edited by Barbara Unger, Stina Lundström, Katrin Planta and Beatrix Austin. Berghof Handbook Dialogue Series No. 10 Reader's Comment. Berlin: Berghof Foundation, 2013.

peace process, therefore favouring more formal approaches. Hopp-Nishanka emphasises their domestic character and seems more permissive of those included in these organisations than the UNDP.

Suurmond and Sharma, on the other hand, adopt the language of free markets and business, talking about "peace needs", "peace demands", the delivery of "peace services" in reply to such demands and so on. While such an approach raises another set of questions, it seems to recognise the change potential of informal peace infrastructures more. Andries Odendaal goes as far as hinting that informal peace infrastructures might in some ways be superior, although he does not pursue this line of enquiry further.[7]

Problems with the concept

The emerging literature and observable practice have steered the concept away from the original, Lederachian formulation concerned almost exclusively with reconciliation processes, towards a tool for peacebuilding as a whole. This has happened to such an extent that it is over-stretching the original intent of the concept, bringing it into the problematic realm of prescriptive methodologies similar to that we see in Liberal Peace.

One notable criticism of the concept has been that it is a project of social organisation, primarily suiting the interests of the State elite and the international community, before the conflict-affected society. Vincent Verzat has been one to prosecute this case most forcefully, claiming that the creation of peace infrastructures in case of Ghanaian peace architecture was essentially a "top-down, governmentally and internationally led approach",[8] counterintuitive to the grassroots and mid-level orientations of the original concept.

Prescriptive approaches to creating peace infrastructures do not just reinforce a powerful elite, but as Oliver Richmond warned, are also vulnerable to being captured post-establishment by local interest groups.[9] One may consider the case of Nepal where peace infrastructure was created and integrated haphazardly with local-level structures, only to be (unsurprisingly) taken over by political interests at the grassroots level. It should not be assumed that the perversion of peacebuilding initiatives is an ability of the State's elite alone; peace infrastructure may just as easily become a vehicle for further consolidating the power of local elites. Peacebuilding initiatives that are "local" are not inherently or eternally good.

---

[7] Odendaal, A. (2010). An Architecture for Building Peace at the Local Level: A Comparative Study of Local Peace Committees. New York: UNDP.

[8] Verzat, Vincent. "Infrastructures for Peace: A Grass-Roots Way to Do State-Building?". In *Peace Infrastructures: Assessing Concept and Practice*, edited by Barbara Unger, Stina Lundström, Katrin Planta and Beatrix Austin. Berghof Handbook Dialogue Series No. 10 Reader's Comment. Berlin: Berghof Foundation, 2014: 5.

[9] Richmond, Oliver P. "Missing Links: Peace Infrastructures and Peace Formation." In *Peace Infrastructures: Assessing Concept and Practice*, edited by Barbara Unger, Stina Lundström, Katrin Planta and Beatrix Austin. 22-29. Berlin: Berghof Foundation, 2013.

Richmond, Oliver P. "Peace Formation and Local Infrastructures for Peace." *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 38, no. 4 (2013): 271-87.

Indeed, the broadening of infrastructures for peace has had the result of, once again, feeding into the more state- and market-centric approaches which we have come to associate with the Liberal Peace. With the UNDP now championing the concept wholeheartedly, and setting the industry standard so-to-speak, infrastructures for peace has now become a benchmark for all peacebuilding initiatives to meet. Sure, the UNDP's endorsement signals the international peacebuilding community's desire to engage with local-level actors; however, increased popularity is making infrastructures for peace yet another "tick-box" exercise to resolve conflict.

A consequential problem thus arises with the potential for peace infrastructures to be over-institutionalised and overly prescriptive. As Lederach pointed out when re-joining the debate in 2012, bureaucratisation and professionalisation do not in and of themselves assure a higher quality of response in peacebuilding.[10] The rigidity with which bureaucracies themselves hinder the creativity and fluidity needed to tend to the diverse social demands of the conflict-affected context. What peacebuilding organisations need more than a professional working class is a cohort of staff that are familiar with the often complex historical and cultural setting of the local troubles.

To throw the baby out with the bathwater?

With pitfalls becoming apparent so early, the question emerges, should we simply let go of this concept? The convenors of the conference do not think so, and nor did the majority of last year's participants.

Despite its Liberal Peace tendencies, the earliest notion of peace infrastructure attempted to provide a practical proposition to attaining a functional level of peace. Based on a similar constructivist tradition, we thought the way forward is to meet the problems head-on, keeping our eyes on the opportunities that peace infrastructures offer to the cause of peace, whilst always being wary of its flaws when the concept flirts with the statism, which characterises contemporary international peacebuilding.

Peace infrastructure as a concept and methodology for practice is in a good place right now: increasing interest in its challenges and daily opportunities for building peace leaves the road ahead open to creative ideas, techniques and projects.

Rather than seeking to canonise it, we wholeheartedly encourage discussion about and experimentation with peace infrastructures. The truest manifestations of peace infrastructures, we believe, are found in dialogical and diverse peace efforts that are attune to social, cultural and political realities. As such here we have tried to curate a selection of papers that most accurately express the diversity of opinion, academic approach and empirics in the field, and importantly raise some constructive thoughts.

Conclusion and introduction to papers

This volume of papers begins with an extensive and high-level discussion of peace infrastructure by Ulrike Hopp-Nishanka, keynote at the conference. Ulrike explores the emerging

---

[10] Lederach, John Paul. "The Origins and Evolution of Infrastructures for Peace: A Personal Reflection." *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development* 7, no. 3 (2012/12/01 2012): 12.

trends in the literature on peace infrastructures. She identifies three approaches – the positivist, the critical, and the empirical – operating in relative isolation from each other and makes the case for more intensive interaction and discussion. The core argument of the paper is to see the potential of peace infrastructures in transforming the state itself. Finally, Hopp-Nishanka lays out possible directions for future research.

The paper of Md. Touhidul Islam takes a top-down approach and explores how peace infrastructures may be used as an instrument to consolidate peace agreements. The paper argues that infrastructures for peace be created as an instrument to link elite pacts to realities prevailing in other strata of society and thereby ensuring they succeed.

The need to ground infrastructures for peace in reality is an argument also prosecuted in the following article by Kaitlyn Hedditch, but with noticeably less optimism than Touhidal. In her piece, Hedditch conducts a systematic review of the infrastructures for peace commentary regarding the Kenyan Wajir Peace and Development Committee, the number one success story of the infrastructures for peace concept and bottom-up peacebuilding. Hedditch discovers a strong propensity for 'outsider' commentary – i.e., namely seen in the I4P literature – to over-simplify the concept and therefore impair the organic nature needed for the concept to success in reality. Similar to Lederach's point in 2013 vis-a-vis the institutionalisation of the concept, Hedditch argues that while I4P can be an effective agent in cultivating positive social values and attitudes, it does not do so when it is over-theorised and implemented in a literature-prescribed fashion.

The journal then moves further into more empirical examples of infrastuctures for peace starting with a piece from Newt Kay Khine, a former journalist who gives first-hand account of state-sanctioned media censorship in Myanmar. Kay examines the work of the government body established to regulate and monitor media outlets, the Press Scrutiny and Registration Division, showcasing the arbitrariness in which it vetted all news pieces. While the many Myanmar news outlets helped to advance diverse 'local' identities, she illustrates the lasting impact the state's control has had on ethnic representation in the country. Kay's analysis encapsulates the four years between 2008 to 2012, but as she notes, the PSRD has no doubt influenced just how democratic the country is today.

Johanna Garnett picks up from Kay's piece by exploring locally-grown initiatives to educate on the social instability coming from Myanmar's industrialization and environmental degradation. The country's rapid political and economic change is bringing with it new social and environmental challenges, which the Network for Environmental and Economic Development is trying to stem by promoting alternative development processes across the country. Johanna adds an interesting commentary to the peace formation debate by exploring environmentalist elements through the work of NEED.

The last of the empirical pieces in this special edition is by Harout Akdedian, who interrogates peace infrastructure in Syria over the past 20 years or so. He charts their establishment as not part of but working with the State in the early 2000s, only then to become the heart of local Islamic power groups' religious-political opposition to Bashar al-Asad's regime. His paper is a powerful piece in highlighting how infrastructures for peace, such as religious centres and charities, and schools, which once taught tolerance and national unity in Syria, have become easily obtainable social assets to advance particular interests and belief systems. Harout perfectly illustrates how infrastructures for peace, because they are effective vehicles for social changes, are vulnerable to exploitation of an elite few.

This volume concludes with a theory-based piece by Karen Kennedy, who sets a poignant contrast to the prescriptive discourse that surrounds infrastructures for peace. Karen suggests that we forego endeavours to define the concept because, as she claims, this inevitably draws the concept into the hierarchical understandings of Liberal Peacebuilding that focuses on the state, bureaucratic organisations and a market economy. Perhaps most significantly Karen seeks to subvert the underlying presumption of the state within infrastructures for peace literature. As an alternative, she explores nonviolent social defence and recent ideas of the Anarchist Turn, arguing that communities can use strategic nonviolent action to buffer themselves from violence.

Infrastructures for Peace as a Contribution towards State Transformation?
Contours of a Critical-Constructive Research Agenda

Ulrike Hopp-Nishanka[*]

Introduction

Every day, committees and working groups around the world are meeting to discuss people's concerns, rights, interests and livelihoods that are contested in the context of violent conflict. In some cases, representatives of all conflict parties are present; in others the meetings bring together community members, civil society organisations and government officials. Sometimes these gatherings take place under the open sky in villages spread out in the countryside, sometimes in the meeting rooms of a President's Office. In some cases, they take place in order to prevent escalation of violence; in other contexts, commissions are established in order to implement a peace agreement. All these different forms of institutionalised interaction between stakeholders can be considered elements of infrastructures for peace (Unger et al. 2013).

The last years have seen a lively debate on how to theorise these efforts and conceptual scoping is still in progress. While some authors would go by the term of peacebuilding, others prefer the term of 'peace formation'. Here, the intention is to highlight local agency and to differentiate and distance these efforts from externally dominated, supposedly liberal peacebuilding (Richmond 2012 and 2013). Nevertheless, both perspectives have in common a general notion that 'the local' is at the centre of peace efforts. It should be noted, however, that views on 'the local' vary (Chandler 2013, Mac Ginty 2015, Paffenholz 2015).[1]

While the theoretical debate is on-going, practitioners are also considering the added value of the conceptualisation of infrastructures for peace (see in particular the Berghof Handbook Dialogue published in 2013 with a continuing online discussion). In order to learn from experiences and further develop the concept, common ground and synergies among the different perspectives should be explored further.

This article will delineate the current discourse, discuss elements of definition as well as offer a research agenda. The contested role of the state will take centre-stage, as the text will argue that infrastructures for peace can be seen as a way of contributing to the transformation of the state.

Perspectives on infrastructures for peace – between liberal peacebuilding and emancipation of local agency

While the roots of the nascent concept are commonly described as going back to the 1990s with the UN's Agenda for Peace as well as Lederach's middle-out approach (van Tongeren 2011), it is not

[*] Ulrike Hopp Nishanka, Senior Policy Advisor on Peacebuilding and Reconstruction for Syria, Iraq, Yemen and Libya, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Germany

[1] For an overview and literature review see Hughes et al. (2015) and Leonardsson & Rudd (2015).

so clear where the concept stands to-date. Considering the literature on infrastructures for peace during the last 5 years, we can so far identify three main groups of perspective:

— The first, positivist group mostly focuses on the description of conceptual ideas which offer a heuristic framework for activities or interventions observed in practice. Here, the theoretical foundation is often sketchy or missing, and reference to literature is mostly made 'in passing' with a strong emphasis on Lederach (1996). Much of this literature references a selected few empirical cases, which are cross-referenced by other authors (Kumar 2011, Odendaal 2010, van Tongeren 2011).

Naturally, this group also encompasses donor publications, factsheets and guidelines as well as practitioners' commentary (Bombande 2014, Unger et al. 2013, UNDP 2013). A particular role in the development of the concept takes UNDP with several staff members authoring articles (e.g. Kumar 2011, Paladini Adell 2012, Ryan 2012); but also other major donors like the EU published their own factsheet concerning national dialogue platforms and infrastructures for peace (EU EAAS 2012). The proliferation of donor references to the concept, however, appears to fuel the interest of a second group of authors.

— This second group – representing a critical theory perspective – is concerned with the concept's potential connection to liberal peacebuilding. There is also concern about it being too mechanistic or inviting as a blue print for the peacebuilding industry (Verzat 2014). Given the risk of instrumentalisation by the state or international actors, civil society needs to be cautious to be drawn into external or elite-driven statebuilding efforts. Some of the criticism draws on the current discourse on 'the local' (Leonardsson & Rudd 2015).

In addition, the role of the state in infrastructures for peace is considered problematic. Local peace agents should be foremostly concerned with their own emancipation and peacebuilding efforts. Some authors like Oliver Richmond (2012, 2013), however, offer a constructive way out by linking infrastructures to the alternative framework of peace formation.

— The third group is that of in-depth empirical studies that discuss in detail a specific aspect or element of infrastructures and their activities and relevance. One such author would be Andries Odendaal who has written extensively about peace commissions and forums (Odendaal 2010, 2012). For a variety of topics from peace secretariats (Hopp-Nishanka 2012c) to early warning mechanisms (Alihodžić 2012) see the special issue of the Journal of Peacebuilding and Development (van Tongeren et al. 2012).

This kind of literature is potentially more numerous in publications than the other two, but authors do not necessarily relate to the concept explicitly. This is for example the case for literature on truth and reconciliation commissions. Only recently, the concept is being discussed in combination with other topics of subjects of peacebuilding, e.g. security sector reform (Ghimire forthcoming), national dialogue (Siebert 2012) or peace agreement implementation (Islam 2015)

To-date these three perspectives do not yet interact as much as they should in order to critically assess empirical findings, feed back into conceptualisation and further theorisation. As Heathershaw (2013) pointed out regarding the liberal peace debate, the field of peacebuilding needs to overcome the demarcations between positivist and critical perspectives. Likewise, this paper argues that all three perspectives are relevant to propel the conceptual development forward, to deepen our understanding and to engage critical views.

This would be relevant since the concept offers a lot of potential to deal with some challenges in the process of promoting peace, in particular with regards to engaging the state, linking different tracks and bringing local concerns and needs to the attention of peace talks and national dialogues (Hopp-Nishanka 2012a, Ryan 2012). Furthermore, and perhaps more importantly, the concept already at this state provides a way of mapping peace actors and considering their interactions with the state with a view to transforming the same. This article will argue that the last aspect - transformation of the state - might be considered the concept's central contribution to peacebuilding.

From local peace committees, district officers responsible for peace promotion to the central government's ministry for rehabilitation and reconstruction – in many conflict situations we find elements of an infrastructure for peace. The respective governments often will be criticised by peace and human rights activists for not doing enough, for being party to the conflict, and political elites in many cases will attempt to manipulate the infrastructure in their own interest. Still, the local communities often welcome the regular, albeit frustrating meetings with their district officer since they might provide an opportunity for change (Hedditch 2015).

This paper argues that caution is required. In many situations, we must not expect the state – while being a party to the conflict - to turn into an enabling, empowering actor. Rather we need to consider ways to contribute to the transformation of the state: we need to learn from emancipatory and decolonial thinking how to empower the agency of those who want change within the state. We need to understand how local actors can confront and engage the state through infrastructures, and we need to consider the role of external actors in this difficult context of power asymmetry.

This is why the above-mentioned perspectives on infrastructures for peace should be brought closer together in a future research agenda. In order to do so effectively, the paper will first offer clarifications on several aspects of the concept.

Definitions, theoretical and normative clarifications

In order to make use of the concept's potential we need to be clear – or clearer – about three aspects of the concept: the overall definition of infrastructures for peace, the theoretical grounding of the concept, as well as its normative foundation.

While Lederach wrote about the idea with a view to networks already in the 1990s, there was a revival of the concept around the years 2010-2013 (Lederach 1996, 2012, van Tongeren 2011). Building on workshop results of a meeting among representatives from 14 African countries facilitated by UNDP in 2010, an often-cited definition of infrastructures for peace refers to the "dynamic networking of interdependent structures, mechanisms, resources, values and skills, which, through dialogue and consultation, contribute to conflict prevention and peacebuilding in a society" (Kumar 2011, 385). This appears to be a rather broad definition that potentially includes everyone engaging in and on peace. In this author's perception, such a broad understanding is not helpful; the focus should be more on institutionalised forms of interaction. This is in line with Suurmond's and Sharma's differentiation between the wider peace sector as "the part of society that deals with the demand for peace" and infrastructures for peace as "the structures, resources, and processes through which peace services are delivered" (Suurmond & Sharma 2013, 3).

Paul van Tongeren offered a definition that connects network ideas with institutionalisation, the legal and financial framework of infrastructures (2011). He outlines a number of main

components of an infrastructure for peace, including peace councils at different levels of administration but also capacities and skills required to fill the structures with purpose. Similarly, this author's definition highlights the organisation and linkages between elements of infrastructures, the mandate, the inclusiveness of composition and their legitimacy (Hopp-Nishanka 2012a). These elements have to be context specific and embedded in the traditions of the respective society.

While some of these texts at their time remain unclear whether an infrastructure concerns a single organisation or the sum of its elements, at hindsight the latter should be preferred. Kai Brand-Jacobsen compared the infrastructure for peace to that in other public sectors, e.g. the health sector (Brand-Jacobsen 2010). Just as the health infrastructure comprises hospitals, health stations, school nurses, nutrition consultants etc. an infrastructure for peace should refer to the sum of its elements, to all institutionalised forms of engagement between the stakeholders as well as their linkages and connections.[2] In such interpretation of infrastructure several aspects are relevant: its institutional mandate and organisation, the development of policy and professionalization of expertise.

While the example of the health sector is a highly sophisticated one, not every infrastructure for peace will see the same level of differentiation and organisation. Therefore, it appears useful to identify a common denominator found in most of the examples in practice: infrastructures for peace are intended to give dialogue, consultation and conflict resolution and the respective stakeholders a set of rules of engagement and a space – though not necessarily physical. This alternative space often allows for creativity and for thinking out of the box (Kovacs 2015).

For many local practitioners, infrastructure is about giving community dialogue or reconciliation efforts an actual address (Hopp-Nishanka 2012a). This address might be under a palaver tree, in a tent or - for virtual dialogue - an IP address; it does not necessarily have to be an office (Puig Larrauri et al. 2015). Often it seems, however, that such space in a building, a meeting point is highly desired by local peace actors. What matters is that all stakeholders can access the space and have the possibility to negotiate their participation - albeit at times in separate forums, as the example of women's shuras in Afghanistan as a mode for local level participation in consultation and decision making show.

This notion of negotiated participation and reliability of inclusion leads to a second aspect of organization and institutionalisation: the rules of engagement. Institutionalization brings with it mandates, membership, terms of reference and some kind of regularity and standardization of the activities within an infrastructure. This appears to be a value added as it can contribute to reliability and confidence building (Giessmann 2015).

One should note, however, that the other side of the coin is called bureaucracy and that, of course, regulation, professionalisation and institution building must not lead to reducing creativity and responsiveness (Lederach 2012).

Perhaps bearing in mind this criticism, many authors focus on "values and skills", as in the UNDP definition above (Kumar 2011, 385). Both are of course relevant, but they remain vague at the same time. Concrete rules of engagement like a peace commission's membership and mandate,

---

[2] Suurmond and Sharma (2012, 2) suggest using the term infrastructures for peace (lower-case) to indicate the parts and the term "Infrastructure for Peace (IfP)" (upper-case, with the acronym for purposes of clarity) to indicate their sum. Since the single parts tend to be complex units that can function more or less independently of the overall Infrastructure for Peace (IfP), we might consider them in their own right.

which can address important issues like inclusion, are relevant if one wishes to engage the state and go beyond voluntary civil society networks or peace constituencies.

This leads to the question of the subject of infrastructure for peace. Here again, literature often remains vague and appears to opt for the usual wide range of peace actors from society, polity and government. While certainly many peace actors may have their role as members of an infrastructure, the issue at stake, however, is the involvement of the state. A network of civil society might make a big difference in a local situation, but they will realize that resources and institutions of the state need to be engaged as well in order to achieve peace writ large. This is particularly true in context of national dialogues, peace agreements and their implementation.

This leads to the second aspect requiring clarification. Given the critical stance of many authors regarding infrastructures for peace as a potential instrument of liberal peacebuilding, the **theoretical foundation** of the concept requires clarification.

First of all, it should be noted that infrastructures for peace as a concept are deeply rooted in the school of conflict transformation. The original idea of Lederach is connected both to his thinking on conflict transformation and process-orientation as well as to his thinking on the role of local agency (Chandler 2013, Lederach 1997). It is helpful to share here a quote of Lederach (1997, 84 cited partly as well in Chandler 2013, 24): "An infrastructure for peacebuilding should be understood as a process-structure … made up of systems that maintain form over time yet have not hard rigidity of structure… made up of a web of people, their relationships and activities, and the social mechanisms necessary to sustain the change sought".

Further conceptualisation should thus build on systemic approaches to conflict transformation in order to capture the embeddedness of peace infrastructures in a wider peace and conflict system (Ropers 2011). In order to stay clear of the institution building short-cut taken in liberal peacebuilding approaches, the comprehensive nature of conflict transformation needs to be highlighted. Earlier thinking on conflict transformation remains valid here: transformation requires a deep structural change in society, encompassing new social relations, institutions and visions (Mitchell 2002, Paris 2004, Väyrynen 1999). Transformation is required with regards to the context, the relationship between the conflict parties, the issues at stake, as well as with regards to the actors – both on an organisational and an individual, personal level. The article will return to the last aspect, the actor transformation, in the following chapter.

At the core of the concept of infrastructure for peace should be the quest for agency of the 'local', primary conflict and peace stakeholders – i.e. those actors that will form peace based on internal, domestic traditions and cultural practices (Paladini Adell 2012, Richmond 2012). The so-called 'local turn' asks to acknowledge agency of these actors and let them form or build their own peace (Mac Ginty 2015). This again is in line with conflict transformation thinking which sees the primary conflict actors as drivers of transformation (Lederach 1995, Mitchell 2002). International support to local stakeholder efforts is nevertheless possible in limited ways, if it cares for contextual and localized polities and engages local legitimacy, norms and institutions. At times the agency of some local actors benefits from external support but at times it also avoids it for various reasons, e.g. in order not to be seen as influenced by the international intervention.

Consequently, in order to understand peace formation efforts and how they can be supported, a critical analysis of power relations between the local, the state and the international intervention is required. Not only is it required to understand the dynamics between the local and the state; it is likewise important to consider the relationships between each of them and the

intervening, externals. Furthermore, as Hughes et al. note (2015, 820), "there has been little discussion of the ways in which 'the local' itself may be internally contested, oppressive, even violent, except as a mirror for external aggression directed at it by international forces". A more systemic perspective offers alternative analysis of the role of local elites, state institutions and local agency (Chandler 2013).

Thirdly, closely connected with the theoretical foundation is the concept's **normative foundation**. This is particularly relevant with a view to the liberal peace critics' perspective on the supposedly binary relationship between internal, domestic and external, international actors in a peace and conflict system (Heathershaw 2013, Paffenholz 2015).

If not prescribed and imported, approaches and avenues to peace have to be discovered within the system and the stakeholders. External actors, especially donors, should first of all be careful not to let their structural or governmental power mislead them into prescriptiveness (Richmond 2013).

Moreover, there is concern about instrumentalisation and manipulation at two levels – firstly, the external manipulation of international organisations and donors that use infrastructures as a new tool in their liberal peacebuilding approach. And secondly, manipulation might take place from within – given the power asymmetry between state and its citizens and given the fact that the state can often be identified as a conflict actor. Local abuse of power could come at the hands of traditional power holders or new power brokers enthroned by the international intervention. These concerns are legitimate and need to be addressed when considering the establishment of infrastructures either from bottom-up or from top-down.

Nevertheless, it is important to give space to the capacities and solutions that lie within the system. In order to do so, the capacity of intervening agents is important: they need to have an elicitive capacity. This refers to their ability to foster autonomous learning and action among the stakeholders, to engage in a way of empowerment and recognition, avoiding instrumentalisation, victimization, stereotyping and patronising (Scotto, 2012).[3]

Against this backdrop, it needs to be said that infrastructures for peace are not for every context; in some cases, engaging a predatory and autocratic state, or a local government dominated by warlords and criminals, through collaborative infrastructures for peace might be pointless. In such situations, support for human rights defenders, strengthening of local peace constituencies in civil society or community building with the aim of improving local livelihoods could be more appropriate. Here, international community needs to identify other ways of engaging the state.

In many other contexts, however, it appears worthwhile to engage the state at various levels and through different channels even if the state is partisan to certain interests or driver of marginalisation. So far, literature mostly focuses on the question if the state should and could be included in infrastructures for peace in order to promote peacebuilding or peace formation, or if this inclusion would potentially 'spoil' the infrastructure. The following chapter will turn around the question in order to ask if infrastructures for peace could be an avenue to help with the transformation of the state in order to make peacebuilding a possibility.

In sum, the nascent concept of infrastructures for peace needs a theoretical 'home' and a clarification of values and principles guiding its application. Taking into account the discussion so far,

---

[3] The elicitive capacity is coined after Lederach who suggested non-directive, "elicit training" as the way to discover and use the potential of implicit knowledge and solutions (Lederach 1996).

it is suggested to root the concept in the school of conflict transformation and consider it as a contribution to what could be called 'state transformation'.

Engaging the state - infrastructures for peace as contributions towards state transformation

As outlined in the beginning of this article, the current discourse(s) on infrastructures for peace appear to be searching for a balance between two perspectives regarding state involvement – the positivist and the critical. It is argued here that the middle ground should be explored further by dealing with the dilemma of state engagement in a critical-constructive way. This way, the gap between the constructive potential of infrastructure for peace and the risk of instrumentalisation for statebuilding might be bridged. This author proposes to consider engaging the state in infrastructures in a transformative sense.[4]

In this perspective, the theoretical framework of reference is that of conflict transformation, rather than that of liberal peacebuilding or statebuilding. This seems more relevant to situations of protracted conflict in which the state is contested and change cannot be brought alone through institution building and governance reform. While these are important elements in a process of systemic transformation, they are not sufficient.

Literature on conflict transformation has attempted to grasp the complexity of systemic change be establishing categories or types of transformation. One categorisation is offered in Miall's model of transformers of conflict (Miall 2004), which distinguishes between context (regional or international environment), structure, actor, issue, and personal/elite transformation. These categories should be seen in a complementary manner.

Considering the relevance of the categories for transformation of the state in a context of violent conflict, several categories seem to apply. The transformation of structure refers to the structure of the conflict, i.e., the number of parties involved and their relative power balance and relationship, and their sources of power. This often relates to the structural aspects of violence, if for example the source of power of a conflict party is based on political exclusion. Institutional and state reform measures have a particular role in this type of transformation while relating to issue transformation at the same time.

Issue transformation concerns the parties' positions towards the conflict issues, e.g. minority rights or the distribution of resources. These conflict issues concern the state in manifold ways, as they might be ensconced in the constitution and the fundamental structure of the state. The transcendence of such contested issues will mostly be a prerequisite for lasting peace.

Actor transformation relates to strategic choices in the organisation and general approach of the parties to conflict. This category is of particular relevance if the state is considered to be partial towards one conflict party or if the state itself is party to the violent conflict. Examples are changes of leadership or goals of the actor or its constituency. These could occur in the case of a regime change after elections as well as through awareness and capacity building of constituencies. This category is closely related to personal or elite transformations, which concern changes of perspective, of will or heart. Such changes in individuals' perceptions, attitudes and values can take place in manifold ways, often inspired through personal insights at critical moments. While some interventions aim at creating conditions for such transformations, it is obvious that they can only

---

[4] The idea has been discussed already earlier under the notion of self-transformation (Hopp-Nishanka 2012)

reach a limited circle of people. Often, they focus on a selection of elite, or potential change agents, albeit at all levels of society. In order to affect a wider circle, e.g. government staff at large, personal transformation requires a combination with actor transformation.

The short overview shows that state transformation will usually concern several categories of transformation. It will require drivers from within and as well as support and critical engagement from society. In this comprehensive spirit of transformation, infrastructures should embrace both society and state institutions and focus on their mutual interplay. On the one hand, the local aspirations for peace, security, development and identity are translated into the state, and on the other hand, the state is translated into a localized polity. (Richmond 2013).

Such engagement comes about in various ways: In some cases, civil society actors might request local government representatives to attend their meetings, to listen to their concerns and needs, and to work with them towards improvement (Hedditch 2015). Infrastructures like local peace councils may grow out of this experience in a bottom-up way. In other cases, the involvement is top-down if governments engage stakeholders by providing financial and material resources for peacebuilding at the local level, or by establishing policy and governmental routines through, for example, a ministry for peace and reconstruction.

The bottom-up approach is more obviously transformative. If questioned about the purpose and value added of engaging government officials, participants in infrastructures for peace refer explicitly to the transformation of state actors. For example, it is important that local government representatives consider local needs in their analysis and adjust their policy response. Taking into account community needs might transform how the local government implements political directives. If feedback is channelled to the national level, the infrastructure might serve as a conduit for transforming views and policy on contested issues.

The top-down approach in which a national infrastructure is implemented directly and with government authority takes a more implicit approach to transformation. As in the Ghanaian example, the government sees the establishment and appointment of structures and officers dedicated to peacebuilding at diverse levels of administration. These official structures are supported in their new role and function through exposure and capacity building. Evidence from the Philippines suggests that – very much like Lederach's middle-out approach – modern government servants at middle management levels use their role in infrastructures for peace to work towards transformation 'from within'. With their work, they aim at undermining traditional, contested state structures and establishing the foundations of a legal framework of a rational, modern state (Kovacs 2015).

Just like the establishment of gender units within government ministries is supposed to contribute to gender mainstreaming, one can argue that a state-owned peace infrastructure furthers the state's awareness, expertise and responsiveness on peace-related matters. Following this argument, these infrastructures have the potential to bring peace-related expertise into policy making with the aim of a comprehensive government approach towards peace. This is the approach of the Global Alliance for Ministries and Infrastructures for Peace, which "collaborates with and supports governments and civil society around the world working to establish national ministries and departments of peace, and also to support efforts to develop local, regional, and national peace councils, peace academies, and other effective infrastructures for peace" independently of their direct exposure to violent conflict (GAMIP 2015).

Whereas transformation in the midst of violent conflict and at stages of escalation is more difficult (Hopp Nishanka 2012b), one could argue that infrastructures for peace in a post-agreement context might have more transformative impact (Islam 2015). Here, the state needs to be transformed comprehensively in order to implement the agreement; this is often done in a multi-pronged approach linking governance reform to reconciliation, economic recovery and reform in education.

These efforts are of course of a long-term nature and state transformation is not only about a change of hearts among government officials. Transformation also requires legal state reform and constitutional change. State bias might nevertheless persist for a long time, and one should also note that national-level infrastructures for peace are not necessarily the most powerful ones in a government cabinet. While they are bestowed with presidential powers in some situations, in others, their role might be mostly symbolic. In the worst case, they offer a potential avenue for addressing government responsibility with the claim that not enough is done (Hopp-Nishanka 2012c).

In any case, they offer a channel for improving relations between state and society, which is considered to be a key element of peacebuilding assistance in fragile contexts (OECD 2007). Most prominently, this notion is reflected currently in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) where inclusion is addressed prominently in Goal 16. While the goal is titled "promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels", the indicators encompass a collection of various aspects broadly concerned with the theme of peace. Most relevant to this discussion is goal 16.7 ("Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels"). It would appear that one way to achieve this is to engage the state through infrastructures for peace.

Master plan or food for thought - a matter of perspective

Critical observers might yet again perceive the discussion above as leading towards a master plan of state transformation. This is the case with much of the literature on infrastructures for peace, or peacebuilding altogether, if it potentially offers ideational structure and conceptual guidance. There is valid concern that the concept could applied as a 'blue print' without detailed analysis and understanding of the local context. It is therefore important to note, once again, that master plans serve simplification and cannot be implemented like a blue print. Rather than being concerned with their replicability, one should consider the analysis of infrastructures as food for thought.

This food for thought is intended primarily for those who engage in infrastructures for peace. The people, who spend their time and resources to be part of infrastructures in a conflict situation, do have a very legitimate interest to know what works and what not.

If research intends to inspire learning from other contexts and introspection in order to improve peace practice, researchers need to listen to the practitioners' questions, their concerns and their way of looking at infrastructures.

Consequently, one needs to ask who should conduct this research and how to avoid the usual biases and misrepresentations. If research is concerned with 'the local' in peace formation, it needs the local perspectives to have a stronger word in the research agenda. In order to do so,

— we have to overcome the binary understanding of the researcher and the research subject which often follow the alleged international – local divide;
— we have to cross disciplinary boundaries;
— and we have to transcend the divide between academia and practice.

Suggestions for further research

The following suggestions are developed from this author's understanding and interpretation of the concept of infrastructure for peace. They resonate with discussions in different academic and practitioners' forums and conferences. And they are driven by the essential concern that agency of peace actors must not be hampered by structure and organisation.

Firstly, more empirical research is required. Given what is known about infrastructures, more independent research is required to validate the existence, performance and relevance of infrastructures on the ground.

A lot of literature refers to anecdotal evidence, self-descriptions of governments or reports of donor and international agencies involved in the respective infrastructure, and there are concerns that some of the infrastructures look very different in reality.
Secondly, we need to understand the effectiveness of infrastructures. There are three central assumptions that lead much of the current thinking about the concept:

— A central contribution of peace infrastructures appears to lie in offering the opportunity for inclusion of stakeholders at various levels (Hopp-Nishanka 2012a). This takes place e.g. through facilitating dialogue in peace councils, through participatory decision-making in joint commissions, or through enacting public ownership in local implementation of peace agreements.

Whereas there is a substantial body of research on inclusion in processes – be they national dialogues or peace processes - there is less research on the organisation of inclusion. What can be learned about the inclusion of women or youth in peace infrastructures? Even less is written about institutionalisation of inclusion, e.g. the inclusive staffing and leadership, the representation in boards and steering committee.

What do we know about inclusion in an organisation and its hierarchy; the timing and sequencing of inclusion, e.g. at which point certain stakeholders need to be represented in ministries and commission, or whom to invite first? What do we know about the effects of exclusion, about the combination of partisan and joint, collaborative infrastructures? Here lies a vast field of topics for further research.

— The same is true for the second assumption: Infrastructures are effective because they stand for continuity and reliable rules of engagement (Giessmann 2015). Local peace commissions follow certain rules when engaging in conflict resolution; truth commissions work on the basis of a carefully crafted mandate that stakeholders can refer to.

But is that assumption actually true? Have we probed into theories of change sufficiently? Do we know how trust and confidence in institutions are built and maintained? How do we recruit and train government officials who serve as representatives in peace commissions? Under which

circumstances can confidence in local bodies survive and perhaps mitigate the break down of Track 1 negotiations?

Or is trust building mostly depending on the informal relationships, the personal connections and responsibilities that form within infrastructures as well? How does the informal, relational power influence the role of insider mediators or traditional leaders within formal infrastructures?

— And lastly, we require better understanding of linkages. As said before, the concept is based on a multi-track understanding and foresees both vertical as well as horizontal linkages (Danielak 2013). This idea is strongly based on one of the earliest infrastructures established to help the implementation of the National Peace Accord in South Africa, which inspires much of the conceptualisation to date (Siebert 2012).

In how far this multi-layered approach can be applied in other contexts needs to be tested. There are many related practical questions, such as:

— how to deal with regional and local variation within nation-wide structures?

— What to do with geographical areas not under government control?

— How do we deal with vertical linkages in case of strong politicisation at one level? When is it better to disconnect levels?

— How to connect to other infrastructures on the ground, e.g. water user groups, school associations, local development and monitoring committees? Often we see the same dignitaries attending all of these. Should we mainstream and connect? Should mandates be kept separately?

These are some of the questions that come to mind when thinking about themes of a multi-disciplinary research agenda that considers power and politics of infrastructures for peace.

An even bigger question concerns the proposition of state transformation through infrastructures for peace. Under which circumstances can such transformation 'from within' be effective, what can be expected, where are limitations, and which kind of support is possible? This matters to all those people meeting every day in committees and working groups around the world in order to discuss their concerns, rights, interests and livelihoods. They know that they can only achieve so much on their own without the government taking action. They know that their local efforts to manage conflict and build bridges between communities need to resonate on other levels in order to lead to peace writ large.

The proposition also matters to all those government officials, to public servants as well as to political advisors, who want to see their government policies and administration change. They want to see the state transformed.

References

Alihodžić, Sead (2012). Electoral Violence Early Warning and Infrastructures for Peace. *Journal of Peacebuilding and Development*, 7(3), 54-69.

Bombande, Emmanuel (2014). Peace Infrastructure Initiatives. Raising Aware-ness to Build Sustainable, Locally Rooted Peacebuilding Programs. Key Note Speech at the Third Asian Peace Practitioners' Research Conference, held December 5 – 7, 2014 in Siem Reap, Cambodia. http://www.centrepeaceconflictstudies.org/wp-content/uploads/Keynote-Speech-Emmanuel-Bombande.pdf

Brand-Jacobsen, Kai (2010). Towards an Effective Architecture-Infrastructure for Peace: Learning from Medical Health. Annex 2 of GPPAC Working Paper on Infrastructures for Peace, July 2010. Download not accessible anymore.

Chandler, David (2013). Peacebuilding and the Politics of Non-linearity: Rethinking 'Hidden' Agency and 'Resistance'. In: Peacebuilding, 1 (1), 17-32.

Danielak, Silvia (2013). External Aid Incorporated? Infrastructures for Peace and the Challenge of Coordination in Kyrgyzstan. Reader's Comment on Berghof Handbook Dialogue Series No. 10, http://www.berghof-foundation.org/fileadmin/redaktion/Publications/Handbook/Dialogue_Chapters/dialogue10_comment_danielak.pdf

European External Action Service (2012). Strengthening National Capacities for Mediation and Dialogue: National Dialogue Platforms and Infrastructures for Peace. Mediation Support Project Factsheet. http://eeas.europa.eu/cfsp/conflict_prevention/docs/2013_eeas_mediation_support_factsheet_peace_infrastructures_en.pdf

Fontan, Victoria (2012). *Decolonising Peace*. Doerzbach, Germany

GAMIP 2015. Mission Statement of the Global Alliance for Ministries and Infra-structures for Peace. http://gamip.org/mission-vision.html

Ghimire, Safal (forthcoming). Making security sector reform organic: infrastructures for peace as an entry point? In: Peacebuilding.

Giessmann, Hans J. (2015). "Infrastrukturen des Friedens" notwendig, möglich, illusorisch? Vortrag in der Plenarsitzung der Leibniz-Sozietät am 07.05.2015, Leibniz Online, 18/2015, http://leibnizsozietaet.de/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/giessmann.pdf

Heathershaw, John (2013). Towards Better Theories of Peacebuilding: Beyond the Liberal Peace Debate. In: *Peacebuilding*. 1 (2), 275-282.

Hedditch, Kaitlyn (2015). Deconstructing the Local Peace Puzzle: Building a Bet-ter Understanding of the Factors That Influence Success of Local Peace Committees. Paper presented at UNE Peace Studies Conference 2015. Ques-tioning 'Peace Formation' and 'Peace Infrastructure', held 26-28 August 2015 at University of New England, Parramatta/Sydney.

Hopp-Nishanka, Ulrike (2012a). Giving Peace an Address? Reflections on the Potential and Challenges of Creating Peace Infrastructures. First published online in June 2012: Peace Infrastructures - Assessing Concept and Practice. Berghof Handbook Dialogue No. 10. Berghof Foundation. http://www.berghof-foundation.org/fileadmin/redaktion/Publications/Handbook/Dialogue_Chapters/dialogue10_hopp_nishanka_lead.pdf. Accessed on 21.09.2015

Hopp-Nishanka, Ulrike (2012b). Infrastructures for Peace at the Height of Violent Conflict. *Journal of Peacebuilding and Development*, 7(3), 70-74.

Hopp-Nishanka, Ulrike (2012c). Between Negotiation Support, Relationship Building and Propaganda. The Contribution of the Peace Secretariats in Sri Lanka to Conflict Transformation. Doctoral Dissertation. Hamburg.

Hopp-Nishanka, Ulrike (2013). Circularity, Transversality and the Usefulness of New Concepts. Reflection on the Response Articles, in: Unger, Barbara et al. (eds.). Peace Infrastructures – Assessing Concept and Practice. Berghof Handbook Dialogue Series No. 10. Berlin: Berghof Foundation. www.berghof-handbook.net/documents/publications/dialogue10_hopp_nishanka_resp.pdf

Hughes, Caroline, Joakim Öjendal and Isabell Schierenbeck (2015). The Struggle versus the Song - The Local Turn in Peacebuilding: An Introduction. *Third World Quarterly*, 36 (5), 817-824.

Kovacs, Balazs (2015). Peace, Infrastructure, and Statebuilding at the Margins in a Philippine Province. Paper presented at UNE Peace Studies Conference 2015. Questioning 'Peace Formation' and 'Peace Infrastructure', held 26-28 August 2015 at University of New England, Parramatta/Sydney.

Kumar, Chetan (2011). Building National "Infrastructures for Peace: UN Assis-tance for Internally Negotiated Solutions to Violent Conflict. In: Susan Allen Nan, Zachariah C. Mampilly & Andrea Bartoli (eds.). *Peacemaking: From Practice to Theory*. New York: Praeger, 384-399.

Lederach, John Paul (1996). *Preparing for Peace. Conflict Transformation across Cultures*. Syracuse, NY.

Lederach, John Paul (1997). *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*. Washington, DC.

Lederach, John Paul (2012). The Origins and Evolution of Infrastructures for Peace: A Personal Reflection. *Journal of Peacebuilding and Development*, 7 (3), 8-13.

Leonardsson, Hanna and Gustav Rudd (2015). The 'Local Turn' in Peacebuilding: A Literature Review of Effective and Emancipatory Local Peacebuilding. *Third World Quarterly*, 36 (5), 825-839.

Mac Ginty, Roger (2015). Where is the local? Critical Localism and Peacebuilding. *Third World Quarterly*, 36 (5), 840-856.

Miall, Hugh (2004). Conflict Transformation. A Multi-Dimensional Task. In: Austin, Alex, Martina Fischer and Norbert Ropers (eds.) *Transforming Ethnopolitical Conflict. The Berghof Handbook*. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag, 68-89.

Mitchell, Christopher R. (2002). Beyond Resolution: What Does Conflict Transformation Actually Transform? *Peace and Conflict Studies*, 9(1), 1-23.

Odendaal, Andries (2010). An Architecture for Building Peace at Local Level: A Comparative Study of the Use of Local Peace Forums. A working paper commissioned by UN BCPR, mimeo.

Odendaal, Andries (2012). The Political Legitimacy of National Peace Committees. *Journal of Peacebuilding and Development* 7 (3), 40-53.

OECD (2007). Principles for Fragile States and Situations. Paris. http://www.oecd.org/dacfragilestates/the10fragilestatesprinciples.htm

Paffenholz, Thania (2015). Unpacking the Local Turn in Peacebuilding: A Critical Assessment towards an Agenda for Future Research. *Third World Quarterly*, 36 (5), 857-874.

Paris, Robert (2004). *At War's End. Building Peace after Civil Conflict*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Puig Larrauri, Helena, Rodrigo Davies, Michaela Ledesma and Jennifer Welch (2015). New Technologies: The Future of Alternative Infrastructures for Peace. White Paper Series No. 20, Geneva Peacebuilding

Platform, http://www.gpplatform.ch/sites/default/files/WPS%2020%20-%20New%20Technologies%20-%20Puig%20Larrauri%20-%20Davies%20-%20Ledesma%20-%20Welch.pdf

Richmond, Oliver (2012). Missing Links: Peace Infrastructures and Peace Formation, in: Unger, Barbara et al. (eds.). Peace Infrastructures – Assessing Concept and Practice. Berghof Handbook Dialogue Series No. 10. Berlin: Berghof Foundation. http://www.berghof-handbook.net/documents/publications/dialogue10_richmond_comm.pdf.

Richmond, Oliver (2013). Peace Formation and Local Infrastructures for Peace. In: Alternatives: Global, Local, Political, 38 (4), 271-287.

Ropers, Norbert (2011). Peace Processes as Corridors for Systemic Change: In-sights from Sri Lanka 2002–2005. In: Körppen, Daniela, Hans J. Giessmann & Norbert Ropers (eds.). *The Non-Linearity of Peace Processes – Theory and Practice of Systemic Conflict Transformation.* Opladen, Farmington Hills, 148-166.

Ryan, Jordan (2012). Infrastructures for Peace as a Path to Resilient Societies: An Institutional Perspective. *Journal of Peacebuilding and Development* 7 (3), 14-24.

Schmeidl, Susanne (2015). The Local Quest for Peace: Moving beyond 'A few good men' to More Permanent Peace Infrastructures. Paper presented at UNE Peace Studies Conference 2015. Questioning 'Peace Formation' and 'Peace Infrastructure', held 26-28 August 2015 at University of New England, Parramatta/Sydney.

Scotto, Giovanni (2012). Elicitive Capacity as a Critical Component for an Infrastructure for Peace. Paper prepared for the conference: "New Frontiers for Peacebuilding", 13-14 September 2012, University of Manchester, UK.

Siebert, Hannes (2012). National Peace and Dialogue Structures. Strengthening the Immune System from Within instead of Prescribing Antibiotics, in: Unger, Barbara et al. (eds). Peace Infrastructures – Assessing Concept and Practice. Berghof Handbook Dialogue Series No. 10. Berlin: Berghof Foundation. www.berghof-handbook.net/documents/publications/dia-logue10_siebert_comm.pdf

Suurmond, Jeannine and Prakash Mani Sharma (2013). Serving People's Need for Peace: Infrastructures for Peace, the Peace Sector, and the Case of Nepal. in: Unger, Barbara et al. (eds.). Peace Infrastructures – Assessing Concept and Practice. Berghof Handbook Dialogue Series No. 10. Reader's Comments

UNDP (2013). Issue Brief: Infrastructure for Peace. BCPR, New York. http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/crisis%20prevention/Issue_brief_infrastructure_for_peace_27022013.pdf

Unger, Barbara, Stina Lundström, Katrin Planta and Beatrix Austin (eds.). 2012. Peace Infrastructures – Assessing Concept and Practice. Berghof Handbook Dialogue Series No. 10. Berlin: Berghof Foundation.

Väyrynen, Raimo (1999). From Conflict Resolution to Conflict Transformation: A Critical View. In H.W. Jeong, ed. *The New Agenda for Peace Research*. Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, pp.135-160.

Van Tongeren, Paul, Ozonnia Ojielo, Kai Brand-Jacobsen, Erin McCandless and Necla Tschirgi (2012). The Evolving Landscape of Infrastructures for Peace. *Journal of Peacebuilding and Development*, 7 (3), 1–7.

Verzat, Vincent (2014). Infrastructures for Peace: A Grass-roots Way to Do Statebuilding? Reader's Comment on Berghof Handbook Dialogue Series No. 10, http://www.berghof-founda-tion.org/fileadmin/redaktion/Publications/Handbook/Dialogue_Chapters/dialogue10_comment_verzat.pdf

Signing Peace Agreements: A Negotiated Beginning of New Relationships—What Helps Afterwards Sustaining It?

Md. Touhidul Islam [*]

This paper by viewing peace agreements as a stepping-stone of enduring peace aims to explore key factors and conditions that assist in a process of transition from violence to stability and peace, once agreements are in place. Negotiated peace agreements, a compromised way-out from violent conflicts, have been widely pursued by the international community and policy-makers for resolving internal conflicts in the post-Cold War changing political landscape. Negotiated agreement sets a peace framework for the parties involved in armed conflict. A new formal relationship between parties often emerges out of conflict when leaders shake hands after long period of fighting over their goals. In reality, incidents of armed violence have often stopped, or reduced, in many occasions, if not all. In many occasions, agreements nevertheless have produced nothing but negotiated breaks in the cycle of violence. This paper, however, does not pursue that external support and attention to peace processes should be stopped after signing agreements; what it crucially argues, instead, is an emphasis on the implementation of agreement, a means of trust-building between/among signatories, to support comprehensive peacebuilding activities, to bridge local knowledge, approaches of local peace, and global norms. Such hybridization has to be sensitive to conflicting contexts, and accepted by locals, in order to sustain a lasting 'peace infrastructure'. This paper concludes by reasoning that such a hybridization can not only reduce gaps between conflicting parties through participatory decision-making processes but also improve their understandings in relation to transform their negative relationship in longer-term into a workable one, at least.

Introduction

The settlement of internal armed conflicts through negotiated peace agreements, which have been mediated by external third parties, has become a normative trend in the post-Cold War political landscape. Statistics show that 216 peace agreements have been signed between 1975 and 2011. The majority of these were signed in internal conflicts—only 20 were interstate agreement, and a high number of internal agreements were signed during the 1990s and 2000s (Högbladh, 2011). This is perhaps one of the main reasons why Bell (2006) termed the post-Cold War period as "decades of peace agreements" (p. 7). The rise of numbers of peace agreements indicates that parties like to end war by consensus, whatever the legitimacy of armed conflicts is, since there are no absolute winners and losers in the contemporary conflicts (Pfetsch, 2012). Signing agreements at top level, nevertheless, does not guarantee that it will lead to sustain a new relationship the peace agreement creates. Some studies of the last twenty years show that 50 per cent of negotiated agreements survived maximum five years, or violence resumed within on an average of three and a half years' time, such as in Liberia, Angola, Cyprus, Rwanda and so on (Licklider, 1995; Hartzell, Hoddie, and Rothchild, 2001). On the other hand, nearly 40 percent of peace agreements failed within first five years (Harbom, Högbladh, and Wallensteen, 2006), which means the survival of negotiated peace agreements has been increased. Nevertheless, the potential for recurring violence after signing agreement does exist. Many peace agreements, for instance, have ended long-term violent conflicts, such as in Mozambique, South Africa, El Salvador and Bougainville, whereas in many places agreements have produced mixed results, like in Cambodia, Guatemala, Philippines and Sierra Leone.

Considering the above facts and issues, this process-oriented paper, based on wider secondary literature, aims to understand different factors and analyse the extent to which such factors help to create peace infrastructures and sustain peaceful relationship that peace agreements generally create by signing at the elite level. By recognizing the fragility and uncertainty of the post-agreement contexts, where chances of recurring violence exist as the distrust of parties to each other prevails, this paper proposes to argue that peace agreement itself is an infrastructure of peace that emanates from the mediation process. An agreement is a public commitment, made by the leaders of the conflicting parties to their people and communities. However, sustaining post-agreement peaceful relationships is a complex politico-social process. It is a process that just does not stop with the singing of an elite-level agreement. It has many other issues to accomplish in a long-term transition and transformation process. There is no 'one size fit to all' process; instead, it is a context-dependent process, wherein an agreement, by its nature and contents, has implicit value of sustaining relationship. The more an agreement upholds patterns of peace infrastructure, the better the process of sustaining relationships between the parties and communities. Besides that, the implementation of agreement provisions, which indicates both the compliance and commitment of the parties, helps to build confidence of parties to each other, plays as crucial a role as comprehensive peacebuilding activities for keeping parties on track in order to tackle violent challenges, which may arise anytime in the post-agreement phase due to different critical reasons.

The post-agreement peacebuilding, however, has to be hybrid in nature. The hybrid peacebuilding, which has a large canvas that accommodates different activities and programmes including the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) of ex-combatants, participatory election and socio-economic development, and addressing outstanding issues of the past, can improve relationships between the parties and communities in longer term. The externally pursued liberal peace, which has been called into questions for different reasons, may not produce expected peace, and could lead to counter-productive results (Richmond, 2007; 2013; Paris, 2004), if the local

communities and parties are not involved in such processes. The outstanding issues of armed conflict like the past atrocities and injustices committed by the parties during the conflict, however, have to be overcome jointly by the agreement signing parties—through re-negotiation, continuous discussion and involving the whole society in such processes. Therefore, 'a hybrid peacebuiilding' process that covers the complementary aspects of liberal peace and local knowledge as well as indigenous strengths (Mac Ginty, 2010), which Mitchell (2012) has called a bridge between the 'vertical' peacemaking and the 'horizontal' peacebuilding, has been more convenient than pursuing only the liberal peacebuilding for building relationships between the parties. In order to sustain such relationships in the post-agreement contexts, what has been required is to establish some kinds of peace infrastructure in contexts. If peace infrastructures are in place that helps to bring any emerging contentious issues into the consideration of the governing authority, on the one hand, and sort those out in due process for sustaining peace in the longer-term, on the other. This paper has two main sections. The first section briefly defines peace agreement, and the second section discusses explicitly about the factors that contribute to sustain peace after negotiated peace agreements.

Peace agreement: A new relationship begins

A peace agreement in internal conflict has primarily been views as is a formal mutual contract between/among conflicting parties that aims to settle disputed incompatibility, either fully or partially (Uppsala Conflict Data Program [UCDP], 2014). The main objective of signing a peace agreement is to stop armed conflict in a negotiated manner (Bell, 2008). Peace agreements, often negotiated by external parties, however, create a new social space, a new relationship that comes out of the past conflicting relationship of the parties. Maintaining or rejecting such relationship in a new social environment is a long-term issue, which mostly depends on the agreement signing parties.

Although Bell (2008) has termed peace agreement as a "lay term" due to the nature and complexities of the contemporary conflicts (p. 47), Vinjamuri and Boesenecker, (2007) have seen the phenomenon as "formal legal agreement" aiming to end armed conflict (p. 6). An agreement also "sets forth terms that all parties are obliged to obey in the future" (Vinjamuri and Boesenecker, 2007, p. 6). From that point of view, negotiated peace agreements in fact set a foundation for peace infrastructure out of armed conflicts. In other words, peace agreement itself is an infrastructure set by the parties through intense negotiation, often facilitates by the third parties. In a wide encompassing literature of peace infrastructure, Hopp-Nishanka (2012) has identified several issues and factors to engage conflicting parties in the process, but perhaps missed the point that without setting a foundation of setting different mechanisms in the peace agreement, what there should be monitored in the implementation process. Therefore, a peace agreement that usually places different mechanisms, both formal and informal, such as power sharing or devolution arrangements amongst other issues, forms an infrastructure of peace which works in the post-agreement phase to regulate behaviours of the parties and to tackle further challenges in the peace process. Peace agreements however are not "formulaic documents"; these can be replaced by new follow up agreement(s) (Dupuy, 2008, p. 152). When the top leaders of the conflicting parties shake their hands after new agreements, it becomes new commitments for the parties to their people for political, economic and social changes. This creates a new social relationship between the parties which is definitely different form the past conflicting relationship since they direct a violent conflict into a non-violent political direction (Darby, 2010). Peace agreements as an instrument thus create a new space for (ex-) conflicting parties in the post-agreement situation, wherein many issues also

evolve, based on the needs and priorities of parties and communities. This is a way of opening up new windows for greater hope of peace.

Sustaining post-agreement stability and peace: What helps?

When a peace agreement is signed, it brings a new beacon of hopes for many people including civilians, who suffered from indiscriminate violence of conflict. The hope is for transition from violence to stability to peace and making it sustainable. The process of lasting peace after agreement is not only to maintain 'negative peace', but also to sustain a state of peace for longer-term in a way so that the rival groups do not like to get back to armed violence. The possible factors and issues, as shown in figure 1, in general contribute significantly into such process of lasting peace.

Figure 1: Post-agreement possible factors that help to sustain peace

Sustaining a state of peace in post-agreement situation therefore requires changing perception and behaviours of parties to each other, and transforming previous negative relationships into a positive one for the longer period. It not only means restructuring political structures but also emphasizes on re-building "peaceful human relationships" so that former conflicting parties can live together in a new social environment wherein diverse interests could be

"regulated constructively" and equitably, if not "equally" (Cochrane, 2008, p. 150; El-Bushra, 2006, p. 235). For sustaining peaceful relationship in a long-term process both decision-making and grassroots levels must be interconnected and integrated. Without involving grassroots people of conflict-affected communities and groups, elite peace process, often assisted by liberal agents, cannot strengthen ties between parties and communities in divided societies.

The inclusiveness of peace agreement

Although signing peace agreement is a key stepping-stone in an on-going process of transforming relationships, how inclusive an agreement is that is a foremost issue in relation to understand the process of enduring peaceful relationship. We can consider inclusivity of a signed peace agreement in relation to two important issues: the number of conflicting parties that signed an agreement and its contents. Both of these issues nevertheless are dependent on specific context and nature of the conflict, which in general determine the design and contents of an agreement. How many of the conflicting parties of an internal conflict, however, join in a painstaking negotiation process and how many of them finally become signatories of an agreement that are critical in defining the inclusivity of an agreement. The simplest sense is that if an agreement includes all contending parties that will lead to sustaining peace like in Cambodia, Bougainville, South Africa etc.; otherwise, parties outside an agreement could try to disrupt the deal (Rubin, 2002; Licklider, 2001).

The inclusion of civil society voice in peace negotiation process, on the other hand, has both positive and negative implications in reaching an agreement that satisfy all parties' interests and demands, particularly after harsh armed conflict (John and Kew, 2013). Beside the external efforts, civil society was involved in the negotiation processes of the 1999 Lomé Peace Agreement (LPA) of Sierra Leone (Crwford-Garrett, 2012), the 1996 Guatemalan Peace Agreements (GPAs), and the 2001 Bougainville Peace Agreement (BPA) (Chand, 2013). The 1991 National Peace Accord (NPA) of South Africa was the results of businesspersons' covert initial initiative of meeting with both the African National Congress (ANC) and National Party (NP) government for negotiated settlement of the problem, although external pressure of sanction and divestment played a crucial role too (Wood, 2000; UN, 1994; Bairstow, 2008). On the other side, some peace processes did not involve wider civil society like in El Salvador and Cambodia—but all major concerned parties had signed agreements after intense negotiation process, and made avenue towards next stages.

Beside inclusion of major conflicting parties, the substance of an agreement is also crucial for changing violent political relationship between the contending parties into a non-violent, workable peaceful one. Focusing on the significance of contents of peace agreements, Hampson (1996) stated that it is the peace agreements that sometimes "contain the seeds of their own destruction" (p. 3). Therefore, the design of peace agreements and their contents are important factors to determine the extent to which agreements will transform a conflicting relationship. Putting it differently, the contents of an agreement lay the foundation of its success during the implementation phase and afterwards. To what extent an agreement addresses root causes of conflict, ensures the participation of contending parties in the political process, and supports initiatives of reforming existing institutional structure, or creating new institutions, if essential, that determine its further success. Without incorporating these wider issues in agreements, it would neither be feasible to implement agreements nor to prevent recurring of armed violence.

Agreement provisions like power-sharing, formal reconciliation and accommodative efforts etc., give greater insights for success of settlements (Derouen Jr. et al. 2010). Incorporating amnesty provisions also has positive effects on keeping agreement parties on track (Melander, 2009), though

not too many agreements have included issues of the past atrocities and human rights violations in the contents (Wallensteen, Melander, and Högbladh, 2013). According to Badran (2014), "the design quality of the peace agreement is determined by the number of mechanisms it contains to address impediments to cooperation . . . the more mechanisms the agreement contains, the better its design" (p. 196). Well-negotiated and carefully designed agreements thus can have more pacifying effects at post-agreement stage, although parties in general aim for re-negotiating issues when there is a lack of substantive contents, which mostly depends on the credibility and commitments of actors and parties. There is no hard and fast rule for agreeing on the contents of an agreement. Each context is different, as each agreement. Therefore, the design and the content of an agreement rely on the nature and issues of conflict, but have substantive impact on lasting peace in the post-agreement situation.

Political commitment for implementation of agreement provisions

The implementation of provisions of signed agreements is a key to stability—a first step to show political willingness of parties to subsequent process. Post-agreement immediate implementation stage is most "volatile" and "fragile" in nature (Walter, 1997; Bekoe, 2008). One misjudged attempt of implementation can undermine the whole enterprise of peace agreement. Failure of implementing agreement provisions, intentionally by one party or due to lack of institutional capacities, moreover, can jeopardise process of relationship building (Derouen et al. 2010). It is however crucial to consider that whatever conflicting parties usually agree on in an agreement cannot be executed immediately after signing a deal. Some agreements define the implementation timeframe, while many others do not. In spite of having an agreed period, full implementation has not been finished within that timeframe in many occasions for different reasons. What is essential in such circumstances is to show political commitment and willingness by implementing priority provisions for starting transition process smoothly, which can pursue further cooperative moves in relation to altering negative relationship.

In asymmetric power-relationship of the post-agreement situation, the main responsibility of implementation depends on political will and ability of the powerful party, mostly the government (Salvesen, 2002). For instance, the political willingness and leadership in El Salvador as well as in South Africa were leading factors for effective implementation of accord provisions and overall stability (Hampson, 2001; Wood, 2000). There is no quick approach of implementing so many provisions of contemporary peace agreements. Once armed violence stops after peace agreements, the implementation of the crucial provisions throughout the short and medium terms have to be prioritized for making transition and improving state of stability, aiming to sustain peaceful relationship for longer period.

Conflicting groups however usually go for implementation of agreement provisions once they find two key guarantees. One is security guarantee for demobilization and disarmament of the fighting groups and the other is power-sharing in the post-conflict first government (Walter, 2002). Parties moreover consider the 'mutual vulnerability' of their political and military concessions during implementation stage (Bekoe, 2008). In Mozambique, for instance, in spite of having a 'weak' agreement, the military and political concessions made by both the Mozambican National Resistance, Resistência Nacional Moçambicana (RENAMO) and Mozambique Liberation Front, Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (FRELIMO) had created 'mutual vulnerability' for them that sustained its implementation through constant re-negotiation process (Bekoe, 2008). The way they were involved in re-negotiation process of electoral institutions and rules formation aligning with their

interests that showed their commitment to the implementation of agreement provisions as well as controlled their behaviour, actions and relationship.

Once political commitment for implementation has been shown by the parties, that makes, on one hand, a balance of "trust deficit" between rival groups, and, on the other, creates a ground for fostering democracy and peace (Joshi and Darby, 2012). The commitment that Papua New Guinea (PNG) and Bougainville leadership has shown in relation to the decentralisation of power to Bougainvillean authority through constitutional process has been remarkable to strengthen trust-building process between the central and provincial government following the 2001 BPA (Wallis, 2012). The constitutional recognition of agreement, often through parliamentary process or referendum, has been seen as one of the great sources of political commitments after peace agreement, which brings wider commitment for parties not to derail from the process (Vendrell, 2007). It is a process of strengthening compliance of an agreement: the compliance of one party is dependent to the compliance of the other party of an agreement, and vice versa.

The negative result of the May 1999 referendum in Guatemala indicates the extent to which political leaders could be reluctant to execute such a priority issue of an agreement, and the extent to which such activities can undermine the spirit of an agreement (Salvesen, 2002). Rushing to execute agreement provisions can also collapse an implementation process during the treacherous post-agreement period (Cunningham, 2012), as we noticed in Sierra Leone after the 1999 accord. Controlling splinter groups, which do not like the execution of agreement provisions for their own interests, therefore has been inseparable from the overall commitment of the parties. This is because such rejectionist groups aim not only to derail peace process but also to create outrage for stopping extensive structural reforms as per agreement provisions in order to maintain the old structure. They often prefer the old framework, which seems more profitable for them. Following the 1999 referendum in Guatemala, which had discarded 12 important constitutional amendments, the armed forces, for instance, had come up with an interpretation that people of the society want their participation in post-agreement peace, although the armed forces as hidden power had been playing a degrading role in the implementation process (Salvesen, 2002, pp. 22-23; Kurtenbach, 2010, p. 85). In such circumstances, it has been important to tackle such groups that liked to spoil a peace process with credible political commitment and actions, either through persuasion (as in South Africa) or application of force (as in Sierra Leone). Such approaches can stop returning to extensive violence in post-agreement situation.

From the discussion of this section, we can come to a consensus that commitment of agreement signing parties to implement its provisions is pivotal not only to keep parties committed to the peace process but also to strengthen the new relationship that an agreement has established. Therefore, the trust-building process that generally starts between conflicting parties during peace negotiation stage has to be linked, and maintained throughout the implementation process so that confidence between/among the parties go upwards (SjØberg, 2007). Without such commitment and trust building, the implementation of an agreement is neither possible, at short term, nor feasible to fulfil judicious demands of parties in longer-term. The more the parties of a peace agreement show their commitment to the implementation of agreement provisions, the better the chance of moving away from violence towards long-term stability and sustenance of a new relationship.

Comprehensive peacebuilding: A means of sustaining post-agreement cooperative relationships

In order to sustain cooperative relationship between/among parties in a post-peace agreement situation, what is important is to attain a range of peacebuilding activities and

programmes, wherein different actors including external and national as well as government and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), whenever appropriate, can jointly contribute in that process. This we can define as comprehensive peacebuilding, which has a large canvas of covering both peacebuilding and statebuilding issues, and a plan of hybridizing the liberal and local approaches and resources complementarily for consolidating and sustaining peaceful relationships. Some issues of peacebuilding, however, need quick execution after agreement, such as the DDR and post-conflict election with external guarantee, while some other need long-term involvements like socio-economic development, and dealing with the past issues for owning peace by people on the ground.

External support: Peacekeeping, DDR and participatory politics

The UN has been played a central role in terms of both demobilizing ex-combatants and holding of democratic elections, with necessary financial assistance and sending peacekeeping troops in many post-conflict contexts. The main objective of UN involvement in such contexts has been nothing but to promote peace, primarily negative peace—through providing credible security guarantee and commitment to the agreement signing parties (Walter, 2002). In spite of having good intentions, many post-agreement governments on their own may not be able to execute provisions of agreement due to numerous reasons, such as inadequate resources, lack of institutional capacity, and, importantly, trust deficit between/among the parties. Considering these issues, external authority has been played a greater role in such contexts in order to execute peace formulas as designed through the agreement (Cunningham, 2012).

Reducing former combatants' firepower and transforming insurgent groups into political parties, where they lack political ideology and structure, are two important tasks at the post-agreement immediate stage, wherein the international community offers security guarantee for the parties to attend such tasks. International guarantee for DDR however is a complex process, which is related to many issues, such as the immediate issues of the 'supply side' of troops, integration of ex-combatants, both institutional (political) and economic, internal politics of rebel groups, and dilemmas of past atrocities and injustices etc. (Berdal and Ucko, 2010, pp. 2-4). The external authority, according to Hampson (1996) can "proffer carrots or wield sticks" to keep parties committed to DDR process. What has been proven important at dangerous post-agreement contexts, where belligerent parties have capacity to return to violence, is to deploy peacekeeping forces in order to keep combatants separate and maintain peace. Therefore, the international community's strategic role after agreement have been considered from three crucial dimensions: (i) peacekeeping, at least to maintain 'negative peace' in situation where conflicting parties have power to retaliate each other (Fortna, 2004), (ii) to provide security guarantee to former combatants for DDR (Walter, 2002), and (iii) to ensure, and enable, participatory decision making process (Papagianni, 2009). These three roles played by the international community have been common and phenomenal in many post-agreement contexts, such as in Cambodia, Sierra Leone and Mozambique, and some places were soft in nature, such as in El Salvador, Guatemala and Bougainville.

Without enough security guarantees parties of an agreement would rarely go for disarming them, because groups' security is core of their survival in the post-agreement situation wherein distrust between the ex-belligerents is highly prevalent. The more soldiers are appointed, considering the power of parties to resume violence, and the widely they are deployed in the post-agreement context, the greater commitment it carries, and the better it will be for the parties to comply for such provisions (Walter, 2002, p. 41). Holding democratic elections, possibly within the

first two years after signing peace agreement, has become a norm, an indicator of transition from violence to participatory politics. In many occasions, internationally mandated forces alongside DDR have been responsible for holding elections like in Cambodia, Mozambique, El Salvador, Guatemala and Sierra Leone. However, before those elections, the rebel groups had been transformed into political party. For instance, the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front, Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN) in El Salvador, the RENAMO in Mozambique and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in Sierra Leone were transformed and prepared for democratic elections with the international assistance. South Africa, however, has been one of the cases where the international community did not send international troops. The internal compliance of parties in South Africa has pursued post-agreement consultative development of constitution, and the post-apartheid multi-party first election in 1994, through which both the ANC and NP formed a unitary government (Lodge, 2009). Following the three-stage DDR process and the PNG constitutional approval in 2004, the first-post agreement election took place in 2005 that established an Autonomous Government for Bougainville (AGB).

What 'exit strategy' does the international community prepare and to whom they leave responsibility to oversee security issues is a crucial factor (Ramsbotham, Woodhouse, and Miall, 2011). Without having an effective but sustainable exit approach of international community after DDR and post-conflict first election, it could be difficult due to contextual complexities to tackle recurring violence and sustain democratisation as happened in Cambodia and Sierra Leone. It requires local security and professionalized forces as happened in many places like El Salvador, Mozambique, Sierra Leone and Guatemala to tackle violent challenges, on the one hand, and to maintain security of the society, possibly non-violently, on the other. The Bougainville Police Service, as a non-coercive force, for instance, has been mandated to 'preserve peace and good order' in accordance with 'rehabilitatory and reconciliatory' policing through connecting local communities and strengthening customary practices, which has significantly been contributed to reducing crimes in post-agreement phase (Wallis, 2012).

Pursuing socio-economic development

Bringing normal economy (by reconstructing economic institutions and promoting socio-economic development) back after war-ravaged, fractured economy has been an imperative for many post-peace agreement countries. The main objective of economic development is to accommodate all, affected by war, in normal life (Castillo, 2001). This issue in general does not receive enough attention from practitioners' perspectives, though it does not carry less importance from conflict sensitive development perspective. The core assumption that most, if not all, of practitioners hold is that only pursuing neo-liberal economy (i.e. privatisation and market-oriented economy) will automatically bring normal socio-economic situation back in post-agreement contexts. This in fact has not always worked in consolidating peace, which is a complex issue. Because, without addressing root (economic) causes of conflict, the promotion of neo-liberal economy has instigated further political and socio-economic tensions, and at worst recurred violent conflict (Francis, 2012). Insensitive development interventions by external authority moreover can cause more harm than doing good (Anderson, 1999). Unless people including former combatants see enough contribution of peace dividend in everyday life, a relapse of violence is highly probable (Verkoren and Junne, 2012). When war ends by negotiation, it creates the scope of reducing military expenditure of the country, and invites external actors to contribute in socio-economic and infrastructural development, mostly pursued by liberal peacebuilding agenda, which often comes with strings and conditions.

If basic livelihood conditions of people in post-agreement contexts do not improve, it is difficult, if not impossible, to keep ex-conflicting groups out of violent behaviour. The economic interests of conflicting parties, which contributed to armed violence from beginning, just do not go away by signing an elite-level agreement. Nor do ex-combatants like to give up their involvement with profitable activities, mostly linked with illegal and criminal means, until they see further attractive incentives through lawful activities (Verkoren and Junne, 2012). In the long-term, they have to be integrated in development process aiming for them to become self-dependent by involving in formal income generating activities. Post-conflict socio-economic development interventions, either from the donor or government side, have to be sensitive to local contexts so that they do more good than cause unintended harms. What, besides international development assistance, is required is to build capacities of post-agreement economic institutions, which can transform a war-affected economy into a formal economy, and foreign aid dependent development into local production based economy, so that people participate in locally based economic works like agricultural production or other contextual income generating activities.

The common issue of many post agreement contexts is that most cases have been dependent on externally driven liberal development agenda (like in Sierra Leone, El Salvador, Mozambique and Cambodia), while only a few have focused on domestic approaches of pursuing development (like in South Africa and Bougainville). The liberal economic practices like in El Salvador, Cambodia and Sierra Leone have been strengthened the sources of economic power of political elites. Mozambique has transformed from centrally controlled political economy into a market-oriented economy during early 1990s under international pressure (Shikhani, 2012). This 'elite capitalism', which is inextricably related with state, party and economy, promotes further inequality in the post-agreement society (Phiri and Macheve, 2014; Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2012). This has been true for many contexts including El Salvador, Guatemala and Bougainville.

Though with the assistance of the diaspora community, health and education spending have increased from approximately 3 per cent of national income of late 1980s to 4.5 per cent during early twenty-first century (Pleitez, 2003, p. 64), educational opportunity has remained inaccessible for many poor people in El Salvador. The society moreover has remained stratified—the gap between rich and poor as well as rural and urban is high, mostly due to the economic interests of rich oligarchy (Arnson, 2003; Zamora, 2003). This has been the case in Bougainville too. The per capita income has been rebounded to 40 per cent of pre-conflict, both income and services have been recovered, but one-third of the schoolchildren have remained out of schools (Chand, 2013). The quick socio-economic growth through mining, which had been one of the leading causes of conflicts both in Guatemala and Bougainville, however has been the key potential challenges of resuming violence due to insensitive economic policies in the former case.

There is not much commonality in promoting socio-economic development in post-agreement contexts other than neo-liberal socio-economic policies, pursued by the international community and supported by national elites. The basic issue of post-agreement development approach, based on different contexts, nonetheless is that development programmes have to be focused on societal needs and demands of people on the ground, and sensitive to local contexts, whether that is at the central or sub-state level. To what extent the socio-economic apparatus of a post-agreement country/society will be reformed or changed, and in what direction that will go, that have to be guided by contextual needs and priorities, instead of imposing from outside. International community can support such development programmes, but their assistance needs to be for the benefits and well-being of people on the ground. The more peace dividend is used in basic needs fulfilment, the better the chance of keeping people away from violent means.

Dealing with the past, and reconciliation

The issue of dealing with past atrocities and human rights violations is critical in sustaining a new relationship after peace agreement. As we know that peace agreements seldom include deeper issues of past violence, instead incorporate provisions related to general amnesty of combatants, which in other way is a means of neglecting justice of ordinary citizens, who are mostly innocent victims of violence. Reconciliation of past injustice at community level hence is an utmost essential aspect of enduring relationship after elite negotiated agreement. Additionally, maximum, if not all, of the post-Cold War peace agreements have recommended some kind of institutional mechanism, such as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) for addressing past issues. This perhaps is a suitable way that parties to a conflict, and external mediator, prefer for attending, and healing notorious past traumas.

Conversely, issues of crimes against humanity and war crimes in many occasions have been dealt with through special legal mechanisms, such as establishing special courts or tribunals, aiming to bring responsible persons to justice. This international trend of holding top individuals accountable (retributive justice) for crimes has significantly improved human rights situations in many post-conflict countries comparing to countries that did not use such process (Hein, 2015). Without addressing issues of past atrocities and violence, however, neither peace has chance to sustain for longer, nor will parties/communities get space to nurture interdependent cooperative relationship. Numerous studies have regarded reconciliation as a prime area of focus to build restorative relationship between communities after conflict, which is an urgent, but most complex task (Lederach, 1997; Bar-Simon-Tov, 2004; Arthur, 2007; Cochrane, 2008). Reconciliation as an implicit value for comprehensive peacebuilding is a "dynamic, adaptive process" where people interdependently build relationships for moving forward—a way of "reconstructing their identities" in association with political actors, victims and survivors of conflict, who in any circumstances would not prefer returning to violence (Lederach, 2001, p. 842). For preventing the cycle of violence, reconciliation process must address fear, hurt and trauma, and the cognitive and emotional barriers of peace so that citizens of a post-conflict fractured society feel empowered, and humanized, to move forward together (Jeong, 2010).

Many, if not all, peace agreements have applied amnesty of combatants for addressing the past issues, often backed by institutional processes of TRCs. Such processes have involved civil society groups and NGOs in many occasions for bridging gaps between communities at grassroots level. The restorative focus of South African TRC was on jointly moving forward from the past, building a future rather than analysing the past to impose punishment on responsible persons (Cochrane, 2008). This was a process of societal bridge, formally acknowledging past losses and beginning of healing process through which reconciliation happened there (Fombad, 2004, p. 194). This process nevertheless was primarily a "political compromise", and secondly "a strategy of conflict transformation", that effectively moved the country from apartheid, a system of minority white hegemony over majority black people, which was declared as a crime of humanity by the international community, to full-fledged democracy (Fombad, 2004, p. 196; Rosoux, 2009). In spite of some limitations, the South African approach showed that TRC as a building block had not only played a crucial role on national unity and reconciliation, but also showed how former antagonists can live together after signing political settlement agreement.

Sierra Leone established a TRC like South Africa in order to collect "historical record" of the conflict and to restore "human dignity of victims and promote reconciliation" (Gberic, 2005, pp. 207-

208). Following the 2000 crisis, the UN furthermore pursued establishing the Sierra Leone Special Court (SLSC), backed by US and UK, upon a request from Kabbah government for prosecuting those who were involved with "greatest responsibility" in the civil war, mostly the RUF leaders who were in leadership since 1996. The two parallel processes of SLSC and TRC have called into questions on the extent to which Sierra Leoneans wanted or needed these externally driven expensive initiatives as long 'social forgetting' and healing mechanisms are embedded in their society (Harris, 2013, p. 138).

The spontaneous grassroots approach of reconciliation in Mozambique, based on traditional healers, called Curandeiros, agreed not to get hold of "truth about the recent past" but to use post-agreement political momentum for building future through rituals and ceremonies (Ryan, 2007; Kelly and Fitzduff, 2002, p. 27). A traditional pattern of exchange of gifts (compensation like pigs), an outward approach to reconciliation, between feuding communities worked as a symbol of restoring relationship and re-establishing social harmony in Bougainville (Boege, 2009). Grassroots groups have been involved in this process since 2003, wherein women, chiefs and churches persuaded their sons, brothers and husbands to disarm themselves and involve in reconciliation process for forgiveness. It was the chiefs, who criticized ex-combatants, and offered forgiveness in rituals by saying, 'we no longer call you ex-combatants, you are now our men' (quoted in, Spark and Bailey, 2005, p. 604). When such collective reconciliation worked well in situations like Bougainville, individuals have in effect been encouraged to confess to and ask for forgiveness for past atrocities or murder form families or relatives of victims (Braithwaite, 2011).

The above discussion stipulates that addressing issues of past human rights abuses and atrocities is a complex politico-social process in the post-agreement phase. The contexts could be different, but feelings of victims of violence mostly are the same. The evidence from different cases shows that apart from internationally sponsored legal processes of prosecuting responsible persons, there are different alternative means of bridging divides between ex-conflicting parties and communities. The alternative mechanisms include establishing TRC, granting amnesty to combatants, paying reparations to victims, community-based reconciliation etc. None of these mechanisms is less important in reconciling parties, victims and communities after armed violence, which often ends by negotiated agreement. There is no 'one size fits all' approach of reconciliation and dealing with past issues, however. It varies from context to context, conflict to conflict. The advantage of having provision related to past issues and reconciliation in peace agreements is that it unfolds paths of reconciliation more easily than agreements, which do not include such clauses. In other words, the more the issues of past are included in political settlement, the easier the process of reconciling parties and communities.

Hybridizing peace infrastructure

Maintaining a peaceful relationship following a peace agreement has to be institutionalized, and hybridized, in the long-term gradual process so that parties and relevant communities would not go to use violent means for future demands. Important to note that two former UN Secretary Generals, namely Boutros Boutros-Ghali and Kofi Annan, have advocated for the "institutionalization of peace" and "lasting peace" through wider peacebuilding works. Institutionalizing a peace infrastructure that is relevant for the overall maintenance of stability, security and peace moreover needs to be linked with issues of everyday governance. An inclusive governance system, wherein grassroots people of conflicting communities can participate in decision-making processes, would give them a sense of protection in new socio-political arrangements (Rothchild and Roeder, 2005). As long an existing system of difference between groups exists that often, if not always, could

constrain efforts of maintaining relationship for longer term (Jeong, 2010). Therefore, institutionalizing and hybridizing the peace structures, which often peace agreements call for by different means, is seen indispensible for sustaining peace. Either creating new institutions or capacity building of existing institutions in line with peace agreement is thus important for institutionalising a peace infrastructure. It is a means of changing the pre-agreement power dynamics at the post-agreement phase through transforming old institutions that created conflict (Lyons, 2009). This refers to a way of strengthening the capacity of the state and society to deter further challenges that may emanate from different actors due to diverse reasons at the post-agreement phase (Derouen et al. 2010; Boltjes, 2007). However, peace infrastructure does not only include the formal institutions of the state, but the informal mechanisms that exist in the society have to be integrated with the institutional approach for peace maintenance works.

The concept of establishing infrastructure of peace in the post-conflict situation has been advocated by the international community in the contemporary peacebuilding literature aiming to endure peace. Though the concept is still in the process of its maturity, it initially came into the prominence through the writings of Lederach (1997). Although a peace agreement is seen as an infrastructure of peace through which new relationship emerges, it does not indicate the conclusion of lasting peace. An agreement creates an atmosphere of evolving new infrastructures aiming to endure peace and to bring positive change in the society. "The notion of infrastructure", in Lederach's (2012) view, is to propose "a longer-term view of change required a high view and reconsideration of context in order to understand, encourage and support resources from within the setting. At its core, infrastructure suggested that change unfolds over time and requires a quality of presence rooted in the setting with a capacity for generative responses to emergent crises and a longer-term, shared vision of desired change" (p. 10). Peace infrastructure generally covers a wide range of installations and mechanisms that can be used for sustaining peace. According to Hopp-Nishanka (2012),

> "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 facilities of public participation), or the implementation of process results (e.g. through monitoring and coordination of agreement implementation" (p. 3).

Although she emphasised on peace infrastructures at different stages, this paper focuses on the post-agreement infrastructures of peace which need to be useful to sustain peaceful relationship that a peace agreement brings out of the conflicting relationships. An institutionalized infrastructure briefly can help to accomplish the implementation of agreement, to address potential disputes, and to connect elite level political processes with grassroots initiatives of everyday peace. The promoters of liberal peace like the UNDP (2013), the DFID (2010) and the WB (2011) considering the dynamics and contexts of contemporary conflicts have emphasised on establishing wider networks of peace, "a network of interdependent systems", a hybrid peace model, wherein the government and non-government institutions can connect each other in the greater set up of the society. Their visible objective is to sustain peace after conflict.

In order to ensure post-agreement lasting peace, it requires a hybrid nature of peace infrastructures after violent conflict that connects everyday life of people from below with the institutionalized process (Richmond, 2013; Mac Ginty, 2010; 2014; Ramsbotham et al. 2011). This

hybridity is by no means an option rather an utmost necessity for enduring peaceful relationship after peace agreement. The people and institutions, who and which are placed in the middle of the peace pyramid, as Lederach (1997) developed, are key to pursue such functions of relationship building by connecting national level processes with grassroots people and social institutions like religious institutions, schools and community organisations. Peace infrastructure thus includes a wide range of formal and informal structures, and their main purpose is to strengthen the post-conflict peacebuilding process and to last and support peace among the people and communities. This is a dynamic adaptive process. It requires to recognise the "historic patterns of division and violence, both direct and structural" and to adapt with the "long, slow processes of change" in order to capitalise opportunities of sustaining peace and preventing emerging violent tensions and challenges (Lederach, 2012, p. 11).

The South African peace infrastructure under the National Peace Secretariat played a crucial role in promoting reconciliation and social cohesion at the community level after the 1991 accord. The Regional Peace Councils coordinated the formation of Local Peace Committees (LPCs) in towns and villages, which worked for preventing sporadic violence, mediating local disputes and promoting dialogue, communication and reconciliation. Although this process was not equally smooth across the country, like in KwaZulu-Natal (Odendaal, 2012), such localized violence contributed in both mobilisation and pacification (decrease) of political participation of people in 'everyday peace'. Such participation of people was immensely influenced by emotions such as pride, enthusiasm, joy (positive emotions), fear and anger (negative emotions), and individual's sense of agency (Jarstad and Hoglund, 2015). Individuals who experienced direct armed violence in Sierra Leone have been more participatory in political and civil affairs than non-victims of war (Bellos and Miguel, 2009).

The creation of the National Council for the Defense of Human Rights (NCDHR) along with other institutional structures, such as the creation of a new civilian police force and reform of the army and judiciary has created an overall infrastructure in El Salvador (Arnson, 2003). Civil society organisations of El Salvador moreover have been putting positive lights on the country's progress by pointing out challenging as well as advancing solutions along with state institutions (Castaneda, 2003). The establishment of the Human Rights Committee by the AGB in 2011 in each three regions of Bougainville, which has representatives of Police Service, NGOs and lawyers, has been a further commitment to strengthen the protection of fundamental rights of people (Wallis, 2012). The issue of establishing a hybrid peace infrastructure was also reflected in the post-agreement constitution of 2004. The Bougainville Constitutional Commission states, "'it must recognize the existing authority of traditional chiefs and other traditional leaders, and must build linkages with those leaders. The people wish to see Kastomary [customary] authority recognized within the formal government arrangements'" (quoted in, Boege, 2009, p. 35).

The two-tiered local government system consists of a Village Assembly (VA) and a Council of Elders (CoEs). These institutions function for social integration and local level dispute resolution and perform as effective governance institutions in the AGB (Wallis, 2012). In practice, the VA, which meets once in a week in Tsuhana, the meetinghouse, where the chief leads discussion process, connects rural level community people with the CoEs in an overall hybrid governance system. Important to point in this regard that the CoEs include community elder, instead of 'chiefs', so that grassroots people other than traditional leaders, such as women, churches and youth, are empowered to participate in the local legislative, executive and judicial systems (Wallis, 2012). This "hybrid political order", a combination of the formal western model of statehood including a constitution, a president, a parliament, free and fair election and a public service, on the one side, and the chiefs and elders, village assemblies, councils of chiefs, CoEs, customary law etc., on the

other, has been functioned relatively well both in terms of governance and conflict resolution (Boege, 2009, p. 35). As a result, the state monopoly of use of coercive force has reduced largely. The decentralisation of power in Sierra Leone, on the contrary, has been contributed to maintaining peace, stability and development due to the participatory pattern of politics at local level (Harris, 2013). Some of the municipalities in Mozambique have been functioned well, too, without the major party influence, while some have been struggling with service and competence because of political patronage of ruling party like in some municipalities of South Africa (Bertelsmann Stifung, 2012; Koelble and Siddle, 2013).

Many such infrastructures we may find in any post-conflict society, which work for making the transition, consolidating peace after signing the agreement and equalizing balance of power at grassroots level by empowering local people and strengthening trust of parties in the national quest for peace. The inclusion of local level institutions, both formal and customary, has power of strengthening state functions and improving cooperation of conflicting parties in relation to agreement implementation, development activities and tackling challenges jointly. These infrastructures are the foundations of long-term mechanisms of settling disputes that may arise any time after signing agreement. Negotiated peace arrangements may never produce a lasting peace if people on the ground including former fighting groups and civilian population are not well-connected in an overall "public peace process" (Saunders, 2001). Peace education, which has significant contributing roles for promoting non-violence, mutual understanding, respect and tolerance, moreover, has to be planned considering cultural sensitivity of conflicting parties and communities at post-agreement phase so that none of the former conflicting communities' culture and identities get hurt further (Ramsbotham et al. 2011, pp. 238-239). Both the bottom and top levels have to be interlinked, and that relationship building process has to be maintained through hybrid peace infrastructures so that both complement each other rather than playing divergent roles in a continuous process of sustaining positive relationship. Having peace infrastructures placed within peace agreement thus is an advantage in the longer-term to sustain peace by transformation of negative attitudes and behaviours of the parties.

Conclusion

The transition from violence to stability to durable peace following negotiated peace agreement is a continuous process. Establishing a lasting peace that transforms conflicting relationship is a prolonged process, which often needs generational change. This paper does not claim that this is the only way of studying post-agreement patterns of sustaining relationship, instead explores the significance of many additional factors besides the negotiated agreement that play crucial roles in sustaining relationships in a long-term strategic process. Important to note that violence may stop with the signing of an agreement, but conflict does not. The prevention of violence and consolidation of peace in the post-agreement contexts requires strategic and constant engagement of different concerned parties. Different actors including national and international ones play roles in providing security, consolidating and enduring peace. This nevertheless evolves gradually through the post-agreement joint decision-making, wherein many interconnected issues including the agreement, its implementation and comprehensive peacebuilding activities basically play pivotal roles in a process to transform parties' hostile attitude, and to control violent behaviour.

Transformation of fundamental structure, which created conflict at beginning, is crucial as transformation of a less participatory political process into a participatory one for lasting peace. Institutional capacity building, moreover, is not a matter of only strengthening political institutions,

but also related with security and economic institutions as well as civil service so that ordinary people get advantage of such improvements. Addressing past issues of human rights violations of ordinary people has to be attained, by either special tribunals or formal TRCs or informal process that should be determined by localized contexts of conflicts, instead of relying too much on external efforts, so that it creates a sense of ownership of relationship building for parties and communities. The whole enterprise of post-agreement peace has to be hybrid in the forms of peace infrastructure, wherein the liberal and local as well as national and local approaches can play their due roles in preventing further violence at the bud non-violently, and tackling further discriminatory practices to sustain peace in the society. Nevertheless, the greater the commitment of agreement signing parties show at the post-conflict stage, the more cooperative the process of post-agreement joint decision-making and relationship building likely to be.

References

Almeida Santos A., Roffarello L. M., & Filipe, M. (2015) Mozambique 2015. African Economic Outlook. AfBD, OECD, UNDP. Retrieved from http://www.africaneconomicoutlook.org/fileadmin/uploads/aeo/2015/CN_data/CN_Long_EN/Mozambique_GB_2015.pdf

Anderson, M. (1999) *Do no harm: how aid can support peace or war*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Arnson, C. (2003) Introduction. In C. Arnson (Ed.), *El Salvador's Democratic Transition Ten Years after the Peace Accord*. Washington DC: Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars.

Arthur, P. (2007) Conflict, memory and reconciliation. In M. Elliott (Ed.), *Long road to peace in Northern Ireland: Peace lectures from the Institute of Irish Studies at Liverpool University* (pp. 7-15). Liverpool, England: Liverpool University Press.

Atashi, E. (2009) Challenges to conflict transformation from street. In B. Dayton and L. Kriesberg (Eds.) *Conflict transformation and peacebuilding: Moving from Violence to Sustainable Peace*. (pp. 45-60). London, England: Routledge.

Badran, R. (2014) Intrastate peace agreements and the durability of peace. *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, 31(2), 193-217.

Bairstow, T. (2008) Amnesty, reconciliation, and reintegration in South Africa. A Monograph. School of Advanced Military Studies. United States Army Command and General Staff College.

Barraza, S. (2003) The evolution of the Salvadoran economy: economic and social policy. In C. Arnson (Ed.), *El Salvador's democratic transition ten years after the peace accord* (pp. 55-61). Washington D.C.: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

Bar-Simon-Tov, Y. (2004) (Ed.), *From conflict resolution to reconciliation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bell, C. (2000) *Peace agreements and human rights*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bell, C. (2006) Peace agreements: their nature and legal status. *The American Journal of International Law*, 100(2), 373-412.

Bell, C. (2008) *On the law of peace: Peace agreements and the Lex pacification*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Bellows, J., & Miguel, E. (2009) War and local collective action in Sierra Leone. *Journal of Public Economics* 93, 1144-1157.

Bekoe, D. (2008) *Implementing peace agreements: Lessons from Mozambique, Angola and Liberia*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Berdal, M., & Ucko, D. (2010) Introduction: The political integration of armed groups after war. In M. Berdal & D. Ucko (Eds.), *Reintegrating armed groups after conflict: Politics, violence and transition* (pp. 1-9). London, England: Routledge.

Bertelsmann Stiftung. (2012). Mozambique country report. Retrieved from http://www.btiproject.org/uploads/tx_itao_download/BTI_2012_Mozambique.pdf.

Boege, V. (2009) Peacebuilding and state formation in post-conflict Bougainville. *Peace Review: A Journal of Social Justice*, 21(1), 29-37. doi:10.1080/10402650802690037

Boltjes, M. (2007) The implementation challenges in intrastate peace processes: An analysis. In M. Boltjes (Ed.), *Implementing negotiated agreements: The real challenges to intrastate peace* (pp. 1-47). The Hague: T.M.C. Asser Press.

Braithwaite, J. (2011) Partial truth and reconciliation in the longue duree. *Contemporary Social Science* 6(1), 129-147. doi:10.1080/174501144.2010.534498

Castillo, G. (2001) Post-conflict reconstruction and the challenges to international organizations: The case of El Salvador. *World Development*. 29(12), 1957-1985.

Chand, S. (2013) Building peace in Bougainville: Measuring recovery post-conflict. SSGM Discussion Paper 2013/5. Australian National University. Retrieved from http://ips.cap.anu.edu.au/sites/default/files/SSGM-DP-2013-5-Chand-ONLINE_0.pdf

Cochrane, F. (2008) *Ending wars*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Crawford-Garrett, B. (2012) Sierra Leone: A Case the international community finally got somewhat right. In D. Francis (Ed.), *When war ends: Building peace in divided communities* (pp. 103-122). Surrey, England: Ashgate.

Cunningham, D. (2012) Who gets what in peace agreements? In W. Zartman, M. Anstey, and P. Meerts (Eds.), *The slippery slope to genocide: Reducing identity conflicts and preventing mass murder* (pp. 248-269). New York: Oxford University Press.

Darby, J. (2010) Reconciliation (Reflections from Northern Ireland and South Africa). In O. Richmond (Ed.), *Palgrave advances in peacebuilding: Critical developments and approaches* (pp. 294-306). London, England: Palgrave Macmillan.

Dayton, B., & Kriesberg, L. (2009) Introduction. In B. Dayton & L. Kriesberg (Eds.), *Conflict transformation and peacebuilding: Moving from violence to sustainable Peace* (pp. 1-12). London, England: Routledge.

Derouen Jr., K, Ferguson, M., Norton, S., Park, Y., Lee, J., & Streat-Bartlett, A. (2010) Civil war peace agreement implementation and state capacity. *Journal of Peace Research*, 47(3), 333-346. doi:10.1177/0022343310362169

de Varennes, F. (2007) Recurrent challenges to the implementation of intrastate peace agreements: The resistance of state authorities. In M. Boltjes (Ed.), *Implementing negotiated agreements: The real challenges to intrastate peace* (pp. 49-67). The Hague: T.M.C. Asser Press.

Department for International Development (DFID). (2010) Building peaceful states and societies: A DFID practical paper. London, England: DFID.

Dupuy, K. (2008) Education in peace agreements, 1989-2005. *Conflict Resolution Quarterly* 26(2), 149-166. Doi:10.1002/crq.228

El-Bushra, J. (2006) Transforming power relations: Peacebuilding and institutions. In H. Yanacopulos, & J. Hanlon (Eds.), *Civil war, civil peace* (pp. 233-258). Oxford, England: The Open University.

Fombad, C. (2004) Prospects for peace building through Truth Commissions in Africa. In A. Nhema (Ed.), *The quest for peace in Africa: Transformations, democracy and public policy* (pp. 189-219). Addis Ababa: Ossrea.

Fortna, V. (2003) Scraps of paper? Agreements and the durability of peace. *International Organization*, 57(2), 337-372.

Fortna, V. (2004) Does peacekeeping keep peace? International intervention and the duration of peace after civil war. *International Studies Quarterly*, 48(2), 269-292.

Francis, D. (2000) Torturous path to peace: The Lomé Accord and postwar peacebuilding in Sierra Leone. *Security Dialogue*, 31(3), 357-373.

Francis, D. (2012) Introduction: When war ends: Building peace in divided communities—Core Issues. In D. Francis (Ed.) *When war ends: Building peace in divided communities* (pp. 1-26). Surrey: Ashgate.

Gberic, L. (2005) *A dirty war in West Africa: the R.U.F. and the destruction of Sierra Leone.* London: Hurst and Co.

Hampson, F. (1996) *Nurturing peace: Why peace settlements succeed or fail*. Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press.

Hampson, F. (2001) Conclusion: Assessing the results of the peace process. In M. Studemeister (Ed*.) El Salvador: Implementation of the peace accords* (pp. 47-53). United States Institute of Peace.

Harbom, L., Högbladh, S., & Wallensteen, P. (2006) Armed conflict and peace agreements. *Journal of Peace Research*, 43(5), 617-631.

Harris, D. (2013) *Sierra Leone: A political history*. London: Hurst & company.

Hartzell, C., Hoddie, M., & Rothchild, D. (2001) Stabilizing the peace after civil war: An investigation of some key variables. *International Organizations*, 55(1), 183-208.

Hein, P. (2015) The multiple pathways to trauma recovery, vindication, and national reconciliation in Cambodia. *Asian Politics and Policy*, 7(2), 191-211.

Hopp-Nishanka, U. (2012) Giving peace an address? Reflections on the potential and challenges of creating peace infrastructures. Berghof Handbook Dialogue No. 10. Berghof Foundation.

Högbladh, S. (2011) Peace agreements 1975-2011 - Updating the UCDP Peace Agreement Dataset. In P. Thérése, & L. Themnér (Eds.) (2012) *States in armed conflict 2011* (pp. 39-56). Uppsala University, Sweden: Department of Peace and Conflict Research Report 99.

Hughes, C. (2003) *The political economy of Cambodia's transition, 1991-2001*. London: Routledge Curzon.

Jarstad, A., & Hoglund, K. (2015) Local violence and politics in KwaZulu-Natal: Perceptions of agency in a post-conflict society. *Third World Quarterly*, 36(5), 967-984. doi: 10.1080/01436597.2015.1030385

Jeong, H. (2010) *Conflict management and resolution: An introduction*. London: Routledge.

John, A., & Kew, D. (2008) Civil society and peace negotiations: Confronting exclusion. *International Negotiations*, 13, 11-36. doi:10.1163/138234008X297896

Joshi, M., & Darby, J. (2012) The peace accords matrix. Peace Policy. Retrieved from http://peacepolicy.nd.edu/2012/05/02/introducing-the-peace-accords-matrix/.

Joshi, M., Lee, S., & Mac Ginty, R. (2014) Just how liberal is the liberal peace? *International Peacekeeping*, 21(3), 364-389. doi: 10.1080/13533312.2014.932065

Kelly, G., & Fitzduff, M. (2002) *Government strategies on victims in post-conflict societies*. UNU and INCORE: University of Ulster and United Nations University.

Koelble, T., & Siddle, A. (2013) Why decentralisation in South Africa has failed? *Governance: An International Journal of Policy, Administration, and Institutions*, 26(3), 343-346. doi: 10.1111/gove.12022

Kurtenbach, S. (2010) Guatemala: A dependent and fragmented civil society. In T. Paffenholz (Ed.), *Civil society and peacebuilding: A critical assessment* (pp. 79-104). London, England: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Lederach, J. (1997) *Building peace: sustainable reconciliation in divided societies*. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace.

Lederach, J. (2001) Civil society and reconciliation. In C. Crocker, F. Hampson, & P. Aall (Eds.), *Turbulent peace: The challenges of managing international conflict* (pp. 841-854). Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press.

Lederach, J. (2012) The origins and evolution of infrastructures for peace: A personal reflection. *Journal of Peacebuilding and Development*, 7(3), 8-13. doi: 10.1080/15423166.2013.767604

Licklider, R. (1995) The consequences of negotiated settlements in civil wars, 1945-1993. *American Political Science Review*, 89(3), 681-690.

Licklider, R. (2001) Obstacles to peace settlements. In C. Crocker, F. Hampson & P. Aall (Eds*.), Turbulent peace: The challenges of managing international conflict* (pp. 607-718). Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press.

Lodge, T. (2009) Revolution deferred: From armed struggle to liberal democracy—the African National Congress in South Africa. In B. Dayton & L. Kriesberg (Eds.), *Conflict transformation and peacebuilding: Moving from violence to sustainable peace* (pp. 156-171). London, England: Routledge.

Lyons, T. (2009) Peacebuilding, democratization and transforming the institutions of war. In B. Dayton & L. Kriesberg (Eds.), *Conflict transformation and peacebuilding: Moving from violence to sustainable peace* (pp. 91-106). London, England: Routledge.

Mac Ginty, R. (2010) Hybrid peace: The interaction between top-down and bottom-up peace. *Security Dialogue*, 41(4), 391-412. doi: 10.1177/0967010610374312

Mac Ginty, R. (2014) Everyday peace: Bottom-up and local agency in conflict-affected societies. *Security Dialogue*, 45(6), 1-17. doi:10.1177/0967010614550899

McGrew, L. (2011) Pathways to reconciliation in Cambodia. *Peace Review: A Journal of Social Justice*, 23(4), 514-521. doi:10.1080/10402659.2011.625851

Melander, E. (2009) Justice or peace? A statistical relationship between amnesties and durable peace. JaD-PbP Working Paper Series no 4. Seventh Framework Programme, European Commission.

Mitchell, C. (2012) Introduction: Linking national-level peacemaking with grassroots peacebuilding. In C. Mitchell & L. Hancock L (Eds.), *Local peacebuilding and national peace: Interaction between grassroots and elite processes* (pp. 1-18). New York: Bloomsbury Publishing.

Mitton, K. (2010) Engaging with disengagement: The political reintegration of Sierra Leone's Revolutionary United Front. In M. Berdal & D. Ucko (Eds.), *Reintegrating armed groups after conflict: Politics, violence and transition* (pp. 172-198). London, UK: Routledge.

Mitton, K. (2015) Building peace in Sierra Leone – the need for transformative reconciliation. Transconflict. Retrieved from http://proto.insightonconflict.org/2015/06/building-peace-in-sierra-leone-the-need-for-transformative-reconciliation/.

Nadin, P. (2013) Peace support: A new concept for UN peacekeeping. Retrieved from http://unu.edu/keyword/human-security.

Newman, E., Paris, R., & Richmond, O. (2009) Introduction. In E. Newman, R. Paris and O. Richmond (Eds.), *New perspectives on liberal peacebuilding*. (pp. 3-25). New York, the USA: United Nations University Press.

Nilsson, D. (2008) Partial peace: Rebel groups inside and outside of civil war settlements. *Journal of Peace Research*, 45(4), 479-495.

Odendaal, A. (2012) South Africa's infrastructure for peace. In M. Christopher (Ed.), *Local peacebuilding and national peace: Interaction between grassroots and elite processes* (pp. 93-110). New York, the USA: Bloomsbury publishing.

Papagianni, K. (2009) Political transformation after peace agreements: The importance of consultative and inclusive political processes. *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, 3(1), 47-63.

Paris, R. (2004) *At war's end: Building peace after civil conflict*. Cambridge, the UK: Cambridge University Press.

Pfetsch, F. (2012) Conditions for internal conflict resolution through external intervention. In W. Zartman, M. Anstey & P. Meerts (Eds.), *The slippery slope to genocide: Reducing identity conflicts and preventing mass murder* (pp. 232-247). New York, the USA: Oxford University Press.

Phiri, M., & Macheve, A. (2014) Mozambique's peace decades since the end of the conflict: Inclusive or managed democracy. *African Journal on Conflict Resolution*, 14(1). Retrieved from http://www.ajol.info/index.php/ajcr/article/view/108894/98684

Pleitez, W. (2003) The evolution of the Salvadoran economy: Economic and social policy. In: C. Arnson (Ed.), *El Salvador's democratic transition ten years after the peace accord* (pp. 63-72). Washington D.C.: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

Ramsbotham, O., Woodhouse, T., & Miall, H. (2011) *Contemporary conflict resolution: The prevention, management and transformation of deadly conflicts*. Cambridge, the UK: Polity.

Richmond, O. (2007) *The transformation of peace*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Richmond, O. (2013) Failed statebuilding versus peace formation. *Cooperation and Conflict*, 48(3), 378-400. doi: 10.1177/0010836713482816

Rosoux, V. (2009) Reconciliation as a peacebuilding process: Scope and limits. In J. Bercovitch, V. Kremenyuk & W. Zartman (Eds.), *The sage handbook of conflict resolution* (pp. 544-553). London, the UK: Sage.

Rothchild, D., & Roeder, P. (2005) Power-sharing as an impediment to peace and democracy. In P. Roeder & D. Rothchild (Eds.) *Sustainable peace: Power and democracy after civil wars* (pp. 29-50). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Rubin, J. (2002) The Actors in negotiation. In V. Kremenyuk (Ed.), *International negotiation: Analysis, approaches, issues* (pp. 97-109). San Francisco, the USA: Jossey-Bass.

Ryan, S. (2007) *Transformation of violent intercommunal conflict*. Aldershot, the UK: Ashgate Publishing Limited.

Salvesen, H. (2002) *Guatemala: Five years after the peace accords—the challenges of implementing peace*. Oslo: International Peace Research Institute.

Saunders, H. (2001) *Public peace process: Sustained dialogue to transform radical and ethnic conflicts.* Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Shikhani, R. (2012) Mozambique: Post-war socio-economic and political challenges. Institute for Security Studies Situation Report. Retrieved from http://www.obsafrique.eu/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/Mozambique-Post-war-socio-economic-and-political-challenges.pdf.

SjØberg, G. (2007) Third party involvement in the negotiation and implementation of intrastate peace agreements. In M. Boltjes (Ed.), *Implementing negotiated agreements: The real challenges to intrastate peace* (pp. 177-191). The Hague: T.M.C. Asser Press.

Spark, N., & Bailey, J. (2005) Disarmament in Bougainville: 'guns in boxes'. *International Peacekeeping*, 12(4), 599-608. doi:10.1080/13533310500202025

Taft-Morales, M. (2014) Guatemala: Political, security, and socio-economic conditions and U.S. relations. Congressional Research Service. Retrieved from https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R42580.pdf.

Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP). (2014) Peace agreement: Definition. Retrieved from http://www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/definitions/.

United Nations (UN). (1994) *The United Nations and apartheid 1948-1994*. New York, the USA: Department of Public Information.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). (2013) Issue brief: Infrastructure for peace. Crisis prevention and recovery: UNDP. Retrieved from http://www.un.org/en/land-natural-resources-conflict/pdfs/Issue_brief_infrastructure_for_peace.pdf.

Vendrell, F. (2007) The role of third parties in the negotiation and implementation of intrastate agreements: An experience based approach to UN involvement in intrastate conflicts. In M. Boltjes (Ed.), *Implementing negotiated agreements: The real challenges to intrastate peace* (pp. 193-203). The Hague: T.M.C. Asser Press.

Verkoren, W., & Junne, G. (2012) Economic aspect of post-conflict development. In D. Francis (Ed.), *When war ends: Building peace in divided communities* (pp. 59-67). Surrey, the UK: Ashgate Publishing Limited.

Vinjamuri, L., & Boesenecker, A. (2007) *Accountability and peace agreements: Mapping trends from 1980s to 2006*. Geneva: Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue.

Wallensteen, P., Melander, E., & Högbladh, S. (2013) Peace agreements, justice and durable peace. In K. Aggestam & A. Bjorkdahl (Eds.), *Rethinking peacebuilding: The quest for just peace in the Middle East and the Western Balkans* (pp. 125-139). London, the UK: Routledge.

Wallis, J. (2012) Building a liberal-local hybrid peace and state in Bougainville. *The Pacific Review*, 25 (5), 613-635. doi: 10.1080/09512748.2012.728242

Walter, B. (1997) The critical barrier to civil war settlement. *International Organization*, 51(3), 335-364.

Walter, B. (2002) *Committing peace: The successful settlement of civil wars*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press.

Wood, E. (2000) *Forging democracy from below: Insurgent transitions in South Africa and El Salvador*. New York, the USA: Cambridge University Press.

Zamora, R. (2003) The nature of the political transition: Advances and setbacks in democratic consolidation. In C. Arnson (Ed.), *El Salvador's democratic transition ten years after the peace accord* (pp. 5-11). Washington D.C.: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

It's a Matter of Perspective: Revisiting Kenya's Wajir Peace and Development Committee and its Contribution to Current Discussions on Infrastructures for Peace

Kaitlyn Hedditch [*]

At the conceptual edge of current peacebuilding studies, Infrastructures for Peace (I4P) advocates for importance of the 'local level' in the search for peace. Current discussion around I4P focuses on championing a particular set of success stories, often presented as evidence of the effectiveness of the I4P approach. Many of these case studies, however, are largely descriptive and lack empirical data that substantiate claims made by I4P advocates. In the absence of more critical analyses of successes, grounded in empirical evidence, I4P literature stays largely on a normative level, expecting that the approach will be embraced at face value. Seeking to help fill this empirical gap within I4P literature, this paper examines the Wajir Peace and Development Committee (WPDC), a widely heralded benchmark of success. This article examines the contrast between two accounts of success of the WPDC's: the first offered by those whom have direct experience with the committee, or an 'internal' perspective, against that posed by I4P literature, or an 'external' perspective. Using a mixed methods approach that combines document analysis with semi-structured expert interviews, this article examines the differences in these accounts and offers a brief critical reflection on the current nature of the I4P discussion. This contribution to a more nuanced dialogue on the emerging concept of I4P is timely given its increasing uptake and use within international peacebuilding discourse and practice.

[*] Kaitlyn Hedditch, Bachelor of International Studies with a major in Development Studies, University of New South Wales, Australia

Introduction

After more than two decades of international peacebuilding efforts, spearheaded by the United Nations, the Institute for Economics and Peace tells us the world is becoming less peaceful, with five of nine geographic regions regressing in their peace statistics in 2015 (IEP, 2015). Despite such regression, how to best inspire change within a society caught in a 'conflict trap' is a challenge yet resolved by international peacebuilding and development communities alike (Collier et al. 2003; WDR, 2011).

Johan Galtung – often considered the father of Peace Studies – first articulated the concept of peacebuilding in 1976 as one component of a conflict resolution triad, along with peacekeeping and peacemaking. Complementing his two-pronged conception of peace, Galtung defined this as an approach to achieving a positive peace (absence of structural violence), rather than a negative peace (absence of direct violence). Galtung's peacebuilding was theorised as a bottom-up process, whereby local consensus and participation of stakeholders was fundamental (Richmond, 2010, p. 21).

The first policy incarnation of peacebuilding, enunciated in the UN's 1992 Agenda for Peace (Boutros-Ghali, 1992), overturned this grassroots orientation. Constructed around the ideological and conceptual core of the 'liberal peace,' peacebuilding then, at it's core, espoused a specific framework for political and economic organisation as the ultimate guarantor of peace: the liberal market democracy (Paris, 2004, p. 13; Öjendal & Sivhouch, 2015, p. 929). A seminal document for international peacebuilding, the Agenda jumpstarted an 'international growth industry' (Paris, 2004, p. 13), typified by an ambition to build strong and effective states that were modelled upon the priorities and institutions underpinning liberal peace (Paffenholz, 2015, p. 858; Ryan, 2013, p. 26). However, what became characteristic of the decade was a failure to bring about the promised sustainable peace despite a 'flurry' of peacebuilding missions proliferating in places such as Cambodia, Somalia, Rwanda, Bosnia, East Timor and Sierra Leone (Paris, 2010, p. 340-2). Critics attributed this failure to the 'rationalizing and reductionist machinery' (Newman et al. 2009, p. 15) of the prevailing liberal orthodoxy. In effect, this top-down and 'from-scratch' approach demonstrated an acute insensitivity towards local agency, customs, norms and resources (Öjendal & Sivhouch, 2015).

These failures quickly brought a return to the 'peace from below' mantra originally espoused by Galtung (Leonardsson & Rudd, 2015, p. 826; Paffenholz, 2015, p. 858). This shift emphasised participatory, inclusive approaches to peace, for which the bedrock of legitimacy and sustainability was local ownership. Despite almost universal rhetoric supporting bottom-up peacebuilding, what remains contested is how best to achieve this and what role external actors might be able to play in its support. The idea of Infrastructures for Peace (I4P) is the most recent iteration of a peacebuilding approach seeking to represent a solution for a localised peace process, wholly owned and directed by the 'locals' of conflict-affected countries.

The definition that has become most widely used to represent I4P was coined at a meeting among fourteen African nations in Naivasha, Kenya in 2010. Promoted as an alternative to the often-divisive, top-heavy liberal peacebuilding model, I4P represents the 'dynamic network of interdependent structures, mechanisms, resources, values and skills which, through dialogue and consultation, contribute to conflict prevention and peacebuilding in a society' (Kumar et al. 2011, p. 14; van Tongeren et al. 2012, p. 2). Advocates for I4P describe the rationale behind its elaboration as

an understanding that a process of conflict transformation must emerge from within society in order to be sustainable and resilient (Paladini Adell, 2014, p. 2).

While peace infrastructures first emerged in the work of peace pioneer, Lederach (1997), the 2006 UN Secretary General's Progress Report on the Prevention of Armed Conflict (A/60/891, 18 July 2006) cemented it in the mainstream peacebuilding discourse. Promoted as a 'promising approach' (van Tongeren, 2013, p. 58) or 'useful jargon' (Frazer, 2013) to enter the peacebuilding lexicon, and adopted into the rhetoric of the UNDP (UNDP, 2013), I4P has come to represent the conceptual edge of peacebuilding today. However, across documents discussing the concept of I4P, a normative tone far exceeds empirical evidence, prescribing what a peace infrastructure is supposed to capture, and what it should ideally do. It ascribes a supportive role to international peacebuilders, and assumes a near seamless integration between local and state level peace processes.

Kenya's Wajir Peace and Development Committee (WPDC) is recurrently called a key success in peacebuilding literature, often used to declare why this renewed articulation of I4P works. The WPDC, formally established in 1995, was first labelled a 'peace/peacebuilding infrastructure' in 2000/2001 (Juma, 2000, p. 27; Ndegwa, 2001, p. 20). Its uptake within I4P discussions a decade later marks the beginning of this case study's portrayal as a 'pioneer' of peace infrastructures, with the WPDC described an 'exceptional and inspiring case' (van Tongeren, 2013, p. 55). However, the WPDC and other similar case studies are often presented as 'uncontested empirical evidence' (Paffenholz, 2015, p. 103) of the effectiveness of the I4P approach. While often cited as 'bottom-up success' (Odendaal, 2013, p. 54), in tune with I4P rhetoric, the benchmark to which it is held is to be taken at face value in place of a deeper engagement with the complexities and nuances of its experience.

This article is based on research conducted for my Honours Thesis, which took the shape of an exploratory case study of the WPDC that combined desk-based research with semi-structured expert interviews. The analysis presented here is not envisioned to interrogate the success of the WPDC itself, but to juxtapose two accounts of its success and critically reflecting on the insights and implications any differences in these accounts has for the increasing uptake of the burgeoning I4P approach. Furthermore, this paper is guided by an ambition to level the current discussion by foregrounding local perspectives, particularly of those directly involved with, or impacted by, local peace formation processes.

The desk-based research analysed scholarly literature, applied case studies, a documentary film, blog posts, organisational reports, conference proceedings, and selected media stories. Case studies dedicated to the WPDC exist in abundance outside of the body of I4P literature, and date back to a 1998 documentary by Responding the Conflict. However, to build an 'internal perspective' of its success, I chose to narrow my focus on case studies created by those directly involved with the WPDC, or case studies for which data was collected by interviews and field visits. Based on the belief that an internal perspective of success of the WPDC can be best accounted for in the lived experience of those involved or affected by its work, I sourced a total of fourteen documents that fit these criteria.[1] I also conducted 10 semi-structured expert interviews with peacebuilding academics and practitioners between 20th July and 8th September 2015, using a mix of Skype, email, and some face-to-face interviews at the University of New England Peace Conference, held 26th – 28th August 2015 (UNE FutureCampus, Parramatta). Four out of 10 interviews conducted will be drawn upon in this article.

---

[1] The documents drawn upon for document analysis are marked with an '*' in the bibliography.

Wajir's endemic violence and the beginnings of the WPDC

The creation of the WPDC cannot be viewed as a singular episode in a peace process. Instead, it emerges with the weight of what has come before, and thus must be understood in the context of its historical, conflict antecedence. According to Lederach (2003), understanding the 'broader picture' of peace initiatives relies on understanding different aspects of a complex reality and underlying human relationships. Only then are we able to begin to understand the creative solutions that have evolved in response to persistent and pervasive conflict.

Since Kenya's independence in 1963, the Wajir County of the North Eastern Province (NEP) was plagued by recurrent cycles of destructive violent conflict. The second largest county in Kenya, Wajir is a rural region with pastoral nomadism accounting for more than 80 per cent of its population (Ibrahim, 2004, p. 168; Kimathi 2013, p. 75). Bordering Ethiopia to the north and Somalia to the east, Wajir has a population that is almost entirely ethnic Somali (Menkhaus 2008, p. 25). Due to cultural, political and economic bonds shared with Somalia, the NEP launched what was to be an unsuccessful secessionist movement in 1963. Lasting until 1969, the so-called Shifta War[2] instigated a period of draconian state emergency rule, during which state-perpetrated violence was 'instrumentalised as the ultimate means of conflict resolution'[3] (Kimanthi 2013, p. 75; van Tongeren, 1999, p. 245). A subsequent policy of exclusion was pursued until 1992 and rendered Wajir one of the most insecure, impoverished and ungoverned regions within the country (AW, 1991, p. 269; Kimathi, 2013, p. 75).

The unsuccessful self-determination attempt by the NEP degenerated into banditry, as remnant firearms, coupled with severely depleted resources, entrenched a sense of insecurity in the region (Ibrahim, 2004, p. 168; Sing'Oei, 2011, para, 4). Tensions between Wajir's three main tribes, the Degodia, Ajuraan and Ogaden, remained endemic, with anxiety over livestock, land and water access causing increasingly frequent outbursts of violent conflict throughout the 1980s and 1990s (Menkhaus, 2008, p. 25). The passivity of the government to quell the inter-communal violence and 'sheer non-existence... of state-led dispute resolution mechanisms' (Sing'Oei, 2011, para. 5) embedded a sense of disillusionment among local populations.

A confluence of factors led to a renewed wave of intense communal fighting from 1992 until 1995. This included the swelling impact of prolonged cycles of drought, which had displaced thousands and decimated Wajir's livestock, and an influx of refugees and firearms from neighbouring Somalia following the collapse of the Somali government in 1990 (Ibrahim, 2004, p. 168; Ndegwa, 2001, p. 2). Throughout this period, cattle-rustling, although a condoned customary practice, gained a violent dimension amid a need to replenish severely depleted stock (Sing'Oei, 2011, para. 12). Reaching its violent peak in 1993, over 1,200 people were killed and more than 2,000 injured or raped in the incessant conflict. At this time, Wajir was immobilised as businesses, schools and health centres closed down, and transport and herd movement was at a standstill. These conditions caused an exodus of professional and middle-class residents from Wajir town, the capital of the county (Kimathi, 2013, p. 77; Menkhaus, 2008, p. 26).

---

[2] According to Africa Watch (1991, p. 271), the characterisation of the secessionist forces as shifta, or bandits, is indicative of the attempt by the central Kenyan government to undermine the political significance of the secessionist movement.

[3] The most notorious incident of state-perpetrated violence was the Wagalla massacre of 1984. In an attempt to disarm clans in conflict over grazing land, government forces rounded up thousands of Wajir men to the local airstrip, where they shot, burned or beheaded the majority over five days. Estimates of those killed in the massacre exceed thousands. See Latif Dahir (2014) and AW (1991, p. 273 – 277).

The official peace process in Wajir had begun in July 1993, however by September the few NGOs in Wajir had withdrawn due to the killing of a UNICEF pilot and aid worker on 3rd September 1993 (AP, 1993; Ndegwa, 2001, p. 1). The international community subsequently deemed Wajir an unsafe zone, and only through intense lobbying efforts by a women's peace group, were a few basic humanitarian services maintained (van Tongeren, 1999, p. 245).

Typically, women had enjoyed relative safety from the exigencies of the inter-communal conflict. However, by the early 1990s, traditional enclaves of women, including the marketplace, came to mirror the wider tensions in the county, as women refused to sell goods outside of their clan groups (Ndegwa, 2001, p. 1; Kimathi, 2013, p. 78). Meeting at a wedding, a small group of women decided there was an urgent need to address the cycle of violent conflict and sensitise the population to the necessity of peace (Ibrahim, 2004, p. 169; Odendaal, 2013, p. 35). The peace process that emerged from Wajir in 1993 came from local citizens directly impacted by the violence (Jenner & Abdi, 2000, p. 15). Formally inaugurated in 1995, the WPDC was 'unquestionably instrumental in the remarkable turnaround of Wajir district from one of the most anarchic to one of the more stable border zones of Kenya' (Menkhaus, 2008, p. 27).

Once established, the WPDC made efforts to 'export' the peace it had achieved in its county. Recognising the cross-border conflict dynamics, the WPDC facilitated the establishment of peace committees, styled upon its own, along the border zone with their Somali counterparts. Acting as a point of reference for cross-border disputes, these efforts affected an actual decline in cross-border conflicts (Mutsotso, 2005, p. 10). What is more, according to Chopra (2009, p. 10), the regional connectivity facilitated by the WPDC was instrumental in ushering in the Modogashe Declaration of 2001, concerned specifically with the peaceful settlement of regional disputes.

Out of necessity, the foundations for Wajir's local peace infrastructure were born. From its humble origins, the WPDC swiftly became the go-to success story for localised peace efforts. One practitioner who had worked closely with the WPDC noted that 'Wajir became a story that everyone wanted to be able to tell… it's a good story, it speaks to so many different elements of what good practice is.'[4] Within I4P literature, the WPDC was not cited as a success case until 2010, nearly two decades after the committee's inception. This reference was made by Paul van Tongeren, who described it as a 'fascinating example' of a locally grown effort to establish a local 'peace architecture' (van Tongeren, 2011, p. 407).

What made the WPDC successful?

Based on my analysis, I identified three concrete pertinent aspects of WPDC which were highlighted both by individuals who had worked with the committee, and by those that had analysed or advocated for it being a model I4P. These include (1) the WPDC's organic, homegrown nature and the input of women, (2) inclusivity, and (3) hybridity and external relations. These contributing factors to the committee's success are indicative of how the WPDC was able to create the 'institutional context within which pursuit of more sustainable peace could be achieved' (Ndegwa, 2001, p. 21). It is important to highlight that while similar aspects of the WPDC were attributed to its success in both internal and external accounts, there are nuances within the subsequent rationale, which I will draw out during my discussion of each aspect. The following section will discuss each

---

[4] Personal communication, Skype, 11th August 2015, Peacebuilding Practitioner (South Africa)

aspect of the WPDC's success as it emerged through local or internal accounts of the committee's experiences, then critically examining these factors as they are presented in I4P literature.

Organic Emergence

The first and most prevalent factor contributing to the success of the WPDC was its homegrown, organic nature. The self-organisation of the WPDC was fundamental to the creation of a contextually relevant and responsive peace formation process. The fact that the WPDC grew from within the Wajir community was one of the most frequently cited reasons for its success. For example, one Peacebuilding Practitioner argued that the peace process that was to culminate in the creation of the WPDC in 1995 '… emerged very organically from a felt and immediate need,' and was '… culturally and contextually rooted in the region where it functioned.'[5] This particular aspect of the WPDC's experience and subsequent success was also captured by the late Dekha Ibrahim Abdi, a founding member of the Wajir Women for Peace, a predecessor of the WPDC. She noted that 'there were no formulae, guidelines or rules. We created our own rules, created our own mandate' (2007, para. 4).

Women are widely attributed a foundational role to the emergence and expansion of the 'collective action regime' of the WPDC (Sing'Oei, 2011, para. 16). At the apex of traditional Somali society, male elders are reified as the 'custodians of cultural norms and practices' and as 'the depository of knowledge.' They are thus regarded the vanguards of peace (Ibrahim, 2004, p. 173; Kimathi, 2013, p. 76). It is significant, therefore, that women were the first to 'concretely articulate' the necessity of peace and provide the initial, small-scale impetus that was to have a much broader, cumulative impact in Wajir (Kimathi, 2013, p. 88). Dekha Ibrahim Abdi, widely cited as the cornerstone of the Wajir peace process, captured the critical agency of the women within the WPDC. In her own words, she explained that '(t)o fulfil their potential in peace-building and development, Somali women have learned to counter the passive, victim role often ascribed to them by people in their own society and by Western scholar and media' (Ibrahim, 2004, p. 173). The Wajir Women for Peace who instigated the peace initiative in 1993 remained critical for the survival and sustainability of the WPDC's work, involved in conflict response, fundraising, training workshops, and organising the reintegration and rehabilitation of ex-militia.[6]

It is important to note that the WPDC's organic emergence and growth occurred outside of international spotlight and without national or international assistance. While this is not to imply a correlative relation between this and the committee's success, it is noteworthy as it stands in contrast to the literature on I4P more generally, which ascribes a facilitative and supportive role to external peacebuilding actors to create a peace infrastructure (see for example the works of Paul van Tongeren, Chetan Kumar and Jos de la Haye, and papers published by the UNDP on their role in supporting peace infrastructures). Although a sensitivity to the delicate relationship between external actors and local peace initiatives is contained within much of the I4P discourse, an overemphasis on externally driven efforts to develop networks, provide training, and develop support strategies for local peace processes is prevalent and does not clearly delineate limits to international engagement. As such, this relationship will inevitably embody a power asymmetry that

---

[5] Personal communication, email, 8th September 2015, Peacebuilding Practitioner (Kenya)
[6] Interestingly, their work with ex-militia targeted firstly the wives and mothers of combatants, whom would pressure their husbands or sons to turn away from engaging in conflict. Understanding it was a critical part of their livelihood, the Wajir Women for Peace would then offer their families microloans to start small businesses (Ibrahim, 2004, p. 170; Kimathi, 2013, p. 84).

threatens the organic emergence and self-direction of local peace initiatives (Ghebremeskel & Smith, 2013, p. 67).

Nevertheless, the creation of the WPDC was evidently born out of the 'sheer determination' of individuals directly impacted by the inter-communal violence.[7] From this effort grew a network of inclusive, community-level institutions specifically designed for conflict response, mediation and resolution, as well as peace promotion. The creation of these institutions, including a Rapid Response Team to mobilise in instances of imminent violence, and women's and youth's groups, conditioned what had been an often-violent recourse for conflict resolution, and shaped preferences in favour of de-escalation, mediation and peaceful resolution of potentially violent conflict.

Inclusivity

A second factor noted was that the WPDC was inclusive to the many different groups and actors within Wajir. Fundamental for the WPDC was an engagement with the whole spectrum of society and the bringing together members who shared a stake in peace (Juma, 2000, p. 30). According to one Peacebuilding Practitioner, seeking to be an inclusive organisation, the WPDC '… was very careful about the relational side of things… it saw relationships between people as being essential and central.'[8] Undoubtedly contributing to its success, the WPDC came to represent a network of networks among various local peace organisations, also choosing to work in conjunction with the local government administration (Jenner & Abdi, 2000, p. 15).

Once relations were restored in the marketplace, which had been a hotspot for tension, the Wajir Women for Peace sought to catalyse broader change in the county, going from door to door to encourage community participation. While incremental, from this emerged the Youth for Peace; a group composed of male youth who mostly worked as civil servants. In collaboration with the Wajir Women for Peace, this group agitated for further evolution of the peace process, spurring the creation of the 'supra-clan' organisation, the Elders for Peace (Ndegwa, 2001). The creation of the Elders for Peace was significant as it awarded the local peace initiative legitimacy in the eyes of the community. Acceding to their new role, the Elders for Peace issued the Al Fatah Declaration in September 1993, which formally inaugurated the peace process among clans, and established a loose 'code of conduct' to facilitate the return of peace and to regulate future relations between clans (Menkhaus, 2008, p. 26).

Formalised as a sub-committee in 1995 under the District Development Committee, a government-mandated administrative organ in Wajir (Ndegwa, 2001, p. 8), the WPDC became a coordinating body for government representatives, NGO representatives, security officers, and local peace organs; the impact of which was to routinise communication and collaboration among stakeholders in the county. Further to this, the WPDC allied itself with other community-based and non-government organisations, including the Wajir South Development Association, the Nomadic Primary Healthcare Program, among others, which helped pool resources, facilitate collaboration and information-sharing, avoid duplication of services, and extend the reach of either partner across the county (Mutsotso, 2005, p. 35-8).

Despite facing resource scarcity, the WPDC was conscious to navigate its relationships with external donors and sourced funding principally from its local constituency (Ndegwa 2001, p. 18).

---

[7] Personal communication, Skype, 28th July 2015, National UN Staff (Kenya)
[8] Personal communication, Skype, 11th August 2015, Peacebuilding Practitioner (South Africa)

Although the WPDC eventually became registered as an NGO in 2002 in order to legally access external support and policy advice, Ndegwa (2001, p. 22) postulates that the minimal involvement of external donors in facilitating the work of the WDPC may have been a 'blessing in disguise.' This is because it placed agenda- and direction-setting power within the committee and mitigated 'the subversion of its priorities to fit donor trajectories' (Adan & Pkalya, 2006, p. 20; Kimathi, 2013, p. 88). While financial constraints and maintaining a standing budget remained a burden, at times weakening the capacity and reach of the WPDC's sub-organs, the committee maintained autonomy and escaped the need to conform to an externally-driven agenda. This allowed the WPDC to perform a diverse range of activities considered necessary and relevant to the Wajir community (Kimathi, 2013, p. 88; Ndegwa, 2001, p. 18).

Hybridity in Structure and Approach

The final aspect contributing to the success of the WPDC was its embodiment of a hybrid organisation. The WPDC was hybrid, most emphatically, in its state-civic structure, its work at the intersection of the traditional Somali and modern state justice systems, as well as in the diversified responsibilities it took on. With a concern for the longevity and sustainability of the peace initiative, the WPDC allied itself with the local government apparatus and assigned Wajir's District Commissioner as its chair. The deliberate decision to engage the district administration as a partner not only awarded the peace initiative legitimacy according to the state, it allowed the WPDC to retain a level of necessary local autonomy, yet the benefit of political support and coordination (Kimathi, 2013, p. 85). Giving the committee a 'legally defined locus' (Juma, 2000, p. 26) and awarding it decision-making power at the district level, the state often sub-contracted out its responsibilities to the WPDC.

This mediation or sharing of responsibilities, in effect, represented 'official government blessing to largely autonomous civic and traditional action on matters,' which are typically the reserve of the state (Menkhaus, 2015, p. 106). These included, among others, the role of police, judiciary and cross-border diplomacy. The achievement of this partnership is significant given the history of attrition between the state and Wajir community, thereby transforming the 'insular and often brutal structures of the local administration into more open, accessible and partnering institutions' (Ndegwa, 2001, p. 15).

Another hybrid aspect included how the work of the WPDC represented the interface between two paradigms of justice: the customary Somali justice system and the modern state justice system, with discretionary power invested in the committee. This hybridity revived and legitimised the use of customary conflict mediation and resolution practices and explicitly avoided de-legitimising traditional clan arrangements, as had been practiced under successive governments. Although this arrangement may have compromised the notion of justice according to the Kenyan constitution, it is evidence of a pragmatic negotiation between local community leaders and the local government administration (Chopra, 2008; Menkhaus, 2008). Setting the normative framework for the WPDC, this arrangement acted to 'assure more peace than either one [paradigm] by itself' (Ndegwa, 2001, p. 9; Sing'Oei, 2011, para. 13).

In addition to performing some accountabilities of the state, the WPDC acceded to a range of other activities in response to identified local needs, codifying these within their terms of reference. This included the creation of a Rapid Response Team, facilitating disarmament, the return of illegal firearms, livelihood support for ex-militia and their families (primarily performed by the Wajir Women for Peace), peace and security policy research, peace education through dialogue, school

programs, reconciliation workshops, peace festivals, local fundraising, and generating employment opportunities for youth (Jenner & Abdi, 2000, p. 15-16). As such, these activities are indicative of how the WPDC surpassed functioning simply as a local peace committee, instead evolving into a dynamic, complex and wide-reaching local peace infrastructure.

The WPDC as a benchmark within I4P

Praise for the WPDC within I4P literature is effusive, with van Tongeren (2011, p. 41) describing its creation as a 'process of peacemaking that was impressive by all accounts.' However, such praise for the WPDC's success lacks analytical depth, as accounts remain anecdotal or descriptive in nature, narrowly depicting the committee's emergence, formalisation, and its professed upward influence on national peacebuilding processes. While this is not to suggest dual narratives of success exist – for instance, the themes stated above are also evident in I4P literature – these accounts often reduce the committee's experience to a set of few sequential events, removed from the context and complexity that would indicate their significance. Such abstraction of the successful features from the WPDC story allows for the creation of a narrative geared towards a replicable model of an I4P. A juxtaposition of the internal and external perspectives of the success of the WPDC brings to the fore the shortcomings contained within I4P literature, which will now be explored.

Though accounts of the WPDC in I4P literature acknowledge the organic emergence of the committee and the foundational contribution of women, the reductionist accounts habitually overlook what were at times tumultuous and even dangerous efforts towards relationship- and trust-building. The literature omits a critical sensitivity to the time and process taken for the peace initiative to flourish. What started as a single women's initiative to secure peace in their immediate environment, proliferated across Wajir with increasing degrees of connectivity through a concerted, determined effort by these women. Prompted by their small initial input, the richness of interactions that emerged is overlooked, as are the relationships in which the WPDC was to become embedded. The simplification of their story risks trivialising the challenging circumstances through which these women were forced to both assert and compromise their agency amid, for example, increasing threats to their personal safety (see Kimathi, 2013).

Simultaneously, the persistence of gendered roles and the concurrent division of labour within the committee is not mentioned in I4P accounts. The work of the WPDC perpetuated traditionally ascribed gender roles, with men representing the face of the committee, typically dealing with violent conflicts in the public domain, while women specifically attended to domestic, much less public conflicts, including rape, divorce and domestic violence (Kimathi, 2013, p. 85-6). While this is not to lessen their contribution, particularly considering how such domestic conflicts may be trigger points for wider, inter-clan fighting, there was a consciousness among women who understood the importance of this division for the continued participation of men, as well as the correlative perception of legitimacy of the WPDC in the eyes of the community (Kimathi, 2013, p. 86; The Wajir Story, 1998). Importantly, this gendered division of labour is illustrative of how locally grown and owned peace organs must exist within, and may ultimately replicate, prevailing local power structures in order to be able to function. This understanding has implications on the replicability of local peace structures, which must contend with, and operate among, manifest and discreet power asymmetries that are unique to their local contexts.

A tendency to draw connection between the WPDC and Kenya's national level peace processes, subsequent to the committee's formalisation in 1995, is evident in accounts of the WPDC within I4P literature (see van Tongeren, 2011 & 2013). References to the committee since its formalisation are tangential and imply its formalisation within the local district administration is the zenith of the local peace process. As such, it overlooks much of the work taken on by the committee once it was cemented as a critical district peace actor. Furthermore, Odendaal (2013a, p. 137) warns that collaborative potential between local grassroots movements, exemplified by the creation of the WPDC, and national peace processes is easily overstated; the mere existence of one does not automate collaboration with the other (Odendaal, 2013b, p. 61).

The horizontal influence of the committee and its upward contribution to Kenya's 'national peace infrastructure' (and the promulgation of the National Accord and Reconciliation Act of 2008) is regularly discussed. The WPDC is attributed with instigating a proliferation of peace committees, modelled upon its own, across neighbouring northern districts and Kenya as a whole (Odendaal, 2010, p. 40; Odendaal et al. 2008, p. 18, van Tongeren, 2011, p. 42). Ostensibly, evidence of the effectiveness of these committees is based on the relative stability of Kenya's northern districts during the post-election violence of 2007-8 (van Tongeren, 2013, p. 43). However, this causal claim is made without further elaboration on the specific activities of these committees, as well as counter narratives attributing the absence of violence to other factors (see Odendaal, 2010, Paffenholz, 2015, Pkalya, 2009).

Though briefly acknowledging some degrees of hybridity in the WPDC, for example, state-civic engagement and its ability to 'facilitate greater government responsiveness to the needs of the population' (Odenaal, 2010, p. 40; van Tongeren, 2013, p. 42), I4P literature does not account for the committee's hybridity in its responsibility. Firstly, the diversified role of the committee and the way in which it acceded to responsibilities, otherwise reserved for the state, does not feature in I4P literature. One of the most prominent roles it played, in addition to cross border diplomacy and acting as local judiciary, was to aspire for 'peace through development' via efforts to mainstream peace education within schools and revive the Wajir Youth Polytechnic. This not only reflects a point of evolution in the WPDC's work beyond conflict mediation or resolution, it also indicated flexibility to adapt to prevailing local challenges amid the absence of the state. While its achievements in this regard are mixed, it is nonetheless significant. What is more, although the state-civic engagement is noted from an external I4P perspective, it is depicted as a benign or automatic process of cooperation, thus removing this achievement from the history that would otherwise indicate its significance. The decision to engage state actors as stakeholders in the peace initiative was the result of a particular foresight and pragmatism by local actors, specifically within the Wajir Women for Peace.

A Window into I4P

Two interview participants agreed that the ultimate success of an I4P is 'if it manages to create sufficiently peaceful conditions for the people who created it, and whom it serves,'[9] and if the local community value its accomplishments.[10]

---

[9] Personal communication, Face-to-face interview, 28th August 2015, Peace Studies Scholar (Australia)
[10] Personal communication, Skype, 11th August 2015, Peacebuilding Practitioner (South Africa)

While the committee's success has been punctuated with interspersed incidents of violence (see Menkhaus, 2015), through its organic nature, inclusivity and hybridity, the WPDC was effective in creating and sustaining a local 'peace infrastructure' (Juma, 2000, p. 27) in Wajir. The cumulative impact of the organic peace process, which was culturally and contextually rooted in the Wajir County, was a 'perceptible attitudinal change' that de-emphasised retaliation and violence and instead emphasised dialogue. Not only fostering broad community engagement in the peace process, the WPDC's engagement and productive partnership with local government administration enabled a re-orientation of attitudes and actions of local state actors, at least at the district level (Ndegwa, 2001, p. 9, 21). As such, according to the internal perspective, the WPDC has effectively ensured sufficiently peaceful conditions for those whom created it and for those whom it serves.

This definition of success aside, I believe that the I4P literature instrumentalises the Wajir story beyond its local achievements. More importantly, the reduction or simplification of its experience to a seemingly sequential set of 'landmark events,' which are represented as the most salient or remarkable features of its experience, is arguably to render it replicable across varying contexts. This, however, would violate the most basic yet prevalent factor of its success: organic emergence. Moreover, an understanding of the more intangible elements that undoubtedly abetted its success, including the nurturing of constructive relationships and the richness of interactions between different peace groups, is lost. In addition to what may be more overt aspects addressed above, such elements are otherwise essential to comprehend the complexity, dynamism, creativity and subsequent success of the WPDC as a local peace infrastructure. Ultimately, the simplification of its experience performs a disservice not only to the local experiences of the Wajir peace infrastructure, but also to the potential contained within the I4P concept as an expansive, systematic approach to local peacebuilding.

While at its core, I4P advocates for the elaboration of a system that effectively promotes peaceful collaboration and flourishing at all levels of society, there is little hope to reconcile the potential and the promise of I4P in the face of a lack of empirical evidence on the experiences of peace infrastructures. Without this, the concept of I4P cannot transcend its normative binds and thus is open to interrogation and criticism for the great potential it espouses, otherwise burdened by a lack of evidence (Paffenholz, 2015). As such, much of the literature espousing the I4P approach falls instead upon the repetitive championing of a particular set of success stories, leaning on prescriptive dedications of what an I4P should ideally look like. Despite expressions for the necessity of further in-depth empirical evidence to consolidate the 'conceptual promise' (Hopp-Nishanka, 2012) of I4P, examining the advocacy-oriented literature offers particular insight into the feeble nature of the current discussion.

The essence of any local peace infrastructure is its embeddedness in the history, culture and context of the society in which it manifests, meaning it is not amendable to generalised accounts or easy replication. Given the historical trajectory of the peacebuilding field and the 'Local Turns' in which the concept of I4P is intrinsically rooted, this approach must find ways of setting itself apart from its often-divisive predecessor, liberal peacebuilding. Without an effort to attach it to real world experiences and the everyday realities of achieving peace, with all the complexities and challenges this may entail, I4P as an approach to a more localised peacebuilding process will instead reflect an externally driven, overly prescriptive peacebuilding approach. Discussion on the worth and effectiveness of the I4P concept will therefore all but lose traction, rendering this current articulation in the peacebuilding field nothing more than 'old wine in new bottles.'

References

Adan, M., & Pkalya, R. (2006). The Concept Peace Committee: A Snapshot Analysis of the Concept Peace Committee in Relation to Peacebuilding Initiatives in Kenya. Retrieved from http://practicalaction.org/concept-peace-committee

Africa Watch (AW). (1991). *Kenya: Taking Liberties*. New York: Human Rights Watch.

*Chopra, T. (2008). Reconciling Society and the Judiciary in Northern Kenya. Justice for the Poor. Washington, DC: World Bank. Retrieved from http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/2008/12/16604307/kenya-reconciling-society-judiciary-northern-kenya

*Chopra, T. (2009). Justice Versus Peace in Northern Kenya. Justice & Development Working Paper Series. 2(1) Washington, DC: World Bank. Retrieved from http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/2009/01/10875919/justice-versus-peace-northern-kenya

Collier, P., Elliot, V. L., Hegre, H., Hoeffler, A., Reynal-Querol, M., & Sambanis, N. (2003). *Breaking the conflict trap: civil war and development policy. A World Bank policy research report.* Washington, DC: World Bank and Oxford University Press.

Frazer, O. (2013). Mediation Perspectives: "Infrastructures for Peace" – Useful Jargon? The International Relations and Security Network. Retrieved from http://isnblog.ethz.ch/conflict/mediation-perspectives-infrastructures-for-peaceuseful-jargon.

Galtung, J. (1976). Three realistic approaches to peace: peacekeeping, peacemaking and peacebuilding. *Impact of Science on Society*, 26, 103-115.

Ghebremeskel, A., & Smith, R. (2013). Comments on Paul van Tongeren's 'Potential cornerstone of infrastructures for peace? How local peace committees can make a difference. *Peacebuilding*, 1(1), 65 – 68.

Hopp-Nishanka, U. (2012). Giving Peace an Address? Reflection on the Potential and Challenges of Creating Peace Infrastructures. In B. Unger., S. Lunström, K. Planta, and B. Austin (eds.). *Peace Infrastructures – Assessing Concept and Practice* (pp. 1-19). Berghof Handbook Dialogue Series No. 10. Berlin: Berghof Foundation.

*Ibrahim, D. (2004). Women's Roles in Peace-making in the Somali Community in North Eastern Kenya. In J. Gardner & J. El Bushra (Eds.) *Somalia The Untold Story: The War Through The Eyes Of Somali Women* (pp. 166 – 174). London: Pluto Press.

*Ibrahim Abdi, D. (2007). Acceptance Speech by Dekha Ibrahim Abdi. Right Livelihood Awards, 2007 Laureates. Retrieved from http://www.rightlivelihood.org/dekha_ibrahim_abdi_speech.html

Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP). (2015). Global Peace Index 2015. Retrieved from http://economicsandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Global-Peace-Index-Report-2015_0.pdf

*Jenner, J., & Abdi, D. I. (2000). *Voices of Local Peace Initiatives – Kenyan Peace and Development Network, Wajir Peace and Development Committee, Council of Churches of Kenya, and Amani People's Theatre.* Cambridge: CDA Collaborative Learning Projects.

*Juma, M. K. (2000). *Unveiling Women as Pillars of Peace: Peacebuilding in Communities Fractured by Conflict in Kenya*. New York: UNDP.

*Kimanthi, L. (2013). Breaking through the confines of traditions: the Wajir Peace and Development Committee in northern Kenya. In *Journeys from Exclusion to Inclusion: Marginalised women's success in overcoming political exclusion* (pp. 72–101). Stockholm: International IDEA.

Kumar, C. & De La Haye, J. (2011). Hybrid Peacemaking: Building National "Infrastructures for Peace". *Global Governance*, 18, 13–20.

Latif Dahir, A. (2014, February 27). Kenya's Wagalla massacre 30 years later. Al Jazeera. Retrieved from http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2014/02/kenya-wagalla-massacre-30-years-later-201422682831165619.html

Lederach, J. P. (1997). *Building Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press.

Lederach, J. P. (2003). *The Little Book of Conflict Transformation*. s.l.: STL Distribution North America.

Leonardsson, H., & Rudd, G. (2015). The 'local turn' in peacebuilding: a literature review of effective and emancipatory local peacebuilding. *Third World Quarterly*, 36(5) 825–839.

* Maletta, R., & Hensel, U. J. (Producers) & Maletta, R (Director). (1998). The Wajir Story [Documentary]. Birmingham, UK: Responding to Conflict; London, UK: Trojan Horse Production. Retrieved from http://www.respond.org/pages/films.html

*Menkhaus, K. (2008). The rise of the mediated state in northern Kenya: the Wajir story and its implications for state-building. *Afrika Focus*, 21(2), 23–38.

*Menkhaus, K. (2015). Conflict Assessment / 2014 Northern Kenya and Somaliland, Nairobi: Danish Demining Group.

*Mutsotso, B. (2005). Bringing Peace to the people of Wajir: An Evaluation of the Wajir Peace and Development Agency (WPDA): Wajir District of North Eastern Province – Kenya. Unpublished report commissioned by USAID.

Newman, E., Paris, R., and Richmond, O. P. (Eds.) (2009). Introduction. *New Perspectives on Liberal Peacebuilding* (3 – 25). Tokyo: UNU Press

*Ndegwa, S. (2001). Peace Building among Northeastern Pastoralists in Kenya: The Wajir Peace and Development Committee. Greater Horn of Africa Peace Building Project. Washington, DC: USAID, Management Systems International.

Odenaal, A. (2013a). *A Crucial Link: Local Peace Committees and National Peacebuilding*. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press.

Odendaal, A. (2013b). Cornerstones or scattered bricks? Comments on Paul van Tongeren's 'Potential cornerstone of infrastructures for peace? How local peace committees can make a difference'. *Peacebuilding*, 1(1), 61– 62.

Öjendal, J., & Sivhouch, O. (2015). The 'local turn' saving liberal peacebuilding? Unpacking virtual peace in Cambodia. *Third World Quarterly*, 36(5), 929-949.

Paffenholz, T. (2014). International peacebuilding goes local: analysing Lederach's conflict transformation theory and its ambivalent encounter with 20 years practice. *Peacebuilding*, 2(1), 11–27.

Paffenholz, T. (2015). Unpacking the local turn in peacebuilding: a critical assessment towards an agenda for future research. *Third World Quarterly*, 36(5), 857-874.

Paladini Adell, B. (2014). Peace infrastructures: Towards a support system for peacebuilding in Colombia. Peace in Progress, No. 20. Retrieved from http://www.icip-perlapau.cat/numero20/articles_centrals/article_central_3/.

Paris, R. (2004). *At War's End: Building Peace after Civil Conflict*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Paris, R. (2010). Saving liberal peacebuilding. *Review of International Studies*. 36, 337-365.

Pkalya, D. R. (2009, March 13). Why northern Kenya remained calm during post-poll violence, Daily Nation. Retrieved from http://www.nation.co.ke/oped/Letters/-/440806/545346/-/id8jgs/-/index.html

Richmond, O. P. (2011). Becoming liberal, unbecoming liberalism: liberal-local hybridity via the everyday as a response to the paradoxes of liberal peacebuilding. In S. Tadjbakhish (Ed.) *Rethinking the Liberal Peace: External models and local alternatives* (pp. 37–57). Oxon: Routledge.

Ryan, S. (2013). The Evolution of Peacebuilding. In R. Mac Ginty (Ed.) *Routledge Handbook of Peacebuilding*, (pp. 25 – 35). Oxon and New York: Routledge.

*Sing'Oei, A. K. (2011, April 12). Customary Law and Conflict Resolution among Kenya's Pastoralist Communities. Pan African Thinking. Retrieved from http://panafricanthinking.blogspot.com.au/2011/04/customary-law-and-conflict-resolution.html

UNDP. (2013). Issue Brief: Infrastructure for Peace, New York: UNDP BCPR.

van Tongeren, P (Ed.) (1999). Women Take the Peace Lead in Pastoral Kenya: Back to the Future. In *People Building Peace – 35 Inspiring Stories from Around the World*. Netherlands: European Centre for Conflict Prevention.

van Tongeren, P. (2011). Infrastructures for Peace. In S. A. Nan., Z. C. Mampilly., & A. Bartoli (Eds.), *Peacemaking: From Practice to Theory*, 2 (pp. 400–419) New Directions in Peacemaking, New York: Prager.

van Tongeren, P. (2013). Potential cornerstone of infrastructures for peace? How local peace committees can make a difference. *Peacebuilding*, 1(1), 39-60.

van Tongeren, P., Ojielo, O., Brand-Jacobsen, K., McCandless, E. & Tschirgi, N.(2012). The Evolving Landscape of Infrastructures for Peace. *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development*, 7(3), 1–7.

World Development Report (WDR). (2011). Conflict, Security and Development. Washington, DC: The International Bank of Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank.

The Effects of Censorship: Myanmar's Limited Views on Ethnic Diversity

Nwet Kay Khine [*]

This study examined the effect of censorship of Myanmar's media on representations of ethnic diversity. Before the lift of pre-printing censorship system in 2012, Myanmar was ranked as having one of the lowest press freedom levels. The censors cut a great number of issues from the public sphere ranging from civil wars in ethnic areas and political corruption to poverty and gay issues. The collective memory of Myanmar society has been distorted as a result. This study is an outcome of ongoing research and the findings came out from observing the pattern of censorship on the drafts submitted between 2007 and 2012 at pre-printing stage to the censor authorities. It analyzes the way it affected the information flow that played a pivotal role in shaping the agenda of the State on civil wars and ethnic conflicts. The outcome of the censorship processes described in this study has been the creation of an atmosphere of misperceptions among ethnic groups.

---

[*] Nwet Kay Khine, PhD candidate, Institute of Human Rights and Peace Studies, Mahidol University.

Introduction

This study examines the effect of censorship on ethnic representation in Myanmar media in the years on the brink of political change. As an integral part of the democratization process, pre-printing censorship was lifted in Myanmar recently. Prior to the lift of censorship, Myanmar was ranked as one of the least free country in the world (IMS, 2012). The apparatus of censorship, the Press Scrutiny and Registration Division banned a wide number of topics ranging from civil wars in ethnic areas and corruption of officials, to poverty and homosexuality. Because of the censorship, the collective memory of the society was severely distorted as some parts of national social fabric were persistently disappearing.

This paper sheds light on the way the PSRD control the content of press before they went to printing. Findings in this empirical research came from observing the manuscripts which were submitted to the State censor board in the pre-printing stage. Systematic human rights violation that happened in several decades had negative impact on the whole society but unfairly a heavier weight on a variety of ethnic groups. This paper argued that censorship pattern from 2008 to 2012, a period which played a pivotal role in shaping the agenda of the State in early political transformation. This paper discusses the past existence of information gap in society and its possible consequences.

Function of censorship under authoritarian regime

All forms of censorship come from a primary source of fear of losing power and control (Ahmed, 2008). Thus the core objective of censorship is to protect against attacks on a centralised, State-sanctioned culture and worldview. Green & Karolide commented on the possible reason of censorship by stating that "The belief that if the speech, book, play, film, state secret or whatever is permitted free exposure, then the authorities will find themselves threatened to an extent that they cannot tolerate" (Green & Karolide, 2005, p. xviii). It is not certain that fear was underlying cause that had driven Myanmar military government to seize control over the right to manage license and content of media. They might have fear that might fear being persecuted under any future civilian government and being held responsible for violation of human rights they committed in the past. The truth is that as long as they have censorship mechanism in their hand, as Jansen (1988) argued, they are still having the knot that binds power and knowledge.

Sorabjee (1993) argues, censorship is also employed when the regime has the compulsive psychological need to prevent offensive utterances and images (p.3). What is offensive is usually judged by political or religious vested interests in preserving the status quo usually under the pretense of national security. Thus social and moral factors motivate a fervent desire for preserving a "clean" society (Sorabjee, 1993). In the case of Myanmar, censorship took a form of systematic human rights violation (Smith, 1991) which is rooted in the cultural violence practiced by the State over its own people in the last five decades of dictatorship. Oppressive media regulation was product of structural and cultural violence of authoritarian system that had impact on the society as a whole but heavier effect was imposed on ethnic dimension. The State had always assumed that such a bias restriction was an action that needed to be done and fair enough to keep such an imbalanced collective memory in society.

Prevalence of censorship under Military rule

Authoritarian censorship existed for fifty years in Myanmar not solely with a reason to promote the citizens' morality. Rather it served a political weapon that helped the military's supremacy affirmed. Post-independence press freedom was ended with a coup d'état in 1962 by General Ne Win (Smith, 1999). The State take over all newspapers and subsequently shut down many of them including 30 ethnic news outlets. Since then the government tightly control ownership and content of the media ensuring the State owned media has no competitor.

From a legal standpoint, the new government introduced regulations which turned out to be more restrictive than that of the British era (Larkin, 2003). The Printers and Publishers Registration Law, passed in 1962, required that all books, magazines, other periodicals, song lyrics, and motion picture scripts be submitted for scrutinizing prior to publication or, in some cases, prior to distribution (Iyer, 1999). Publishers and printing houses were required to be registered with Press Scrutiny Board (PSB) which was renamed in 2005 as Press Scrutiny and Registration Division (Sar Pay Si Sit Yay Hnint Hmat Pone Tin Htar Na - စာပေစိစစ်နှင့်မှတ်ပုံတင်ဌာန in Burmese). Publisher usually must go through time-consuming process of registration and there were times only applicants who were affiliated to the departments of military government were permitted to get the license. The regulation also required that identification must be shown on every piece of publication for which the licensees were responsible (Iyer, 1999).

Situation of the press did not change much although new military administration took over the power in 1988. Arbitrary form of censorship lasted in Myanmar for a total 48 years and fourteen days. The Press Scrutiny Board, which was managed by the military intelligence (Zaw, 2006), carried out a tradition of censoring several issues including ethnic and religious tension across the country, human rights violations by the state, homosexuality, critics against the quality of public services such as education and health care, allegations of corruption against the government officials, and even a portrait of poverty.
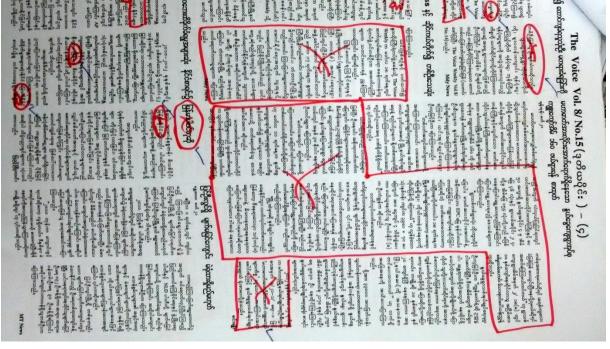
On 19th October, 2004, the news of removing Khin Nyunt from power was announced. The government said he was permitted to retire for health reasons. But actually public understood that it was not his weak health condition that put him under the risk of house arrest. There were rumors of tension inside this secretive government for years regarding the tension between the conservative army leaders and the military intelligence forces. Together with the downfall of Khin Nyunt, Major Aye Tun, the head of PSB was replaced by another retired military official, Major Tint Swe. Control over media outlets by the military began to relax since the new head took responsibility. Regardless of swinging mood in the process of gradual media liberalization, the PSRD changed regulation for publication licenses. The owner can be independent from government affiliated bodies and he can hold the license as long as he can work under the strict rule of censorship. This policy shift affected almost all types of media in different ways (Zaw, 2006) except the ban of license over news media outlet in ethnic languages was not removed. This did not mean any one can publish freely but at least the media landscape has witnessed the growth of privately owned media, especially in expanding markets of weekly newspapers. However, the change of government in 2011, operating news media in different ethnic languages domestically was not possible (Clark, 2014; Brooten (2016).

Myanmar media outlets were always required to submit the drafts in advance for review before printing. The duration of reviewing by censor board under Military Intelligence period took more than six month even for romantic fiction due to a suspicion that it may contain provoking thoughts for societal change. The time for reviewing was shortened after 2005 when the military

intelligence (MI) was no longer able to exert its power after the ousting of its leader, the Prime Minister, Khin Nyunt (Jay, 2005; Zaw, 2006). However, procedure did not change significantly and the news media did not exist until late 2000.As the final decisions of the reviewers were fixed and final, there was no appeal process. Editor must avoid resubmitting the censored stories. Later after the leadership changed, repetition was increasingly allowed by the censor board but it was never consistently measured, but rather maintaining arbitrary form of censor (Kyaw Min Swe, personal communication, June 12, 2011).

Figure 2. A3 Size pre-printing draft must be sent to the PSRD at least five days earlier

Since 2005, the government's media reform has been rapid with the intent to restore trust of the people prior to transforming military government to a semi-civilian rule (Nyein, 2012). Especially

since 2008, media reform has been progressing in line with the regime's roadmap of scheduled liberalization (Fuller, 2012). The military started to allow journalists to write issues that they thought it did not undermine political stability and did not disturb the political reforms. On the one hand, the progress happened because Myanmar, which is also affected by rapid global technological change cannot effective control the media in the age of globalization (Personal communication with former censor, 5 September, 2011). Emerging use of internet in the newsroom broke down the walls of censorship especially the readers could have better access to international issues and a more fluid information flow domestically. On the other hand, privately owned media earnestly strived to maximize their space for societal change (Zaw, 2006). Motivation for sustaining hard earned survival in the market increase their effort to keep the readership as wide as possible. Being ineffective to filter all information flowing to Myanmar form the world public sphere, the military government, State Peace and Development Council, had to permit more and more freedom to the private media while it still controlled monopoly of the broadcasting media and daily newspapers. As Myanmar of before 2012, it did not have daily private news outlet in any format (Foster, 2013), the most widely circulated state-owned daily newspapers were only periodical news citizen could access but they primarily focus on function of the government mouthpiece and carried a heavy injection of the State propaganda (Foster, 2013).

Under the military government, freedom of both the mainstream and ethnic media was oppressed by the censor authorities but the level of controls came in different degree (Brooten, 2016). While mainstream media were free to some extent, the ethnic language news media was totally banned until 2013. Together with restriction over the ownership license by ethnic groups, contents on ethnic issues in any media which were different with the version of the State were curtailed. They were sensitive politically and cut out from the mainstream public sphere. So, it was not possible to build a common understanding on ethnic issues until now as equal information access among citizens has never been happening. The news from ethnic areas and the views of ethnic leaders were not present for a long time in the mainstream media. Under the given situation, it is not surprising that part of collective memories of society were merely mysterious, while some others were wrongly sketched.

Challenges of field research and research methodology

By looking at the censored content of old newspapers draft from a weekly publication called the Voice, the following discussion will bring the impact of censorship on ethnic issues into the light. Content analysis will carry an insight of the newsroom running under authoritarian press system. These censored messages that never came to public eyes may play a role in learning history of society now and then. Certainly they are the evidence of information black out that constructed atmosphere of misperceptions and distrust among citizens of different ethnic groups.

After pre-printing censorship is no longer valid at time of field research for this paper, it is difficult to find the old manuscripts that used to be submitted to the desk of the PSRD. At time of field research before 2015, it was not possible to access to the government storage of data which contained the draft manuscripts. A collection of draft weekly papers which came back to the newsroom from the hand of the PSRD can be found only in a few media offices as there was no official archive in Myanmar. Out of inquiry, this researcher found out that very limited number of media still have their own collection of old manuscripts. According to the interviews with senior editors and newsroom people, most media outlets already sold out these manuscripts to clear their offices. The value of these drafts which was appreciated by media researcher was forgotten by the

paper recyclers who bought them. Fortunately, more than a hundred set of manuscripts were found at the Voice Weekly office. The Voice, one of the products of Living Color Media Company used to be one of the top five newspapers in Yangon. Without proper archiving, the historical documents which detailed the oppressive measures of the past military regime are disappearing without any record or digitization.

A collection of the draft material used in this research was selectively chosen from the Voice weekly papers published between 2008 and 2012. Ten issues from each year between 2008 and 2012 were used for identifying ethnic news stories that were cut before printing. Apart from availability of the resource, another justification of choosing 'The Voice' comes from its critical stance during pre-transition period. It was one of the most outspoken media outlet which also has a notable record of receiving heavy punishment from the government for reporting critical issues such as corruption of the government Ministries and constant criticizing against the ill public policy making of the government. Between 2005 and 2006, it received six times of punishment from the PSRD which ordered temporary close-down of the newspapers. Such suspension periods stopped function of the newsroom for minimum two weeks to maximum one month. The way PSRD dealt with such a rebellious newspaper within a five-year period displayed the pattern of censorship that stopped Myanmar from transforming into a truly informed society.

Figure 1. The percentage out of total content (proportion calculated by number of news stories) removed from sample manuscripts from every year

Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Percentage of censored content out of the whole paper	Minimum 20%	10% - 20 %	5% - 10%	5% - 10%	Under 3%

What did they censor in ethnic affairs?

The chronological changes throughout the chosen period indicated that the content cut by the PSRD decreased year after year although the rate of censorship in 2010, the year of election and 2011, the year of transfer of power from a full military government to semi-military government was stagnant. According to the editors from the Voice, political events happening in every year had influence on the pattern of censorship they experienced around the year.

2008: The year after Buddhist monks led demonstration

After 2007 Buddhist monks led demonstrations, the government controlled more tightly on the media content and the outbreak of Nargis cyclone even made the cut exceeded more than twenty percentage of the whole draft. As the date was save for organizing National Referendum in May 2008 for approving the Constitution that allotted a fix number of parliament seats 25 % to the military, critics against national referendum in any format was never tolerated. In 2008, the most significant issue that happened in parallel with National Referendum was the event of Cyclone Nargis. Prior to Nargis, the PSRD banned the stories that revealed the potential severity of the impact of the cyclone. It caused the media's failure to alarm adequately that may prompt necessary evacuation. The newsroom people heard about the incoming cyclone from several source of internet at least two days prior to the landfall, many draft stories journalists submitted to the PSRD were rejected.

After the cyclone hit the country, most of the stories revealed the impact of slow response to the needs of the survivors by the government but they became key target of censorship. The state prohibited reports that highlighted the needs of affected communities in the relief and recovery phases. For example, scarcity of drinking water, inadequate shelters for the victims, the closure of the schools due to existing damage.

2009: Post-Nargis Vulnerability and Yettaw's agony

In 2009, the amount of censored content was slightly lower than previous year in general. Post-Nargis recovery stories were still sensitive and prone to the cuts. Negative images of cyclone response by the government were still censored. As the election was planned for 2010, The State's version of election preparation process can be stated but opponents' political views were silenced. Coverage of any news of Aung San Suu Kyi was not tolerated and story of her appeal at the court of not guilty of accepting trespasser, John Yettaw was totally banned. News about other political opponents of the government cannot be written. Even after the release of Yettaw, the American citizen, any stories regarding US-Myanmar relation was highly targeted for a partial or full cut.

Apart from politically sensitive issues such as critics against the election and the state of cyclone victims who were not close full recovery, soft news stories such as LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender), celebration of St. Valentine's day, business of a dating company, etc. continued to be forbidden. Normally, from the conservative points of view, explicit talks on the above mentioned issues were considered as accepting foreign cultural dominance.

2010: Year of Election

In 2010, media has more freedom when the election was approaching. As the planned election was drawing near, media was open to more spaces and increasingly being allowed to report concerning political parties. They could insert the opinions of politicians. After the election law was announced in March 2010, political parties gained more coverage every week. However, coverage on political career of any candidates who participated in the last election of 1990s or their roles in struggle for democracy was not allowed to write, so that, any army official candidates who changed their uniform could be equal in terms of political experience. For instance, profile of electoral candidate must omit his or her involvement in student movement in 1988 and former experience as prisoner of conscience he or she gone through was not allowed. In spite of the progress in freedom, pictures of Aung San, his daughter Aung San Suu Kyi and NLD's activities were still blocked as part of the campaign of any political parties. In year 2010, one of the most important events happened in the history of Myanmar but it was never revealed in local media. It was the news about an event led by the Prime Minister U Thein Sein in October of 2010. After he himself raised a new flag officially in front of government office, the government ordered every office to replace the old fourteen-stars national flag with a new one-star one which is specified by the new constitution. Although Constitution did not come into effect yet, a new national flag with three horizontal bands of yellow, green and red with a white star at the centre was forced to be in place even before the election of 2010. Myanmar people never had a say on the introduction of a new flag which they are seeing every day now. In a story of new flag, paragraph asking the question about the forgotten state of old flag were cut from the page.

Although economic news was found more tolerable than political ones in normal condition, in some cases, economic issues could attract serious cuts as long as they were concerned with evidences of mis-management of economy by the State. As underdevelopment of communication

infrastructure were considered by journalists as a picture of weak governance of the State, the PSRD cut any negative highlights on over-priced telephone sim-card which was as expensive as US 1400 dollar in contrast to the market price of its neighbouring countries where a Simcard was available with less than 2 USD. People demanded to lower the price, but this news was not accepted.

2011: Transition to uncertainty

After election, the reform under newly elected government officially started in 2011 and there emerged a lot of issues to be written by newspapers. Total number of pages in draft of the manuscript increased from 30 to 40 pages from previous set of 26 pages. Many issues which were previously banned could be reported. A story such as analysis on "international human rights treaties, a critic towards reform process or government policy changes" were more tolerated by the PSRD. Aung San Suu Kyi, after the release from house arrest, gained more frequent coverage than ever before, yet the censorship policy on Suu Kyi's related topic was a swinging door. The first ever interview with Aung san Suu Kyi after her release was allowed to publish in the Voice. In contrast, story about commemoration of the birthday of her father, General Aung San was cut out from the draft.

With a more open atmosphere, some positive changes spread in the air. More critics against the government policies could be presented louder and clearer. Of course, it was not on every issue. While environmental degradation and harmful environmental impact caused by extractive industries became more visible, resource management that rooted in bad governance was not yet allowed to cover freely. A controversial dam building at the confluence of Ayeyarwaddy river, the cultural heart land of Kachin people from the North was not allowed to reported at the beginning. Far more sensitive than dam construction was the civil war revived in 2011. Although there was no chance of reporting about civil war throughout the rule of military administration, journalists tried to report the newly sparking civil conflict in more details but impact of the war on human faced a major cut. Call for peace by Aung Sann Suu Kyi and other politicians inside the government was ripped off the pages. Any report or opinion piece over the politics of power sharing between central and regional governments in line with the newly adopted constitution was not permitted. Celebration of Media freedom day was a taboo in the past, now organizing meetings and street gathering for press freedom by journalists in Yangon passed the scissors.

2012: Final year of advanced censorship

The year 2012 was marked with the end of half a century long pre-printing censorship. Until the final day of censorship 20th August, 2012, the submission of manuscripts was present as a valid procedure. The announcement abruptly came in to the newsroom and people were joyful. In months before that day, more and more activities of political opposition movements were allowed to express. However, tolerance of associational lives of citizens was still thin. Vocabulary such as "Worker Union or Student Union" was reckoned as a sign of revolution as they were in history. These words were regarded as a taboo and cut with red ink. Similarly, another group of players, political prisoners were still left out of the pages. Let alone the call for their immediate release, even the term, 'political prisoner' was not acceptable.

After transforming the government into semi-civilian rule in appearance, gesture for national reconciliation was speed up by allowing more visas to the exile Burmese who have been fighting against the dictatorship. The western governments which were considered as 'external elements jeopardizing the stability of the State' in the past, were now welcomed for engagement. Yet, writing

about activities of philanthropic organization based in the Western countries such as Open Society Institute which used to support cause for democracy and human rights still received a cut.

The most sensitive issues which were cut more frequently by the PSRD appeared in natural resource extraction sector. Land has always been the most problematic areas even before the political change. But self-censorship among the journalists prevailed and public grievance on the issues was not reported that loud. Now, the voices of local people in areas of land confiscation committed by the developers and mega development projects were reported but the government tried to make it hidden.

Ethnic representation on media under censorship policy

This period under study coincides with the beginning of peace negotiation process between the government and ethnic armed groups, which was restructured under the new government and has taken different formats from what the pre-transition military government since 1988. While ethnic minority areas are made up of 40 percent of the population, reform process cannot be all-inclusive if reciprocal fighting goes on and on between the army and the ethnic armed groups. Since the political change in 2011, the dynamic of a new peace deal undertaken by the President Thein Sein's government has been characterized as being far from smooth (Williams, 2015). Twists and turns in peace process are not something new but they appeared only behind the door away from the watch dog. A total transparent negotiation process was not possible in 2012, but the citizens had more information about the topics raised on negotiation table lounder than ever before.

Any content related to ethnopolitics was totally forbidden in the period between 2008 and 2009 except the government version of it. Most of the media applied strong self-censorship knowing that their attempts would end up in vein. The press in those days could not carry much about ethnic stories except coverage on some cultural events such as annual celebration of National Day of different ethnic groups. Some issues were reported based on geographic focus but not with deep analysis on peace and political dimension of ethnic areas.

The state of ethnic coverage in 2010: As stated before, the year 2010 had the first election in twenty years since 1990. Legitimacy of the election was being constructed by the government by allowing re-registration of ethnic parties. Any updates of ethnic parties which agree with the government election agenda were allowed. Even in that sense, an interview with an ethnic woman candidate, Pi Kan Kham Dim of The Zomi Congress For Democracy was banned although it did not contain criticism against the government or constitution. As usual, there was no explanation for the cut occurred, but the editor guessed the reason must be her competing against the former Yangon mayor, a retired high ranking military official, Aung Thein Linn in the same constituency.

At large, the censor left out the voices from ethnic communities which had been in disagreement with electoral process and the formatted constitution for military supremacy. Regardless of lack of predictability and inconsistency in decision making over ethnic presence on media, at least profile of ethnic parties and introduction of their leaders and party policies could be stated.

Even though there was a political opening in 2010, there was still strong restriction over social and cultural fronts, especially for expression of ethnic identities. Use of ethnic language was still the most controversial issue. As successive government banned teaching ethnic language in the school

and abandoned regional ethnic press five decades ago, the strength of language in each and every group is shrinking (Lian, 2016; James, 2014). Some of the languages already disappeared after many decades of oppression (Bradley, 2011). Until 2010, the PSRD took a high caution in giving permission to ethnic related issues, especially the language matter. It was a careful cut indeed that a story of the introduction of a new Karen computer font which was initiated by Karen Baptist Theological Seminary was banned. This story was quite short not more than three paragraphs and the layout seemed rather boring without any picture. But it did not pass through the censor. In 2010, discussion over the newly approved constitutions was allowed if the writer discussed from the constructive points of view but every story that touches upon critical points of resource sharing between the regional government and the central government through a process of decentralization was banned. Many Op-ed written by several writers over the ethnic minority rights according to the new constitution was not allowed. Moreover, the viewpoints of main opposition party, the National League for Democracy over ethnic rights in the new political setting was ripped off from the draft.

The state of ethnic coverage in 2011: In 2011, press freedom had been slightly improved in comparison with 2010. Increasing number of coverage over ethnic political activities was permitted. However, partial cut was applied instead of a full cut occasionally. In some cases, the PSRD demanded the news room to change this and that with written remarks in red ink beside the story. In one case, interview with ethnic political leaders was allowed but censorship officers demanded that quotation of a Chin leader who said "Ethnic people can also become president one day" to be removed from the title.

Not like in the past, more widows of opportunity for ethnic stories were open now. Cultural preservation activities of ethnic groups which not currently involved in armed conflicts with the state army, such as Inn Thar from Innlay lake can be written in details. In parallel with the economic changes initiated by the new government, peace initiatives of government started to gain momentum. Along the peace negotiation process in 2011, the stories of the views from multiple stakeholders which participated in the government and foreign donor sponsored peace talks which forged cease-fire with many armed groups could have wider coverage than ever before. Significant improvement is that interview with leaders from armed-groups could reach to the local readers for the first time in nearly three decades.

However, this progress did not signify that everything was going smoothly in the newsroom. The newsroom management was still required to deal with the red crosses coming back from the censor board. Decentralization of power to provincial government was still the top forbidden issue. The movements of opposition party NLD, especially Aung San Suu Kyi's appearance in public event from time to time were subject to a partial or fully cut.

Far more sensitive issue above all the stated censored stories was the renewal of armed conflict in Kachin State in 2011. Very limited information can be reported about the situation of both sides engaging in the conflict, the Government army or Kachin Independent Army. Stories of the suffering of the local population displaced by the war and the alarming rate of Chinese illegal logging at the Kachin border were often cut by the PSRD but it was no longer a hundred percent cut as they did in the past. At the same time, stories of Myit Sone Dam which was a source of anger for Kachin people often faced serious cuts. Negative environmental and social impact of the cascade dams stated by civil society and the local experts were subject to very detailed scrutiny. In general, environmental destruction resulted by government policies over natural resource management was persistently prone to the red ink even after the changing of government. Previously it cannot be written loudly. Now the journalists tried to push the limit but they were still subject to careful

examination of the State. In spite of all these repercussion of political change, writing about political prisoner was not acceptable issue for the PSRD.

The state of ethnic coverage in 2012: A series of negotiation between government and ethnic minorities representing different armed groups continued in 2012. Candid opinions of ethnic leaders, even if they contain negative points about the process can be reported for the first time for local readers. This year was filled with stories of returning exiles including ethnic leaders who came back from different hemisphere of the world to Myanmar as part of national reconciliation process. Ethnic stories were reported more often than ever before and they covered not only political events such as progress in cease-fire negotiation but also cultural activities of different ethnic groups which were forbidden by the State before political change in 2011. For example, National Days recognized by many ethnic groups among themselves were different with the date fixed for them by the former government. Moreover, the junta usually put severe limits on how they should organize celebration in public space. The whole rule of military dictatorship had been hiding many façade of every ethnic culture preventing one group learning from the other. Now they gained more freedom in organizing events. The groups such as Mon and Chin were able to arrange their annual cultural celebration more openly. These activities came to the printed press now.

The year 2012 was also marked by by-election in which the opposition party, NLD occupied seats in all available constituencies. Aung San Suu Kyi was now sitting in the parliament and the media was given much more freedom than previous year. As the government already announced that the PSRD would be abolished very soon (but not stated how soon), the newspapers gained the highest liberty they could enjoy in the past five decades. Most of the topics related to peace, democracy or human rights which were previously considered as not allowable can be written. But, until the total lift of censorship in August, restrictions were still there. For instance, civil society's call for the release of a key Shan political prisoner, U Khun Htun Oo, public criticism towards slow progress in judicial reforms and corruption of judiciary were still not permitted. When the ethnic leaders urged the ruling government to have sincerity in peace negotiation and build sustainable trust with genuine desire for peace, the story was cut. Stories about negative impact of extractive industries especially in Kachin Jade mine were always on the top issues to be cut. Reports from war zones were not permissible and the issues of displacement, hunger and shelter needs for war victim was not allowed. To sum up, until 2012, the government's tolerance against public criticism over its deed and action was still very thin. Stories cut by the PSRD, which revealed the local protest against coal power-plants in many ethnic areas, debt problems of farmers, identity formation of ethnic group in their own traditional terms such as the naming of the race itself, the mass demonstration on the street for promoting peace and the release of political prisoners especially who belonged to ethnic groups were to name a few evidence.

Conclusion

Traditionally, ethnic representation in the national media or the scope of coverage of ethnic issues was structurally undermined by the old authoritarian press system. The mainstream private media did not exclude ethnic stories as periphery to national issues. However, censorship policy of old regime wiped out the opportunity to get the voices of ethnic people be heard. Although large percentage news content was dedicated to the ethnic issues as soon as the PSRD allowed space to the media, the progress was hampered by many other structural factors which derived from authoritarian nature of the State. As collective memories were distorted for a long time, what could be accessed by the readers of the press was only fragmented picture. The chance for building mutual

understanding between one group and another whether the belonged to central plain or hill tribes, was limited. It will definitely take time to construct a more fluid information channel that flows reciprocally.

References

Ahmed, S. (2008). Censorship. In Wolfgang Donsbach (ed). *International Encyclopedia of Communication*, (pp.427-431). Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Bradley, D., 2011. A survey of language endangerment. na. p-73

Brooten, L. (2006). Ethnicity and dissent in community media development: A case study of Burmese/Myanmar media-in-exile. Retrieved on 18 December, 2011 from http://www.amic.org.sg/Resources/Research_Materials/Media_attitudes_conflict_and_crisis/Ethnicity%20and%20dissent%20in%20community%20media%20development.pdf

Brooten, L. (2016). Burmese Media in Transition. *International Journal of Communication*, 10, 18.

Clarke, J. (2014). Ethnic Groups in Burma Need Their Own Media. Retrieved on 12 August, 2014 from, http://www.media-diversity.org/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2813:ethnic-groups-in-burma-need-their-own-media&catid=35:media-news-a-content&Itemid=34

Chongkittavorn, K. (2014). Ethnic media and views needed in Myanmar. Retrieved on 1st August, 2014 from http://www.nationmultimedia.com/opinion/Ethnic-media-and-views-needed-in-Myanmar-30228780.html

Foster, M. (2013). The Business of Media in Myanmar, 2013. *Internews*, February.

Fuller, T. (2012). Chief Censor in Myanmar Caps His Red Pen. Retrieved on 1 January, 2016 from http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/22/world/asia/myanmars-chief-censor-is-closing-his-office.html?_r=0

Galtung, J. (1990). Cultural Violence. *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 27, No. 3, pp. 291-305.

Jame, K. (2014). Myanmar's ethnic media finding its voice, but faces hurdles. Retrieved on 3 March , 2016 from http://onmedia.dw-akademie.com/english/?p=20815

Jay,K. (2005). Burma's censorship board gets a new director. Retrieved on 1 January, 2016 from http://www.burmanet.org/news/2005/05/19/irrawaddy-burma%E2%80%99s-censorship-board-gets-a-new-director-ko-jay/

Iyer, V. (1999). Acts of Oppression: Censorship and the law in Burma. London: ARTICLE 19. International Media Support.

IMS. (2012a). Change is in the air. An assessment of media development challenges and opportunities in Myanmar: Retrieved 27 February, 2012 from http://www.i-m-s.dk/files/publications/changeisintheair_january2012_IMS.pdf

Larkin, E. (2003). The self-conscious censor: censorship in burma under The british 1900-1939. *The Journal of Burma Studies*, 8.

Lian, S.H. (2016). Challenges of Ethnic Language Media In Burma/Myanmar. Retrieved on 3 March, 2016 from http://chinlandguardian.com/index.php/election/item/2470-challenges-of-ethnic-language-media-in-burma-myanmar

Nyein, T. (2012.). The end of censorship after 48 years and 14 days. Retrieved on 1 January, 2014 from from http://thawthikho.blogspot.com/2012/08/blog-post_2572.html

Smith, M. (1991). State of Fear: Censorship in Burma. London: Article 19.

Smith, M. (1995). Censorship Prevails: Political Deadlock and Economic Transition in Burma. London: Article 19.

Smith, M. (1996). Fatal Silence: Freedom of Expression and the Right to Health in Burma. London: Article 19.

Williams, M.C. (2015). Myanmar's Troubled Path to Reform Political Prospects in a Landmark Election Year. Retrieved 4 May, 2015 from https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/files/chathamhouse/field/field_document/20150226Myanmar.pdf

Than, Ba. (1978). History of Myanmar Press. Paper presented at the Proceedings of a Public Forum on History of Myanmar Press in Yangon in 1975.

Zaw, M. (2006). Privately owned print media outlets in Myanmar: Their roles and functions in Myanmar society. Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts Program in International Development Studies, Chulalongkorn University.

Zawana. (1978). Myanmar Press and Politics. Paper presented at the Proceedings of a Public Forum on History of Myanmar Press in Yangon in 1975.

The 'Local Turn' and Resilient Communities in Syria: Infrastructure for Peace or Hegemonic Pathways?

Harout Akdedian [*]

This paper argues that 'Peace Infrastructures' in Syria have disguised hegemonic power relations as seemingly 'neutral' and 'innocent' initiatives that promote tolerance, coexistence and Islam. Both government and local intermediaries have used these relevant infrastructures to expand their socio-political influence. Hence, based on the Syrian experience, infrastructures for peace and the associated efforts to incorporate and institutionalize local, state and mid-level participation toward localized peace, have been ultimately conflict-engendering, hegemonic pathways for power consolidation. From this perspective, employing the term 'Infrastructures for peace' without taking into account its correlations with power and hegemonic structures, leads to the reification of the topic and conceals significant questions about its nature.

[*] Harout Akdedian, PhD candidate, University of New England, Australia

Introduction

In this paper the topic of Middle East politics is uncharacteristically situated in the context of peace rather than conflict. The paper presents the "local turn" of the Syrian state when it began efforts to build resilient communities after the year 2000 when Bashar al-Asad came to power, replacing his father and promising social change. These efforts strove to increase local capacity to address community based social and socio-economic challenges, retarding chances of conflict escalation. Hence, in order to create resilient communities, the Syrian state strengthened local capacity for non-violent conflict management by networking, enabling, supporting and cooperating with Islamic religious organizations, Islamic charity organizations, Islamic schools and mosques that served as intermediaries between the state and local communities.

Although these infrastructures for peace nurtured an environment of accommodation, dialogue and tolerance, the paper points out how they led to the formation of new local power groups and eventually created tension between these new groups and the overlapping state-level decision-makers. As the Syrian state's legitimacy and effective control began to erode after 2011, local religious structures challenged and replaced the state's institutional reach altogether.

The first part of the paper delves into the background of state-society relations in Syria. More specifically, the first section reviews the power struggle over the state and the violent tensions between the self-proclaimed secular Asad regime and the Muslim Brotherhood up to 1982. The violent conflict between the Muslim Brotherhood and the state resulted in marginalizing and antagonizing a significant portion of the Syrian society. In the process, the state's legitimacy, interactions and institutional reach became more and more limited. Post-2000 efforts of creating resilient communities and supporting local capacity strove to ameliorate relations between state and society, extend the state's institutional reach in local areas out of its direct influence and create local mechanisms of intervention and conflict management where the state is unable to take up such responsibilities on its own. Hence the second part of this chapter details post-2000 efforts of the Syrian state to co-opt, accommodate, and empower Islamic organizations, Islamic charitable work and the proselytization of Islam to spread the message of tolerance, moderation, co-existence and national unity. The third and last section highlights how co-opted Sunni clergymen and religious figures serving as intermediaries gained significant resources, social influence and bargaining power. Hence, these initiatives led to the formation of new power groups, both competing and cooperating with the state in matters of social organization. Local religious structures easily challenged and replaced the state's institutional reach, and the infrastructures for peace and efforts of creating resilient communities have shaped the currently witnessed landscape of overwhelming Islamic opposition against the Asad dictatorship.

The marginalization of political Islam and state-society relations

In the early twentieth century, Islamic institutions in greater Syria did not have a strictly political program but sought to carry out Islam's cultural, religious and civic missions.[1] For instance, Jam'iyat al-Maqasid al-Khairiyah (est. 1878) and similarly influential organizations such as Jam'iyat al-Ghara' (est. 1924) and al-Tamaddon al-'Islami (est. 1930) were devoted to social and welfare services as a way of maintaining cultural and religious norms in the face of expanding Western influence,

---

[1] Talhami, G. (2001). Syria: Islam, Arab Nationalism and the Military, *Middle East Policy*, 8:4, p. 113

particularly within non-Muslim communities in Syria.[2] By the mid 1930s there were a number of Islamic organizations and schools throughout Syria, concentrated mostly in Damascus, Aleppo, Hama, Homs, Deir el-Zor and Lattakia.[3] The operations and activities of these Islamic groups were apart of institutions providing social services and were integral to institutional arrangements for social organization in general.

Between 1938 and 1947 a number of these institutions consolidated to form the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood.[4] It was during this time that Syria gained its independence from France, and the preceding colonial top-down political structures were to be replaced by more inclusive and participatory political ordering. This allowed local activist groups (both Islamic and non-Islamic) to pursue their agendas in the political arena and expand their social base.[5] Syria's post-independent political life began with a vibrant democratic and parliamentary environment in which the Brotherhood's participation was mainly targeted at carrying out the Islamic reformist project.[6] In other words, the Brotherhood sought to reconcile Islamic tenets with newly emerging social and political realities.

Unlike the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood accepted and participated in the liberal political system.[7] For instance, in 1947, the Muslim brotherhood took part in parliamentary elections in Syria with four candidates of whom three were elected.[8] While symbolic of the group's influence in the country at the time, the Brotherhood's win was numerically insignificant given the total of 142 seats in parliament.[9] The Brotherhood utilized their representatives to advocate for joining Islam with the state. However, their ambitions were farfetched in the eyes of most Syrians, for whom more substantial socio-economic issues such as the redistribution of wealth and land reform were more pressing.[10] Although the Brotherhood was not successful in unifying Islam and state, it continuously advocated for change and represented the interests of its social constituency.

2 Ibid. The political class, to promote their political interests and power base, manipulated these organizations. Nevertheless, the nature and aim of Islamic activism remained educational, religious and social; see al-Haj, A. (2014). Al-Salafiya wal-Salafiyoun fi Sourya: Min al-'Islah 'ila al-Sawra [Salafism and the Salafis in Syria: From reform to Revolution]. In B. M. Nafi', E. D. Abd al-Mawla, & A. H. Takiya (Eds.), *Al-Zahira al-Salafiyya: al-Ta'addoudiyaal-Tanzimiya wal-Siyasat [The Phenomenon of Salafism: Organizational and political diversity]* (pp. 117-139). Beirut: AlJazeera Center for Studies and Arab Scientific Publishers.

3 Amongst them are alRabita alDiniya in Homs (1935), Dar alArkam in Aleppo (1937), Ansar al'Islam in Deir elZor (1942), and others; see Sa'd el-Din, A. *Shahidon 'alal-'Asr [Witness of the Era]*, AlJazera, interview with A. Mansour, 9 September 2012.

4 Ibid.; Hussein, M. (1996). *Souriya al-Muassirah, 1963-1993 [Modern Syria, 1963-1993],* Damascus: Dar Kan'an. For more on the history of the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood and its relation to other Islamic organizations see Reissner, J. (2005). *Al-Harakat al-Islamiyya fi Sourya [Islamic Movements in Syria],* Beirut: Riyad el-Rayyes. For more about the Brotherhood's activism in Syria starting in 1938, see Othman, H. (2001). *Al-ahzab al-Siyasiyya fi Sourya: al-srriyya wal-'alaniyya [The Political Parties in Syria: the Explicit and the Confidential],* Beirut: Riyad el-Rayyis. For the Brotherhood's activism in Hama and other provinces from 1941 to 1947 see Zarzour, A. (2004). *Mustafa al-Siba'i,* Damascus: Dar al-Qalam.

5 Othman, op. cit.

6 Abdallah, U. (1983). *The Islamic Struggle in Syria.* Berkeley: Mizan Press.

7 Reissner, op. cit.

8 Sa'd el-Din, op. cit.

9 Jabbour, G. (1993). *Al-fikral siyasi al-mu'asser fi Souriya [Modern Political Thought in Syria].* Beirut: Al-Manarah.

10 Talhami, op, cit.

The Brotherhood's respect for participatory processes gradually withered over time as the encroachment of army commanders into politics ensued after 1949. Syria witnessed three coup d'états in a single year at the hands of army commanders in 1949.[11] Remaining traces of political participation were effectively eliminated starting in 1958 with the union of Syria and Egypt under Nasser.[12] At that time Nasser abolished all political parties and held onto power by means of authoritarian rule until 1961.[13] The Muslim Brotherhood accepted and encouraged the union but rejected the authoritarian character of the transition.[14] The Brotherhood's last electoral participation in Syria came in 1961, when it achieved a total of ten seats in the parliament.[15]

As the Syrian government became more hard-line, the Muslim Brotherhood's call for cooperation dissolved. The first manifestation of the transition to radicalism came after the 1963 Ba'thist takeover. In 1964, after long anti-religious campaigns by the secular forces of the country,[16] tensions grew to unprecedented levels in Homs.[17] A protest was organized in the 'Osman al-Hoourani school where mobs attacked local government forces because they were perceived to symbolize the authoritarian and secular Ba'th rule. This escalated into an armed confrontation between the government and protestors. After clashing with the army a large number of protesting Brotherhood members took refuge in the Sultan mosque, exchanging fire with government forces.[18] Ultimately, the army shelled the mosque, killing and detaining a number of the Brotherhood.[19]

After 1980, the Muslim Brotherhood officially endorsed the use of violence in the struggle against the Syrian government.[20] Asad declared that the government was to respond to assassinations and attacks by 'revolutionary violence'.[21] Subsequently in March 1980, a law was passed criminalizing membership in the Muslim Brotherhood, which was now punishable by death.[22] By that time Asad had started referring to the Muslim Brotherhood in his speeches as the 'Satanic Brotherhood'.[23] The culmination of all these was the Hama uprising in 1982. The antagonism between the government and the Brotherhood led Hama to rebel against the regime.[24] Although rebels took over the entire city of Hama, the government retaliated by destroying almost half the city and killing between 10,000 and 30,000 residents.[25] Eventually, the government's ruthless

[11] Ibid. Husni al-Za'im in March 1949, Sami Hinnawi in August 1949, and Adib al-Shishakly in December 1949. Shishakly himself was eliminated in another coup in February 1954.

[12] Seale, P. (1989). *Asad: The Struggle for the Middle East.* Berkeley: University of California Press. Reissner, op. cit.; Heydemann, S. (1999). *Authoritarianism in Syria: Institutions and Social Conflict, 1946-1970.* London: Cornell University Press.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Sa'd el-Din, op. cit.

[15] Hinnebusch, R. (2001). *Revolution from Above.* London: Routledge.

16 According to Sa'd el-Din these campaigns were initiated in 1949 by Sami Hinnawi and continued later under Shishakly's left leaning rule; Sa'd el-Din, op. cit.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Seale, op. cit.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Sa'd el-Din, op. cit.; Dib, K. (2011). *Tarikh Souriya al-Mou'asir: Min al-Intidab al-Faransi 'ila Sayf 2011 [The Contemporary History of Syria: From French Colonialism to the Summer of 2011].* Beirut: Dar al-Nahar.

[25] Seale, op. cit.; Lund, A. (2013). Syria's Salafi Insurgents: The Rise of The Syrian Islamic Front. *The Swedish Institute of International Affairs*, March Retreived from: http://www.ui.se/eng/upl/files/86861.pdf;

crackdown and the Brotherhood's internal divisions resulted in the fall of the armed struggle, and Islamic activists either returned to educational and social endeavours or turned to radicalized activism.[26]

Despite the fact that Asad sr. dealt with the Islamic question effectively by removing political Islam from Syrian politics altogether, significant portions of the Syrian population lost their representational outlet. In other words, the state had effectively demolished all institutional linkages with large proportions of society. Given that Sunni Muslims comprise the vast majority of the Syrian population, both the functional capabilities and legitimacy of the Syrian state were undermined. Furthermore, the actual sources of severed and antagonized state-society relations were never addressed and all expressions and signs of it were repressed.

The 'local turn', intermediaries and the return of Islamic activism

Hafez al-Asad's natural death brought his son Bashar al-Asad to the presidency of Syria in 2000. Asad jr. explicitly expressed the moral need for establishing communication and dialogue with Syria's Islamic movement.[27] This rhetoric reveals the Syrian state's awareness of the gap between state and society and its intentions of addressing it. In fact, policies in line with this rhetoric were pursued immediately after Hafez al-Asad abolished the Muslim Brotherhood in 1982. Hafez, in an effort to re-establish the state's institutional reach, ties and influence over the antagonized social groups, co-opted a number of Islamic figures and religious leaders that supported the state and reached out to the Sunni Muslims. However, the need to transform previously antagonized relations and extend the state's institutional capacity became more pressing after Bashar al-Asad took power.

The challenging economic climate along with increased political pressure led the Syrian state to look for local partners. Hence a number of state initiatives were launched under the official label of 'diffusing morality, spreading the culture of tolerance and communicating the true message of Islam'.[28] The declared objectives were to strengthen 'national unity' and 'moderation'. The government implemented a number of symbolic steps to introduce these policies and ameliorate its relations with disenfranchised Sunni Muslims. For instance, in 2000 the government repealed a decree banning the wearing of headscarves by girls and women in schools and educational institutions. The regime also allowed the return of exiled political activists from the Muslim Brotherhood.[29] In addition, some 800 political prisoners and previous Islamic activists were released; among them Islamic leaders and prolific figures such as Khalid al-Shami who spearheaded previous Islamic uprisings against the government.[30]

The Syrian state adopted and incorporated Islam more overtly, both ideologically and institutionally, than ever before. The government started organizing Islamic conferences and incorporated Islamic education into the program of its once anti-religious military academy.

---

[26] Sa'd el-Din, op. cit; al-Haj, A. (2011). *State and Community: The political Aspiatons of Religious Groups in Syria 2000-2010.* London: Strategic Research and Communication Center. Sheikh Muhammad Nasr el-Din al-Albani is one example amongst radicalized Islamists

[27] Khatib, L. (2012). Islamic Revival and the Promotion of Moderate Islam from Above. In L. Khatib, R. Lefevre, & J. Qureshi (Eds.) *State and Islam in Baathist Syria: Confrontation or Co-operation?.* Scotland: University of St. Andrews Centre for Syrian Studies. p. 33

[28] '*takrees al-akhlaq wa nashr thaqafat al-tasamuh, wa isal al-resala al-ḥaqiqiya lil-islam'.* Ibid.

[29] such as Abu Fateh al-Bayanuni, Ibid.

[30] Ibid. p. 34

Furthermore, the government officially employed new shaykhs and theologians in government institutions.[31] This was mostly notable in the Ministry of Endowments.[32]

In addition to these active policies mentioned above, the government's passive support and permissiveness towards Islamic institutions is also notable. The flourishing of Islamic groups and Islamic educational schools inside mosques and in Islamic centres were unprecedented since the takeover of Hafiz al-Asad in 1973.[33] Promotional religious campaigns, banners and symbols were allowed in public. Furthermore, as Lin Khatib notes, the number of Islamic figures in the parliament increased.[34] Pierret and Shelvik demonstrate in their research how these Islamic figures enjoyed support from the political and economic elite that controlled Syria revealing the formal and informal support that Islamic figures enjoyed.[35]

The main objective of Islamic movements was to assist the government in addressing the country's socio-economic challenges. As Khatib argues, since more that 50 percent of the Syrian population is under the age of 30, Islamic organizations appealed to the youth.[36] Islamic organizations operated charity events and undertook social activities providing educational and employment services. The Syrian economy was struggling and government funded social support was diminishing significantly. Hence, the government found a useful partner in Islamic organizations and religious leaders in a time of need. Furthermore, given these Islamic organizations were apolitical in nature, their partnership exhibited popular support with regards to the government and reinforced its legitimacy.

Examples of such Islamic organizations and movements include but are not limited to the 'Tajdeed movement', 'Al-Zayd group', and the 'Qubaysiyyat'. Leaders such as Shaykh Muhammad Habash, the late 'Abd al-Karim al-Rifa'I, Sa'id al-Buti, and Shaykh 'Abd al-Hadi al-Bani served as local intermediaries endorsed by the state to carry out social, educational and charity activities and to assist in administrative and organizational tasks meant for government responsibility. This 'local turn' was very effective in spreading the message of Islam, establishing dialogue between previously antagonized social groups, improving state-society relations through developing communication and establishing partnership and preventing conflict by addressing socio-economic challenges, poverty and unemployment. Local Islamic organizations created resilient communities with the capacity to resolve local challenges without the need for state intervention. Over time, the reach and activism of these organizations grew so widespread that some Islamic organizations and religious intermediaries expanded and operated transnationally. The al-Qubaysiyyat, for example, started operating in other countries in the Middle East such as Lebanon and Jordan.[37]

---

[31] Khatib, L. (2011). *Islamic Revivalism in Syria: The rise and fall of Ba'thist secularism.* New York: Routledge Studies in Political Islam.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Pierret, T. (2013). *Religion and State in Syria: The Sunni Ulama from Coup to Revolution*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[34] Khatib, *Islamic Revivalism in Syria,* op. cit.

[35] Pierret, T. and Selvik, K. (2009). Limits of Authoritarian Upgrading in Syria: private Welfare, Islamic Charities, and The Rise of the Zayd Movement. *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 41, pp. 595-614. L. Ruiz de Elvira and T. Zintl, 'The End of the Ba'thist Social Contract in Bashar al-Asad's Syria: Reading Sociopolitical Transformations through Charities and Broader Benevolent Activism', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 46 (2014), pp. 329-349

[36] Khatib, *Islamic Revivalism in Syria,* op. cit*, p. 33

[37] Al-Haj, *State and Community,* op. cit.

In the process of assisting the Syrian state in extending its institutional reach, carrying its organizational responsibilities and improving its relations with previously antagonized factions, the intermediary Islamic figures and organizations gathered significant influence on state and society alike. For instance, given that more than 50 precent of the population in Syria is under 30, employment services and charity activities provided by Islamic organizations led to the creation of a significant loyal social network amongst capable and influential social groups. Furthermore, Islamic organizations infiltrated state institutions and influenced high-ranking officials within the state apparatus. In 2009 the draft amendment of the Personal Status Law was leaked, which included a Sunni Muslim version of family law in Syria.[38] The draft reinforced and empowered Islamic and other religious courts in matters regarding family law, marriage, divorce and inheritance. It also included amendments such as polygamy for men and other regulations similar to the Islamic law in Saudi Arabia, requiring women to get their husbands' approval before traveling or applying for work.[39] Despite the fact that the draft never passed as legislation, the content and regulations reveal unprecedented Islamic influence.

The influence and negotiating capacity of these religious groups and local intermediaries is also noticeable in the education sector. Religious groups were provided permits to establish private schools and institutes in Damascus. For example, al-Bawader school in Damascus was led by an Islamic group which yielded significant investment projects and collection of money and expanded the school from approximately 10 to 40 classes.[40] The religious groups also managed to apply their own educational agenda and enforced their curriculum without abiding by the Syrian education ministry's regulations.[41] The Islamic groups also managed the employment of teachers and educators. The evasion of the Syrian education ministry's control is only proof of Islamic groups' influence on government officials and infiltration of state institutions.

The Islamic movement and the Syrian state: friends or foes?

In the midst of struggling economic climate between 2000 and 2011 the Syrian regime permitted non-Political Islamist groups to organize social and humanitarian activities.[42] Hence, Islamic associations began to flourish in this climate of socio-economic uncertainty.[43] The regime kept these movements under surveillance of course, but most Islamic organizations were able to continue their activism as long as they limited their public face to charity work and religious activities.[44] As economic development grew unequally, local Islamic organizations and charities received a pro-poor profile in the rural countryside and increased in popularity nationwide. It is against this environment that Islamic activism gained popularity in the rural countryside in different parts of Syria even before the protests of 2011.[45]

Confronted by the growing influence and significance of Islamic organizations and religious intermediaries, the Syrian government had realized that the policies of co-optation and

---

[38] Khatib, *Islamic Revivalism in Syria,* op. cit
[39] Ibid.
[40] Ibid.
[41] Ibid.
[42] Lund. op. cit.; al-Haj, *State and Community*, op. cit.; Pierret*,* op. cit.; Pierret and Selvik, op. cit.; Ruiz de Elvira and Zintl, op. cit.
[43] Al-Haj, *State and Community*, op. cit.
[44] Lund. op. cit.; Ruiz de Elvira and Zintl, op. cit.
[45] Ajami. op. cit.; al-Haj, *State and Community*, op. cit.; Pierret, op. cit., p. 196.

accommodation rendered the Islamic groups an independent force that sometimes cooperates but often competes and undermines the state. In an effort to curve the growing independence and influence of Islamic organizations the government reverted some of its previous permissive policies. For instance, on the 28th of February 2006, the director of the Damascus Waqf (religious endowments), Muhammad Khaled al-Mu'tem issued a decree that banned religious lessons from Syria's mosques and reduced Qur'anic lessons to once or twice a week instead of daily.[46] The decree also banned mosques or *zawiyas* from receiving donations without reporting them first to the ministry of Endowments.[47] Despite these efforts, Islamic groups have become so influential that they managed to renegotiate these restrictions and lift certain parts of the ban.[48]

More explicit examples of growing antagonism between the Syrian state and the religious intermediaries include Friday sermons hostile and critical of the state conducted by prolific preachers previously assumed to have been co-opted by the state. Salah Kuftaro from the Abu el-Nur Mosque in Damascus, for one, explicitly called for Islamic democracy in Syria while criticising secularism and highlighting the failures of Secular Arab leaders in the Middle East.[49] In addition, the Zayd movement included many Shaykhs who were explicitly critical of the regime.[50] It is worth noting that this kind of audacity and criticism of the state is unprecedented since the takeover of the Asad family.

After March 2011, as public protests started spreading across different Syrian provinces, the Islamic institutions that once served as local intermediaries for creating resilient communities became the main institutional platforms for anti-government activism. Friday prayers for example had been the only avenue for crowds to gather legally after the year 2000. With the growing influence of Islamic figures and preachers and the increase of followers and mosque attendants, throughout the years, Islamic 'ulamas have yielded significant public mobilization capacity. No other sector in society shared this faculty. Consequently, nearly every single demonstration after March 2011 was launched from mosques after Friday prayers. The Mosque, the religious leader and Friday prayers became symbols of resistance, piety, justice and pro-poor and pro-people establishments. Similarly, funeral gatherings, proceedings and prayers often turned into anti-government rallies as the government's crackdown turned more violent and deadly.

In light of these developments, the position of local Islamic intermediaries was mixed between those who kept silent and those who expressed compassion for demonstrators and anger towards the government's excessive use of force. A number of Islamic leaders previously associated with the Syrian state have challenged the government and demanded drastic reforms. Examples include – but are not limited to – Shaykh 'Usama al-Rifa'I, Shaykh Muhammad al-Ya'qubi, Shaykh Kuraym Rajih and Shaykh Moaz al-Khatib.[51] These religious figures were highly influential Islamic authorities and many of them closely associated with the government. For instance, 'Usama al-Rifa'I ran charity organizations and controlled many mosques and Islamic schools through concessions from the

[46] Khatib, *Islamic Revivalism in Syria,* op. cit.

[47] Ibid.

[48] Ibid.

[49] Ibid.

[50] Ibid.

[51] Qureshi, J. (2012). The Discourses of the Damascene Sunni 'Ulama during the 2011 Revolution, In Khatib, L. Lefevre, R. & Qureshi, J. (Eds.) *State and Islam in Baathist Syria: Confrontation or Co-operation?* Scotland: University of St. Andrews Centre for Syrian Studies. P. 59-91.

government.[52] Al-Ya'qubi was allowed into Syria in 2006 by the Syrian regime and preached in prolific mosques such as the Umayyad mosque and the al-Hasan Mosque in the heart of Damascus.[53]

Conclusion

Since the militarization of public demonstrations, armed opposition forces in Syria are almost entirely Islamic in their constituency, structure and outlook. After sporadic demonstrations in 2011, Syria plunged into a vicious civil war. The Islamic Front, the 'Islamic State' and *Jabhat al-Nosra* emerged as the most potent challengers of the state's monopoly over the means of violence and control. Vast territories in the North and East of Syria are under the control of Islamic groups who established Shari'a courts and enforce Islamic rule.[54] Not all these groups are at the extreme end of the spectrum. The Islamic Front, for instance, was moderate compared to more extreme Jihadi groups such as the IS.[55] Nonetheless, they all explicitly strive to establish an Islamic state.

The local turn of the Syrian state to create resilient communities through religion and Islamic intermediaries allowed Islam in its institutional arrangements to become a platform of anti-government activism. Local intermediaries became an essential part of the existing socio-political establishment. In this sense the state has successfully coopted these factions and expanded its institutional reach. However, the Islamic groups made themselves indispensable to the ruling political elite that gained further legitimacy, representational capacity and organizational help to the extent that the power groups in charge of the state grew more dependent on local intermediaries than the other way around.

To conclude, 'peace infrastructures' in Syria disguised hegemonic power relations as seemingly 'neutral' and 'innocent' initiatives that promote tolerance, coexistence and Islam. Both government and local intermediaries used these institutions of control to expand their own socio-political influence. Based on the Syrian experience, infrastructures for peace and the associated efforts to incorporate and institutionalize the local, were ultimately conflict-engendering, hegemonic pathways for power consolidation. From this perspective, employing the term 'Infrastructures for peace' without taking into account its correlations with power and hegemonic structures, leads to the reification of the topic and ultimately conceals its placement in the context of power relations.

---

[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid.
[54] Cane, S. (Producer). (2013). *Invading Sunni muslims force sharia law on occupied Aleppo Syria* [Motion Picture], from Bostom, A. (2013). 'Video Report: U.S. Syrian Jihadist 'Allies' Establish Brutally Unjust Aleppo Sharia Courts', *The Counter Jihad Report,* 13 September, http://counterjihadreport.com/tag/solomon-Kane/
[55] Other less famous groups within this category: *Majlis Shoura al-Moujahidin*, *Kataeb al-Muhajerin*, *Jund al-Sham*, and *Fath al-Islam*. See, Lund, op. cit.

Grassroots Environmental Adult Education:
Developing Environmental Peace Infrastructure in the Nascent Democracy of Myanmar

Johanna Garnett [*]

Myanmar is undergoing rapid political, social and economic change as a result of political and economic reforms instigated in 2011 by the ruling authoritarian junta. The nascent democracy is adopting an industrialised development strategy aimed at addressing the dire poverty of the vast majority of the population, lack of public infrastructure, serious environmental degradation and deeply seated ethnic conflicts. This paper is based on a case study of a grass roots environmental organisation in Myanmar that is focusing on raising awareness of the ecological violence inherent in the processes of modernisation and development and working on developing peaceful and practical alternatives. The organisation, The Network for Environment and Economic Development (NEED), is educating young adults from various ethnic groups and geographical regions within the country in alternative development processes and practices that are centred on sustainable agriculture and livelihood models and ecologically sound environmental management systems. It is argued that this participatory, grass roots involvement and development of local infrastructure is vital if Myanmar is to achieve enduring peace, one grounded in a peaceful relationship with the natural environment. This paper is based on the belief that the implementation of liberal peace infrastructure ignores ecological violence and that peace practitioners need to focus on 'environmental peace' in order to achieve enduringly peaceful societies. This is particularly so given increasing populations and depleting natural resources and threats to environmental, human and food security.

[*]Johanna Garnett, PhD candidate, University of New England, Australia

Introduction

Myanmar (formerly known as Burma) was once the wealthiest nation state in Southeast Asia but is now one of the world's least developed countries (UNDP, 2014). Globally it is deemed to be one of the least peaceful countries, ranked 147th of 162 on the Global Peace Index (IEP, 2014). Myanmar is thus deemed a 'weak' state. Weak states 'fail to deliver positive political goods—such as security, health, education, a reliable legal framework and functioning infrastructure—to the people' (Rotberg, 2002). Myanmar has been governed by a military junta, the *Tatmadaw*, since a coup d'etat in 1962 and the installation of the Burmese Socialist Programme Party (1962-1988). Poverty, dire health outcomes, low levels of education, lack of public infrastructure and appalling human rights issues in Myanmar are all attributed to the poor governance, corruption, cronyism and brutality that have been endemic under their rule (Thant Myint-U, 2011 for example).

Myanmar is rich in natural resources - in particular oil, gas, timber (primarily teak) and jade. Its economic model is centred round extractive industries and agriculture – traditionally rice (*paddy*) but increasingly rubber, sugar cane and palm oil. The agriculture sector accounts for the largest share of the economy. It provides livelihoods for more than 70 per cent of the population and generates 43 per cent of GDP. In Myanmar the state has been extremely 'self-serving' (Steinberg, 2013) maintaining an economic system that serves to support the military elites and the crony capitalists (Jones, 2014). One report (Myanmar Times, 2015) states that "since the 2011 reforms there has been an increase of 170 per cent in the amount of land slated for agribusiness with little or no economic benefit to local communities". Inequitable and unjust exploitation of natural resources by a wealthy elite in Myanmar and by neighbouring countries, China in particular, has resulted in conflict between the extractive resources sector, the military and indigenous and local peoples and is likely to continue or worsen (BEWG, 2011; Simpson, 2007).

Since 2011 Myanmar has been undergoing rapid political, social and economic change as a result of political and economic reforms (MacDonald, 2013). These reforms were instigated by soft-liner, President Thein Sein, and his nominally civilian government ostensibly to address the economic, social and environmental problems the nation-state is facing (Aspinall & Farrelly, 2014; Skidmore & Wilson, 2012).[1] The nascent democracy is adopting an industrialised development strategy - shifting from a reliance on subsistence farming to export manufacturing - and the government is relying on foreign investment and foreign aid for boosting the economy (Thant Myint-U, 2011). The recent changes have begun a process for new actors, identities, and relationships to be constructed (MacDonald, 2013). Multi-national corporations and investors are flooding into the country and the opening up to INGOs and NGOs is empowering the elites and middle class and raising the capacity of an emerging civil society (Petrie & South, 2014). The recent changes appear to be working with the economy growing 7.8% in the period 2014-15 but economic benefits have yet to reach the grass roots. Traditional livelihoods are increasingly under threat. The uneven distribution of wealth has resulted in unsustainable agricultural and livelihood practices by the vast majority of Myanmar farmers as they struggle to survive.

Myanmar's modernisation and peacebuilding process, with its focus on a shift to democratic governing systems and market-oriented economic growth, is consistent with the dominant paradigm of 'liberal peacebuilding' (as discussed by Paris, 2010:337). The liberal peace framework is embedded in and replicates cultures of materialism and consumption (Richmond & Mitchell, 2011).

---

[1] Theories surrounding the underlying intention of the reforms abound – but are not within the purview of this paper

The implementation of liberal peace infrastructure does not acknowledge or ignores the ecological violence (as defined by Galtung, 1990, p.294) embedded in these systems. In Myanmar the vast majority of the population relies on local natural resources and healthy local environments for their shelter, food, livelihoods and wellbeing.

Myanmar has a history of conflict but, as one student in Myanmar told me, "nowadays, the people are living with conflict between environmental quality and economic development". She is one of a growing number of young people in Myanmar who realise that ecologically sensitive local infrastructure is vital for Myanmar to achieve enduring peace, one grounded in the natural environment.

This paper presents a case study of a grass roots environmental organisation in Myanmar that has mobilised in response to environmental and associated social issues in the country. The Network for Environment and Economic Development (NEED) has established an eco-farm and residential school in the south of the country and has developed an environmental adult education program aimed at young adults from agrarian communities around the country. Environmental adult education is an education *for* the environment – "its aim is both an understanding of the complex webs of ecological and social relations and changing behaviours to create stronger, peaceful and more ecologically sound relationships" (Sauve & Orellana, 2004, p. 99). NEED's focus is twofold: to raise awareness of the ecological violence that is inherent in the processes of capitalism, modernisation and development as well as current localised agrarian practices; and, to develop peaceful, practical alternatives that can be applied at the local level.

This paper begins with a brief outline of Myanmar and a discussion of the environmental conflict in the country. The case study is then presented as a response to these issues. This is followed by a discussion as to how this local initiative is contributing to environmental peacemaking and development in the country. The paper ends with thoughts on the implications of local initiatives such as these on enduring peace – one embedded in nature.

Background

Myanmar is one of the largest countries in Southeast Asia. It is home to a wealth of biodiversity and complex eco-systems. There are vast areas of forest throughout the country, covering around 48% of the land as well as expanses of montane grasslands, shrub lands and mangroves. All of these natural environments are home to a diversity of wildlife. Four major rivers - the Irrawaddy, the Salween, the Mekong and the Kaladan - flow through wide, central plains and down to mangrove-lined river deltas before emptying into the Bay of Bengal and the Andaman Sea which lie to the west of the country. The country is vulnerable to a wide range of hazards, including floods, cyclones, earthquakes, landslides and tsunamis.[2]

Myanmar is home to around 53 million predominately Buddhist (89%) citizens represented by 135 officially recognised ethnic groups falling under eight major groupings. The ruling ethnic cohort are Burman (68%), followed by the Shan (9%), Kayin (7%), Arakan (3.5%) and Mon (2%). Besides Buddhism, the main religions in Myanmar are Christianity (4.9%), Islam (3.8%), Hindu (0.05%) and Animism (1.3%). Theravada Buddhism permeates the government and the majority of peoples' lives and values. The country can be divided geographically into two areas; the plains and delta, and the

---

[2] At time of writing, over one million people had been displaced by flooding after torrential rain.

mountains. The plains and delta area which is located in southern and middle Myanmar has been the predominant political and economic centre of the Burman (Bamar) empire since the late 1700s and is home to the majority of the population, industry and cities (Adas, 1974). The mountains are rich in natural resources and home to smaller ethnic groups and relatively sparse populations (Scott, 2011; Silverstein, 1977).

Myanmar is geographically isolated, being surrounded by mountains on three sides and the sea on a fourth, and, historically, this isolation has enabled the country to withstand assimilation and keep its cultures largely intact (Silverstein, 1977). In ancient 'Burma', and until colonialism, the monarchy held absolute power and bureaucracy was linked to the king with no independent government. This centralised style of state-making has resulted in a periphery - of agrarian communities (peasants) and of ragged borders and self-governing ethnic groups (Scott, 2011).

Whilst a centralised state structure has persisted in Myanmar, cultures at the local level have been relatively stable and traditional practices have also carried on (Scott, 2009). For agrarian communities, agricultural production and the structure of management – of landlords, cultivator/land owners, tenants and landless labourers – has hardly changed in hundreds of years (Adas, 1974). Two reasons for this cultural and social stability have been the practice of subsistence farming with a small surplus for taxes and barter (Silverstein, 1977) and distance from the centre of government and not being absorbed by the state (Scott, 2009). This has resulted in conflict between ethnic groups which is ongoing.

Environmental Conflict in Myanmar

There are two major aspects to environmental conflict in Myanmar. The first stems from the state's top-down, centralised, exploitative and inefficient management of natural resources and the implementation of environmentally damaging new policies and practices under its export-oriented, industrialised development program. The second is at the grass roots level – the impact of poor local resource management practices on local environments as poor people try to carve out a livelihood, keep themselves housed and fed. Combined, these practices have resulted in widespread environmental degradation and environmental insecurities and injustices (Sovacool, 2012; BEWG, 2011). Both aspects intersect and are discussed below.

Myanmar is geographically strategically placed between the two economic powerhouses of India and China (Thant Myint-U, 2011). Mountains and monsoons have been barriers to trade but the north/south alignment has been conducive to trade with China and has resulted in close trading relations and resource development between the two countries (Thant Myint U, 2008). China benefits from cheap oil and gas and an overland market for its goods – the markets in Myanmar are overflowing with poor quality, plastic paraphernalia and processed products and the countryside is littered with waste, mainly plastic packaging. Myanmar's shared border with Thailand has resulted in political, economic and social tensions due to ethnic conflict, the opium trade, illegal logging, people smuggling and refugees but also resource development in the form of oil and the damming of rivers for hydro-power (Thant Myint-U, 2008).

A number of large development projects have been of particular concern with regard to the environment and human rights. The Shwe Gas Project, operated by a consortium led by Daewoo (South Korea), and in conjunction with Myanmar Oil and Gas (MOGE) has resulted in a 1,200 kilometre dual pipeline spanning the length of Myanmar in order to carry gas and oil to Yunnan

Province in China. Oil and gas projects like Shwe Gas have threated the livelihoods of thousands of farmers and fishermen (BEWG, 2011:60) and large oil refineries being mooted for Dawei and other areas in the country are causing concern for local communities. Large dams have been constructed to produce electricity for new towns and cities built by the military regime, for factories and mining and for export to neighbouring countries and many more are in the pipeline (Salween Watch, 2013). Mining techniques have resulted in pollution, displacement of villages, decimation of agricultural land and deforestation and further development now poses a grave threat to the mountainous regions in the north (BEWG, 2011:61). Self-sustaining indigenous and agrarian communities have been forced into slave labour, lost the capacity to feed themselves and have been displaced.

A large percentage of Myanmar is forested and there is only about 16 per cent arable land. All of the land is ultimately owned by the government and controlled by the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation (MoAI). Under Myanmar law, the state may compulsorily acquire land for public purposes and for business purposes (Displacement Solutions, 2015). As a result, there is a high rate of landlessness among rural populations due to 'land grabs' related to increased militarisation, development projects, special economic zones and industrial agricultural production (US Aid, 2014). As a student from Rakhine State in the west of the country, told me "some of the rich people are making the large scale agriculture; they plant rubber, teak and other plants and they need a lot of land to plant that".

Although the law requires the state to pay compensation for land it acquires, in practice the compensation often falls short of minimum standards or does not occur at all (USAid, 2014:8). Acreage, however small, is vital for food security and in many areas farmers no longer have security of land tenure or the freedom to grow rice and other crops. For those still on the land, there is increasing concern about deforestation and the intensive, expensive and insufficiently controlled use of pesticides and chemical fertilizer that is resulting in degraded soil and water pollution and impacting on human health (Sovacool, 2012; BEWG, 2011). This is described by a student:

> Nowadays, the agriculture in my village is not nature because of too much cultivation and overuse of chemicals. Over use of chemicals causes loss of biodiversity, unplanted fruits and pollutes the environment. But, they (the villagers) have not known that chemical fertilizers not only result in destruction of the environment but also that they don't replace the wide variety of nutrients that plants and humans need.

Inequitable development in Myanmar is widening the socio-economic chasm that currently exists between the rulers and the vast majority of the citizenry and it is not addressing existing conflicts, particularly with regard to the environment. The rural sector desperately needs investment in infrastructure and physical capital (Dapice, 2010). Natural gas revenues could be used to recapitalize the rural sector but it is argued that dissemination of revenue needs outside assistance as the government lacks both the will and the expertise (Dapice, 2010). INGOs and NGOs are being allowed in to previously prohibited areas under the reforms but the majority are operating under mainstream development models.

Rural populations in Myanmar are marginalized and weakened due to their peripheral geography and social status (Jones, 2014). Members of these communities experience high levels of environmental and food insecurity. They are particularly vulnerable to the negative impacts of economic development programs centred on extractive industries and industrialisation as well as natural disasters and changing weather patterns. If sustainable development and enduring peace is to be achieved in Myanmar, the political rights of local people to manage the natural resources upon

which their livelihoods depend must be protected (Tun Myint, 2007). There are groups within Myanmar working towards this end. Following is a discussion of one of them.

Case Study of a localised initiative – Network for Environment and Economic Development (NEED)

The Network for Environment and Economic Development (NEED) was instigated in 2006 in Chiang Mai, northern Thailand. Its Director, a Burmese national, educator and environmentalist, was in exile from Myanmar for 17 years since the political unrest of the late 1990s. NEED was established with the overarching aim "to address perpetual food insecurity at the village-level in Myanmar; particularly lack of village-level knowledge and the capacity to deal with bio-diversity loss and environmental degradation" (NEED, 2013). NEED's training program was 'developed after listening to members of agrarian communities in Myanmar and is intended to help communities restore their agriculture-based livelihoods, diversify and re-establish new, sustainable, socio-economic opportunities to enable them to regain control over their livelihoods' (NEED, 2013). In 2008 NEED set up its first eco-farm and residential school with funding from its primary donor, *Child's Dream,* a Swiss charitable organisation with a focus on education. The eco-farm in Chiang Mai was modelled on the holistic agricultural design philosophy of 'permaculture', influenced by the organic farm and educational facility of northern Thai environmental organisation, *Pun Pun*.

Between 2008 and 2013 students from Myanmar travelled across the Myanmar/Thailand border to take part in the environmental education and community development program offered by NEED in Chiang Mai. Alumni students initially took up roles in NGOs and community-based organisations - primarily in the border region between Thailand and Myanmar – or stayed on the farm as interns. Increasingly, as political restrictions have eased, graduates have been able to initiate programs in their local areas within Myanmar and the changing political situation in Myanmar has seen the Director return to build an eco-farm and educational facility based in Myanmar.

NEED has adopted the core tenets of 'permaculture' in its efforts to address local environmental and food insecurity problems in Myanmar. Permaculture is a regenerative, organic farming system that guides the redesign of small-scale systems for production, consumption and inhabitation (Holmgren, 2011). Permaculture is grounded in a fundamental recognition that economic viability and social justice are interrelated with functioning ecological systems (Lockyer & Veteto, 2013). Permaculture provides opportunities for marginalized communities to not only become more self-sufficient with regards to meeting their basic needs but to flourish. Permaculture practices on the NEED eco-farms include soil conversation strategies, organic pest control, manual and biological weed control, mixed plantings, crop rotation, and seed saving.

The initial program at the eco-farm in Hmawbi in Myanmar commenced in June 2013. I joined the organisation in October 2013 as part of my PhD and lived and worked on the farm for four months until February 2014. When I first arrived at the farm in 2013 the infrastructure was very basic with only 3 buildings and no electricity. But rather quickly it has developed into a comfortable and productive site. The majority of the buildings on the farm are made of mud brick utilising mud from the stream that bounds two sides of the property. In early 2015 NEED installed solar power and subsequently staff, students and visitors have access to electricity 24 hours a day. NEED staff and students plant a variety of seasonal crops which include rice (paddy), beans, corn, bananas, gourd, eggplant, potatoes and water-cress. They catch fish from the stream and raise chickens but with so many mouths to feed they are not yet wholly self-sufficient and still rely on local village produce

with the local town market providing a large portion of their supplies. The aim, however, is to be self-sufficient and self-funding within a few years.

When I joined NEED there were 5 administrative staff, a number of farmworkers and the 25 students that are the focus of my research living on the farm. To date, 60 students have completed the 10 month program at the Hmawbi school and a further 35 are currently studying. The program runs from June to March annually. Students who attend NEED come from various ethnic or indigenous groups round Myanmar – primarily Arakan but also Karen, Shan, Chin, Mon and Intha (from Inlay Lake). They tend to come from villages or small townships and are primarily from farming families. Their ages range from 17 to 30. The majority are Buddhists, the others are Christian. The vast majority have completed Grade 10 of high school. Many have completed Grade 11 and of these some have gone on to further education – distance tertiary study - which they continue during their time at the NEED school. The students have grown up without electricity and only a few have used a computer or the internet before. Most have never travelled outside of their immediate area and have had limited knowledge of the outside world. All have worked in some way, either in factories, shops or for their families, farming.

The majority of the students who come to NEED are involved in or attached to local community development or environmental organisations and they are very knowledgeable about local issues. They share an ecological worldview – one that is embedded in their traditional cultures and knowledge systems and that stems from their close connection to nature and being part of small communities. They share a profound sense of self as being in relationship with natural and social ecosystems. They all have childhood memories of special places and have been affected by disturbances to these places. They are motivated by the environmental problems that they have experienced – primarily deforestation and water pollution. Their special places are changing, old cultural ways are being threatened and the wilderness is dissipating. These concerns are articulated below by some of the students:

> In the last 5 years, 90% of the villagers have been cutting down the trees to use for cooking and making furniture. The companies are also logging, but they are not replanting. So, the occurrence of deforestation is everywhere. Deforestation causes loss of biodiversity, climate change and erosion. Climate change is a threat for agriculture. Most of people are living near the river and fishing. They are moving from one place to another when erosion.

> The villagers are depending on the lake for their livelihood. Now, the lake is facing, water pollution and loss of fish and bio-diversity. Now, we have economic, social and cultural problems.

In their lifetimes the students have witnessed increasing poverty, breakdown of communities and the loss of their traditional cultures. The students repeatedly stressed that the high levels of migration and lack of access to education and health services were impacting community solidarity and wellbeing – noted by these students:

> Most of the people have nothing to do for their livelihood. So they try to go to the foreign countries and Yangon to find employment. And they can come back to their respective village and their native land and even they can't support for their families, so their families are facing livelihood problems. That is why the children can't go to the school because they have no money to provide for their children, so the society is getting poorer.

The poor people can't go the school because in our country, if we have no money we can't go the school. So the poor people have no chance to go the school. That is why their lives are harder. They also can't get health care. The poor people don't have secure shatter, nutrient food and other need things. So they can get diseases easily.

Capacity Building Through Skill Development

The program of the NEED school is informed by the curriculum developed by the EarthRights School, established in 1999 in Thailand and The Curriculum Project, established in 2001, again in Thailand. Earthrights' activities are aimed at addressing human rights and environmental justice issues in Myanmar and The Curriculum Project designs adult education curriculums for Myanmar nationals interested in further education and community development work. The NEED course outline is focused on capacity building through skill development and is very comprehensive, from social and political sciences to the more technical subjects like animal husbandry and computer science.

The students at NEED learn how they can transmit alternative and more sustainable practices and processes back to their already established villages and communities. All of those connected to the NEED eco-farm share the belief that a healthy natural environment is the underpinning of a strong, resilient, healthier and happier community and they express a desire to assist their families and villagers in regenerating environments. For example:

In the last 7 years the farmers were working successfully in their farms, they grow seasonal crops like tomatoes, potatoes and chilli, and other plants. Their families were happy. Their education and health was not difficult and had work all the time. Now, their cultivation is not successful because they lose land and soil.

When I stayed in village I didn't know about the environment. But I worried about that, the environment of my village is becoming degraded. So, I wanted to maintain the environment in my village. I wanted to help my villagers' problems. That's why I came here [to NEED] to learn about environmental.

Discussion

In Myanmar, a tenuous peace has been maintained by pacification resulting from the domination of one part of society – the military regime - over the vast majority of the rest of society (see Fink, 2001; Skidmore & Wilson, 2012; Silverstein, 1977 for example). The junta has not tolerated public critique and is highly sensitive to alternative views. Any and all opposition has historically been brutally squashed and a large number of citizens in Myanmar have been exposed to direct violence (Fink, 2001). More concerning, however, with regard to ongoing conflict, poverty and human rights issues in Myanmar, is the structural and associated ecological violence.

By focusing on and addressing ecological violence through its environmental education program, NEED is involved in environmental peacemaking. Stemming from the 1970s environmental and peace movements in North America and Europe, environmental peacemaking aims to alleviate all forms of violence (cultural and structural) and is much more than just the absence of direct violence and environmental issues (Kyrou, 2007: Reardon, 1994). The strength of environmental

peacemaking is in its wholistic approach focusing on creativity, solidarity, participation and commitment to a culture of peace achieved through a transformation of human/nature relationships (Spretnak, 2011).

Globally we are experiencing a paradigm shift, from mechanistic reductionist science towards a new, relational discourse, of interconnectedness and interdependence (Kyrou, 2007; Reardon, 1994; Spretnak, 2011). NEED's program encompasses notions of sustainability, participatory democracy and nonviolence marking the connections between the Global South and the Global North. Environmental education highlights the relationship between ecological degradation and the violation of human rights and the right to wellbeing and flourishing. Environmental adult education advocates a holistic and integrated approach for educating towards a culture of social and ecological peace (Sauve & Orellana, 2004).

NEED's environmental adult education program is based on their argument that "Burmese civil society, particularly youth, must be strengthened and empowered at the grassroots level" (NEED, 2013). NEED has taken advantage of the recent political and economic reforms instigated in 2011 by the Myanmar government and is working towards a goal of creating a network of young individuals from rural communities, various ethnic and marginalized groups in Myanmar. NEED in Myanmar has created a 'learning community' – "a space for a collective to better apprehend the reality of the living place, learn how to transform perceived problems and conceive ways to enhance shared conditions" (Sauve & Orellana, 2004, p. 112). Truly enduring and sustainable peace requires a long term view that fosters positive, co-operative relationships (Lederarch, 2013, p.9). NEED is not functioning in opposition or parallel to the state but seeks to work with government departments, business and corporations in developing policy for the nation's future. They are, however, resisting top-down structures centred on economic development that homogenises culture and alienates the 'periphery'.

Those involved with NEED are taking ownership of the development process in Myanmar and are attempting to regenerate a traditional culture of sustainability and simplicity. This subsistence mode of peacebuilding, maintained at the local level, is one that constitutes an important form of counter organization against the project of liberal state building (discussed by Richmond & Mitchell, 2011:333). Alternative community development models, such as those mooted by NEED, are built on a shared vision of society away from material wealth as a sign of progress and are aimed at retaining the simplicity and spirituality of traditional cultural practices and events. The curriculum that NEED has developed in its efforts to reconcile poverty alleviation with environmental protection has three major components with regard to building peace infrastructure:

- Addressing issues surrounding structural, cultural and ecological violence through a critical analysis of prevailing political, economic and social structures, institutions, practices and processes

- Developing positive peace by creating structures, processes and institutions that nurture strong inter-personal and human/nature relationships through ecological community development, and

- Caring for the natural environment through localised socio-economic models and sustainable livelihood practices.

Students leave the NEED eco-farm armed with practical skills aimed at putting theory into practice. Projects include farmers workshops, short training courses, advocacy training, networking and the development of forums with like-minded individuals and organisations, seed saving networks, small organic farming projects, engaging with government departments, cultural activities and networking with international groups and tertiary institutions.

It is too early to assess the efficacy of the NEED program with regard to practical application but, nearly 18 months on, the initial cohort of students that completed the NEED program report a greater sense of ecological awareness and sense of responsibility towards the environment; greater awareness of political, economic and social structures and institutions; a greater sense of agency; new practical skills and confidence. One girl from Mon State explained:

Before NEED training I never took care of the environment but after I am trying to care. When I was back in my village I spoke to the villagers, especially about the plastic rubbish. People are not changing behaviour but are just starting to think.

Another felt that 'people want to change but don't have the opportunities' and yet another 'wants to build a business that is supportive of the people – not make it difficult for the people'. Some do comment on resistance from family and community members to the new ideas they are introducing – particularly the concept of changing behaviours. They have noted, however, that there is a growing body of young people in Myanmar, like themselves, who are becoming more involved in politics and environmental and social issues.

The strength of the NEED program lies in its deep understanding of the local context and its engagement with local cultural practices. The alternative development practices mooted by NEED and being embraced by the students more accurately reflect the needs, goals, and aspirations of local actors, and thus increases the legitimacy and potentiality of peacebuilding processes. It is a program that is being developed by local people for local people. Participatory, grass roots involvement in the development of local, ecologically sound infrastructure is vital for enduring peace – one embedded in positive relationships with the natural environment. As Richmond and Mitchell (2011:339) say, 'exercises of critical agency have significantly more impact on the conditions and substance of peacebuilding than is often assumed - even if they only operate as a form of subsistence peacebuilding'. The 'local turn' may well be facing many obstacles (MacGinty & Richmond, 2013, p. 764) but, as they go on to say "localism is the future of peace infrastructure – environmental peacebuilding in particular".

This paper has presented a case study of a grassroots participatory community development model in the nascent democracy of Myanmar, arguing that environmental peace making projects such as these are vital if populations in Myanmar are to adequately address social and environmental issues surrounding natural resource extraction and management. Local initiatives such as these depend on a peaceful relationship between humans and the natural environment.

References

Adas, M. (1974). *Burma Delta*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

Aspinall, E., & Farrelly, N. (2014). Myanmar's Democratization: Comparative and South-East Asian Perspectives. *South East Asia Research*, 22:2, 163–169. Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org/10.5367/sear.2014.020.

Burma Environmental Working Group (BEWG). (2011). *Burma's Environment: People, Problems, Policies. Thailand*. Wanda Press. Retrieved from www.bewg.org.

Burma Rivers Network (BRN). (2013). Retrieved from http://www.burmariversnetwork.org/home-mainmenu-1/74.html.

Dapice, D. (2010). Recapitalizing the Rural Economy. In L. Rieffel (Ed.), *Myanmar/Burma: Inside Challenges, Outside Interests*. Washington: Brookings Institute.

Dinmore, G. & Wa Lone. (2015, March 13). Vast agribusiness concessions mask unprecedented deforestation: report. Myanmar Times. Retrieved from http://www.mmtimes.com/index.php/business/13507-vast-agribusiness-concessions-mask-unprecedented-deforestation-report.html.

Displacement Solutions. (2015). Land Acquisition Law and Practice in Myanmar. Retrieved from http://displacementsolutions.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/LAND-ACQUISITION-LAW-AND-PRACTICE-IN-MYANMAR.pdf.

Fink, C. (2001). *Living Silence; Burma Under Military Rule*. London: Zed Books.

Galtung, J. (1990). Cultural Violence. *Journal of Peace Research*, 27:3, 291-305. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/423472.

Holmgren, D. (2011). *Permaculture; Principles & Pathways Beyond Sustainability*. Hepburn, Australia: Holmgren Design Services.

Jones, L. (2014). The Political Economy of Myanmar's Transition. *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, 44:1, 144-170. Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00472336.2013.764143.

Kyrou, C. N. (2007). Peace Ecology; An Emerging Paradigm in Peace Studies. *International Journal of Peace Studies,* 12:1, 73-92.

Lederarch, P. (2013). The Origins and Evolution of Infrastructures for Peace: A Personal Reflection. *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development*, 7:3, 8-13. Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15423166.2013.767604.

Lockyer, J. & Veteto, J.R. (2013). *Environmental Anthropology Engaging Ecotopia: Bioregionalism, Permaculture and Eco-villages*. New York: Berghahn.

MacGinty, R. & Richmond, O.P. (2013). The Local Turn in Peace Building: a critical agenda for peace. *Third World Quarterly*, 34:5, 763-783. Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2013.800750.

Paris, R. (2010). Saving Liberal Peacebuilding. *Review of International Studies*, 36:2, 337-365. Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0260210510000057.

Petrie, C. & South, A. (2014). Development of civil society in Myanmar. In M. Gravers & F. Ytzen (Eds.), *Burma/Myanmar Where Now?* (pp. 87-94). Copenhagen: NIAS Press.

Reardon, B. (1994). Learning Our Way to a Human Future. In B. Reardon & E. Nordland (Eds), *Learning Peace* (pp. 21-44). Albany: State University of New York Press.

Richmond, O.P, & Mitchell, A. (2011). Peacebuilding and Critical Forms of Agency; From Resistance to Subsistence. *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*, 36:4, 326-344.

Rotberg, R.I. (2002). The new nature of nation-state failure. *The Washington Quarterly*, 25:3, 83-96. Retrieved from http://home.comcast.net/~lionelingram/403W_failedstates_rotberg.pdf.

Sauve, L. & Orellana, I. (2004). Environmental Education: A Contribution to the Emergence of a Culture of Peace. In A.L. Wenden (Ed.), *Educating for a Culture of Social and Ecological Peace* (pp. 99-122). Albany: State University of New York Press.

Scott, J.C. (2009). *The Art of Not Being Governed*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Silverstein, J. (1977). *Military Rule and The Politics of Stagnation*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Skidmore, M. & Wilson, T. (2012). *Myanmar's Transition*. Singapore: ISEAS.

Sovacool, B. (2012). Environmental Conservation Problems and Possible Solutions in Myanmar. *Contemporary Southeast Asia*. 34:2, 217-248. Retrieved from http://www.proquest.com.ezproxy.une.edu.au.

Spretnak, C. (2011). *Relational Reality: New Discoveries of Interrelatedness that are Transforming the Modern World*. Topsham: Green Horizon Books.

Thant Myint-U. (2011). *Where China Meets India; Burma and the New Crossroads of Asia*. London, UK: Faber and Faber.

USAid. (2014). USAid Country Profile, Property Rights and Resource Governance, Burma. Retrieved from http://usaidlandtenure.net/sites/default/files/country-profiles/full-reports/USAID_Land_Tenure_Burma_Profile.pdf.

Against a definition: In Favor of Nonviolent Social Defense and The Anarchist Turn

Karen Kennedy [*]

This paper argues against a definition of peace infrastructure on the grounds that this would entrench it more deeply in liberalism and by extension, states, capitalism, bureaucracy and their concurrent impositions. An alternative to defining what is or what constitutes peace infrastructure(s) would be to prioritize research/development and practice around the concept of Nonviolent Social Defense along with insights from the Anarchist Turn. When combined these become anarchist nonviolent social defense (ANSD), which, I argue are existing, nascent and future peace infrastructures that are not of the liberal peace. Both Nonviolent Social Defense and Anarchism are either explicitly (by way of capital & state and their attendant bureaucracies) or implicitly (by way of omission and outsider status) not visibly incorporated into institutional peace and conflict literature or their interventionist practices. The recognition of the validity and legitimacy of anarchist importance in creating commons oriented movements and in defending these where they currently exist would seem to offer more hope of sustaining peaceful formations and post liberal infrastructures than any bureaucratically captured definition could. Peace and conflict studies need to bite the hand that feeds them or at least step up their resistance to liberalism if alternative narratives are to flourish and monolithic narratives and bureaucratic impositions are to be avoided.

[*] Karen Kennedy, author, activist, and academic in Australia. Most recently: *Deeply Felt: Reflections on Religion and Violence within the Anarchist Turn* (2016) and *Traveling on a Long Rope* (2016).

Introduction

This invitation to participate in discussion/debate around the necessity of standardizing by definition, the term peace infrastructure within the context of peace formation, is in itself telling. This is because standardisation via definitions historically goes hand in hand with the ascendency of bureaucracies and western liberal, democratic institutions. Widely accepted liberal impositions include: the way humans and all other life forms are, delimited through numbers and then operationalized through the liberal (both classic and neo versions), assumptions and presumptions of level playing fields and individual self-interest. Liberalism, despite its historical variations and including attempts at redistribution of wealth and power through welfare and equity policy interventions, still envisions a world of consumers exercising their individual power through their production and consumption of commodities in a competitive and accumulative free market. The driving fictions of commodity culture, (land, labour and life valued through market pricing) is not compatible with the formation of peace or peace infrastructures. Neoliberal capital has instead enclosed commons in favour of private property and individual competition.

Political and economic inequalities of all sorts play out regularly in social life at local and global levels and these are increasing as a result of the 2007 global financial crisis and its aftermath. This is liberalism in action. Some describe the liberal and modernising project as pathological (Arvanitakis, 2007).

Weber (1918) warned that rational, legal, bureaucracy would entrap cultures in an, 'iron cage' yet, liberal capitalist bureaucracy has increased rather than decreased. This is despite years of liberal rhetoric that pledges a reduction of rules and interference by cutting red tape: green tape, pink tape and the like within public and private institutions. Today liberal bureaucracy is of course global and is dispersed and forged through contemporary digital technologies as well as through the old worlds of paper and pins. This nexus has led to what has been called the 'Iron Law of Liberalism', which operates in contemporary global contexts as a phenomenon of total bureaucratisation and functions as a utopia of rules (Graeber, 2014). In many ways the idea of a utopia of rules can also be understood through the ascendency of neoliberalism and subsequent struggles against it. Despite efforts from the counter economic globalization movements or the movement of movements as they became known in the early 1990s through to recent mass occupations and demonstrations the dynamics of capitalism, state and bureaucracy continue to largely define and control social relations (Martin 2015, Stilwell, 2002, Graeber, 2011a, 2014b) on a planetary scale. In light of this context and this invitation to define a phenomenon that is embedded in what Charbboneau and Seas (2014, p.17) describe as a:

> " …contradictory global political order that not only sets out the homogenizing ideological criteria on which to build peace through war, but also links these criteria to liberalizing governance in the transnational donor–partner relations of domestic and international politics".

Why would these key ideas of peace and conflict studies that have been "…developed within alternative and self-described 'illiberal' schools of thought…" (Richmond 2009 cited in Tobias 2015) and that critique the impositions and inequalities of liberalism and a fixed belief in a liberal peace need to be standardized and pinned down? Who would this help? How would such defining contribute to the creation and sustenance of peace infrastructures?

Surely any defining would precipitate their demise if their aims actually are illiberal. People actively working within these paradigms either are or are not supporters of liberalism and therefore free market capitalism. Any complexities arising from this simplicity can be further discussed by considering the degree to which individuals and groups within peace and conflict networks and actions are *of* the institutions that they are in. Tobias et, al, (2016) "questions whether 'peace infrastructure', as a concept, term and plan for implementation, is any different to previous, much- maligned concepts of 'tick-box peacebuilding' that prefers bureaucratic and economic 'solutions' to often social and cultural problems" which, I suggest comes from the contradiction around being *in* something but not *of* it. An anti-capitalist in capitalism, an open borders supporter within the system of international nation states and their territorial borders, women struggling within patriarchy, for example.

This contradiction and its attendant complexities was taken up in salient ways within the *Journal of Resistance Studies* (2015) which offers peace and conflict studies and activists more generally an invitation to deep resistance. Along with this work by Graeber (2012a, 2014b) and others show that bureaucracies create cultures of complicity with the status quo and universities are capitalist institutions that are supposed to educate students into capitalist culture (Holloway, 2015). Working actively against this usually comes at a personal cost and or stifles creativity and creates ambivalence and a variety of psychological dis-orders, such as depression, anxiety and feelings of defeat. An alternative would be to move out of the contradiction as much as possible and with the aim of making the move permanent. To remain alternative and contribute to resisting this utopia of rules it would seem most practical to forget the defining of peace infrastructures and what to concentrate instead on building capacities for nonviolent social defence and in recognizing that these exist already in a plurality of anarchist practices of prefigurative politics.

Why not run with the terms peace formation and peace infrastructure and accept that proof of the illiberal comes when we are free of liberal impositions and inequalities, when cultures are enabled to create sustainable local and nonviolent social relations for themselves and still enjoy the benefits of science, technology and the wondrous world around us? Clearly we do not live in such times, indeed multiple physical and structurally violent crisis dominates the twenty first century. The liberal peace has not come despite or because of its hegemony within peace and conflict studies/actions. Following this it seems fair to say that if the alternatives that exist and/or are proposed here are *too radical,* a few options arise:

1. Liberalism is totally entrenched and little change is foreseeable.
2. Many are not prepared for the peace/victory to come and do not want the responsibility of creating and maintaining autonomous free thinking cultures – nonviolent participatory democracies/anarchies.
3. Not enough people are empowered with the knowledge, skills and technologies of revolutionary nonviolence, anarchist praxis and nonviolent social defence.

These options are not limiting or definitive, they do however assist our understanding of the present and the task of writing for or against a definition of peace infrastructures.

In what follows I will move into a brief discussion of Lederach and some of his interlocutors' instructions/discussions of peace infrastructure. This will be followed by analysis of Brian Martin and others work in relation to nonviolent social defence and then by insights from the anarchist turn. This paper will then conclude by explaining how the later are linked and why they can be considered truly illiberal and therefore fundamental to any project that aims to contribute to the "great deal" (Heathershaw, 2012) that needs to be done in relation to the liberal peace. "In sum, it matters little to speak of the 'liberal peace', 'post-liberal peace' or 'hybrid peace' if one fails to theorise the relationship between the whole nature of the building and the specific outcome for peace" (Heathershaw, 2012). I take this to mean that the means of achieving peace infrastructures are as important as and should be consistent with their desired end. If this is so, the 'Iron Law of Liberalism' and its capitalist culture of social control represents 'the whole nature in which the building of peace takes shape and alternatives to this should deploy means that are consistent with their goals of wider system change.

Unfortunately many useful concepts and praxis have been marginalized or captured by the dominant culture. Nonviolent action, as Martin (2014) and Graeber (2014) note has been selectively popularised and co-opted by liberal peace institutions and their mediators. This not only goes towards explaining its limited role in peace and conflict literature but also its taming and policing by authorities that it largely aims to resist. As (Ndlozi, 2015 p.3) put it in relation to the free education movement and their protests in South Africa, "Student protests could never start with the liberal narrative of peace. Liberal peace is a concept through which liberal public discourse sought to co-opt through struggle, in order to tame them, and control them because their mass power threatened the very core of the liberal establishment." Mark Boyle – AKA – The Moneyless Man, suggests that "…we might do well to concern ourselves less with our protest being peaceful, and a little more about our actions being effective (Boyle, 2016, p. 29). In a similar vein (Jackson, 2016 p. 21) suggests that peace and conflict studies turn to resistance, to revolution, to save the field from its current malaise and system collaborator functions.

Peace Infrastructures within and busting out of the liberal peace

The broad nature of the liberal peace is based on the assumption that capitalism and nation state can work with civil society to gradually reform a liberal version of human history. Out of this context peace and conflict centers within or associated with universities have aligned with international institutions and agencies that have burearcratised a multiplicity of peace knowledge and practice. Out of these sincere efforts and their countless cross-currents the idea of peace infrastructures aka John Paul Lederach (1997 – 2013) has gained wide spread currency both literally and metaphorically. Liberalising bureaucracy, it seems, has made peace workers, managers rather than emancipators.
Lederach's own reflection on the ways that peace infrastructures have evolved shows that:

"bureaucracies tend to rigidify their roles, purpose and activities. Three descriptive views of bureaucracies suggest that they: 1) concern themselves with roles and functions, rules and regulations to deliver specified services to the diminishment of the creativity that gave birth to the

institution; 2) isolate and compete with other bureaucracies, lowering a vision of generative interdependency; and 3) once established, concern themselves mostly with their self-perpetuation" (Lederach, 2013).

Lederach has also made it clear that among other things an infrastructure for peace must have a vision and commitment to systemic change and be accompanied with a good dose of humility (Ibid, 2013). Precisely what is meant by systemic change in relation to long term goals and the resources needed to sustain these is hard to pin down in much of the literature outside of the wide recognition in theory that state and non-state actors converge and that local initiatives are imperative. Notwithstanding this the status of the idea of peace infrastructures is clear in its take up in intra national organisations such as *The Global Alliance for Ministries & Infrastructures of Peace* (GAMIP) and in the many articles dedicated to the idea of a hybrid and informal post liberal peace. As Richmond (2013) notes, the application of resistance studies to debates in the field of peace infrastructures and the liberal peace hegemony more generally, has impacted the field in positive ways.

Richmond's careful analysis of liberal peace formation and infrastructures shows that it is the concept of hybridity that is the most legitimate formation of peace because it thinks and moves away from the liberal, capitalist security state. Richmond concludes that: "Peace formation represents a phenomena of convergence between the western, rational–legal state, and more local and socio historical processes of peacemaking" (Richmond, 2013 p. 283). For Richmond and others, the notion of peace formation means a 'refinement of western knowledge' that leads to the local and the subaltern. Peace formation and its infrastructures can be viewed here as busting out of their liberal cages but still enclosed within them. The subaltern are after all those peoples whose voices have not been heard. Marginalised in a myriad of ways by the power of the authorities that rule them – states of various political orientations and a global hegemony of liberal peace and conflict institutions and donor organisations, how do the subaltern converge with their oppressors peacefully? How does the pressure to be polite, patient and conform to liberal notions of peaceful protest impact the capacity of local actors' struggles, whether they are students demanding a very liberal right to education or groups working with refugees or environmental crisis?

Answers to this can be found in the literature of nonviolent social defence, contemporary anarchist praxis and in the expanding body of work that falls under the relatively new formation of resistance studies (Vinthagen, 2015) to which I will shortly turn. Before proceeding with these alternatives it is useful to confirm that peace infrastructures as they exist currently in organisations like, (GAMIT) both within and outside of governments and liberal international organisations like the UN and its umbrella networks, have been formed in the view *that they are alternatives* to traditional peace and conflict structures which have been deemed to be in crisis (GAMIT, 2013, http://www.gamip.org/).

Whether it is Lederach himself or the ministries and organisations enacting peace infrastructures (often abbreviated as I4P), the stated aims are the building of social structures that aim to change society over time which is seemingly to be achieved through the, by now, standardised ideas of peace and conflict management, such as, building local institutions and capacities, bringing in traditional cultural practices, enacting diplomacy with all stakeholders and managing post conflict among others. As Abres (2014) has put it, (I4P) can be paralleled to a countries military infrastructure except that it is not hierarchical. Examples from (GAMIT 2013, Abres, 2014) and others show that peace infrastructures are

emerging in new directions, yet still very much attached to the features of liberal peace and conflict thinking. Encouraging signs such as (GAMIT's, 2013) pledge that "a special effort will be made to ensure that financial factors not be an impediment to the participation of individuals" offer a glimpse of hope to the subaltern and the millions of ordinary individuals everywhere for whom financial factors (money, access and equity) impedes almost all aspects of their lives. Financial factors arise within the context of contemporary liberal political economy at both local and global levels and these are prone to over accumulation: labor exploitation, political inequality and structural violence, they form what 'we' call the system.

It is hard to see how building institutions and capacities linked to this system of impositions can build a sustainable peace. The means of liberal capitalism: national state monopoly on the use of force, collusion and corruption within governments, a long standing and deadly military complex which now includes militarized police and increasing privatization of prisons and the total bureacratisation of social life do not fit with the goal of making the state the very reason for peace. Institution building needs to be radically altered to resist this system as emerging peace infrastructure directions show. How else could the interests of the subaltern converge with those of the liberal capitalist trajectory? Peace infrastructures as they exist imply albeit in varying degrees, that the whole system be changed and that efforts towards this must resist the tendencies of bureaucracies, agency mentalities, economic exclusion and financial competition amongst peace institutions (Lederach, 2013). This would only seem possible if those agencies dependent upon the international neoliberal security state apparatus bust out of their current modes of operation and create new institutions and organisations. As many have shown, we are not talking only about things that exist. We are talking about forms of democracy that do not exist yet (Graeber 2014), about living the world that we want to create (Holloway, 2015) or as Gandhi said, about being the change we want to see.

In that spirit and with those visions, anarchists of all types with the exception of anarcho capitalists have sought to prefigure new political economies and social relations based on ideas of commons and on decentralized, voluntary and mutually beneficial practices, on empathy not efficiency, sharing rather than competing. They do not need to be convinced that the system is in crisis, nor do they assume as Heathershaw (2013) and others do that the liberal peace is here to stay. In similar ways nonviolent social defence also exists already as an alternative to the liberal enclosure and provides a solution to some of the problems that persist and that have led to this crisis. Its disappearance from nonviolence agendas (Martin, 2015) are revealing of the fixed liberal nature of peace and conflict studies and peace activism more generally.

Nonviolent Social Defence – Existing, nascent and future infrastructures of anarchist peace

In a recent article that asks what happened to nonviolent social defence, (Martin, 2014) answers his own question and affirms the radical nature of nonviolent social defence. In this way he also astutely accounts for its liberal marginalization. In contrast to many other forms of nonviolent action that have been popularised, captured and tamed by the forces of liberal priviledge and narrative hegemonies, nonviolent social defence has been neglected:

"*The radical potential of social defence suggests why it has been neglected. Governments do not want to empower their own citizens in ways that might be used against governments themselves.*

Corporate leaders would have similar concerns, and military commanders do not want to be made redundant" (2014, p.7).

Empowering citizens/subjects with the skills and resources to organise their own social defence systems be they: independent food and water resources, information technologies that can track and report on the secrecies of states and militias, decentralized and communal production and distribution of goods and services, localised capacities to shut down monopolised production or the development of citizen/subject non-lethal technologies, does not suit the interests of states/ corporations or bureaucracies. Indeed, liberal laws work to stop such efforts (Critchley 2009, Graeber, 2014, Kennedy, 2015).

Threatening to shut down communications or power, for example, will not work if communities have organised alternatives to the dominant state institutional grids by setting up their own solar or wind generated power grids. Bio fuels can also be made from recycled materials and the global permaculture movement has shown, in the most challenging of spaces, that sustainable lives are possible everywhere. (See for example http://permaculturenews.org). Israeli Anarchist Uri Gordon astutely lists permaculture as one of the most important activities or praxis of these dark times (Gordon in Amster. *Et. Al*, 2013). Niether Gordon or the permaculture movement, at least to my knowledge, link their activities specifically to nonviolent social defence, however it is clear that they can be seen as such through their efforts to defend commons and life. To work cooperatively and voluntarily to produce not just common and permanent abundance in agriculture but in culture more generally. They do this by defending the commons of land, water and food and by following ethical principles and practices that are not violent and that aim to stand apart from the violent apparatus of modern liberal agricultural and energy production. Various efforts in intentional communities and by individuals the world over show that autonomous, locally produced: energy, food and transport, exist through permaculture and in many other more explicitly anticapitalist movements for sustainable and peaceful cultures. These are arguably examples of a peace infrastructure wherein the means reflect the end. They function not on the premise of individual choices or market position but on collective and shared, local and global commons oriented assumptions of goodwill and direct action and they have to date not degenerated into bureaucratic capitalist enterprises. The point of these types of social defence is to change to the status quo through autonomous forms of direct action. Other less obvious and less spoken aspects of social defence include a focus on direct defence against the weapons both lethal and so called non-lethal that circulate in arms fairs, are developed by militaries and used by states and their opponents as they vie for power and control.

The development of non-lethal weapons with capacities to disarm armed drones and other weapons is another area worthy of consideration. This could be a priority for anarchists and others involved in nonviolent revolutionary actions precisely because they could be (come) central to the formation of future nonviolent social defence and therefore be recognised as significant peace infrastructures. Repressive and structurally violent technologies are already being resisted in the information and surveillance wars via actions launched by groups like: WikiLeaks, anonymous, crisis watch and other whistle blowers. What about other types of technologies that could for example, disarm or disrupt lethal weapons? To date I have not been able to find significant relevant research in relation to this and Martin confirms the gap as he shows that:

"Studies of social defence have dealt with operational and social dimensions of strategy and, to a lesser extent, the logistical dimension. In contrast, the technological dimension of social defence strategy has been almost entirely neglected" (Martin, 2014 p.7)

Perhaps this type of technology is not something that should be easy to find at this point in time, perhaps it shows where our current priorities are. It seems totally at odds with participatory contemporary technologies and communications that this type of technology is not on the rise within alternative movements.

Research and production of social defence technologies that is accompanied with the dissemination of the knowledge and skills needed to operate such technologies would be empowering for communities everywhere. This would also seem to have the potential to significantly challenge military cultures, which is an assumed goal of peace building. If this not a goal of peace building and system changing then it is one of the most strident reasons to leave the liberal peace behind and concentrate on future, alternative peace infrastructures.

The system being challenged is racing ahead with autonomous offensive weapons like killer robots (Walsh, 2016). Just as nuclear weapons out did guns and face-to-face lethal weapons, new research in computing powers in; algorithmic and artificial intelligence is rapidly developing to not just dominate new weapons frontiers but will clearly intermingle with the vast range of existing weapons that are in use in war zones globally. Drones such as the Hell Fire drone that is used in places such as Afghanistan and Yemen while not immediately flown by humans, still require that a human makes the final decision to fire weapons (Walsh, 2016). As debates continue over when fully artificial and autonomous weapons will be available (Walsh, 2016) and bans against these weapons have been called for by many leading activists and researchers, the history of international bans that already exists against weapons has not stopped their proliferation or use nor has it removed the circulation of existing weapons or the continued and profitable development of a plethora of new offensive destructive technologies. These developments should stand as firm ground for the possibility of, if not the necessity of, preparing nonviolent, non-lethal technologies that civilians might be able to use to defend themselves and their communities against attacks.

Professor Russell (cited in Tamblin, 2015) espouses the view that the current technological trajectory should end, and he is also a formidable activist for further international regulation. While these are surely admirable acts why not speak for the development of technologies that can defend civilians? I am not a scientist but like most people including scientists I dream of other things, of other ways, of innovation. In these dreams, technologies of nonviolent social defence *need not be better killer robots*, they would instead be community robots and technologies that have the capacities to block, confuse or reroute the killer robots. My hope here lies in citizen science and the sharing of information that has made things like computer games and hacker software proliferate through open non market oriented channels, peer to peer from the bottom. Rather than put the emphasis on retaining human control of oppressive and violent technologies why not put the focus on putting humans in control of developing resistance technologies - into nonviolent defensive technologies? To a large degree a technology arms race is already underway as the detention of journalists, hackers, green fire and anti-nuclear activists and others shows. Money and resources are clearly monopolised by the security state and its links to business and this clearly impedes citizen/ subject and subaltern access to the materials

needed for research and development, but it cannot, without destroying the vast majority of humanity, remove it.

In his sustained analysis of Cyber Warfare, Harris (2014) asserts that the revolving door between government and business will spin faster. If this is not enough to sound your inner alarm consider the sums of money (liberal financial advantage) that is being spent on cyber warfare because of its vulnerability in relation to the shutting down of national energy grids, water facilities and data systems that run transport and finance industries which is of course considered an act of war (Harris, 2014).

"The cyber business is booming. Companies and individuals around the world spend $67 million dollars a year protecting their computer networks" and a military-internet complex has emerged (Harris, 2014). While Harris thinks that it is the military rather than private companies and spies that should defend cyber space, the reassertion of nonviolent social defence into nonviolent action and peace agendas could provide an alternative to this evident deeper militarisation of the everyday spaces of social life that are controlled in cyberspace through largely private companies. If people and groups act to build their own energy and communications infrastructures and also increase their current capacities to defend them, the goal of changing the system and forming practical peace infrastructures might be further advanced. Cyber warfare is not just about hacking, it is also about digital and robotic weapons that are programmed to kill and other destructive technologies that can enact large scale ecological and human destruction and suffering through corporate and military means. States are not in control of these matters as their tight nexus and dependence on corporations shows. These means do advance an alternative conception or a post liberal peace.

Nonviolent social defence endeavours pose a threat to those in power and a raft of laws, dissent, treason, terrorist would be applied to anyone involved in and advocating nonviolent social defence in the manner in which I have just discussed it. One's national defence and other government security arrangements, assuming that is that you have citizenship within a 'recognised' state would certainly be invoked to put a stop to such nonsense and liberal capitalist universities and media institutions would also, given their current trajectory, clearly do what they could to quell such research. These are serious and potentially dangerous propositions. But, are they any more dangerous than supporting the current status quo? Military research and development, it is also worth noting, go hand in hand with the rise of the bureaucracy (Graeber 2015) and partly accounts for the rise of cultures of complacency surrounding it. Nonviolent defence technologies should be developed collectively in commons, autonomous spaces in the nascent spheres of resistance that exist in the cracks of the liberal enclosures.

Of course there are clear dangers. Nonviolent social defence research and development might lead to a kind of nonlethal weapons arms race and/or acts of state repression against such efforts could silence those involved. These actions could once again seemingly confine the concept to history. While this paper is not the place to begin logistical, or other practical research in relation to the development of technology for nonviolent social defence, it is, I think time to put it on the agenda. If we are at the dawn of cyber and artificial warfare and struggling to live in and form commons and peaceful infrastructures within the existing enclosures of the neoliberal free market and the security state, it follows that we might also be at the dawn of new nonviolent social defence.

Nonviolent social defence is not new and once enjoyed a place of recognition and attention within peace networks however, "…instead of growth, interest in such alternatives went into serious decline in the 1990s, along with the rest of the peace movement" (Martin, 2014 p. 3). Like many public and peaceful initiatives, it seems to have been crushed by the sheer weight of the neoliberal enterprise, disaster capitalism and the growing dis-eases of the 21st Century. Nonviolent social defence has the potential to bring peace and conflict studies out of its liberal contradictions and place it within broader and more contemporary contexts such as those found within resistance studies and within the turn to anarchism in left libertarian oriented progressive and anti-capitalist movements.

The anarchist turn

The anarchist turn brings peace infrastructures into being in mostly small, though at times very large, actions that work outside of and from within cracks in the existing structures of enclosure. Contemporary anarchism has evolved to oppose all forms of domination and it poses the most serious critique of political governance from ancient times to the present.

Anarchists (with the exception of anarcho capitalists) think and move in anti-capitalist directions. On this front alone they are not *of* the neo liberal war machine. This has assured their outsider status within capitalist institutions and is obviously one of the reasons that they have been deemed *too radical*. Anarchists wish to see the end of the nation state, they support open borders and commons rather than individualist oriented economic systems, they aim to liberate and they deploy a plethora of voluntary, mutually agreed and empowering means to do this. To my knowledge no study has been able to show that anarchists have been or are involved in institutionally organised violence to anywhere near the extent of other political praxis. Rather, anarchism is a practice that mostly deploys nonviolence as both strategy and tactic, though it does not preclude the use of violence it has historically attempted to ensure that its means are congruent with and advance its ends (Chan, 2004, Graeber, 2009a – 2014b, Kennedy, 2015). People doing anarchism have turned towards it because of its vigilance in walking the opposite direction and because of the perceived failure of the left which has not been able to halt the monopolising powers of neoliberalism.

Inspired by the Zapatista in the early 1990's and many other movements in the Global South and Europe, anarchism has emerged as the main praxis of the contemporary left, particularly in western countries but certainly not exclusively so (Epstein 2001, Evans, 2009, Graeber, 2009a, 2013b, Kennedy, 2015). Yet this is rarely mentioned in peace and conflict literature and to date I have not seen it mentioned in peace infrastructure or post liberal peace literature, though it is surely albeit tentatively *implied* in the reflections produced by: Lederach (2012) and by Richards (2013) and very clearly by (Vinthagen, *Et Al*, 2015).

At the time of writing, great efforts and experiments with anarchism are enfolding in Rojava in the midst of the Syrian War and the War of Terror both by and against Islamic State. Greeks have organised autonomously in response to the global financial crisis to: defend housing, produce and exchange food and other resources and actively contribute to defending refugees against right wing violence. Anarchists have been at the forefront of such organisations (Graeber, 2009, Stephens, 2015).

In Mexico where an astounding twenty two thousand people have been disappeared in the last few years (Holloway, 2016) the Zapatista still defend their collectives along anarchist lines. In Palestine, anarchists organise against the wall and in the US anarchists organised relief for victims of New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina (Crow, 2014)). Global occupy movements continue to organise through virtual collaboration and solidarity actions. Animal and earth liberation groups still defend life in numerous localities through direct actions using anarchist praxis and there are many other examples of anarchism in action today. Both historically though more so in its contemporary manifestations, anarchism(s) put into practice what those advocating post liberal peace and its infrastructures suggest it might look like. They are decentralised, open to all, do not depend on official recognitions or funding, respect diversity of tactics, begin at local and often subaltern levels of society, acknowledge mutual dependency between localities and engage in direct action that is overwhelmingly nonviolent (Greaber, 2002-2014, Martin, 2015, Kennedy, 2015).

Anarchism has affinities with all those human efforts that work towards creating the new in the shell of the old by prefiguring alternative political, economic and therefore social relations that are self-managed. Following this it becomes clear that self-identified anarchists and others whose affinities lie within anarchism have been and are at the forefront of many creative movements that could be considered as peace infrastructures. Permaculture and off grid movements: collaborative commons economy and artistic movements, free software and technology movements, education and in some cases armed defence initiatives, are evidence of this. Indeed, as Martin (2015, p. 10) notes, "The emergence of the collaborative commons provides a new arena in which anarchist organizing principles are even more relevant, but need to be tweaked for altered circumstances".

Anarchists such as David Graeber and people with anarchist sympathies such as Brian Martin and John Holloway have provided ample evidence that activism and anarchism can be combined with academic institutions. They also show that anarchism has the capacity, through its emphasis on action, its principles of mutual aid, open collaborative efforts and its positive contributions to the formation of resistance to things as diverse as copy rights and patents, secrecy in public administration, abuses of privacy, intimidation of victims to the organization of food cooperatives that the rhetoric of bomb throwing, violent extremists, or unorganized self-interested life style nihilists is no longer sustainable.

Anarchists come in all varieties and have never waivered in their belief in the need to change to the system. They are already committed to a permanent social revolution. Not all anarchists are nonviolent and many would like to leave the question of direct violence behind. As a non-coercive and anti-authoritarian set of ideas, anarchism overwhelming accepts diversity of tactics as the method and strategy within movements. This means that individuals and/or groups decide within their particular contexts, what their tactics will be. In these times where even in the US, anarchist's like Scott Crow have had to take up arms to defend people against criminal militias because the state security apparatus deserted them (Crow, 2015) and very clearly people in Rojava, or Iraq and many other places that are active war zones face different circumstance to those whose localities are free of direct violence. It is also clear that those among them with anarchist tendencies also use a range of both untamed as well as liberally accepted means of nonviolent struggle. The anarchist turn, then, offers a range of practical and theoretical insights into existing, nascent and future peace infrastructures.

Conclusion

Within anarchist literature nonviolent social defence is not prominent, though it is surely implied and within nonviolence literature anarchism is not the norm, though it is surely there. Peace and conflict studies have the capacity and the opportunity to link both anarchism and nonviolent social defence as a priority of research and development of peace infrastructures. As Martin has shown, "Technology can play a crucial role in social defence in direct defence against attack and, more importantly, in supporting operational, logistical and social dimensions of strategy (Martin, 1999). In a similar vein anarchists have shown that prefigurative politics and experiments with collaborative and commons oriented systems can and do work.

The radical potential of anarchism and nonviolent social defence is what brings them together. Their insistence that means reflect ends also links them. Together they become anarchist nonviolent social defence (ANVSD). If the options hypothesized earlier in this article are to be avoided and a post liberal peace is to emerge, anarchist nonviolent social defence would seem to offer a realm of optimism, hope and practical solutions to the present crisis of liberal peace and its attendant formations.

In these times and in light of this invitation to define peace infrastructure this paper argues against a definition in favor of recognition of what has formerly presumably been deemed, too radical or most indignantly marginalised as, too idealistic. That is the present, nascent and future direction of peace infrastructure, understood as anarchist nonviolent social defence (ANVSD) is far more worthy of attention than a bureaucratic definition which at best might function as some sort of plumb line by tweaking the current definitions and practices and at worst could impose further levels of violence and indignity.

References

Abres, S. (2014). 'Infrastructures for Peace: (I4P): A way forward in peacebuilding, *Peace Magazine*, April – June, 18- 24.

Arvanitakis, J. (2007). *The cultural commons of hope*. Saarbruken, DVM, Verlag, Alle Rechte.

Boyle, M. (2016). 'The violence of nonviolent protest', *New Internationalist*, 489, New Internationalist Publishers, Australia, 28-29.

Chan, A. (2004). 'Violence, nonviolence and the concept of revolution in anarchist thought', *Anarchist Studies*, Vol, 12, 103-123.

Charbonneau, B & Sears, J,M. (2014). 'Fighting for liberal peace in Mali: The limits of international intervention', *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, 1 – 22.

Crow, S. (2012). *Blackflags and Windmills*, PM Press, United States.

Crow, S. (2014). 'Interview with anarchist Scott Crow', RT, https://youtu.be/eL42HCmBid0, retrieved, February 20.

Epstein, B. (2001). 'Anarchism and the alterglobalisation movement', *Monthly Review*, 53.

Evans, B. (2009). 'Revolution without violence, *Peace Review*, 21, 85-94.

Critchley, S. (2007). *Infinitely Demanding: ethics of commitment, politics of resistance*, Verso, London.

Graeber, D. (2015). *The Utopia of Rules: on technology, stupidity and the secret joys of bureaucracy*, Melville House, London.

Graeber, D. (2014). 'Why is the world ignoring the revolutionary Kurds? December, *The Guardian*, UK.

Graeber, D. (2013). *The Democracy Project: a history a movement a crisis*, Penguin, Digital.

Graeber, D. (2009). *Direct Action: an ethnography*, AK Press, California.

GAMIT. (2013). Nesting Peace, http://www.gamip.org/summits/switzerland-2013-nesting-peace, retrieved, April, 20.

Harris, S. (2014)*. @War: the rise of cyber warfare*, Headline, London.

Heathershaw, J. (2013). 'Towards better theories of peacebuilding: beyond the liberal peace debate', *Peacbuilding*, 1:2 275-282

Holloway, J. (2015). Resistance Studies: a note of hope, *Journal of Resistance Studies*, 1, 12-17.

Kennedy, K. (2015). *Deeply Felt: reflections on religion and violence within the anarchist turn*, Irene Publishing, Sweeden.

Lederach J, P. (1997). *Building Peace: Sustainable reconciliation in divided societies*, Institute of Peace Press, Washington.

Lederarch, J. (2012). 'The origins and evolution of infrastructures for peace', *Journal of peace building & Development*, 7:3, 8-11.

Martin, B. (1999). Social Defence Strategy: the role of technology, *Journal of Peace Research*, 36:5, 535 – 552.

Martin, B. (2014). 'What happened to Social Defence?', *Social Alternatives*, 33:4, 55-60.

Martin, B. (2015). 'From Capitalism to Commons', *Anarcho-Syndicalist Review*, 64:5, 17-20.

Ndlozin, M. (2016). The # Fees Must Fall Movement: liberalism and the pursuit of peace, Daily Maverick, http://www.dailymaverick.co.za/, retrieved April 20.

Richards, O. P. (2013). Peace formation and local infrastructures for peace, *Alternatives, Local, Global and Political*, 38:4, 271-287

Rojava Report (2015) Collective reports and analysis on the activities of the revolutionary Kurds in Rojava, https://rojavareport.wordpress.com

Russell, S. (2015). 'Artificial Intelligence experts sound the Alarm', RN Breakfast, http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/breakfast/artificial-intelligence-expert-sounds-alarm/6503044, retrieved April 14.

Stevens, J. (2015) 'What No One is Talking About When they Talk About Greece' Gawker, http://gawker.com/what-no-one-is-talking-about-when-they-talk-about-greec-1715187923, retrieved May 5.

Vinthagen, S. (2015) Editorial, 'An invitation to deep resistance, *Journal of Resistance Studies*, 1, 5-11.

Walsh, P. (2016). 'Killer Robots', RN, Big Ideas, http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/bigideas/killer-robots/7266930, retrieved March, 23.