



# Norms and Premises of Peace Governance

Socio-Cultural Commonalities and Differences in Europe and India

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Mir Mubashir (eds.)

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# Introduction

Hans J. Giessmann, Berghof Foundation

This Occasional Paper results from a collaborative endeavour by ten European and Indian institutions<sup>1</sup> and is a part of their joint project on “Cultures of Governance and Conflict Resolution in Europe and India” (CORE).<sup>2</sup> It comprises the updated preparatory papers and contributions for a workshop on the “Socio-Cultural and Political Premises of European and Indian Initiatives in Areas of Conflict Transition and Conflict Resolution” which was organised by the Berghof Foundation and held on 28 June 2011 in Berlin.

The underlying assumption of the CORE project – and the guiding idea of the workshop in Berlin – is that there is a need to critically assess and revise conventional approaches aimed at transforming violent conflict. While it is generally agreed that democratic states and societies are in a better position than autocracies to tackle their social and political conflicts in a non-violent manner, the reality of conflict in many democratic states elucidates a surprising paradox: when confronted with intra-state conflict, the legitimacy of the democratic state’s responses becomes challenged if the social and cultural context of the conflict on the national and local level is not properly taken into account. Several cases of recent conflicts within and beyond Europe have seen a stirring of hatred by mobilising ethnic, religious or cultural identity. Often it has led to protracted intra-state tension with an inherent high risk of escalation into violence and subsequently to a detrimental impact on the democratic structures and mechanisms in place. Democratic states which resort to force in order to contain the spread of violence – because of their inability to cope adequately with intra-state identity conflicts – run the risk of forfeiting the support of their electorate, which is indispensable in a democracy. Democracies face particular difficulties in encountering and dealing with social mass movements which, on the one hand, take advantage of the opportunities provided by a democratic system in order to project pressure on the governing bodies, but on the other hand project this pressure outside of the formal democratic system of government. The strategies and policies to deal with such challenges cannot be derived from pre-fixed templates but instead require sound analysis of the underlying causes of a conflict and an empathetic understanding of its cultural, social and economic background and of its drivers’ motivation. This is what the CORE project intends to examine.

The CORE project tackles both theory-related and operational aspects of conflict resolution and peacebuilding within democratic, conflict-prone societies. The six chosen project cases are Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cyprus and Georgia within wider Europe and three regional conflicts in India – Jammu & Kashmir, Bihar and Northeast India.

The workshop in Berlin aimed at identifying and analysing the social and cultural premises of governance initiatives in the six cases under scrutiny. In preparation for the workshop, we asked the participants to categorise the social and cultural premises of European and Indian initiatives in conflict resolution in order to find out how these initiatives resonate with – or are informed and determined by – the respective social and cultural background of the conflict. The partners’ responses were then analysed by researchers of the CORE project at Berghof Foundation, who compiled their ideas and presented a mapping diagram for discussion during the workshop (see page 6 of Anna Bernhard’s contribution). This diagram provided a concise visual representation of the participants’ responses concerning global, local and hybrid norms and how they relate to conflict resolution and governance initiatives. It set the stage for an in-depth discussion on the different types of norms and norm-building processes in the governance of

<sup>1</sup> A list of institutions involved in the CORE project is provided at the end of this Occasional Paper.

<sup>2</sup> For project details see: <http://www.projectcore.eu>

peacebuilding and conflict transformation.

The agenda of the workshop was structured by four orientating questions which were sent in advance to the participants:

How are specific socio-cultural premises reflected/ incorporated or neglected/ ignored in peacebuilding and conflict resolution initiatives in Europe and India? This question aimed at taking stock of currently predominant conflict resolution approaches and strategies in order to find out if – and to what extent – the social and cultural contexts were taken into account in their design and implementation. It should also reveal if the incorporation or neglect of social and cultural factors is due to the context, i.e. cultural factors do not play a crucial role, or because of the driving actors and stakeholders of a conflict, who might lack interest in addressing cultural factors properly. Another interesting aspect with regard to this question is concerning if and how similar or different social and cultural premises impact the initiatives similarly in European and Indian cases.

How do societal and elite discourses of socio-cultural and political issues underpin the principles, goals and strategies conceptualised and applied for peacebuilding? This question focused less on the policy outcomes but rather on the processes behind them and asked about the influence of discourses on the development of conflict transformation politics. The incorporation of social and cultural premises in governance initiatives depends a great deal on the awareness of them by the political and societal actors who shape the initiatives, and such awareness requires a sense of empathy for cultural diversity and social justice. Particularly critical are the existing power asymmetries, based on economic weight, institutional professionalism and sometimes military superiority, which may result in efforts to impose concepts on others according to vested interests.

How do internal and external governance initiatives interact and how do conceptualised norms of peacebuilding either merge or compete against the background of political conflict and socio-economic diversity? This question builds on the assumption that socialised norms contribute to shaping governance initiatives. The intriguing follow-up question concerns the effects of a collision of such initiatives with other, possibly competing, social and cultural norms. Concepts that aim primarily at a flat transfer of norms will most likely fail if these norms are not recognised by the conflicting parties on the ground. On the other hand it might also be interesting to better understand how ‘local’ social and cultural premises feed into the design and implementation of external governance initiatives. Finally, the question aims at identifying the influence of governance on different systems of social norms and, vice versa, the influence of differing or competing norms on different governance approaches and strategies.

What are the methodological and theoretical challenges for analysing and assessing the socio-cultural sensitivity and political appropriateness (goodness of fit) of governance initiatives in peacebuilding and conflict resolution, and the results thereof? This question pays attention to the difficulties of analysis and assessment, especially the reliability of findings about social and cultural premises for the design of governance initiatives. While social and cultural premises may be defined or described by referring to specific features or by applying predetermined criteria, ideal roles can rarely be found in the reality of conflict. Merging, collision and hybridisation are processes which influence and relativise the scope of assessment.

The workshop participants were asked to present their views on these questions during the workshop. These presentations were then updated and submitted to become the content of this paper. All individual contributors and the organising team of the Berghof Foundation deserve credit for this Occasional Paper. However, special thanks go to Janel B. Galvanek and Mir Mubashir, supported by Amy Hunter, Stina Lundström and Astrid Fischer, for their project coordination and editorial support.

# About the Contributions

**Anna Bernhard**, in the first article of this Occasional Paper, explores the premises of European and Indian initiatives in the areas of conflict resolution and how these initiatives resonate with – or are informed or determined by – the socio-cultural background of either Europe or India. In the form of a diagram, she categorises the different norms and initiatives. She then briefly summarises the discussion that took place after she presented the diagram during the workshop in June 2011. In the second part of her paper, Bernhard delves deeper into the topic of the diffusion and hybridisation of norms and examines the role of local actors. She further exemplifies democratic local governance in India, citing the localisation process of the norm ‘political equality’, by using the Localisation Framework by Amitav Acharya.

**Navnita Chadha Behera** sheds light on the internal conflicts and governance in India by offering three key propositions about India’s governing praxis that can be surmised from the actions of the government over the past seven decades. She then illustrates these propositions by examining specific governance initiatives and policies in the ongoing conflict in Jammu and Kashmir.

**Sumona DasGupta** examines the Indian premises of strategising and policy making on conflict resolution by focusing on the divergence between the national elite thinking about conflict and the people’s understanding of the same conflict based on their lived experiences. DasGupta specifically cites the context of militarised conflicts along India’s borders, with specific reference to Jammu and Kashmir. She criticises the short-term amelioration strategies that sidestep issues of justice and dignity and focus exclusively on special economic packages and special legislations for exceptional circumstances, as these may block creative avenues for sustainable conflict transformation.

**Elida Kristine Undrum Jacobsen** and **Kristoffer Lidén** address the theoretical challenges of analysing and assessing the socio-cultural sensitivity of governance initiatives in peacebuilding and conflict resolution agendas, which was one of the chosen themes of the Berlin CORE workshop. By investigating the relationship between India and Europe through a post-colonial lens, they open up a debate on the meaning of ‘local’ and socio-cultural sensitivity in subaltern contexts.

**Daniela Körppen** looks critically at the liberal peacebuilding paradigm by considering the consolidation of liberal peace by the methods applied in peacebuilding and conflict transformation programmes. She argues that the normative underpinnings of liberal peacebuilding programmes are not only manifest in the content and goals of the concepts but also in the way methodologies like conflict analysis or impact assessment are created and implemented. Körppen stresses the importance of cultural sensitivity, not only with respect to the content of the peacebuilding programme but also with regard to the methods applied and the patterns of thought that the conflict transformation strategy is based on.

**Roger Mac Ginty, Sandra Pogodda, Oliver Richmond** and **Birte Vogel** present a theoretical investigation of *technocracy* and the *technocratic turn* in the field of peacebuilding, which they feel is understudied. They start off by illustrating the ways in which internationally-supported approaches to peace have become technocratic through a complex mix of structural and proximate factors. They then look critically at the technocrats’ claim of neutrality and efficiency and what implications this has on peacebuilding projects.

**Nona Mikhelidze** narrates the development of conflict resolution initiatives in Georgia both before and after the Rose Revolution of 2008. She presents the activities of the different state, non-state and international

actors in Abkhazia and South Ossetia and the implications their initiatives have on the ongoing conflict. Concerning the approach of the Georgian government, Mikhelidze shows how the discourse has changed and evolved from hard power to more soft power approaches and she demonstrates how various actors such as Russia, the UN, OSCE and EU have adapted to this change of strategy.

**Amit Prakash** examines the concept of governance, from its emergence and development to the plurality of views and debates on the concept. He argues that development and democracy have been the central threads that anchor the notion of governance, and then goes on to tackle the complex notion of governmentality. Finally, Prakash focuses specifically on governance and governmentality in the Indian context.

**Ranabir Samaddar** presents the theoretical and historical background to governance structures and peacebuilding in India, with specific reference to the Northeast. He starts off with unveiling the process of norms production in governance during colonial times and continues on to discuss how the dialogic culture of the Indian society has unfortunately got lost in this style of governance. He concludes his paper with an overview of the Northeast region of India and its 'enclave economy' as well as a discussion of the specific governance initiatives in the region to deal with the insurgency.

**Elena B. Stavrevska** discusses how conceptualised norms of peacebuilding (such as the liberal peace framework, etc.) either merge with or compete with one another in post-war Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). To exemplify this, she focuses on the premises of governance initiatives in BiH by looking at external and internal initiatives and their interactions at different levels. As the conflict in BiH has attracted worldwide attention, the author deals with a plethora of initiatives and actors, ranging from the Dayton Agreement to activities of the UN, EU and numerous international bodies, and tries to untwine the complexity of interactions and the complementarity or contradictions between them.

**Janel B. Galvanek** and **Mir Mubashir**, in the last chapter of this paper, add their reflections on the workshop – from the presentations, discussions and papers. They emphasise the explicit and implicit commonalities and differences between the different cases studies of the CORE project – particularly in reference to the socio-cultural and political premises of European and Indian governance/conflict resolution initiatives – and what this means for conflict transformation. Their reflections raise quite a few open-ended questions which could provide food for thought for both the project partners and also the readers.

# Global, Local and Hybrid Norms

Anna Bernhard, Berghof Foundation

What are the premises of European and Indian initiatives in the areas of conflict resolution, and how do these initiatives resonate with – or are informed or determined by – the socio-cultural background of either Europe or India? This question was answered by the partner organisations according to their individual perspectives and experiences in preparation for the workshop. The following text builds on these participants' contributions and on my and my colleagues' reflections on their ideas.

## 1. Categorisation of Norms and Initiatives

Premises and norms play a crucial role in the determination of conflict resolution initiatives. They may encourage or hinder the implementation of these initiatives. In the CORE project, we understand premises as comprised of actors' motives and their structural preconditions. Premises are based on pre-existing norms. I define norms as rules or behavioural conventions that are sustained by internalised values and external, social sanctions (Elster 1996, 1389; Greif 2006; Finnemore and Sikkink 1998).

The participants' contributions display diverse norms and premises covering the countries Bosnia-Herzegovina and Georgia as well as several regions in India. In order to get an overview, we categorised the norms as local, global and hybrid, standing beside each other in a non-hierarchical structure. This categorisation made sense for us since the CORE project is investigating global/international, local and hybrid spheres of action, influence and interrelation. Nevertheless, the categories were a preliminary suggestion, and they were discussed extensively during the workshop (see discussion below).

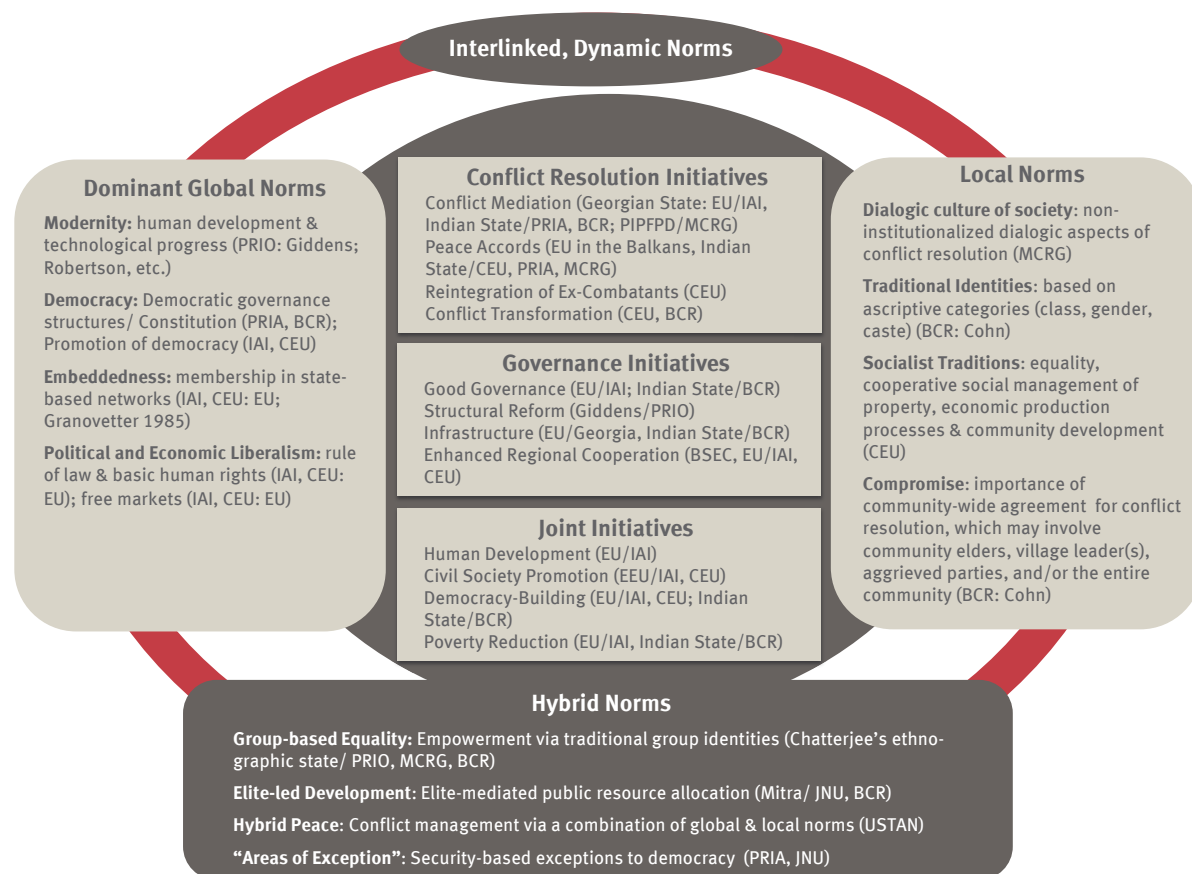
To us the most adequate way of representing and synthesising the contributions seemed to be a visual representation. The resulting diagram<sup>1</sup> suggested a framework for the topic and served simultaneously as an umbrella for discussing the broader scope of Theme A within the CORE project.<sup>2</sup> The diagram allows us to see how initiatives are determined by norms, how there is overlap and divergence between and within the three norm categories we have chosen, as well as how hybrid norms can emerge.

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<sup>1</sup> Rachel Brulé, a Political Science PhD student from Stanford University, California, came up with the idea and the design of this diagram during her work with Berghof between April to June 2011.

<sup>2</sup> Theme A aims to explore, analyse and seek to identify the socio-cultural and political premises of European and Indian governance initiatives.





The diagram consists of two circles. The outer circle shows three categories of norms – local, global and hybrid – while the inner circle displays initiatives that are categorised into governance, conflict transformation/resolution initiatives, and joint initiatives, which means that they can be read simultaneously as a governance and conflict resolution initiative.

### 1.1. Outer Circle: Norms – the Border of our Cognition

The reason for arranging the norms in a circle and placing that circle as an outer ring is to demonstrate how they encompass the inner ring and how great their influence is on it. The initiatives are determined by the norms floating around them on the outer circle. The outer circle can be seen as a symbolic display of the border of our cognition.

**Local norms** are the socio-cultural conventions governing relationships within a geographically-bounded community. For example, ‘reaching compromise’ is a local norm underlying dispute settlement in rural India. Peace talks between a respected person from the village (mediator) and the conflicting parties can last many hours and are continued until a compromise is found with which the conflicting parties can be satisfied. The compromise to which the conflicting parties agree marks the end of the dispute.<sup>3</sup>

**Global norms** govern relationships across national borders and determine the premises of global policies. To give an example, the norm ‘embeddedness’ was an underlying factor in the peacebuilding process in Bosnia and Herzegovina after the Dayton Agreement for Peace, concluded in November 1995. This peacebuilding process was accompanied by a firm European Union (EU) membership commitment. The promise of EU membership illustrates the importance of being a member of - or being embedded in

<sup>3</sup> This was mentioned in the contribution by representatives from Berghof. See specifically: Cohn (1959).

- a state-based network, which promises “peace, security and progress in Europe [...] and resolve[s] to implement a common foreign and security policy”.<sup>4</sup>

**Hybrid norms** are dynamic conventions based on the interaction between local and global actors and norms.<sup>5</sup> Hybrid norms contain components of local and global norms. One hybrid norm finds expression in India’s ‘areas of exception’. In conflict areas, an Indian government that otherwise respects and promotes democratic principles applies non-democratic, illiberal forms of governance. In Kashmir, for example, the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA) gives the army powers to conduct searches and arrest people without warrants. Democratic rights for dissent and protest are suspended in Kashmir and Northeast India as well as in areas where Naxalite groups are operating. Paradoxically, the legitimacy of these ‘areas of exception’ according to the Indian government lies in the liberal democratic norm of maintaining law and order and guaranteeing security for civilians.<sup>6</sup>

## 1.2. Inner Circle: Initiatives – Concrete Action

The inner circle displays the initiatives categorised according to the partners’ descriptions of either governance, conflict resolution, or joint initiatives. It allows us an insight into the overlap and divergence between these categories. This circle shows where ‘concrete action’ happens and explains how this action is influenced by different norms.

To give an example of a **conflict resolution initiative**, the EU brokered a peace accord in Georgia in August 2008. This six-point agreement between Russia and Georgia established a cease-fire, free access for humanitarian aid, a military withdrawal by both parties, and the opening of international discussions on the question of stability in Abkhazia and South Ossetia.<sup>7</sup> This specific initiative was most likely influenced by global norms such as democracy and political liberalism (dialogue, military withdrawal by both parties) and embeddedness (stability and EU membership).

A **governance initiative** in India is the Panchayati Raj Extension in Scheduled Areas (PESA) Act which was introduced in 1996. The act recognises the tribal peoples’ mode of living, aspirations, their culture and traditions. Regarding land resources, the PESA act mandates that there should be consultation before land acquisition for development projects and before resettling or rehabilitating persons affected by such projects.<sup>8</sup> Global norms, such as the promotion of democracy and human rights (participation and respect for their way of living), as well as the hybrid norm of group-based equality (empowerment of ‘tribals’), to mention a couple, probably had an influence on the decision to introduce PESA.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, a **joint conflict resolution and governance initiative** (= indirect conflict resolution initiative or hybrid initiative) in the sector of human development and poverty reduction is the donation of funds by the EU in 1997 to local banks, which enabled them to extend long-term credits to entrepreneurs in order to create small and medium-sized enterprises. At the same time, the banking sector was strengthened.<sup>9</sup> Here the global norms of modernity (human development and technological progress) and economic liberalism may have played a role.

What becomes evident here is the fact that regardless of the type, an initiative is always based on certain norms, most of the time on several norms simultaneously, which can belong to different categories (local/global/hybrid). This list of initiatives as well as the underlying norms is not at all exhaustive and could be further elaborated on.

4 See Maastricht Treaty 1992: <http://www.eurotreaties.com/maastrichteu.pdf>. Global norms of embeddedness, economic liberalism, and political liberalism are each based on countries’ complex relationship with the European Union (EU), as exemplified by EU involvement in Georgia and in former Yugoslavia.

5 This definition follows literature and concepts cited by representatives from JNU, PRIO, and MCRG (see spec. Chatterjee 2004; Mitra 2002; Giddens 1990).

6 Mentioned in the contributions by representatives from PRIA and JNU.

7 Mentioned by representatives from IAI.

8 Mentioned by representatives from MCRG (see spec. Government of India, Ministry of Panchayati Raj: <http://panchayat.gov.in/mopr/viewPortalPage.do?cToken=-1032345680>).

9 This example was mentioned by representatives from CEU.

### 1.3. Discussion

*"Do categories of norms and initiatives make sense in an international, multi-cultural research setting?"*

The categories of norms (local/global/hybrid) were extensively discussed during the workshop. Participants from India pointed out that politically determined norms, or norms like dignity and justice, are not clearly classifiable within these three categories. They stressed that it is difficult to distinguish 'local' from 'global' norms. Often, the norms would be rather a mix of local, regional, national and global elements and actually belong to the category 'hybrid'. Thus, depending on definition, every norm and initiative could be seen as a hybrid of some kind. It was suggested by other participants that instead of using hybrid as a category, we should focus on the *process* of the 'hybridisation' of norms, which after all would be more relevant for serving the aims of the CORE project.

It was also mentioned that the categories global, local and hybrid have different value in different contexts and might therefore be categorised differently, depending on the context. For instance, what is seen as a global norm in Europe might be perceived as a local or hybrid norm in India.

The category 'global' was highly debated. It seemed that the diagram privileges global norms as having a positive influence on conflict resolution although their influence can also be negative. There was common agreement that 'global' is not a geographical category. As a more neutral term, 'overarching' instead of 'global' was proposed. However, it was also discussed that the global norms mentioned in the diagram are based on European history and have a Western bias (e.g. modernity, embeddedness, political and economic liberalism). The diagram thus misses the fact that there are also important global norms from non-Western countries. Norms from India such as Gandhi's non-violence philosophy and Nehru's foreign policy based on non-intervention and multilateralism, are both very important.<sup>10</sup>

Categorising norms by applying a uniform scheme is difficult because norms are not autonomous per se. Categories give them a kind of static character which they don't have in reality. Instead, they are dynamic and diffuse; they change and are adjusted constantly. This becomes particularly evident in the process of hybridisation.

## 2. Diffusion and Hybridisation of Norms and the Role of Local Actors

Norms are spread through the international system, from the global to the local and from region to region. In the process of *localisation*, norms are re-formulated and modified, and components of a chosen global norm will be combined with the local socio-cultural background in order to be suitable to the local context. Amitav Acharya's *framework of localisation* (2004) provides a way of explaining the hybridisation of norms on the local level. His perspective is chosen for this text, because unlike other perspectives,<sup>11</sup> the process of localisation focusses on the active role that local actors play in norm diffusion.

### 2.1. Norm Localisation

Acharya defines localisation as "the active construction (through discourse, framing, grafting, and cultural selection) of foreign ideas by local actors, which results in the former developing significant congruence with local beliefs and practices" (Acharya 2004, 245). A crucial aspect of localisation is, according to Acharya,

<sup>10</sup> Mentioned in the presentation by representatives from BHU.

<sup>11</sup> See for example the "norm life cycle" by Finnemore and Sikkink 1998 or the concept of "congruence building" explained by Checkel 2001 and Risse-Kappen 1994.

that local actors actively choose and import the external idea or norm. It is not imposed by external actors. Acharya therefore speaks of “norm-takers”. The local actors actually *own* the initiative of seeking change. By doing so, they choose external norms that have similarities with existing norms and conditions, and then re-formulate and adjust these external norms to the point that they make sense for local actors. Local actors borrow only those ideas and norms that are compatible with their beliefs and practices. During the localisation process, an external norm may be significantly modified. The modified norm can enter an extant norm hierarchy without changing the hierarchy. Thus, the external norms are adjusted and made congruent to the local pre-existing normative order, while the latter is maintained. Usually, actors choose those ideas that have the potential to enhance their prestige and strengthen their existing institutions or beliefs. They do not seek to replace their beliefs with external ones (ibid., 245-6, 253).

## 2.2. Localisation Framework by Acharya

Acharya developed the following framework of norm localisation. For every step within the framework, he outlines the conditions that are necessary for progressing the localisation process further.

Prelocalisation (resistance and contestation)	<p>Local actors may offer resistance to new external norms because of doubts about the norms’ utility and applicability and fears that the norms might undermine existing beliefs and practices. The contestation may lead to localisation if some local actors begin to view the external norms as having a potential to contribute to the legitimacy and efficacy of extant institutions without undermining them significantly.</p> <p><i>Condition 1:</i> Some aspects of the existing normative order remain strong and legitimate, although other aspects may be already discredited from within or found inadequate to meet with new and unforeseen challenges.</p>
Local initiative (entrepreneurship and framing)	<p>Local actors borrow and frame external norms in ways that establish their value to the local audience.</p> <p><i>Condition 2:</i> There must be willing and credible local actors (insider proponents). These actors should not be seen as “stooges” of outside forces. Prospects for localisation are helped if their local society has developed a reputation for being unique.</p>
Adaptation (grafting and pruning)	<p>External norms may be reconstructed to fit with local beliefs and practices even as local beliefs and practices may be adjusted in accordance with the external norm. To find this common ground, local actors may redefine the external norm, linking it with specific extant local norms and practices and prune the external norm, selecting those elements which fit the pre-existing normative structure and rejecting those that do not.</p> <p><i>Condition 3:</i> There must be some scope for grafting between the external norm and some aspects of an existing norm hierarchy. Borrowing supplements, rather than supplanting an existing norm hierarchy.</p>
Amplification and “universalisation”	<p>New instruments and practices are developed from the syncretic normative framework in which local influences remain highly visible.</p> <p><i>Condition 4:</i> Borrowing and modification should offer scope for some elements of an existing norm hierarchy to receive wider external recognition through its association with the foreign norm.</p>

In order to illustrate and exemplify the process of localisation, the framework will be applied in the following to the process of localisation of the democratic norm of *political equality* by customary village councils in rural India.

### 2.3. Democratic Local Governance in India: Localisation of the Norm “Political Equality”

After independence in 1947, the Constitution of India introduced the democratic principle of *political equality* with the hope that the extant unequal social and economic structures (gender inequalities, caste hierarchy, exclusion of tribal peoples, etc.) would change into a more equal system. For Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, who drafted the constitution, a crucial point was that “political democracy cannot last unless there lies at the base of it social democracy”.<sup>12</sup> Political equality refers to universal adult suffrage (“one man one vote, and one vote one value”).<sup>13</sup> With the constitutional recognition of the local governments in 1993 - the gram panchayats in rural areas and municipalities in urban areas - a big step was made towards equality. The 73rd constitutional amendment vested the gram panchayats with regular democratic elections, reserved seats for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes according to the proportion to their population, and reserved at least one-third of the total seats of the gram panchayat for women. The amendment also created a gram sabha (village assembly), which includes the entire adult population within a gram panchayat area and is meant to serve as a principal mechanism for transparency and accountability.

Simultaneously, traditional ‘customary village councils’ (CVCs), which have a long history in India, remained operative in many rural locations in India, despite the introduction of democratic local governments which function at the same level.<sup>14</sup> CVCs are led by powerful men who due to their caste, religion, professional position, or land ownership, have acquired the position of village head. CVCs continue to fulfill their traditional tasks such as resolving local disputes, exercising limited judicial authority, organising religious activities, and the like. Interestingly, according to Kripa Ananth Pur CVCs are not disappearing. On the contrary, they are adapting to the new democratic local governance system by “actively taking on new roles, especially developmental and electoral roles; becoming more pluralist and democratic; and [...] often interact[ing] closely and synergistically with the formal, elected local councils (gram panchayats)” (Ananth Pur 2007, 3). This can be seen as an interesting example of how external norms are localised. In the following, I will demonstrate the norm localisation process by the CVCs within Acharya’s framework.

The first step of localisation is shaped by resistance and contestation. In the case of CVCs, we can imagine that ‘traditional’ village heads were not happy with the introduction and the later constitutional recognition of elected gram panchayats. Governmental funds, support and recognition bypassed the CVCs and went to the official gram panchayats. It may be possible that these CVCs do not mind much because they continue to have strong recognition and enjoy influence in their communities. However, according to Ananth Pur’s research from recent years, traditional village heads sometimes oppose the formal gram panchayat, e.g. by undermining the governmental policy of reserved seats for women in the gram panchayat (ibid., 17).

In the study by Ananth Pur it becomes clear that representatives of CVCs are aware of the constraints of their caste-based institutions in a democratic environment. They are very careful that the CVCs’ legitimacy is maintained (ibid., 29). Additionally, there is strong evidence that the external norm of political equality is seen by the CVCs as having potential to strengthen their role within the community. By collaborating with the official gram panchayats and by including actors “who have no claim to membership on the customary criterion of caste leadership, but whose skills lie in their ability to help obtain resources from higher levels of government”, they can extract funds that were not accessible to them before (ibid., 25). Accessing these

<sup>12</sup> From the speech by Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar, detailing the accomplishments of the Constituent Assembly of India: <http://indialawyers.wordpress.com/2010/01/24/speech-of-bharat-ratna-dr-bhim-rao-ambedkar-detailing-the-accomplishments-of-the-constituent-assembly-of-india/>

<sup>13</sup> See <http://www.outlookindia.com/article.aspx?263879>; <http://frontierindia.net/the-concept-of-political-equality>; as well as next footnote.

<sup>14</sup> Here I refer to studies undertaken in Karnataka (Ananth Pur 2007, 2006) and Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh (Krishna 2002).

resources is a way to adapt to the new environment in which the central government and international organisations provide increasing funding for development projects and public resources at the local level. To get a piece of this 'cake' for their community is ultimately their task as representatives of the community (ibid., 27-28; Ananth Pur 2006, 44).

The second and third steps of localisation are dedicated to the modification and reconstruction of the external norms so that they match the local institution. The CVCs framed and modified the norm of political equality in that they opened up their membership base to a broader and more pluralistic actor group, but at the same time, restricted membership to actors who can potentially obtain government resources. Representatives of scheduled castes and tribes, and elected representatives of the gram panchayat are included and supported in the gram panchayat election process if they have important connections to influential persons in development projects. The inclusion of women, however, is still very rare (Ananth Pur 2007, 25-26, 28).

According to the fourth step of localisation, practices have to be developed for the new syncretic norm framework. The members of the CVCs have developed practices such as regular and synergistic collaboration with the official gram panchayat, the participation in its elections, and the organisation of autonomous development activities (e.g. looking for donations for building schools, health centers, community halls, residential houses for public officials, local roads, etc.). At the same time, CVCs continue to fulfill their 'traditional' tasks such as local dispute resolution, religious activities, social welfare, and the contribution to development funds (ibid., 16-17). According to Ananth Pur, this broader scope of tasks and roles has strengthened the CVCs' positions within their communities. In focus group interviews with less well-off people from the villages in which CVCs actively operate, Ananth Pur found that CVCs are perceived positively. People even mentioned that there is now less corruption in the official gram panchayat because the CVC is "keeping watch" (ibid., 25).

### 3. Conclusion

From the preceding analysis we can learn how CVCs in rural India have localised the norm of political equality by building congruence between the norm and the CVC's beliefs and practices. The concept of localisation is helpful to explain how norms are spread and institutionalised and how external and local components are combined to form a hybrid norm constellation. By opening up to change and a new environment, and by localising the democratic norms that were introduced by the constitution, the CVCs became more attractive to the local communities, although they did not give up their historical legitimate normative framework. This simultaneity of old and new, respectively the adjustment of the new to the old, is what makes them attractive to their communities. One could say that the CVCs were forced to adapt to the modern environment and it was not really their choice to do so. However, this example also shows that it was their initiative to choose both the norm as well as the method of modifying that norm.



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# Internal Conflicts & Governance: Understanding India's Praxis

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The Indian state has experienced numerous internal conflicts by varied groups and communities demanding affirmative discrimination, political and economic rights of minorities, deeper devolution of powers to states and lower governing bodies, creation of new states, and even outright secession. Among the plethora of literature analysing such phenomenon (Hazarika 1994; Das 1995; Gadgil and Guha 1995; Chadda 1997; Koithara 1999; Frankel et al. 2000; Behera 2000), writings on understanding India's governing practices in dealing with such conflicts are very few, as most of these have focused on its institutions (Kashyap 2000) and the interface between the state and society (Kothari 1988, 1989; Kohli 1991; Banerjee and Chandrasekhar 1996; Sengupta 1996; Panandiker 2000; Tandon and Mohanty 2003; and Tandon and Kak 2007). This is partly because 'governance' itself is a relatively new and deeply contested term whose genealogy can be traced to the international financial institutions such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and United Nations Development Program and their original agendas of seeking retrenchment of the state in favour of the market forces (Behera 2002, 58). This paper adopts a different viewpoint, as its premises revolve around the notion of re-making the state (which includes strengthening its institutional mechanisms while making them more accountable to its citizens) rather than marginalising it. Accordingly, the term 'governance' is being understood here primarily as a political phenomenon, including both the governing institutions and their deeply embedded constitutional frameworks, as well as the implications of governance initiatives, processes and instrumentalities for power sharing among diverse communities living in the state. This paper offers three key propositions about India's governing praxis that might be distilled from its experiences over the past seven decades. These propositions are then illustrated by drawing upon the repertoire of India's experiences mainly from the ongoing conflict in Jammu and Kashmir.

## 1. The Malleability of the Constitutional Apparatus

The Indian constitution has provided a sound, time-tested macro political framework. It is a good, amendable document that allows sufficient flexibility to accommodate the conflicting demands of India's diverse populace. Article 370 of the Indian Constitution granting special status to Jammu and Kashmir is a case in point. In order to meet the Kashmiris' political aspirations for the right to self-determination in 1947, India's first Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had agreed to devise this special provision of the Indian constitution, which allowed Jammu and Kashmir – the only state to receive such a provision – to have its own constitution to be decided by its own Constituent Assembly. Jammu and Kashmir had its own flag, head of state (President) and head of government (Prime Minister).

While there is no doubt that Article 370 has, over the years, been systematically undermined by successive regimes in New Delhi, at the same time a two-decade long insurgency since the early 1990s has driven home the need to re-visit this issue. Most governments, including those led by the Congress as well as the BJP, have argued that the 'sky is the limit' for listening to and accepting the Kashmiris demands so long as these lie within the parameters of the Indian Constitution. In fact, the BJP Prime Minister Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee's famous assertion that a solution to the Kashmir problem must be found within



the *insaniyat's दौरा* (parameters of humanity) broke new ground by going even beyond this traditional position and is still recalled by the Kashmiri separatist constituency as the most plausible starting point of negotiations with New Delhi. The Congress party-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government has also taken several political initiatives, for instance that of the 2006 Round Table dialogue chaired by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh which invited all the stakeholders for direct consultations and talks, and the appointment of three interlocutors in 2010 for exploring a political solution to the Kashmir issue during the second stint of the UPA regime. A solution still remains elusive due to many other complex reasons but the political options accorded by the Indian constitution are certainly an important asset for accommodating the political demands that drive most such conflicts.

Any violation of India's territorial integrity and its sovereignty remains non-negotiable, though the Indian constitution permits the re-organisation of territories within India's boundaries and the incorporation of new institutions, mechanisms and layers of governance. Historically, one of the most critical challenges faced by the Indian state was the demand for a linguistic re-organisation of states, and the Congress leadership had committed to this position as early as 1922. But after independence, the Linguistic Provinces Commission did not approve this re-organisation because the nationalist leadership was afraid that it would "bring in sub-national bias at a time when nationalism was still in infancy" (Abdullah 1993, 12). Later, Nehru's government yielded to the mounting pressures and the States Reorganisation Act of 1956 re-organised the state boundaries and created or dissolved states and union territories. Since then India's internal political map has gradually been altered and currently it has twenty-eight states. In other words, the internal division of territory in terms of carving out new tehsils, districts and states has been used for the purposes of consolidating as well as sharing political power with its varied constituents.

India's governing elites have also been *willing* to experiment with introducing new, intermediary layers of governance. The 73rd and 74th amendment, for instance, institutionalised a mandatory, third layer of governance – the democratically elected panchayats at the grassroots level. In addition, some Autonomous Hill Councils have been established in Gorkhaland in West Bengal and Ladakh in Jammu and Kashmir. While this experiment has not proved to be a success everywhere except in Ladakh, the success story of the Leh<sup>1</sup> Autonomous Hill Council established in 2003 motivated the people in Kargil to accept a similar council for their district in 2007 (Behera 2006).

## 2. Accommodating the Diverse Aspirations of Different Communities

The second proposition concerning India's governing praxis is geared towards addressing the deeply embedded diversity and plurality of Indian society that must be taken into account by those in power. The Indian establishment's experiences with dousing the fires of violent conflicts show that any peace deal or peace agreement does not last unless it includes all the important stakeholders. This applies to those waging the conflict as well, and is best illustrated by the failure of the Kashmiris' demand for the right to self-determination, especially in its territorial *avatar* (version) – a sovereign state of Jammu and Kashmir. A territorially independent Jammu and Kashmir state is neither likely to materialise nor would it 'resolve' the Kashmir problem because it is not supported by *all the people of the state*.

Kashmiri leadership has consistently failed to realise that different communities living in Jammu and Kashmir interpret the right to self-determination differently. The pluralistic character of society in Jammu and Kashmir has exposed internal contradictions in the Kashmiris' thesis. For example, in the 1950s, if Sheikh Abdullah argued that self-determination was the inherent right of all peoples and demanded it for Kashmiris, he could not justify denying the same to the people in Jammu and Ladakh. However, that was self-defeating because the demand of Jammu and Ladakh for full and unconditional accession to India acted as a countervailing force to the Valley's demand for independence. Currently, the separatist

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<sup>1</sup> Capital district of Ladakh.

leadership, including the Hurriyat Conference, faces the same dilemma. While it speaks on behalf of the 'people of Jammu and Kashmir', it represents the political interests of only a part of the majority community – Kashmiri Muslims in the Valley. The minority social groups in Jammu and Ladakh, in fact, seek autonomy from the Kashmir Valley. It's only when we shift the focus from a territorially oriented conception of self-determination towards the question of Kashmiris' political rights and understand the political character of self-determination, does it become clear that the insurgent movement has failed because the secessionist agenda underlying the demand for the right to self-determination lacks an inclusive character. The collective and consistent opposition of the state's lingual, regional and religious minorities have checkmated the demand for secession by the majority community of the Kashmiri Muslims. In other words, recognising the rich, complex and multi-layered character of the Kashmir issue is of critical importance for finding a just, viable and lasting solution (Behera 2006).

As pointed out earlier, this factor weighs in the government's political calculus as well. For instance, the Ladakhi Buddhist Association (LBA)'s agitation demanding a Union Territory's status for the Ladakh region was supported neither by the Shia Muslims living in the Kargil district, nor by the local Argon Muslims of the Leh district. This demand had also polarised the people along communal lines partly because the Ladakhi Buddhists had imposed a social boycott of the Muslims. That's when the central government impressed on the LBA leadership the importance of secularising its political demands and lifting the social boycott of Muslims. Eventually, they held talks with the Ladakhi Muslim Association (LMA) and forged a Joint Coordination Committee drawn from all the area's communities – Buddhists, Shias, Sunni Muslims and Christians – thus earning the support of all the people in Leh. The Kargilis also adopted a more neutral stance when the Ladakhi Buddhists' demand was scaled down from seeking the Union Territory's status for the entire Ladakh region, which would have impacted them as well, to an Autonomous Hill Council for the Leh district. The inclusive nature of the political mobilisations and their demands have thus had far-reaching implications in determining their success or failure.

### 3. Negotiating Styles and Strategies

The third proposition pertains to the negotiating styles and strategies of the Indian government in response to violent conflicts. This has five dimensions. First, it is always a combination of political and military strategies. Political strategies include co-opting the elites and marginalising the radicals; mainstreaming the moderates while taking aim at the extremists. The Indian establishment draws a distinction between moderates and extremists, even among militant insurgents. This is a time-tested strategy that has been deployed in the Northeast, Punjab and Kashmir as well. For instance, in the early 1990s, the government sought to distinguish between the secular-minded Jammu & Kashmir Liberation Front and the pro-Pakistan Hizbul Mujahideen (HM) and later when the Pakistanis started backing Punjabi-Pushtun driven Lashkar-i-Taiba and Jaish-i-Mohammad, attempts were made to reach out to the Hizbul Mujahideen for negotiations, as it was then perceived as the only important militant group which had a local Kashmiri cadre. Later, this distinction was applied to different factions within the Hizbul Mujahideen as well. That is because its Pakistan-based chief, Syed Salauddin, refused talks with New Delhi until its demands of designating Kashmir as an international dispute and including Pakistan in tripartite talks were met – a proposition that no Indian government was prepared to concede. So, the government persuaded its local commander, Abdul Majeed Dar to hold direct talks with it. Likewise, successive regimes have constantly sought to reach out to the moderate factions of the Hurriyat Conference led by Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, since the extremist faction led by Syed Ali Shah Geelami refused to come to the negotiating table.

The second dimension is that the militant violence is sought to be controlled through an amalgam of border management strategies and, as argued earlier, a 'weaning away' of the ethnic Kashmiri cadre from the militant ranks with a 'no-holds-barred' approach towards eliminating the non-Kashmiri jihadis. This is also evident in the state government's latest initiative of announcing an amnesty for those local Kashmiri

youth who had crossed the Line-of-Control to get arms training and are now prepared to abjure violence and return to their homes.

Third, an important aspect of the military approach pertains to its instrumentalities. While there has been a significant and growing reliance on army and paramilitary forces in the past few decades, they work under overall civilian control. Even during the peak years of the insurgency, a Unified Command was established in May 1993 to improve and institutionalise the coordination of counter-insurgency operations between the security forces and the civil administration. The army's role was expanded, although the paramilitary forces retained the primary responsibility for internal security. It is important to note that while the army represents India's military might and continues to have a say in operational matters, it is brought into the picture only at the request of the civilian administration and once a situation is under control, it is invariably replaced by police forces on the understanding that the police, comprised of mostly local personnel, are viewed by the area's populace as 'one of our own'. In Punjab, for instance, the back of militancy was broken by Sikh police officers. Likewise, since the restoration of the civilian government in 1996 in Srinagar, the Special Police Task Force of Jammu and Kashmir has been at the forefront in tackling the challenge posed by Kashmiri insurgents. Currently, there is a raging, an ongoing debate is raging on the demand for the withdrawal of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act. The state government led by Omar Abdullah is in favour of doing so as it is argued that the state police is fully equipped to tackle the security challenges in the state.

Fourth, another important characteristic of the Indian government's negotiating style is to always keep open the options for dialogue. There is, in fact, an impressive record of the central government's dialogues with varied separatist and militant groups not only in Jammu and Kashmir but elsewhere in the Northeast and with the Maoists in Central India as well. On the other hand, this carries the risk of discrediting the process of dialogue itself, especially when these do not yield a decisive, positive outcome.

Fifth, elections are regarded not as instrumentalisation, but as both a strategy and evidence of democratisation, though this remains a point of contestation partly due to low voting percentages in certain areas and partly on account of the debates on the procedural versus substantive aspects of electoral democracy in India.

Finally, there seems to be an interesting paradox that often the government adopts the policy of a benign neglect of nonviolent movements until they turn violent and then asks the movement to give up arms in order to negotiate – thus essentially not redressing grievances in a purposeful manner until the conflict turns bloody. This has proven to be deeply problematic because when the political demands of the non-violent mobilisations such as those in Jammu and Ladakh, for instance, are not addressed through the peace process, it sends a message that 'violence pays', defeating the very purpose of a peace process.

## 4. Conclusion

To conclude, India's praxis in dealing with such a wide variety of internal conflicts is still evolving, especially because these kinds of conflicts are not linear but rather cyclical in nature and hence much remains to be learnt by both scholars and practitioners in this field.

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# Pacification is Not Peacebuilding: Why Special Economic Packages and Special Legislations Do Not Work

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This paper examines the divergence between the national elite thinking around conflict on which grand strategies and policy making on conflict resolution are premised and the people's understanding of the same conflict based on their lived experiences. It does this in the context of militarised conflicts along India's borders, with specific reference to Jammu and Kashmir. It argues that this fundamental variance in perception on what causes and sustains violent conflicts in these areas between those who make and implement policy and those whose lives are affected by the policies perpetuates rather than transforms the cycle of violence and contributes to the continuing militarisation of the conflict. Short-term amelioration strategies that sidestep issues of justice and dignity and focus exclusively on special economic packages and special legislations for exceptional circumstances may actually serve to block creative avenues for conflict transformation in the long run. Pacification, as Diana Francis reminds us, is not tantamount to peacebuilding (Francis 2010).

Francis in fact makes an insightful distinction between pacification and peacebuilding, arguing that these two frameworks for action appear to emanate from two world views. Pacification, she argues, is based on a peace that foregrounds stability, hegemony, prosperity and power while peacebuilding foregrounds just relationships, mutual care, shared powers and responsibilities (Francis 2006). The term peacebuilding has of course itself evolved and broadened significantly from the time when it was first used by Boutros-Ghali in 1992 (UN 1992) to now embrace a range of activities before, during and after the initiation of a peace accord or agreement. This broadening of the overall peacebuilding agenda notwithstanding, it has still largely remained entrenched within the dominant Western model of liberal peace that draws heavily from the policies of the UN, the World Bank, the OECD-DAC and bilateral donors. This converges around three guiding principles – market economy, rule of law and democracy (Sending 2009) – as part of an interlinked transformatory process that would lead to peace and sustainable development (Kurtenbach 2007). However, as liberal peace with its associated projects and/or consequences is increasingly being subjected to critical interrogation, the 'idea' of peacebuilding simultaneously continues to negotiate its way through this labyrinth of arguments and counter arguments about the true nature and form of the liberal peace project, its many hidden and not-so-hidden shades and, most importantly, its intended and unintended consequences (Roberts 2010).

Elite Indian discourses may not consciously refer to the liberal peace project, but its constituent elements, particularly its endorsement of the market economy and emphasis on procedural democracy as pathways to peace, do implicitly resonate in elite thinking and policymaking. Though in this paper I use the term peacebuilding as a descriptive term to capture the basic approach of the elite strategy and thinking in militarised conflict zones such as Jammu and Kashmir, it is important to note that given the UN origin of the term peacebuilding and the manner in which it is typically used to refer to external interventions in countries of protracted civil conflicts, this is not a term that is used consciously by policy strategists in India. The term 'intervention' is also not used for that purpose since these areas are seen as an 'integral part



of India'. Typically, policy makers avoid using any special term to characterise their governance initiatives in these areas, except references to 'bring back normalcy'.

We posit that most elitist national security visions of peacebuilding (bringing back normalcy) in India gravitate towards pacification based on a conflict 'management' and 'violence containment' approach and are based on twin strategies. The first is that of special economic packages and central funds to stem the unrest that is arguably magnified by unemployment, particularly among the youth, in militarised areas. The second is 'exceptional special legislations' to tackle what is perceived as a law and order menace arising out of 'extraordinary situations'. I further argue that even if these twin prongs of elite pacification and mitigation techniques appear to work in the short term, as long as they are based exclusively on a conflict management and restoration of law and order rather than a transformatory approach, the cycle of violence will continue, albeit with ebbs and flows. A conflict transformatory approach comes with the implicit recognition that all conflicts and struggles are not necessarily negative and with the recognition that some conflicts can in fact be a catalyst for positive change.

## 1. Economic Packages and Conflict Governance

One of the most common strategies of pacification in the Northeast and in Jammu and Kashmir is the special economic packages and central funds which are bestowed by the central government from time to time. One of the problems of the 'economic package as panacea' formulation, especially in these militarised areas, is that some uncomfortable questions remain unaddressed. To begin with, a key unaddressed question is: what is the ultimate *destination* of these development funds? Evidently, these special packages typically delivered by bureaucrats and instruments of public administration do not actually reach the people for whom they are ostensibly meant. As an example we can look at the agricultural sector in Jammu and Kashmir, in which the majority of the people are occupied.

In his budget speech of 2011, the state's finance minister stated that the primary sector contributed (only) 21.10% of the gross state domestic product (Rather 2011, 5). This, from a sector from which 70% of the population derives its income, absorbs 49% of the total working force (Directorate of Economics and Statistics 2008-09, 5) and from which arguably a tremendous productive impulse had been unleashed following radical land reforms (Aslam 1977), clearly paints a picture of stagnancy – a fact that was also admitted by the finance minister in his budget speech. Evidently the central largesse that has poured in has not contributed to a better quality of life for those engaged in this sector.

It is also important to note that the earlier picture of the dramatic decrease in poverty in Jammu and Kashmir that ostensibly took place between 1993-94 and 1999-2000 as per the Indian Planning Commission estimates has now been contested by the Directorate of Economics and Statistics of the Government of Jammu and Kashmir. As per their estimates, one fifth of the state's population falls below the poverty level. Not surprisingly, their survey carried out in 2007-8 has shown that the overwhelming bulk of this poverty is in rural areas with a dispersion rate of 26.14% as compared to 7.96% in urban areas (Directorate of Economics and Statistics 2008-09, 97-98). This supports the contention that the largesse from the centre has done little to benefit the rural poor.

In a situation where land resources are already so fragile, the occupation of prime orchard land by Indian security forces for their watch and surveillance activities has had negative psychological as well as economic consequences. Not only has it added to the alienation of people who see the armed forces as the face of the Indian state; but even from a purely economic standpoint there have been resultant losses to the farmer as the rent paid by the security forces does not amount to an adequate economic compensation (Navlakha 2009).

The Kashmir valley is not the only area where farmers and agricultural workers have been affected. It is also significant to note that when the militancy movement spilled over to the mountainous regions of Jammu in Doda, Rajouri and Poonch, and pitched battles started between militants and security forces,

families had to abandon their agricultural fields and flee to Jammu city where they continue to live in miserable camps with minimal government support. For those facing land alienation and conflict induced forced displacement, the 'packages' from the central government have meant very little.

Among the economic/administrative measures announced for Jammu and Kashmir from time to time, job creation by the government ranks high on the list. Prima facie this looks like a conflict amelioration strategy and may fulfil such a purpose in the short run, since clearly government jobs seem to be the only way to tackle unemployment in conflict areas where private investors and industrialists shy away from investing due to the risks and disruptions that violence can create. However, the intended or unintended outcome of this is far from benign, as it creates a crippling dependency of the state government on the central government, which impedes the active transformation of the conflict in the long run and prevents people living in the conflict zone from becoming active arbitrators of their own lives. Despite expressing anxiety that in spite of all the programmes and schemes for employment the unemployment rate of 5.21% in Jammu and Kashmir is well above the all-India figure of 3.01%, the Jammu and Kashmir Economic Survey warns: "As regards the widening of employment base, note has to be taken of the fact that the Government sector has almost become employment inelastic. Any more pressure on this sector will result into inefficiencies that the state can ill afford in a fast growing competitive world" (Directorate of Economics and Statistics 2008-09, 14).

Arguably this strategy of pumping in central funds and creating non-productive jobs, creating huge outflows on salaries and pensions (not to mention the unaccounted for expenses to maintain security) on a revenue base that is already limited because of the conflict dynamics, creates a catch-22 situation. In fact, the salary and pension component of Jammu and Kashmir is greater than its total revenue generation. Therefore, it is not surprising that while the ratio of central transfers to total revenue at 78.6% may be twice that for all other states (except for the Northeast, where it is 67.6%), as much as 50% of Jammu and Kashmir's own revenue goes into debt servicing and into reducing the overdraft of the government with the J&K Bank (Navlakha 2009). Navlakha also argues that this is no unintended consequence but an intended one, as it suits the national elite in New Delhi to devise pacification strategies of a kind that keep the dependency syndrome alive because of the opportunities it affords to control the lives of a disaffected and alienated population and keep the power balance firmly in its favour (ibid.).

Further, the impact of the planned public expenditure has also not translated into significant growth. While this may have to do with more general causes such as the high cost of service delivery in the midst of difficult terrain and poor connectivity, one of the reasons is directly related to the conflict. It emanates from the fact that the beneficial impact of public expenditure spills beyond Jammu and Kashmir, as much of the contractual payments are transferred and purchases are made beyond the state. This is also called the 'missing multiplier' (Government of India 2006).

The national elite assumption that economic packages and job creation will be a panacea to protracted militarised conflicts also does not take into account that there are deep rooted political grievances that go beyond issues of employment. In many ways, the elite attitude and policy on conflict governance is captured tellingly in Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh's speech on the floor of the Indian parliament in February 2011, in reply to the lower house (Lok Sabha) debate on the motion of thanks on the president's address:

"I have appointed a group under Dr. Rangarajan to work out a plan for providing 50,000 to one lakh [100,000] jobs to the Kashmiri youth... I hope that once we start implementing them, these are precise proposals where the Indian industry commits itself to employ Kashmiri youth and *if we can create jobs for a lakh of students from the valley and other parts of Kashmir, I dare say it will change the mental make-up or the mindset of the Kashmiri people.*"

("Fingers Crossed for the Summer" 2011, 9, emphasis and insertion by the author)

Without denying that unemployment among youth can create the kind of disaffection that could manifest in sporadic violence in an already militarised area, what is most telling is the formulation that employment and jobs alone will be the decisive game changer, as this will ‘change the mindset of the people’. There is no further reflection on the causes of disaffection and anger in the valley and increasingly now in Jammu subdivision, or on elite polices that create a trust and confidence deficit. It was precisely the disenchantment with this overall approach that was echoed by members of Jammu and Kashmir’s civil society from the Kashmir Centre for Development Studies. In their memorandum to the Indian All Party Parliamentary Delegation on September 20, 2010 they stated: “No economic packages and cosmetic administrative measures can be a substitute for demilitarisation and a life based on political justice and rule of law” (The Hindu 2010).

## 2. Extraordinary Laws and Conflict Governance

The second prong of conflict governance by the national elite has been the promulgation of special legislation to maintain law and order. The *modus operandi* in areas where the state represented by its civilian regime decides to respond militarily to these low intensity conflicts has acquired a fairly predictable pattern – the technique is to establish a state of exception (regionally, under the civilian order), impose curfews, issue shoot-at-sight orders, introduce special legislation such as the Armed Forces Special Powers Act, modify the law of evidence and bring about a state of emergency without calling it one (Thapar 1984). Thereafter, armed combatants fighting either for an independent homeland or a radically altered relationship with the Indian federation are locked into an armed confrontation with the Indian state’s security forces, represented by the army or several state paramilitary forces such as the Border Security Force (BSF), the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), the Rashtriya Rifles (in Jammu and Kashmir), etc. The implication of this is that there is a clear disjuncture in the way India’s macro democratic experiment has translated into the lived experiences of people living in areas characterised by low intensity conflicts (in the Northeast and Jammu and Kashmir) and those living in other parts of the country.

Pointing to the inherent dangers of such special laws, whether at the national or regional level, Singh argues that these laws essentially create a certain category of population who do not belong to ‘the people’ entitled to certain fundamental rights. It hems in the political community by determining who (group, collective, individual) belongs to ‘the people’ (Singh 2006, 116). By creating what Giorgio Agamben calls the ‘state of exception’, a certain class of people is stripped of the protection they would otherwise have been afforded under the rule of law (Humphrey 2006). However, the overturning of the rule of law is itself done legally and with the procedural aspects of democracy intact – elections are held and typically the state assembly endorses and passes the special legislations. A situation of illiberal governance is created in a geographical pocket but within the liberal framework.

The justification of extraordinary measures rests on the assumption that such measures are necessary responses to specific crimes of an extraordinary nature. They are therefore temporary and extend as long as the extraordinary events are in evidence. However, as Singh (2006) indicates, we see that the extraordinary laws have not been transitory in terms of their temporality or the impact they have had on the larger legal system. Through what he succinctly describes as “a subtle process of symbiosis”, laws pertaining to the so-called ordinary crimes and those claiming to deal with extraordinary situations intertwine in specific contexts (Singh 2006, 120). The extraordinary laws then become so much a part of the people’s lives that they no longer exist alongside and independently of ordinary law – they move from the parallel to an interlocking system.

Manecksha points to the difficulties of securing justice in the context of Kashmir not only because of these draconian special laws but because these laws are increasingly being used to supplant the ordinary criminal justice system, which has its own procedures and human rights safeguards. Moreover, the culture of moral and legal impunity it breeds has led to a lack of respect by state authorities and security personnel



for the judicial process in habeas corpus proceedings, with court directives either being pointedly ignored or circumvented (Manecksha 2011).

In Jammu and Kashmir, the Armed Forces (Jammu and Kashmir) Special Powers Act 1990 (AFSPA) and the Public Safety Act fall into this category of special and extraordinary legislation. Section 4 of the AFSPA empowers “any commissioned officer, warrant officer, non-commissioned officer or any other person of equivalent rank in the armed forces” the authority to arrest, to search and to seize without a warrant. It also gives the authority, extending to the right to shoot to kill, “if he is of the opinion that it is necessary to do so for the maintenance of public order” (Agarwal 2007, 1815).

Citizens and human rights groups have publicly protested against this act, arguing that it has provided a license to kill and destroy on suspicion, while the army has insisted that a low intensity war cannot be fought without it. The current state government in Jammu and Kashmir has also asked for its repeal. In fact, as political commentators have pointed out, the major threat to rule of law in Kashmir – especially with regard to the right to life (Article 21 of the constitution) – is the impunity that springs from AFSPA.

Manecksha (2011) cites the work of a group of lawyers and volunteers in 2000 who conducted fieldwork to examine 98 cases of alleged enforced disappearances and observed that the most striking feature of the habeas corpus proceedings is the powerlessness of the Jammu and Kashmir High Court. The report says that in over 57% of cases there was a clear finding against an identified security force or unit. The court was unable to do anything more than order registration of a First Information Report (FIR), which should have been done in any case. In 10 cases out of 98, even this order to register the FIR took 5 to 12 years. Furthermore, the court’s staff did not carry out the directions of the judges. In as many as 38 cases the accused unit of the armed forces did not file a reply; in 10 cases there was admission of arrest but claims that the person had been subsequently released; in 62 cases in which inquiries had been initiated by the High Court the accused unit did not participate in inquiry proceedings. As Manecksha concludes, “it is a grave indictment of democracy when, after a court holds a crime to be of grave magnitude, the judicial remedy is ineffective because the law cannot be held applicable to an executive that does not respect people’s fundamental rights to life and liberty” (Manecksha 2011, 31).

The other act that adds to the culture of impunity is the Public Safety Act (PSA) in Jammu and Kashmir. This is a statute that provides for detention for a maximum of two years without trial in the case of persons acting in any manner prejudicial to the security of the state. It further allows for preventive detention of up to one year where any person is acting in any manner prejudicial to the maintenance of public order. The detention must be ordered by a divisional commissioner or district magistrate and the grounds of detention provided to the detainee within 5 to 10 days; however, even this basic norm is violated in practice. The PSA was used widely during the summer of unrest in 2010 in the Kashmir valley, where young stone pelters and protesters, many of them minors, were booked under this act, creating public uproar. Since district magistrates rarely scrutinise the grounds for detention before passing the detention order, the detaining authorities have used vague and sometimes outright bizarre grounds to detain a wide category of people under the PSA (Manecksha 2011).

Amnesty International’s report, *A Lawless Law: Detentions Under the Jammu and Kashmir Public Safety Act*, based on Amnesty International’s research during a visit to Srinagar in May 2010 and subsequent analysis of government and legal documents relating to the detention of 600 individuals under the PSA from 2003 to 2010, concludes that instead of using institutional procedures and safeguards of ordinary criminal justice, the authorities are using the PSA to secure the long-term detention of political activists, suspected members or supporters of armed groups and a range of other individuals against whom there is insufficient evidence for a trial or conviction. The purpose is, to quote a senior official of the Indian administration, to keep them ‘out of circulation’ (Amnesty International 2011).

This system of administrative or preventive detention and the erosion of faith in the judicial system have had another consequence. Desperate families have started seeking help from political party workers or influential local leaders when a family member is whisked away under this act. This, in turn, has entrenched extortions, bribery and other corrupt practices (Manecksha 2011).

The special laws have to be seen against the backdrop of the huge government and security apparatus that exists. It is important to note that there has been a significant qualitative change in the situation in the Kashmir valley in terms of a shift from militant-led violence in the early 1990s to people-led sporadic protests that are not necessarily violent and centred around specific issues. The official estimates of active militants (armed non-state combatants) is now down to 350 (“J & K in Numbers” 2011) and even given the fact that they can strike at will, this is a tectonic shift from the kind of command and control they had in the early 1990s. In terms of people’s response (non-combatant population), while it is true that stone pelting of the kind seen as a form of protest in the summer of 2010 certainly cannot be considered non-violent, it is not the same as the organised armed militant movement of the earlier time. The elite response has not been calibrated to take these shifts into account, either in terms of the quality of protests or the people leading them, and much of the same thinking on using security forces and special police to deal with challenges to authority continues to dominate.

### 3. What Law and Whose Order? Rethinking Conflict Governance

This paper has offered a broad overview of the national elite response to the conflict in Jammu and Kashmir which, taken together, form a classic carrot-and-stick approach. Melding the persuasive with the coercive, it holds out the central funds and special packages to persuade people of the benefits of remaining with an India that is increasingly projecting itself as a resurgent, industrialising, liberal, open economy, attracting foreign investments and ready to trade as an equal partner in the comity of nations, while at the same time, in certain militarised pockets, maintaining a huge coercive state security apparatus to control people’s actions if they threaten to alter the current structural balance of power in any significant way with new forms of political formations that do not fit into the current national elite imagination.

As we have indicated, even the first ostensibly persuasive prong of the elite national strategy may well backfire and actually end up provoking violent conflict by its non-participatory top-down distribution of specially packaged development funds through bureaucratic public administrative channels. Typically this bypasses local structures of governance which involve people’s participation. The special packages create new classes of elites (a bureaucrat-political leaders-armed group nexus) with a vested interest in keeping the conflict going because they become stakeholders in a political economy of patronage and violence.

The second prong is of course the openly coercive one that takes a visible form in the presence of security forces and a massive non-military governmental presence as well, the latter to grant various permissions and executive orders. This overall state machinery and its huge discretionary power are then protected by special laws that lawfully upturn the rule of law and create a culture of impunity.

Conflict transformation requires the elite to be invested in a long-term process that may involve the right of the people to wage conflict non-violently and look for new political formulations that may clash with existing power arrangements. Free markets and procedural democracy, including elections, may create a veneer of normalcy but cannot stand in for a peace with justice and security. As long as elite peacebuilding is reduced to pacification and its impact assessed only by how effectively violence is controlled, it will continue to block rather than open up possibilities of conflict transformation.

Peacebuilding is much more than conflict avoidance. It involves bringing people – combatants and non-combatants in conflict zones – into the centre of the peace process. Jammu and Kashmir’s undisputed leader for several decades, Sheikh Abdullah, in a poignant reminder to the elite rulers that peace can neither be bought nor forced, offered the following insight in his last testament: “Only that accession will endure which is acceptable to the hearts of the people. People’s hearts can be won only by love, justice, truthfulness and sincerity and not with subsidised rice, army and offering largesse” (Sher-I-Kashmir last testament, undated).

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# Theoretical Challenges for Assessing Socio-Cultural Sensitivity in Governance and Conflict Resolution

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The issue of socio-cultural sensitivity in conflict resolution and peacebuilding agendas has been addressed in a variety of literature emerging over the past decade (Ramsbotham, Woodhouse et al. 2005; Richmond 2009; Tadjbakhsh 2011). The dominant form of conflict governance through peacebuilding and conflict resolution – liberal peace – is seen to have inadequate concern for the local context, traditions and cultures (Mac Ginty 2008). Therefore the current gap of failure of contemporary conflict resolution and peacebuilding agendas is – according to the conclusion of CORE deliverable 2.2 *Report on the state of the art of governance and conflict resolution literature* – the failure of conflict resolution initiatives and critiques of these initiatives to take into consideration the local dynamics on the ground (CORE 2011). This relates to cultural values, traditions and means of local forms of conflict transformation, as well as already existing institutions and political fora, resulting in a gap in the critical literature regarding acknowledging and understanding voices on the ground in conflict zones.

Thus, the CORE project aims to explore conflict governance in unconventional ways and bridge this gap by analysing “dynamics on the ground”, and “bringing in the role of the local actors” (CORE 2011, 38). The CORE deliverable emphasises the comparative element of the project, which seeks not only to include case studies from both India and Europe, but also to form a dialogue between the various bodies of literature. An important part of this dialogue between Europe and India is the comparison of literature and cases. Both of these points address cultural sensitivity in the research design and theoretical and methodological frameworks of the project.

The aim of this paper is to continue this line of thought, by investigating cultural sensitivity and the ‘local’ through a post-colonial framework, and through a dialogue on experiences in Europe and India. In particular, the paper challenges the notion of a homogenous local as well as a unified external actor, by investigating representations of the local in Indian post-colonial literature. We argue that in Indian post-colonial research, the local has been unpacked in a different way from that of the liberal peace critique. Yet, these various representations of the local in India are highly relevant for a larger assessment of (liberal) peacebuilding practices. Critical perspectives from post-colonial theory, in fact, provide a framework for which the political appropriateness and cultural sensitivity of peacebuilding can be suitably assessed (Lidén 2011b). It is thus a helpful starting point for comparative sharing between literatures and cases across the two continents.

## 1. Socio-Cultural Sensitivity

Western intervention into local society - and the ways in which these interventions are shaped and appropriated by local actors and politics - has been an important issue of debate in recent research (Bachmann and Hönke 2009). In particular, international notions and practices of peacebuilding and conflict resolution have been scrutinised as delivering a flawed and 'template approached' peace (Mac Ginty 2008). Prescriptive agendas for solving conflict have been viewed as external intervention into local culture and traditions, seeking to change local traditions and norms, as well as the 'non-liberal other' (Lidén, Mac Ginty et al. 2009).

Embedded in these critiques is an understanding of the power relations implied by such interventions. Peacebuilding and conflict resolution interventions do not merely intervene in the local context of the conflict in order to seek to resolve it, but also actively seek to alter the socio-cultural, political and economic context of the locality. External actors impose agendas by performing the role of the experts, with objective and rational (read: superior) knowledge, and a dominant model of the desired outcome. The local is here perceived as a negative other of liberal modernity, premised on binary categories such as illiberal-liberal, modern-traditional and global-local (Lidén 2011b). Peacebuilding and conflict-related governance can thereby be seen to perform an expansion and maintenance of the values, practices and institutions of modernity and liberalism (Lidén 2011a), by seeking to actively structure the social space as well as transform the agency of local subjectivities.

Liberal peace critiques presuppose an 'external' actor and a 'local' sphere where the local and the external are portrayed as homogenised entities – whereby the international imposes a certain idea of peace on the local. While this is a helpful correction of the assumption that international peacebuilding simply represents the needs and interests of the affected societies, it reproduces a misleading distinction between the local (as a-liberal) and the external/international (as liberal). The critique of liberal peacebuilding should therefore entail further investigations of the complexity and reflexivity of these processes, moving beyond simplified divisions of local/global and internal/external which are themselves by-products of a modern liberal representation of world politics.

Arjun Appadurai urges us to see culture not as a substantial phenomenon – that is, as an inherent part or property of an object or practice – but as a situated difference in relation to something local or embodied (Appadurai 1996). For him, culture-as-difference is, in particular, important for understanding group identities. Yet, it is also a starting point for an analysis of socio-cultural sensitivity in relation to the local. In international liberal peace agendas, the local is oftentimes figured as embodying “[...] a lack of capacity and ‘primitive’ political, social and cultural practices [...]” (Richmond 2009, 153). Richmond further argues that in this context, ‘difference’ is acceptable only when it manoeuvres within a liberal framework.

Post-colonial critiques have for decades unpacked this political representation of the local ‘other’ in liberal and modernising agendas – be they the building of institutionalised nation states in post-colonies, or more recent developmental modernisation projects. What is common to these agendas are the various ways in which the local has been figured as ‘lacking’, incapable of providing for her own welfare, and embodying filth and chaos (Keshari 2005). These representations cannot therefore be seen as non-historical events, but rather as continuities in the collective imagination of the governing and the governed. Analysing contemporary dominant discourses and practices of liberal peace agendas through this lens enables us to ask the larger questions about power in regards to the local.

## 2. A Post-Colonial Dialogue on the ‘Local’

Locality is a historical product (Appadurai 1996), and the homogenised local a result of a historical process whereby the ‘indigenous other’ had been made knowable. India is a case in point (McKee 2009). Colonialism in India not only introduced new forms of knowing reality – through scientific, medical and



statistical techniques – but also new forms of knowledge and institutions (Kalpagam 2000). Colonial rule in India led to a homogenising narrative of the ‘local-as-other’.

Yet, the local other is also incorporated into the Indian nation state, a focus which has been widely researched by the Subaltern Studies collective. As such, (post)colonialism is also written into contemporary politics. What is of particular interest in the Subaltern Studies group – represented by names such as Ashis Nandy, Dipesh Chakrabarty, Ranjit Guha and Partha Chatterjee – is the relationship between the central elite and the peasantry. Many have expanded the notion of a ‘subaltern’ also to include other forms of marginalised groups, and the positioning of post-colonial knowledge vis-à-vis a dominant Western narrative of history and science.

The epistemic power of European liberal thought is not a neutral remnant from the past, but part of an active social imaginary of the world and its realities. The colonial governmentality of nineteenth century British India was inevitably different from the Western norm. Through enumerating, surveilling, measuring and reconstituting the Indian population, the colonial rule created a “population constituted as subordinated subjects, whose health, resources, productivity, and regularities were the objects of governance” (Prakash 1999, 126). These measures secured the empire. Yet, at the same time the ‘colonialisation of the body’ could only be accomplished if the colonial master operated through care for the native body, and welfare for the population.

The Indian body was, in a series of scientific truth-telling discourses, constituted as the embodiment of filth and disease (Prashad 2001). This representation of the ‘truth’ of the Indian body “as a spectre of filth and error” further “set the stage for the sanitary policing and regulation of the population” (Prakash 1999, 130) deeming the colonised incapable of their own self-governance. Parallel to contemporary governmental strategies, these techniques of governmentality shaped the spatial and temporal reality of India (Robb 1997; Kalpagam 2000) later to be incorporated into the discourses of the nation state (Gill 2007).

An analysis of the impact of colonial rule on Indian lives and subjectivities is thus important for understanding the changes that have been brought about by ‘disciplining’ subjects and homogenising the local, not only in Europe, but also outside the boundaries of the traditional ‘history of politics’. Several Indian authors have written about the relation between the various ways in which the colony was governed, and about subjectification (and resistance to power) both pre- and post- colonial regime (Spivak 1988; Chakrabarty 1992, 2002; Prakash 1999; Kalpagam 2000). They highlight that one cannot look at the history of Europe and India as separate histories, but rather see them as “*contiguous but affiliated* histories of colonialism that would account for connected and coherent developments across the colonial divide” (Bhattacharya 2009, 10).

The building of an independent Indian nation was a struggle of differences – what to take from the West and what to reject? These struggles highlighted differences between the outer and inner, the material and the spiritual, the home and the world, public and private, and through such contestations new boundaries were written in an ideological principle of selection (Chatterjee 1989). Thus, the conception of the local as ‘lacking’ and backward did not disappear in the making of the Indian nation state after independence. Rather,

*"In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, generations of elite Indian nationalists found their subject positions, as nationalists, within this transition narrative that, at various times and depending on one's ideology, hung the tapestry of "Indian history" between the two poles of the homologous sets of oppositions, despotic/constitutional, medieval/modern, feudal/capitalist. Within this narrative shared between imperialist and nationalist imaginations, the "Indian" was always a figure of lack."*  
(Chakrabarty 1992, 6)

The ‘lacking’ other is a narration that has been historically constituted in governance agendas both in Europe and in India, a hybridised product of negotiations over differences. The illiberal and non-modern other – representing humanity’s past, the pre-modern – has to be transformed into a ‘modern’ citizen. This narrative also guides liberal peace interventions into ‘failed states’.

### 3. A Heterogeneous Local

Dipesh Chakrabarty's statement that "Europe remains the sovereign, theoretical subject of all histories" (Chakrabarty 1992, 1), reminds us of the difficulty of representation, or of 'turning the gaze' from the standpoint of the subaltern. The subaltern – be it the rural Indian peasant or the post-colony – is in a position of relativity. India itself is in a "position of subalternity", referred to in relation to the master narrative of Europe, and Indian experiences are not therefore made knowable in their own right. Whereas European history is universally applicable according to this mind set, Indian reality is merely "empirically knowable" in relation to the former.

To think of the modern, the liberal or even the nation state, is to think about a reality which as a theoretical subject is Europe (Chakrabarty 1992). This relationship has to be taken into account also when discussing issues of locality. By reflecting upon this relationship in both a past and present dialogue, we might find ways to understand the 'locality' of European cultures as particular representations of the world, as well as understanding the relationship between so-called internal and external actors in governance initiatives. Rather than seeing liberalism as a natural fact, it is a culturally specific event in history that has been shaped in the relationship between Europe and her colonies. In fact, it "... becomes necessary to tell the story of modernity as inextricably linked to the story of colonialism" (Kaviraj, 2010, 10).

Therefore Partha Chatterjee calls for an understanding of the present as dense and heterogeneous times of modernity (Chatterjee 2004). The illiberal local is not of another time, its 'real space' is modernity in and of itself – a hybrid, messy, chaotic, and heterogeneous present. It is this tension between a utopian homogenous time and the presence of a heterogeneous local in 'most of the world' (Chatterjee 2004) which challenges analysis of socio-cultural sensitivity in peacebuilding and conflict resolution agendas.

The liberal project of building peace is, similar to colonial modernisation processes, enforcing the homogenous time of capital upon the narrative of the local. Peacebuilding and conflict resolution agendas have inbuilt an assumed outcome that is written in homogenous time. Their discourses and practices in general follow a linear trajectory – from an incomplete backwardness – the process of making something or someone worthy of accounting for the 'present'. Its discourses and practices have an inbuilt preference for liberal national economies over vernacular activities and knowledge, and shape the mainstream regard on the subaltern local as the state of 'lacking', especially in economic terms (Rahnema 2001).

Yet, the *antihistorical liberal subject* which liberal peacebuilding agendas seek to bring into being is in fact a utopian non-reality. Is it possible to turn the gaze and see the local beyond this dominant vision? Gayatri Spivak's *Can the Subaltern Speak?* (1988) is but one of many texts that are relevant here. We allow ourselves to be challenged by asking 'to what extent can the local speak'? Are we seeking to represent or re-present or simply translate socio-cultural identities and practices in relation to governance and conflict resolution?

### 4. Conclusion

There are multiple ways in which we can approach both the issue of locality, by bridging the gap of existing literature through addressing processes of locality, as well as engaging in a substantial dialogue across histories, cases and literatures in India and Europe. Yet some challenges remain. Firstly, how do we understand the local in relation to the external? Secondly, both 'local ownership' and 'participation' presuppose a local sphere of action. Who defines this 'local'? And thirdly, by seeking to represent 'voices on the ground' in a culturally-sensitive manner, we are engaging in ethics, in a dialogue of difference, and thereby also in the challenge of allowing ourselves as researchers to be changed by that encounter.

We have put forward the usefulness of moving beyond the 'gap of the local' in the liberal peace critique that sees the international and the local as two 'closed actors' – whereby the international imposes a certain idea of peace on the local – and rather see the complexity and reflexivity of (historical) processes

by which meaning/peace is created. In fact, the 'local' does not exclude the 'global' but is rather a hybrid micro expression of 'the global' (Lidén 2011b). It is therefore useful to think of a "mix of global trends and local particularities", as Ranabir Samaddar does in this Occasional Paper series in his reflection on Theme A (see page 61 of Samaddar's contribution).

Yet, by complicating the analytical category of the local, we are also opening up for a complex and difficult research agenda (Tadjbakhsh and Richmond 2001). Therefore, as a research strategy it is desirable not to multiply and fragmentise the local, but rather to problematise the category 'local' itself by persistently defining the particular meanings of the 'local' and 'external' in each research setting. To what extent is 'sensitivity' related to tolerance of difference? Is sensitivity merely tolerance, or does it allow also that in the meeting of the local, of the difference, I allow myself to be changed by it, to be altered by its presence?

It seems that a precondition for socio-cultural sensitivity is acknowledgement of the hybrid space created through the meeting of difference – of culture – and the possibilities such an encounter creates. This opens up a research agenda which allows both the researcher and the local to be re-presented as heterogeneous and changing subjects, in a hybrid encounter of knowledge and realities (Tadjbakhsh and Richmond 2001). Socio-cultural sensitivity is thus a self-reflexive exercise which acknowledges the shortcomings of any re-presentation of the local, and of difference.

Lastly, both the issue of cultural sensitivity and political appropriateness, if we take post-colonial studies seriously, cannot be dealt with without taking up the historical component of colonialism as a perspective of investigation, and thereby asking the different and difficult questions posed by post-colonialism. This is a process that has influenced the self-perception of both Europe and India.

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# Re-Politicising the Strategies and Methods of the Liberal Peacebuilding Discourse

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The critique of the liberal peacebuilding paradigm is nothing new. For more than fifteen years, knowledge transfer from the North to the South in international relations has been critically reflected and the operational strategies of liberal peacebuilding have been criticised for perpetuating the interests and needs of capitalist societies in the Western world (Duffield 2001; Chandler 2009). However, what has only been considered to a very limited extent is the consolidation of liberal peace by the methods applied in peacebuilding and conflict transformation. Very often, the methods for conflict analysis or the development of indicators are considered as ‘neutral’ instruments even though they often serve to guarantee outcomes of the peace process which correspond to the liberal paradigm.

What rarely happens is a solid discussion about the underlying assumptions and norms that peacebuilding strategies are based on and how they influence the activities and objectives of a programme. While this has started to change in recent years in the field of peace and conflict research, implementing agencies, such as the UN, EU and bilateral donors, rarely question their moral frameworks and normative assumptions. Instead, they continue to export a liberal understanding of peaceful coexistence, without considering that their underlying hypotheses on how change can be secured do influence and determine the results of a programme.

Against this background, on the one hand this paper will argue that the normative underpinnings of liberal peacebuilding programmes are not only manifest in the content and goals of the concepts but also in the way methodologies like conflict analysis or impact assessment are created and implemented. On the other it is stressed that cultural sensitivity is highly important, not only with respect to the content of the peacebuilding programme but also in regard to the methods applied and the patterns of thought that the conflict transformation strategy is based on.

It is shown that mono-causal, linear and ‘logical framework’ thinking, which many conflict transformation concepts are based on, stands in the Northern tradition of reasoning and is rooted in European socio-economic history, while thinking in terms of relationships and networks and a more circular understanding of social processes seems to be more familiar with many African and Asian cultures. Hence, a culturally sensitive method for transforming political conflicts needs to go beyond linear thinking and planning. With the aim of presenting an alternative to linear and liberal ways of dealing with conflicts, the basic components of a systemic approach to conflict transformation are briefly outlined at the end of this chapter.

## 1. How Liberal Peace Structures Assumptions, Values, Orientations and Priorities in Research and Practice

Despite the heterogeneity of peacebuilding concepts and methods, a liberal consensus about core values does still exist (Richmond 2007, 111). The liberal underpinnings of conflict transformation concepts and methods are hardly questioned. Donors, international organisations and civil society organisations often develop and discuss approaches to conflict transformation and peacebuilding within the confines of liberal peace by seeking its consolidation from a methodological point of view. One of the aims of the liberal consensus is to develop standards and a universal framework for generating a peaceful world. A certain type of knowledge about peace and conflict is produced, which is transferred to conflict zones by the implementation of peacebuilding approaches.

Highly political interventions are depoliticised and neutralised with the argument that a functioning liberal democracy is a crucial component of peaceful co-existence, and part of a universal truth. The same applies for the methods used. Technical terms like ‘instrument’, ‘tool’, ‘indicator’ or ‘template’ attest that they are considered to be apolitical and objective ways of capturing reality. In debates about the right methodologies for conflict analysis, monitoring and assessment, it is not reflected sufficiently that methods – rather than being neutral instruments to capture reality – have political implications as well.

To give an example: many international organisations work with standardised concepts of quantitative and qualitative indicators which are highly sophisticated and assist in categorising and evaluating activities in the field. Nevertheless, they are always based on political assumptions and a specific understanding of the causes and consequences of conflict. If it is assumed that a non-functioning state is the reason why the implementation of the human rights agenda does not succeed, then, as a logical consequence, the objectives and activities developed for the project’s ‘logical framework’ focus on building state structures and institutions that guarantee the desired implementation of a human rights agenda. An indicator of a successfully implemented peacebuilding strategy would then be the existence of governmental institutions. Very often, it is not questioned whether the liberal assumption that statebuilding leads automatically to peacebuilding fits into every local context. Having said this, it can be concluded that liberal peace structures assumptions, values, orientations and priorities in research and practice.

Besides this, the state-centric perspective of many peacebuilding interventions has led to a paucity of analysis on political organisations and structures in areas outside the formal control of the state. Informal social networks, indigenous administration or security structures are seldom recognized as valuable entities which regulate the daily life of the people. One reason for this might be that they are often not compatible with liberal moral frameworks. However, in the absence of a state social leadership, indigenous social networks can emerge and effectively govern communities (Longman 1998; Mamdani 1999; Sklar 1999).

## 2. Social Change as a Circular Process

The strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation of peacebuilding projects are normally done on the basis of ‘logical frameworks’. Although this manner of linear planning has its benefits because it assists in coordinating the project and in defining and clarifying the goals, objectives and related activities, it has many limitations. It originated in US military planning and was adopted by USAID for development projects in the late 1960s (Hummelbrunner 2010). It is based on a linear and mono-causal understanding of social processes and reinforces the implementing agencies’ ‘in the box’ thinking, rather than being open and creative about changes to the conflict situation:

*"This results from their tendency to reinforce linear, 'if-then' causal relationships between inputs, activities and outcomes. It is this tendency that also leads to an emphasis on the 'quantifiable' when it comes to measurable indicators. It further produces a focus on the project level rather than on the overall policy goals or purposes." (Hoffman 2003, 17)*

In this mono-causal 'if-then' thinking, it is assumed that social change is a linear process based on a set of certain developmental stages aligned on a linear timeline. A society's development is seen as a chronological procedure in which specific criteria need to be fulfilled. Peace, development and 'civilisation' are closely linked in this discourse (Senghaas 1998; 2004). It is assumed that the more developed and civilised a society is, the less violence will be used for solving problems. The underlying criteria for measuring this peace-and-development process are created on the basis of the socio-political history of European societies. Conflict-prone societies are characterised by chaos and disorder, while the democracies in the West are seen as symbols of order and stability. As a consequence, 'exporting order' to conflict zones is a crucial underlying hypothesis of many peacebuilding strategies (Richmond 2007; Schlichte 2005). It also serves as a legitimisation for intervention. The more detailed, comprehensive and multi-layered the intervention strategy is, the bigger the chance for successful implementation. If peace is not achieved, the planning is then seen as insufficient or the methods as not being accurate enough.

This rather rationalistic and right-brain dominated view of societal development processes is a very European or Northern way of thinking, which also prevails in peace and conflict research and practice. The idea of a universal and common history of mankind, with European societies as a benchmark, can be traced back to the Enlightenment. It was shaped by Descartes' rationalistic philosophy and the separation of mind and matter. Accordingly, this so-called 'modern view' considers social processes as being measurable and controllable. For the sake of clarity and definiteness, reason should create order and unambiguity out of chaos (Bauman 2005). Ambivalence and ambiguity were two of the most disturbing components for the Enlightenment and modernity. The modern view trusts in the ability of theories and concepts to capture reality. And it is still this logic which 'logframes' and peacebuilding programmes are based on.

For this reason, it can be concluded that linear, mono-causal reasoning is a Western way of looking at the world, while thinking in terms of relationships, networks or a more circular understanding of social processes is rooted in many African and Asian cultures.

### 3. Beyond Hybridity: About the Differences Between Cultures

Despite hybrid realities, cultural differences still exist. They are manifested, for example, in styles of arguing and thinking about peace and conflict dynamics. Thus, criticising the liberal peacebuilding consensus on the one hand focuses on the liberal content of many peacebuilding projects, but on the other it also needs to question the patterns of thought that the concepts are based on. While the importance of these different ways of thinking is well-documented in the fields of psychology and anthropology,<sup>1</sup> it is rarely an issue in peacebuilding and conflict transformation.

Nisbett et al. (2001) propose a theory of how systems of thought develop on the basis of various cultural practices. They show that substantial differences exist in East Asian and Western thought processes. They emphasise that Greek civilisation gave rise to European societies and post-Colombian American civilisation while Chinese civilisation has influenced societies of East Asia (including Japan and Korea) and South East Asia.

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<sup>1</sup> See for example Nisbett's "The Geography of Thought" (2003). The author has shown that Westerners and East Asians think about and experience the world differently because of differing ecologies, social structures, philosophies and educational systems. These differences are rooted in ancient Greece and China, have survived into the modern world, and are still shaping ways of reasoning and thinking.

The authors found “East Asians to be more holistic, attending to the entire field and assigning causality to it, making relatively little use of categories and formal logic, relying on dialectical reasoning. Westerners are more analytic, paying attention primarily to the object and the categories to which it belongs and using rules, including formal logic, to understand its behavior” (ibid., 292). Besides this they argue that the Chinese were orientated toward continuities and relationships and for them parts existed only within wholes, “to which they have inseparable relations” (Munro 1985, 17), while for the Greeks the single object and its attributes were the conceptual starting point.

The interconnectedness and interrelatedness of different elements within a system and thinking in terms of relationships can also be found in Buddhism, where it is assumed that everything and everybody exists only in relation to other beings and things, and undergoes constant changes while responding and reacting to them (Der-Ian Yeh 2006, 91). The whole world is seen as a network of interactions:

*“At the macro level the universe is represented and seen from a Buddhist viewpoint as a network of jewels, an interconnected and interdependent web of nodes, each of which simultaneously reflects all other hundreds of thousands of nodes in the web. All other nodes would simultaneously reflect this specific node.” (ibid., 92)*

Non-linear thinking is also a crucial component of African cultures. Many believe that webs of relationships exist between organisms and objects, and are therefore less interested in identifying causal relationships within a system. A very well-known concept in this regard is the principle of Ubuntu: ‘I am because we are and we are because I am’. Whereas “Western” psychological concepts regard the self as an autonomous entity, “African” psychology sees the personality as context-based as well. Personhood is defined in terms of its relationships with the family, community or status or position within a group (Mkhize 2004, 27). (The polarisation between ‘Eastern’, ‘Western’ and ‘African’ is explicitly used here to underline the argument. It is quite clear that many ‘hybrid’ ways of looking at social relationships do exist.)

Having said this, it can be assumed that a rational and linear understanding of a peacebuilding process and the construction of linear impact chains based on ‘logframe-thinking’ is connected closely to Western analytical thinking and might not be the most appropriate method for every cultural context.

Hence, it can be concluded that for peacebuilding strategies to be efficient it is necessary to take into account the socio-culturally constituted ways of understanding not only conflicts and how they can be resolved, but also more profoundly how social, economic, institutional, moral and religious/spiritual relations are understood in different cultures. The latter phenomena encompass both culturally specific and general aspects that need to be understood in attempts to reveal the conditions for successful conflict transformation. The modes of thought and collective behavioural patterns associated with different cultures are resources that need to be studied, acknowledged and drawn upon in times of peacebuilding and transformation (Ratner 2002).

Even if it is obvious that cultural patterns of thought are, however, also increasingly subject to influences from a wide range of globalisation processes and institutional dynamics that span both micro- and macro levels, they still influence ways of thinking and reasoning in the non-Western world. Socio-cultural differences in thinking and reasoning are still valid today.

## 4. Systemic Conflict Transformation as a Bridge Builder Between Cultures

This final section of the paper emphasises that the integration of systemic thinking into conflict transformation strategies assists in developing more culturally sensitive approaches to peacebuilding and in re-politizing conflict transformation strategies. One reason for this is that the basic criteria of systemic

thinking, such as thinking in network structures, thinking in terms of relationships, accepting ambivalence, contingency and perspective dependency (Körppen and Ropers 2011) have many commonalities with 'non-European' patterns of thought. Rooted in organisational development and family therapy, systemic thinking emphasises the importance of a process-orientated, flexible and creative manner of dealing with the complexity of violent conflicts.

An essential assumption of a systemic understanding of social processes is the non-linear interaction between single elements within the system. The focus of a systemic conflict analysis rests therefore on the patterns of interaction and the dynamics of relationships among the system's actors, rather than on their individual characteristics. It is not the quality of a single factor which reinforces a conflict or helps to achieve sustainable peace. What counts is the manner in which the different factors interact and in what kind of context they take place. Within complex conflict systems, the differentiated parts exhibit properties which they owe specifically to being components of a larger whole (Körppen 2011).

Systemic approaches to conflict transformation reintegrate subjectivity into conflict analysis, assessment and strategy building and reject the idea that objective, apolitical knowledge about a conflict situation exists. From a systemic point of view, a neutral observation or analysis of a system is impossible because the observer becomes part of the system they observe. Additionally, the results of observation depend on the perspective one adopts. In ethno-political conflicts, discussions about the root causes for the outbreak of violence are very often fraught with controversy (Aspinall 2005).

Against this background, a systemic approach to conflict transformation is based on the assumption that social processes can be influenced only indirectly, e.g. through a change of the context which might contribute to the irritation and mutation of the system itself (Körppen 2011). In this vein, the principle of resonance is crucial for developing a conflict transformation strategy. This means that strategising is considered as an open, creative and dynamic process which is constituted by ongoing action and reflection. Instead of designing the whole strategy at the very beginning and then implementing it, it takes shape during the process itself and provides space for discussing the actors' different theories of change and political assumptions on how to achieve peace. What characterises this kind of systemic approach is testing which issues resonate with the interests and needs of the various stakeholders and trying to find out where the energy flows within the system, rather than defining problems in advance (Burns 2007).

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# Technocracy, Governance and Conflict Resolution

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This paper is interested in the meanings and implications of technocracy for the development and maintenance of peace. It aims to illustrate how the bureaucratic imperative explains much about the ascendancy of certain actors to positions of prominence on the peacebuilding landscape, and the types of activities that these actors engage in. The bureaucratic imperative has attained the status of a foundational socio-cultural premise for many contemporary peace interventions, yet it is largely invisible or at least gives the impression of being neutral. It is further argued that technocracy does not merely constitute a facilitative framework for peacemaking; instead it has become a major factor in determining the nature of the peacemaking process, and the ‘peace’ that it produces. The paper is largely conceptual, but the CORE ‘Cultures of governance and conflict resolution in Europe and India’ project gives the opportunity for empirical testing at a later date.

The paper proceeds by illustrating the ways in which internationally-supported approaches to peace have become technocratic. It argues that a complex mix of structural and proximate factors have reinforced a ‘technocratic turn’ in peacemaking. The paper then interrogates the claims made in favour of applying technocracy to peace. In particular, it discusses the claims that technocratic approaches to peace are neutral and efficient.

## 1. A Technocratic Turn

As a starting point, this paper takes Centeno’s (1993, 314) definition of technocracy: “The administrative and political domination of a society by a state elite and allied institutions that seek to impose a single, exclusive policy paradigm based on the application of instrumentally rational techniques.” Such a definition requires context-specific modification and reminds us of the limits of generalising between cases. In the case of peacebuilding and governance interventions, our focus is often on a particular sector of activities rather than the entire state. Yet Centeno’s definition provides a useful reminder that bureaucratic systems can develop their own logic and can attain hegemony.

It is possible to argue that recent decades have witnessed a ‘technocratic turn’ in relation to internationally-supported peace interventions. Institutions and their activities have become increasingly ‘technicised’ through the adoption of more standardised bureaucratic mechanisms and norms. The seminal document in post-Cold War liberal peacebuilding, the UN’s *Agenda for Peace* (1992, para. 59) makes clear the UN’s role in technical intervention: “There is a new requirement for technical assistance which the United Nations has an obligation to develop and provide when requested: support for the transformation of deficient national structures and capabilities, and for the strengthening of new democratic institutions.” The term ‘technical assistance’ is hardwired into the documents and *modus operandi* of the leading international institutions that comprise the key players in liberal peacemaking and development interventions. Thus, for example, the World Bank (2011) describes itself as “a vital source of financial and



technical assistance". The International Monetary Fund (2001) notes, "In accord with the IMF's first Article of Agreement, the objective of the IMF's technical assistance program is to contribute to the development of the productive resources of member countries by enhancing the effectiveness of economic policy and financial management." The phrase 'technical assistance' features prominently in the mandates, self-proclaimed areas of expertise, and activities of the Asian Development Bank (2008), ECHO (2011), USAID (2011) and CIDA (2005).

A complex set of reasons help explain the increased evidence of technocracy in peacemaking and peacebuilding. These reasons can be divided, somewhat roughly, into the structural and proximate. The former are overarching meta-contextual conditions that facilitate technocracy. The proximate reasons can be regarded as accelerators, or more immediate factors that have propelled the technocratic turn in recent years.

### 1.1. Structural Factors

The primary structural factor is the modernist worldview that prioritises technical 'solutions' at the expense of practices and norms considered irrational, anachronistic and arbitrary. This worldview believes that legal-rational and evidence-based approaches offer 'solutions' to social and economic problems and are best unencumbered by the distorting influence of politics, identity and sentiment. Few areas of life have escaped a technocratisation or the application of 'modern' processes that award priority to efficiency. Of particular note has been an expansion of norms and practices from business enterprises into other arenas of life and society such as public sector organisations. Management systems championed by US accounting conglomerates in the 1980s have been mainstreamed into the organisation and operation of governments, public sector organisations and even INGOs and NGOs. Thus terms such as 'benchmarking' and 'Total Quality Management' have become commonplace, as has an emphasis on key performance indicators (Head 2011). The language and worldview of business organisations has reached apparently hegemonic proportions, with efficiency and value for money being elevated to the primary rubric against which 'success' or 'failure' may be measured. As a result, most formal peacebuilding activities conducted by international organisations and INGOs are embedded within a 'results based management discourse' (Denskus 2010, 3).

The extent of this hegemony is reflected by the almost complete absence of policy, political and public debate on the efficacy of using a business imperative to make judgments on issues that traditionally have rested on notions of human solidarity, ethics or morality. This is not to say that debates on, and motivations for, peacebuilding and humanitarianism are devoid of references to ethics and morality. It is the case, however, that the business and technocratic imperatives have assumed a dominant position and have constructed a framework in which value for money, project cycles, logistical frameworks, and exit strategies seem to have overshadowed fundamental ethical questions.

The mainstreaming of technocracy and the bureaucratic imperative could not have occurred without a facilitating ideological milieu. Here we can point to the symbiotic relationship that developed between the modernist worldview of technocracy and western notions of liberalism and neo-liberalism. While technocracy has been flavoured and embraced by a variety of political outlooks (nationalism, Stalinism, Nazism etc.), its combination with liberalism has awarded it a peculiar dynamic (Bailes 1974; Amir 2007). Liberalism has a technocratic bias in that it believes that societies can design their way out of problems through the perfecting of institutions and the creation of conflict resolution mechanisms. The notion of the reformability of humans and social systems is a key part of the liberal canon and thus drives a modernisation agenda. Rather than relying on the arbitrary distribution of power and resources, liberals claim to justify resource distribution on the basis of transparent allocation systems (e.g. elections or other forms of metrics). Also relevant is liberalism's orientation towards the future and tendency to see the past in a pejorative light (Hindess 2007). Thus, in the liberal view, the past can be dismissed as unenlightened while the future may be modern, rational and legalistic. Liberals recommend technical 'solutions' to

human problems and place faith in ‘modern’ bureaucratic methods.

The ideological harmony between technocracy and liberalism is not enough to explain a tendency towards technocratic hegemony. Key institutional and political actors had to be in place over a sustained period in order to promulgate the superiority of technocracy. Thus, the key international peacemaking institutions, as well as the international financial institutions, have been effectively controlled by a small group of states that favour liberal peacemaking. Ultimately this elite capture is leveraged on military power and the threat of coercion; in 2008 the US military budget was eight times that of Russia and seventy three times that of Iran (Olson 2010). But beyond the coercive potential of the liberal peace, there exists a complex set of economic, cultural and diplomatic networks that makes international organisations, states and markets complicit in the continuation of the system. They are both captives and stakeholders. The elite capture of the international peace architecture, and its ideological flavour, is illustrated by the example of United Nations Development Programme governance initiatives. In theory, the UNDP is an amalgamation of the interests of all members of the United Nations. In reality, however, its governance programmes are directed and funded by a relatively small coterie of states (who subscribe to what can be called ‘the liberal peace’) and the European Union (Hamieh and Mac Ginty 2009).

The technocratic turn has been given added impetus by the rise of neo-liberalism as the orthodox keystone of many government activities. According to Harvey (2003, 3), “Neo-liberalism has, in short, become hegemonic as a mode of discourse. It has pervasive effects on ways of thought to the point where it has become incorporated into the common-sense way many of us interpret, live in, and understand the world.” Proponents of neo-liberalism have been able to develop an impressive discourse of intuitive-sounding prescriptions (we must live within our means, entrepreneurs must not be shackled by red tape) that can be applied to virtually all spheres of life, including the making and building of peace. This ‘businessification’ of social, political and cultural organisation and practice has become so commonplace that it may be regarded as ‘normal’ and somehow an unremarkable part of the fabric.

The essential point is that past decades, and especially the post-Cold War era, have seen the elision of an international institutional and ideological system that has valorised efficiency and the worldview of business organisations. These structural factors are complemented by more proximate factors that have accelerated the technocratic turn in relation to peace interventions.

## 1.2. Proximate Factors

The proximate factors occur within the socio-cultural and institutional environment maintained by the structural factors discussed above. Three interlinked proximate factors are worth mentioning: the professionalisation of the ‘peace industry’; operational standardisation of ‘best practice’ regimes; and increased opportunities for peace-support interventions. These factors are discussed together rather than as separate factors. The significant growth in the number, scale and complexity of peace-support interventions has meant that the range of peace-related tasks has grown far beyond those envisioned in the era of traditional peacekeeping. Peace support tasks now potentially encompass a range of activities including statebuilding, political engineering and re-education, social provision, and economic recalibration. In turn, these tasks have been complicated by the trends towards securitisation and privatisation found in many international interventions. A cadre of ‘peace professionals’ has developed, many of them moving between post-conflict contexts as opportunities arise (Denskus 2010). Given the problems of well-meaning amateurs and the potential for harmful intervention (Anderson 1999), professionalisation is not problematic in itself. As befits a process of professionalisation, there has been a specialisation of tasks and the development of specialist language replete with a welter of acronyms (DDR, SSR, TRC, ADR etc.).

Multiple peacebuilding training courses and certificates mean the replication and standardisation of ‘best practice’ (Walker 2010, 87-9). While the peacebuilding sector has not developed an equivalent of the SPHERE standards of the humanitarian sector, peacebuilding handbooks, field guides and toolkits

have been developed (Caritas 2002; Reyhler and Paffenholz 2001; Lederach and Jenner 2002). The United Nations (2010) has developed benchmarks for 'peace consolidation' and has attempted to institutionalise 'best practice' within its 'Peacekeeping Resource Hub' via 'policy, best practice and training for the peacekeeping community'. Indeed, 'best practice' and 'lessons learned' have become the ubiquitous cliché-phrases that stalk the peacebuilding community. Initiatives to standardise practice and language are common in the INGO sector with, for example, projects to identify widely accepted indicators for the measurement of peacebuilding.

Accelerating this trend towards technocratisation has been the politics and culture of neo-liberalism, which are increasingly visible in INGOs. A politico-economic agenda of 'value for money' and a predisposition against 'hand-outs', 'idleness', 'dependency' and a 'bloated state sector', has meant that INGOs place significant emphasis on promoting an image of efficiency and value for money. A trickle-down effect means that NGOs often adopt the procedures of the INGOs and international institutions that fund them. A cursory examination of the websites of peacebuilding organisations shows evidence of the mainstreaming of neo-liberal public policy discourse: 'aid effectiveness' (International Alert), the publication of external evaluations of the organisation (Conciliation Resources), or proud statements attesting that the organisation is ISO 9001:2008 accredited (Mines Advisory Group) or has adopted a pro-whistleblower policy to guard against fraud (Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue). While all of these organisations are progressive and transparent, there is a strong sense that a public political discourse inflected with neo-liberal sentiments has effected a cultural change. The agendas of these organisations still remains focused on humanitarianism or peacebuilding, yet the foundational socio-cultural framework they inhabit has been shaped by bureaucratic and technocratic norms.

In addition to the handbooks, manuals and statements of compliance with international standards, the focus of contemporary peacebuilding reinforces the emphasis on technocracy and bureaucracy. This relates to the centrality of statebuilding as a core task of many peace-support and governance interventions (Mac Ginty 2011, 136-41). International actors regard an efficient and capable state as a bulwark against conflict recidivism, as a clearing house for competing demands among citizens, as a provider of social goods and as an organ able to administer the economic and diplomatic responsibilities of statehood on the international stage. According to this logic, if the state is 'perfected' then conflict will be unlikely. Of course, advocates of the liberal peace favour a particular type of state – a facsimile of the western democratic state with an open economy. As a result, significant international efforts have been made in paring down the economic roles of states. The centrality of the state, or more precisely state reform, to internationally-supported peace interventions means that a significant proportion of activities termed as 'peacebuilding' are actually focused on bureaucratic recalibration, good governance and the construction of administrative systems that will, it is hoped, deliver outcomes more efficiently, transparently and accountably. In many cases, it can be argued that peacebuilding has been reduced to statebuilding and good governance interventions, and a series of discrete tasks that can fit under that rubric. In such a context, the focus of much peacebuilding activity is predisposed towards technocracy and bureaucracy.

## 2. Neutrality and Efficiency?

It is worth reviewing the two most prominent arguments made in favour of technocratic approaches to peacemaking: neutrality and efficiency.

Advocates of a technocratic approach to peacemaking posit that scientific and rational approaches to dispute resolution are superior as they are not influenced by arbitrary or potentially discriminatory decision-making based on historical bias or identity claims. There is an "implicit and often explicit rejection of 'politics' as inefficient and possibly corruptive" (Centeno 1993, 313). Technocracy offers the possibility of constructing mechanisms that are free from bias and that can depoliticise issues that are often viewed through political lenses. Technocratic ideals have infused many approaches to conflict resolution and

conflict management (as opposed to conflict transformation). These approaches believe that conflicts can be 'solved' or 'managed' via arbitration mechanisms that are able to reach judgments based on evidence rather than on competing claims that might be based on sentiment or identity. Moreover, conflict resolution and conflict management approaches believe that a key driver of conflict is a lack of transparency between conflicting parties. As a result, they believe that the opportunities for misunderstanding (and thereby conflict) can be minimised by the creation of forums for transparent communication. This administrative rationality takes institutional form through tribunals, arbitration panels and truth commissions. These may be staffed by outsiders and 'experts' who do not have an obvious stake in the conflict.

Technocrats would see this approach as being value-free and neutral: decision-making would be based on objective criteria. They would see their approach as being anodyne and free from the subjective pitfalls of value judgements. Yet it is difficult to see how some issues can be separated from their affective hinterland. Consider the status of Jerusalem: a committee of inquiry could develop a conflict resolution rubric based on demography, urban planning and other 'scientific' criteria. Yet given the highly emotive claims involved, it seems unlikely that administrative rationality could satisfy all parties. A paradigm based on administrative rationality seems peculiarly unsuited to evaluating claims based on religious faith, identity claims, symbolism, historical interpretation, and emotion. Yet it is difficult to think of civil war situations in which the majority of these factors are not at work.

Rather than being value-free, it can be argued that technocracy amounts to an ideology in itself. Centeno (1993, 312) refers to it as "an ideology of method" or "a belief in the ability to arrive at the optimal answer to any discussion through the application of particular practices". Systemic efficiency is valued above all else. The defence of the system, and the bureaucracy that supports that system, becomes a political project. An inbuilt pro-system bias can develop. Shapiro (2005, 343) observes how "experts are themselves special interest groups whose perspectives and self-interests render them non-representative of the demos as a whole." Technocratic systems are highly political in at least two respects. Firstly, technocratic elites rely on material power and social capital in order to acquire legitimacy and assume positions of power (Amir 2007, 88). Technocrats do not emerge from a vacuum: they rely on a supportive politico-economic environment. This involves the exploitation of opportunities and political manoeuvring (Amir 2007). The second highly political aspect of technocracy derives from its assumption that technocratic methods and 'solutions' are superior to the alternatives. From this starting point, alternative approaches to dispute resolution are deemed invalid. Donais (2009, 8) notes that "In [the] technocratic version of peacebuilding, local perspectives are more often viewed as hurdles to be overcome or obstacles to be avoided than as potential sources of sustainable solutions." Although justifying itself as being value-free and neutral, technocratic approaches are capable of exhibiting significant intolerance and exclusivity.

This intolerance is especially apparent in relation to participative mechanisms. In a purely technocratic system, popular input is irrelevant: decisions are made according to a rational rubric whose findings are unchanged by popularity. Participation is sacrificed to efficiency. If uncontrolled, the logic of technocracy may be to minimise the demands of participation in order to maximise efficiency. As Bryld (2000, 701) notes, "An authoritarian regime with a single string of command is presumably the most efficient and least participatory government you can get." Exclusion and lack of participation can occur in non-authoritarian contexts as well. Reflecting a wider patriarchy in education and society in general, technocratic networks often display a gender bias (Daday and Burris 2001, 243-4). Moreover, technocratic approaches are often characterised by the deployment of a specialist language that is exclusionary to non-speakers. Referring to economic reforms in 1990s Argentina, Corrales (2004, 9) observed a "democratic dissonance, whereby state officials justify economic policy by using technocratic arguments while groups from civil society feel unable to 'talk back' to the state because they do not have the language of the technocrats."

### 3. Concluding Discussion

The central argument of this short piece is that technocracy forms a foundational socio-cultural premise for contemporary peace governance interventions. A near hegemonic position exists with technocracy so embedded in conflict response mechanisms that it becomes an unquestioned norm. This is not to say that conflict resolution and governance activities are devoid of innovation and creativity. Nor does it diminish the efforts of those involved in peacebuilding. It does suggest, however, that the space for alternative non-technocratic responses to conflict is diminishing (Mac Ginty 2008). Technocracy has a 'closed loop' effect whereby it provides the discursive framing through which conflicts are defined and analysed, as well as the prescriptions. As conflicts are framed in technocratic terms it is no surprise that technocratic 'solutions' become the standard response; technocracy begets technocracy.

Technocracy, per se, is not a negative phenomenon. Technocratic systems can offer mechanisms to deal with issues of exclusion, inequality, and arbitrary decision-making. Problems arise, however, whenever technocracy shifts from offering a suite of devices to being an ideology or a norm-setting framework that is prescriptive about how conflicts are to be interpreted and approached. This situation has been reached with regard to many of the orthodox conflict resolution frameworks used by international institutions, INGOs and NGOs. Reflexive and innovative practice, while not entirely absent from approaches to conflict, are marginalised when the mainstream is so heavily dominated by technocracy.

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# Georgian and International, State and Non-State Governance Premises and Initiatives in Conflict Resolution

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## 1. Georgian Governance Initiatives and Premises

Prior to the August 2008 war, the Georgian government, being party to the conflict, preferred to concentrate on short-term initiatives aimed (in its view) at conflict resolution. Its main goal, however, was the consolidation of its political and military power. Following the Rose Revolution in 2003, under the initiative of Georgian President M. Saakashvili, Georgia's constitution was revised to enhance presidential power over parliament. This trend was reversed, however, after the 2008 war, when Georgia's constitution was revised again, so as to strengthen parliamentary power and foster a greater separation of powers through an enhanced role of the prime minister. This new constitution will enter into force in 2013. As for the consolidation of military power, the period prior to August 2008 was marked by large military spending by the Ministry of Defence and on the reconstruction of the national army, accompanied by hard military rhetoric. All this induced growing fear within the separatist entities of renewed hostilities. However, after the Georgian-Russian war, the Georgian government's assumption that a strong military entails a strong state, able to re-integrate the lost entities into Georgia, has changed. Military spending and militarised rhetoric have since diminished.

In 2010, the Georgian government launched its new *State Strategy on the Occupied Territories: Engagement Through Cooperation*. In the framework of the peace initiative for Abkhazia, the Georgian president offered 'broad autonomy' and wide-ranging self-governance to Abkhazia. Furthermore, the new post of Vice-President of Georgia was established and reserved for an Abkhaz representative; the Abkhaz were guaranteed posts in all ministries and state agencies; and the Georgian government proposed the establishment and joint management of a free economic zone covering the Gali and Ochamchire regions. The Abkhaz were also offered a veto right on all issues regarding the constitutional status of Abkhazia, as well as the development of the Abkhaz culture, language and identity. The Georgian strategy foresaw the creation of three working groups – legal, economic and political – tackling the main objectives of the initiative. The Georgian government also asked the international community to act as the guarantor of a peaceful settlement in Georgia (Government of Georgia 2010).

In the peace proposal for South Ossetia, Georgia called for the non-use of force and accepted to take on all social obligations regarding the population of the region, i.e. financial compensation for the families who suffered damages in the conflict of 1991-92. Furthermore, it offered unconditional protection of the principles of self-determination of nations, respect for cultural and ethnic identity, human and minority rights as well as the equality of citizens, as stipulated by Georgia's constitution. The proposal stated that the territory of South Ossetia should be restored within the administrative borders that existed prior to the outbreak of conflict in 1992, i.e. it should include the regions of Tskhinvali, Java, Znauri and Akhalkgori. It stated that South Ossetia would represent an autonomous entity within Georgia and would be governed by the Head of South Ossetia and a parliament, both elected through direct elections by secret ballot.

The local population would be granted the right to elect the self-governing bodies of regions, towns and villages. The government of Georgia would ensure guaranteed quotas of representation of South Ossetians in federal ministries and state agencies. Additionally, the Ossetian language would enjoy the status of an official language, and education in Ossetian would be guaranteed. The Georgian government would also finance the Ossetian television, radio and print media (Office of the State Minister for Reintegration 2008).

## 2. International Governance Initiatives and Premises

Turning to international governance initiatives, after the re-eruption of the Abkhazian and South Ossetian conflicts in 2008, the international presence in the region has substantially decreased. The activities of the United Nations (UN), e.g. its Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) were scaled back in Abkhazia, after Russia vetoed a UN Security Council resolution extending its mandate on 16 June 2009 (UNOMIG 2011; Parliamentary Assembly 2009). UNOMIG was established on 24 August 1993 by Security Council Resolution 858 (1993). It was initially composed of 88 military observers, but soon expanded considerably. The purpose of the mission was primarily to monitor the implementation of the Abkhaz-Georgian ceasefire agreement of 27 July 1993 (Akaba 2010, 12). However, the mandate soon expanded encompassing broader areas such as human rights and the protection of refugees (UNOMIG 2011). Starting as a peacekeeping mission, UNOMIG with its broader mandate also began working towards sustainable and economic development. This was carried out along with political efforts to reach a settlement to the conflict. After 2008, despite the withdrawal of UNOMIG, the UNHCR, UNDP, WFP, and UNICEF continued their presence in Abkhazia. Through these agencies, the UN has continued to have an impact on socio-economic development, human rights and other areas of social protection (Khintba 2010, 34).

The UNDP is particularly active in funding initiatives within its programmes on crisis prevention and recovery and democratic governance. One of these initiatives is the assessment of social vulnerability across Georgia (UNDP 2011). The UNHCR is mainly involved in monitoring, advocacy and standard setting on Internationally Displaced Persons (IDPs), through its “shelter plus” approach and community mobilisation framework (UNHCR 2011), while UNICEF supports national efforts in enhancing the provision of health services for children in conflict (UNICEF 2011).

Like UNOMIG, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Mission to Georgia also failed to have its mandate renewed regarding its operations in Abkhazia and South Ossetia (Parliamentary Assembly 2009). The mandate expired on 1 January 2009 after Russia blocked the routine annual extension of the mandate (Socor 2009). The Greek Foreign Minister and Chair of the OSCE at the time, Dora Bakoyanni, expressed her disappointment with the failure to reach consensus: “As a result, one of the largest on-the-ground missions of the OSCE in the region was led to an end – despite the clear need, recognised by many states taking part in it, for the organisation to be present in order to contribute toward security and stability in the region” (Robinson 2009). The OSCE mission was established in 1993 and its activities had supported the UN-led peace process in the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict zone. Moreover, the Mission had regularly monitored, analysed and reported on developments in the economic, energy and environmental sectors. An important initiative to monitor human rights was the Human Rights Office in Abkhazia (HROAG), jointly staffed by the OSCE and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) (HROAG 2011).

The European Union (EU) began to engage with Georgia’s territorial conflicts in the late 1990s, endorsing, as a premise, Georgia’s territorial integrity and sovereignty and thus not recognising the de facto independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Its non-recognition has also meant a non-engagement policy with the separatist entities. The premises of the EU’s governance initiatives in Georgia’s conflict prevention, transformation and resolution prior to and after the August 2008 war developed through five overlapping dimensions: (i) the promotion of democracy, rule of law and development (initially through TACIS and then the financial instruments of the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument

(ENPI) and the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR)); (ii) financial assistance to international NGOs in order to provide mediation forums as well as direct funding to local civil society; (iii) direct financial assistance to IDPs and rehabilitation projects for the conflict zones; (iv) the enhancement of regional cooperation through the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC); and (v) the development of bilateral and multilateral relations through the Eastern Partnership (EaP) between the EU and Georgia.

With the curtailing of the UN and OSCE activities in Georgia's breakaway regions, the EU increased its presence through its Monitoring Mission (EUMM). In other words, post 2008, the EU also moved into the security-related aspects of Georgia's conflicts (Fischer 2009, 389). The EUMM's main responsibilities are to report on the grievances of the local population regarding gender and human rights issues, the security situation and the presence of military and police forces in the area. Moreover, the EUMM monitors the compliance with the Memoranda of Understanding signed by the Mission and the Georgian Ministries of Defence and Internal Affairs. However, the EUMM is currently only able to monitor Georgian-controlled territory and continues its (to date unsuccessful) efforts to negotiate access to Abkhazia and South Ossetia. The EU's current presence and activities thus only contribute to confidence building in the areas adjacent to Abkhazia (EUMM 2011). Other EU initiatives are channelled through the EU Delegation to Georgia. The delegation, among other things, manages the EIDHR, which seeks to strengthen the role of civil society in promoting human rights and democratic reform, the reconciliation of group interests and the expansion and consolidation of political participation and representation (EIDHR 2011). The delegation also funds several initiatives and actively supports justice, freedom and security initiatives such as combating human trafficking, drugs and organised crime. Moreover, the delegation supports human rights, democratisation and performs several civil society initiatives within the education, health and social development sector (Delegation of the EU to Georgia 2011).

The EU, through its Special Representative to Georgia, also contributes to the implementation of the agreement reached on 8 September 2008 between Moscow and Tbilisi, as well as the ceasefire agreement of 12 August 2008. His mandate is carried out in close coordination with the UN and OSCE under the umbrella of the Geneva International Discussion (Council of the European Union 2011). The six-point agreement of 12 August 2008, together with its follow-up document of 8 September 2008, envisaged the creation of this new platform involving the EU, the OSCE, the UN and the US, as well as the conflict parties: Georgia, Russia, Abkhazia and South Ossetia. To date, the Geneva talks have achieved limited concrete results: Russia's decision to withdraw its military troops from Perevi, a small Georgian village beyond the South Ossetian administrative border. More broadly, however, the forum remains an unique international mediation platform, which keeps the conflict parties at the negotiating table and in contact with one another.

Since the 2008 war, the military-security decisions of South Ossetia have been delegated to Russia through bilateral agreements, with the 2009 military cooperation agreement providing Russia with the authority to station troops and maintain military bases in South Ossetia for 49 years, as well as to jointly protect the borders for renewable five-year periods. The same treaty was agreed with the Abkhazian authorities. In 2010, 3800 Russian troops were deployed in South Ossetia, located in Tskhinvali, Java and the village of Kanchaveti, in Akhalkalaki, and an estimated 900 border troops have been deployed along South Ossetia's administrative boundary with Georgia, replacing Ossetian security forces. In addition, Russia has been restoring and building transportation routes between Russia and South Ossetia that can be used both for civilian and for military purposes. Following the August 2008 war, Russia has also increased its military presence in Abkhazia. The estimated number of Russian security personnel in Abkhazia is between 4000 and 5000 (ICG 2010). Furthermore, Russia is upgrading the Gudauta military base and the Ochamchire naval base. Moscow also finances the budgets of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. This includes infrastructure projects and local pensions. Thus the Russian governance premises in these de facto republics largely amount to an exclusive security focus, without any concern for the development of democracy or good governance. It is unknown whether the latter are simply left to the Abkhaz and Ossetian authorities, as there is a dearth of information about the development of democracy, civil society, freedom of assembly and mass media.

### 3. Private Governance Initiatives: NGOs and Business Initiatives

As for non-state initiatives in the field of governance, there have not been radical changes over time. According to Kvarchelia, “with the exception of humanitarian organizations, international NGOs (INGOs) only began to show interest in Abkhazia a few years after the Georgian-Abkhaz war ended” (Kvarchelia 2010, 47). The initiatives of the numerous INGOs and private international foundations operating in Georgia have varied from development projects to projects aimed at supporting governance reform. The few INGOs that became engaged in Abkhazia have focused exclusively on the need to resolve the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict. Many of the INGOs have managed to develop good cooperative relationships with local organisations and hence have gained an in-depth understanding of the local context. This has enabled several INGOs to support work on the development of local civil initiatives, strengthening democratic institutions, etc. (ibid.). The first and perhaps most influential non-governmental actors to carry out work on conflict transformation in Abkhazia were the University of Maryland (USA), George Mason University (USA) and the Norwegian Refugee Council.

The INGOs that were mainly involved in initiatives aimed at strengthening civil society and democratic institutions include the University of California, Irvine (USA), the British NGOs Conciliation Resources, International Alert and the Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR), the Berghof Center for Constructive Conflict Management, the South Caucasus Bureau of the Heinrich Böll Foundation, the Swedish Kvinna till Kvinna (Woman to Woman) and the Toledo International Centre for Peace (ibid., 53-54). The American National Democratic Institute for Foreign Affairs (NDI) also carry out important initiatives, directing their programmes at civil society development, women’s political participation and local governance (ibid., 59). It is important to note that the incidents in August 2008, followed by the declaration of Abkhaz independence, created entirely new conditions for INGOs working in Abkhazia. In this context, the fact that INGO activities were not brought to a halt is particularly important to acknowledge (ibid.).

As for South Ossetia, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) was the only international organisation involved in humanitarian, development or monitoring work. In 2009, through mini-grants to support small businesses, it implemented economic development projects for residents of border villages and refugee families. In 2010, the focus shifted to distributing seeds and fertilisers to families in rural areas.

### 4. Conclusion

Thus prior to the 2008 war, the Georgian government attached prime importance to hard power, i.e. to its military build-up, while casting this in (and covering it with) a broader peacebuilding rhetoric. The August war brought about a fundamental change to Georgia’s approach. The Georgian government has now adopted a soft power approach (or even a neo-liberal approach based on building a decentralised state), following the line chosen by the EU, to resolve conflicts in the long run by reinforcing its internal democracy. Reforms in different governmental structures (covering the reconstruction of infrastructure; city rehabilitation projects; local self-government reforms; the establishment of patrol police; economic reforms such as the creation of free industrial zones; a liberalised tax policy and customs reform; the privatisation of state property; a liberal labour code; a free trade regime with Turkey and the CIS countries; and reforms in education, social welfare and healthcare) have become the main elements of conflict resolution. Yet this decision has not been the outcome of an endogenous appreciation of a successful democratic transition in Georgia (amongst others, promoted and assisted by the EU), but rather of the Georgian-Russian war, which brought to the fore Georgia’s inability to re-conquer its lost territories by military means.

As for the approach of the international actors and in particular that of the EU, throughout the first post-war phase, the principal means through which the EU tried to induce peace in the region was the provision of aid as well as democracy promotion, state-building and civil society development initiatives in Georgia proper. The implicit aim was that of raising the appeal of reintegration of the secessionist entities

into Georgia. The ethos and logic of the European Union's policy in the conflict-governance nexus were and continue to be framed within the liberal peace paradigm, which views the development of democracy both as an end of state-building and a means to induce conflict transformation. The August 2008 war marks the beginning of the EU's direct involvement in conflict management. Given that the war has directly threatened European security interests, the EU has begun to add conflict management activities to longer-term and more structural approaches premised on democracy promotion. However, these activities have not entailed a broader conflict transformation/resolution approach. Indeed, the Geneva Forum seems to be aimed at crisis management (mainly to prevent another confrontation between Georgia and Russia) rather than Georgian-Abkhaz and Georgian-South Ossetian reconciliation. The EU has not yet designed a strategy in this direction; its approach towards conflict resolution in Georgia was and continues to be pragmatic and reactive.

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# Governance, Governmentality and the Study of Conflicts

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The concept of governance has emerged as the leitmotif of discussion about public issues amongst academics, policymakers and civil society actors over the past couple of decades. It is perhaps owing to this prolific use of the concept that there is also an equal degree of disagreement – and sometimes, fuzziness and fungibility – about the meaning of this concept and its applicability. Conceptual frames for an empirical enquiry of governance initiatives in conflict areas must therefore start with the concretisation of the concept of governance before the governmentality frame can be mobilised for the purpose.

## 1. The Idea of Governance

Emergence, growth and redefinitions of the meaning and content of the concept of governance have had a complex relationship with the ongoing transformations in the traditionally-theorised relationship between the state, the market and civil society. Emerging in the World Bank's concern about the socio-political context of policy implementation and a corollary concern for encouraging market solutions to issues of collective action (World Bank 1989), the concept has evolved and taken on a vast variety of meanings – from issues of transparency and accountability to those of institutional design geared towards greater popular participation; from concerns about sustainability of socio-economic change to the role of traditional actors in modern structures of decision-making; and many more.

While political and civil society actors in India have been enthusiastic proponents of the concept of governance, focussed academic analysis of the issues and concerns thrown up by the concept has, however, been less structured. While a large number of enquiries have interrogated the applicability, efficacy and relevance of the concept – in particular socio-political and economic settings – the result has been a vast amount of apparently unconnected literature, very little of which engages with the need to either inform the global theorisation on governance or explain the Indian peculiarities.

### 1.1. Defining the Conceptual Terrain: Plurality of Views on Governance

Two prominent streams exist in the concept of governance studies: the first distinguishes between rules of conducting public affairs (emphasising the institutional determinants of choice) versus steering or controlling them (how choices get implemented); and the second questions whether governance relates to outputs (literacy rates, employment rates) or the processes by which these outputs are achieved (participation, access, equitable distribution) (Hyden et al. 2005, 12). Interaction between these four components – *rules, steering, outputs, and process*, lays the foundation of much of the debate on Governance. Rhodes refers to governance as “self-organising, inter-organisational networks” (1997, 47-52), which may be classified under the first stream. This is, however, non-substantive since governance is not merely about a different style of ‘managing’ public affairs but must include more substantive concerns. Kooiman (1999, 68-70), on the other hand, identifies three sets of concepts: rules and qualities of systems;

co-operation to enhance legitimacy and effectiveness; and new processes, arrangements and methods; and defines governance as “all those interactive arrangements in which public as well as private actors participate aimed at solving problems, or creating societal opportunities”.

These views should be interpreted within the broad frame of the political and policy environment of the 1990s, wherein the term governance has been used to denote “a baseline agreement that governance refers to the development of governing styles in which boundaries between public and private sectors have become blurred” (Stoker 1998, 17); and, to “provide the acceptable face of spending cuts”, and has become “a code for less government”. More substantively, it “involves recognition of the limit of government” (ibid., 18). Governance therefore is seen as “a reference point” for challenging “many of the assumptions of traditional public administration” (ibid., 18). Stoker offers five propositions as central anchors of the governance theory: to refer to a set of institutions and actors drawn from but also beyond government; to identify the blurring of boundaries and responsibilities for tackling social and economic issues; to identify the power dependence that exists in relationships between institutions involved in collective action; to stress the centrality of autonomous self-governing networks of actors; and finally, to recognise the capacity of collective action that does not rest on the power of government to command or use its authority but sees government only in a steering and guiding role (ibid., 18).

The most significant debate on governance has, perhaps, been within the disciplines of comparative politics and economics, wherein the role of state and non-state actors has been to be involved in the dialogic disagreements along two major threads of discussion: that of state and economic development, and that of democratisation (Kjær 2004, 123-171). Both these threads, though analytically separate, are inextricably intertwined in the trajectory of evolution of the development discourse since the end of World War II.

Turning to the international dimension, global politics and governance since the collapse of the Soviet system have also been pluralised, aided by the processes of globalisation. This has had a significant impact on the way international relations is conceptualised, leading to a reformulation of the state's role in global affairs. Increasing degrees of interdependence (Rosenau 1992) requiring widely accepted norms and concomitant institutional structures are stressed while the role of the state is seen as providing an enabling environment for the free market, functioning under global rules framed at the institutions of global governance such as the WTO, EU, etc. Furthermore, the increasing role of global capital and trade is stressed in determining the governance structures, while that of global civil society is underlined as a mechanism to hold global governance institutions accountable. The central concern of governance at the international level thus remains that of rules and structures.

## 1.2. Development and Democracy as Central Threads Anchoring Governance

Academic focus on development and development economics emerged in the aftermath of the Second World War, owing to the success of Keynesian economics in Europe. The ‘problem’ of the development of the ‘Third World’ was seen to require an accelerated transfer of capital and technology. Located in the modernisation paradigm, this approach was dominant in the de-colonising of Africa, and efforts were also made to apply it to Latin America and Asia. The specific contexts of implementation of development projects were not seen to be of importance and public agencies were deemed responsible for implementing developmental policies. By the middle of the 1960s, owing to the unintended consequences of project-based developmental policies and emerging ‘enclaves of development’, greater sectorial thrust with integrated developmental programmes was stressed. Coupled with an emphasis on the decentralisation of authority to increase co-ordination and management, the new paradigm was to bring about the development of the people.

By the late 1970s, developmental analysts began to draw attention to the inability of governments to efficiently administer the developmental tasks at hand, especially in the African context, leading to the 1980s’ debate about the lack of technical capacity of the state. Underlining the bureaucratic shortcomings, the debate focussed on the relative importance of the state and the market mechanism in

fostering development. Emphasis was laid on generating incentives to include the market mechanism in the processes of development. Structural adjustment reforms to free up resources controlled by the state for use by private agencies were seen to encourage development with the people.

Starting at the end of the 1980s and early 1990s, it was increasingly recognised that the success of developmental efforts depends not merely on technocratically sound models and programmes but also equally, if not more, on the political context. Consequently, many developmental aid agencies began questioning the notion of state sovereignty, resulting in the governance and democracy agenda of many such agencies. Though many of its components are debatable, one of the strengths of this new governance approach to developmental analysis is its emphasis on the pressing necessity to create and sustain reliable institutions at the grassroots level. Such institutions are seen to be important for developing a bottom-up approach to development. This new paradigm talks of a governance approach to development, with an emphasis on human development and the so-called ‘civil society organisations’, as central features in the implementation process. Within this process, the issues of rights and justice become central to the issue of ‘governance reform’ – something that has become the focal point of public policy within nation-states, and which forms the bedrock of most international donors and agencies (Hyden et al. 2005).

The overview above of the main discussions and debates on governance highlights a few central issues. First, governance remains about organising public affairs in a way that is most democratic and encourages economic growth. The second is that of finding the correct institutional mix for such an objective. The third issue is that of democracy, continuing the modernisation era debates of the relationship between democracy and socio-economic change. Last, but perhaps most importantly, is the conception of the state as a facilitating mechanism versus a structure mediating and upholding citizens’ rights (Jayal 1997; Harris 2001). All these debates are conducted in a context of pluralisation of actors as well as levels of governance, which leads to a significant impact on the conception of liberal rights and a democratic state (Chandhoke 2003).

Such a holistic conception of governance in its socio-political and economic context is required to unravel the complex processes through which conflict is generated, reproduced, sustained and contested. Attention must therefore be focussed on the interaction between the state’s image and practice, the former referring to the territorial and social boundaries of the state, while the latter connotes the everyday practices of the state, its institutions and its officials through which it is recognised and reproduced (Migdal 2005).

### **1.3. Government, Governmentality and the Practice of Government as a ‘Focus of Resistance’**

By defining government as “conduct of conduct”, Foucault and others have understood government in two senses. Firstly, it constitutes “all the ways of reflecting and acting aimed to shape, guide, manage or regulate the conduct of persons towards certain goals and objectives” that become governmental when connected with various procedures and apparatus. Secondly, government helps repose our analysis of “problematics of rule” in forms of “reasons, justifications, means and ends of rule” (Rose 2006, 147). Accordingly, Dean argues that government is

*“...any more or less calculated and rational activity, undertaken by a multiplicity of authorities and agencies, employing a variety of techniques and forms of knowledge, that seeks to shape conduct by working through our desires, aspirations, interests and beliefs...” (Dean 1999, 11)*

However, apart from securing the welfare of its population, the government is also required to secure the rights of its citizens. Citizens inhabit the domain of theory and carry the ethical connotation of participation in the sovereignty of the state. Population, inhabiting the domain of policy, is descriptive, empirical, classifiable, and amenable to statistical techniques of census and survey. As the target of government policies, the population provides the government functionaries with a set of instruments that are amenable

to rational structuring to reach the inhabitants (Chatterjee 2004, 34). As mass population of poor emerges amidst mass democracy, the economic rights of the citizen to property and of the population to work came to be seen as being incompatible. As social rights became an issue of contestation, a continuous process of collective struggle has ensued.

The focal question of politics therefore shifts from justifying state actions to 'the governability of the social'. Legitimacy for power was sought not by the participation of citizens in the matters of state, i.e. through the principle of sovereignty, but by claiming to provide for the wellbeing of the population through the principle of bio-politics. This is where governance links up with governmentality – less about matters of politics and more about administrative policies (Chatterjee 2004, 34-35).

Foucault understood power as "relations of reciprocal incitation" and struggle as "relations of permanent provocation". Thus, the history of "the conduct of conduct" is interwoven with the history of "dissenting counter conduct" (Gordon 1991, 5). This propensity is what Gordon, citing Foucault, termed as strategic reversibility, to argue that governmental practices are turned into a "focus of resistance" by groups of human population (*ibid.*, 5). The (re)configuration of the subject of rule confers rights and duties while opening spaces for decision and action. Here we see a "reversibility of relation of authority" wherein what starts off as a norm to be implanted among citizens by the state, is repossessed as demands which citizens make on the authority of the state (Rose 2006, 159).

Exploring and analysing these dimensions involves conceptualising the state "within other social institutional forms through which social reality is lived", and focusing upon the "mechanism of rule and the working of power through the mundane practices of the state". Focus therefore must shift to analysing the "everyday tracks of rule, process, surplus extraction in order to study the operation of power in a disaggregated manner; ...dispersed institutional and social networks through which rules are coordinated and consolidated; and the role played by non-state actors in the process" (Sharma and Gupta 2006, 9).

#### 1.4. Governmentality

The concept of governmentality engages with "the exercise of authority and how to think about that exercise" as a form of analysis (Sharma and Gupta 2006, 9), with an autonomous form of rationality emanating from exhaustive and detailed knowledge of the governed reality (Gordon 1991, 7-8) and based on the "authority of expertise" (Rose 2006, 145-46). Thoughts and techniques of governmentality, therefore, can be seen as an assemblage of institutions, practices, analyses and reflections, calculations and tactics allowing governmental intervention to be devised and conducted (Foucault 1991, 102). Security became a principle of political method and practice with population as its realm of operation unlike sovereignty that extends its power over space of territory and disciplining with its domain over the body of the individual (Gordon 1991, 19-20). At the same time, welfare became the mechanism for reordering relations between political authority, and social and economic affairs (Rose 2006, 152).

Governmentality thus pertains to two research foci: firstly, "how we think about governing," (Dean 1999, 16) or "the practice for formulation and justification of idealised schemata for representing, analysing and rectifying reality" (Rose 2006, 147). Secondly, it "marks the emergence of a distinctly new form of thinking about and exercising power, bound with the discovery of a new reality, economy ...concerned with a new object of population" (Dean 1999, 19). Governmentality seeks to frame the population within an "apparatus of security", with practices and institutions that seek to defend, maintain, and secure a national population. In this set of meanings, three forms of power – 'sovereignty-discipline-government' are fundamental to the modern forms of authority (Dean 1999, 19-20).

However, as security and welfare were critiqued, especially in the 1970s, governmentality evolved into what Rose refers to as "advanced liberalism". Herein, the responsibilities of welfare are devolved to non-state institutions, leading to "degovernmentalisation of state and destatisation of government" (Rose 2006, 156-57).

Drawing from this brief overview, the governmentality adopted focuses attention of research on identifying the emergence of constitutive elements of the “regime of practice”; disaggregating the regime of practice from the image or the cultural representation of the boundaries of the state; analysing the diverse process and relation that assemble the elements of regime of practice; and analysing the processes by which regimes of practice are shaped and informed by particular forms of knowledge (Sharma and Gupta 2006, 9).

## 2. The Indian Context

The rise of the modern liberal state in India saw two distinct features, quite different from the typical historical trajectories. Firstly, the technology of governmentality in India predates the rise of the modern state since the colonial ‘ethnographic state’ used classification, description and enumeration of population groups as objects of governmental policy (Chatterjee 2004, 36). Secondly, democratic governance through liberal institutions was not an outcome of class conflicts as popular democracy preceded the rise of liberal institutions (Mitra 2006, 8). The resulting state formation was slightly different as the agenda of socio-economic change was not the prerogative of technocratic elite, but a highly contested political issue (Mitra 2002, 12-13). As a result, a growing consensus emerged, emphasising the government’s obligation to deliver certain benefits to the population at large, that security and welfare of the population are independent of the consideration of participation by citizens in the sovereignty of state-making. Besides, the widening arena of political mobilisation, prompted by electoral considerations, allowed for the entry of “disorderly, corrupt and irrational practices of unreformed popular culture”. This led to a ‘political society’ whose dynamics involved “politics emerging out of the development policies of the state” (Chatterjee 2004, 40-48).

After independence, under the Indian National Congress, a ‘congress system’, as put forth by Kothari (1970), through ‘vertical disaggregation’ allowed conflicts to be negotiated at the local level. However, the difficulties of balancing its twin commitment to democracy and economic growth were reflected in the fluctuating economic policies (Chatterjee 2004, 24). The fluctuation of policies – community development of the 1950s; sectoral development of the 1960s; and the ‘target groups approach’ of the 1970s – and its attendant institutional innovations greatly affected state-society relations (Mitra 2002, 24-26). These were eroded, as democratic institutions became more deeply rooted, while socio-economic legislation met with limited success (Mehta 1991/92, 537). Both these ‘politics of resource allocation and group identity’ within the context of ‘political society’ led to the emergence of what Kohli (1990) sees as the ‘crisis of governability’ and Weiner (1989) as ‘the Indian paradox’; later Mitra (2006) referred to it as the ‘puzzle of India’s governance’ wherein, functioning democracy exists amidst increasing political violence.

Having seen political mobilisations in the 1960s emanating from the rhetoric of change inculcated from above by the elite, in the 1980s Kothari saw them as grassroots mobilisations that failed to produce alternative forms of politics and leadership due to increasing state violence (Mehta 1991/92, 541). The result, for Kothari, was the emergence of different forms of disjuncture between the state and society (Mehta, 1991/92, 546-47). Others like Bardhan (1984) and the Rudolphs (1987), while agreeing that autonomy of the Indian state is being constrained by politically active groups, differed in their analyses of such mobilisations. While for the Rudolphs these mobilisations were unpredictable and historically contingent, for Bardhan these were systematic consequences of structural conflicts (Gupta 1989, 788-89).

However, as Weiner had shown, conflict in India cannot be fully explained by existing Marxist and secular liberal models regarding social conflicts, which shared the view that the “transformation of market results in the transformation of attitudes and identities” (Wiener 1989, 25). In India, the process of modernisation has intensified ethnic attachments. The emergence of ‘two party systems’ that necessitates coalition-building above all political differences; the role of politics in defining identities and the role of electoral politics in identity dynamics; and the federal structure of power sharing, allowed for the persistence of the ‘Indian paradox’ (ibid., 35).



Kohli (1990) argued that the absence of organisation, linking leaders to their supporters, limited the problem-solving capacity of the leaders. By doing so, he incorporated the state as a dominant actor and explored the patterns of politics that emerge from it. In the context of democratic access to state resources where entitlements are continuously negotiated and renegotiated, problems of governability arise as much from what Huntington saw as mobilisation outpacing institutionalisation, as from the ways in which mobilisation takes place (Mehta 1991/92, 540-42). Kohli saw the crisis of governability as arising from the absence of enduring political alliances, increasing policy ineffectiveness and increasing incapacity to accommodate conflicting interests without violence. Four major factors that he sees influencing the nature of political change in India are: (i) the deinstitutionalising role of national and local leaders; (ii) the impact of weak political parties; (iii) the undisciplined political mobilisation of various caste, ethnic, religious, and other types of groups; and (iv) increasing conflict between the haves and the have-nots in civil society (Kohli 1990, 387).

However, contrary to his prediction, a downwards trend was seen in the levels of collective violence/riots (his primary indicator of crisis) in the 1990s. Kohli (2001) attributed this variation to the effectiveness of the Indian democratic process. In the process he further incorporated individual and elite strategies in his calculus of disorder. With this point in mind, Mitra argues that the level of governance in India is a product of the state's ability to transform social actors into stakeholders in the main organ of body politics and the perception of sanction, welfare and trust by concerned actors (Mitra 2006, 12). Herein, governance refers to "the development of a governing style in which boundaries of the state are blurred... [wherein] governing from communitarian and policy perspectives is always an interactive process as no actor, public or private, has the knowledge or the capacity [and social control] to tackle [the problematic of governments] unilaterally" (Mitra 2006, 24).

In this context, orderly rule is critically conditional on the ability of modern institutions to "accommodate embedded values, undertake strategic reforms and maintain the difficult balance between force and persuasion in the management of law and order" (Mitra 2006, 24). At the same time the ways in which 'technologies of rule' are made into reality depends on the manner in which they are interpreted and implemented by government officials and elected representatives (Corbridge et al. 2005, 7). Enquiries into technologies of rule in India need to understand how and why various agencies of the state produce different subjects as 'poor', 'backward', 'disadvantaged', 'scheduled', etc.; how and why they propose to deal with these pathologies; and the variations in the assumptions about the capacities of state agencies, voluntary sectors and poorer individuals across policies (Corbridge et al. 2005, 51). The way government works in practice has to draw upon the sighting of the state by the poor, its own official and elected representatives and the larger developmental communities' experts (ibid., 15).

## 2.1. Methodological Implications

To be able to explore the rich negotiation, interaction, and resistance shaped by the dynamics between the image of state and the practices of the state and its multiple parts, Migdal's state-in-society model is of relevance (Migdal 2005). Most societies are a mixture of social organisations including the state, heterogeneous in terms of their forms and rules they apply, and possessing varying social control. Herein, the overall sum of authority is high, but the exercise of authority is fragmented leading to an environment of conflict. These organisations compete to provide for components of strategies of survival, thereby leading to a dynamic pattern of social change (Migdal 2005). By seeing politics in an inverted Clausewitzian manner as 'war by other means', Foucault emphasised the mobile relation between strategy and tactics to argue for the analytical precedence of the mobile, changing and contingent assemblage of regimes of government, over the resulting distribution of power and division between state and society (Dean 1999, 25-26).

Analysing regimes of government starts with the identification and examination of specific situations in which the activity of government is called into question for being a problem. It involves questioning



“how we conduct government and how we govern conduct” (Dean 1999, 27-28). By emphasising the *how*, it directs us to focus on the ‘conditions of governing’ that allow a particular practice of government to emerge, sustain and transform itself. This also involves asking what happens when we govern, or are governed, and examining the resulting power distribution influenced by capacities and liberties of various actors and agencies formed in the practice of government (Dean 1999, 28-29).

Viewing the practice of government in this light implies that it can’t be seen as an expression of a particular principle, or be reduced to a particular set of relations, or refer to a particular set of problems and functions. The set of government practices are composed of “heterogeneous elements having diverse historical trajectories, polymorphous in their internal and external relation and bearing upon a multiple and wide range of issues”. The regime of the practice of government refers to this “historically constituted assemblage that allows ... to care, cure, relieve, punish, educate, train and counsel” (Dean 1999, 29-30). The analytics of government within the governmentality approach is primarily concerned with issues of “*how* we govern and are governed within different regimes and conditions under which such regimes emerge, continue to operate and are transformed [original emphasis]” (ibid., 23).

Dean distinguishes four dimensions of this practice of government. The first dimension is characterised by ways in which certain objects are illuminated and defined while others are obscured through “architectural designs, management flow charts, sets of graphs and tables and so on”, to allow for the visualisation of the field to be governed. The second dimension focuses on *techne* of government or “[the] means, mechanisms, procedures, instruments, tactics, techniques, technologies and vocabularies by which authority is constituted and rules accomplished”. The third dimension deals with the episteme of government where the issues of concern are “forms of thought, knowledge, expertise, strategies and means of calculating or rationality employed in the practice of government ... how thought seeks to transform these practices... how practices give rise to specific forms of truth ... and how thought seeks to render particular issues, domains and problems as governable”. The fourth dimension is concerned with the forms of collective identity through which governing operates and which specific practices and programmes of government try to form (Dean 1999, 30-32).

It is this complex frame of governance in a governmentality frame that needs to be operationalised to study conflicts within India – mediated as they are by a tension between the contested yet overlapping logics of redistribution and/versus recognition on the one hand, and tensions between imperatives of governmental technologies and popular reconstitution of the polity on the other. These tensions are sites for fruitful research to understand how multiple governmentalities are formed, perpetuated, reproduced and contested.

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# Governance Structures and the Current History of Peacebuilding in India's Northeast

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## 1. Production of Norms of Governance in the Colonial Time

It would not be an exaggeration to say that modern governance structures emerged in India as part of the broader imperative of peacebuilding, simply because the society that was to be governed was ridden with conflicts and contradictions characteristic of colonial rule and thus marked with violence and an absence of social peace. Governing meant governing conflicts. India has inherited a colonial constitutional culture that does not mitigate conflicts or encourage dialogues, but gives a long rope to arbitrariness. In the post-colonial situation, available forms of self-government (franchise, limited autonomy, decentralisation, public hearings, etc.) gradually became sites of contention and another round of the perennial conflict between those who govern and those who are governed.

The colonial roots of liberal peacebuilding are important to remember because in the origins of modern governmentality, they often go unnoticed. Yet these colonial roots tell us the reason behind the government's permanent search to find the right mix of violence and persuasion, civilian mode and military mode, statistical mode and cultural mode, and representative mode and exceptional mode. They also remind us, to use Charles Tilly's (1985) famous phrase, of "war making as state making".

From the beginning, the main challenge in this specific grammar of governing a colonial country was in finding adequate forms of coping with various reactions and responses of the suppressed groups in society, who faced the problem of being ruled by an alien nation. Hence bereft of legitimacy and representativeness, sovereign power had to always find a model of governance which would inhere military efficacy, yet would retain civilian character. This sort of enigmatic character of governance produced a special type of power, perhaps to be described in Michel Foucault's words, a phenomenon "at once visible and invisible, present and hidden, ubiquitous" (1977, 213) that could not be exhausted by the nineteenth and twentieth century theories of government and peacebuilding.

Even though a government knew with reasonable certainty as to who were the rebellious, its mechanisms could not tell it: what did the recalcitrant population want? Therefore governmental reason oscillated between policies of domination and of producing consensus among the population on issues of social governance. The conquest of a nation inevitably involves issues of race, domination, war, suppression, mutiny, revolt, etc. – all these producing structures of governance. Caught in this paradox, the grammar of rule could be based on neither suppression nor full co-option. Instead it had to be based on the practices of governing conflicts, which came to be accepted as permanent features of a colonised society. Recalcitrance could not be erased; it could not be effaced. Hence it had to be controlled and governed with restraint and necessary violence. In the eyes of the government, recalcitrance was a matter of highly suspicious practices and was therefore seen as potentially dangerous. Recalcitrance was thus a matter of *conduct* that had to be governed. As we shall see in the following pages, this line of reasoning would soon lead to a twofold permanent strategy for governing the disaffected groups – one, the strategy of representation,

and two, shaping the civilian way of doing things in the same orderly way in which military affairs were conducted. Indeed, the civilian government would be based on the military model. As I have demonstrated elsewhere, the entire nineteenth century development of constitutional government in India (including enactments such as the Evidence Act, Indian Penal Code, establishment of the Governor-General's Council, Indian Criminal Procedure Code, Indian Police Act, etc.) depended at every stage or phase on a successful resolution of a conflict by armed means (see Samaddar 2007, chapter 2; also Samaddar 2008). All these built up in time certain foundations of rule where the state had to be strong – sovereignty could not be shared under any circumstances and appropriate administrative and police measures, if formulated, would work. It also meant that there was a thin boundary between punitive, suppressive measures and civilian measures of governance, which allowed conflicts to linger.

Thus, the assumption was that a suitable length of time must elapse before peacebuilding measures were initiated and that the adversary of the state had to be softened up enough through a mix of strong responses and an almost deliberate delay in addressing demands. This was the way in which all negotiations between the colonial state and the nationalist movement went. In addition, the message sent by the India Act of 1935 was that a limited grant of autonomy was the best solution, that the norms of governance should be constitutionalism and the rule of law as planks to retain stability of rule, and there was faith in the effectiveness of a policy of territorial reorganisation including methods of partition and boundary-making exercises towards reinforcing control. Finally, the colonial experiences of statecraft also resulted in the classic governmental assumption that struggles for justice were in essence inter-group conflict for parity.

The colonial history of peacekeeping, pacification (colonial origins of extra-ordinary legislations), limited franchise, techniques of negotiations, divide and rule, and finally constitutionalism, all help us to understand the core period of the development of colonial governmental techniques of maintaining peace. I am referring here to the period from the Indian Councils Act of 1909 (better known as the Morley Minto Reforms) to the passage of the Government of India Act of 1935. These techniques still act as guidelines for modern peacebuilding efforts in India.

During this period of time, there were also salient developments towards peacebuilding. First, there was the idea of the responsible government. Thus even though under the 1935 Act some measure of autonomy was granted to the provinces of British India, the Act provided final powers for the Union Government in the event of irresponsible conduct by the provincial government. People were to be responsible for their conduct – that is to say they had to behave responsibly under the rule of law and the provincial government had to discharge responsibility to the union government. This was so that the constitutional order could maintain itself and the union government had to be responsible to the King so that the liberal empire could serve its historical mission and so that the King had the mission to look after the development and welfare of the subjects until they grew into citizens. In this discriminatory history of responsibility lay the roots of liberal peacebuilding. Second, several provinces were reorganised, making territorial reorganisation a potent tool to tackle dissent. Third, direct elections were introduced as the basic premise of liberal order so that the resolution of any conflict was to be found in elections, and we can now find its echo in areas where there is conflict today. Fourth, a federal court was established and with it developed the idea of a heavenly source mandating the principles of the rule of law and responsible conduct.

## 2. Loss of Dialogic Culture and the Middle Space

One of the chief casualties of the aforementioned style of governance is the dialogic culture of society. Indian society, like all societies, has dialogic aspects in its culture of conflict resolution. However, these dialogic aspects are not fully institutionalised in governance structures. As an example, one of the main features of the conflict resolution scenario in India is peace accords, which form the middle ground in a no-war-no-peace situation. These sites of dialogue need to be thoroughly investigated because on one hand

they represent the desire for peace in society, while on the other hand they show how forms of peacemaking are governmentalised no sooner are they invented. They become the other side of a state-making agenda, if war-making is one side, and sometimes they even become the occasion for the next round of conflict. Given this background, we can see for instance how in Bihar over the years issues of land, migration, floods, access to natural resources, caste domination and indigenous people's rights have produced conflicts and how they have been handled in governmental discourses. The conflict in Bihar can be traced from the sixties onwards in this sort of *longue durée* point of view in which insurgency and pacification have been aided by counter-insurgency methods, elections and the deployment of private armies.

Government-initiated institutional sites conceal many of the dialogic practices which remain as subaltern practices of peace-making. They are like minor knowledge or insurgent knowledge of peace to always be suppressed and whose official traces are always to be erased. Therefore we have seen in India how peace campaigners in Kashmir or the Northeast have been persistently attacked and in many cases killed and removed from the scene of contention. The classic instance, however, is the fate of the Peace Mission in Nagaland after it submitted the 17 point note in 1964. In the note it talked of the impact of peace talks and ceasefire: "Today, people are returning to their normal occupation. Families are being reunited, the biggest harvest for many years has been gathered and there is a feeling of hope in Nagaland which makes every delegate engaged in the peace talk only too conscious of the tasks that are taken. In all this, it is fair to pay tribute not only to the Government of India for their humanity and imagination but also to the leaders of the Baptist Church for whom this initiative was the result of much thought and prayerful consideration of the good India and Nagaland" (NPMHR 1964). The Peace Mission further noted that differences of opinion between the Nagas and the Indian Government still remained over the legitimacy of the Naga demand for sovereign statehood, but continued dialogue over possible common ground had to continue. The Peace Mission also said that it appreciated the courage and tenacity displayed by the Naga people in their endeavour to achieve this goal. It continued by saying that the declaration, in itself, did not resolve the political issues. Therefore some appropriate meeting point had to be found where the aims and ideals of the Nagaland Federal Government could be achieved at the same time, making it possible for the Government of India to accept them within the framework of the political settlement to be mutually agreed upon. The Peace Mission offered certain suggestions, whereupon both parties unequivocally affirmed and declared that they would renounce war and violence as a means for political settlement. However, the Peace Mission proposal, following this bilateral declaration of the renunciation of war, to put all underground arms in safe custody and to withdraw all Indian Security Forces from law and order duties, could unfortunately not be implemented.

How did this happen and why did the Mission fail? According to L. Kaiso, Secretary of the Naga National Council, the third Nagaland Baptist Convention at Wokha in late January and early February 1964 was well attended by representatives from different Associations of Nagaland. The Convention had unanimously passed a resolution to set up a Peace Mission to find out ways and means to restore peace and normality as well as to find a peaceful solution of the Indo-Naga conflict. Following this resolution, a Nagaland Peace Mission was set up. Concerned church leaders of Nagaland had persuaded the Government of India to relax the Indian Army operation for 8 days in 4 villages. As a result, members of the Peace Mission walked through jungle paths and rain and reached Zeliangrong Region to meet the leaders of the Federal Government of Nagaland. Together they discussed ways and means to bring about an Indo-Naga cease-fire. As a consequence of the initiative, negotiations began and a Cessation of Hostilities was announced on 6 September 1964. Peace talks commenced on 23 September 1964, first at Chedema village in the Angami Region. However, in the sixth round of peace talks held in Delhi in October 1967, the discussion between the two Prime Ministers of India and the Federal Government of Nagaland reached a deadlock. Following the deadlock the atmosphere in Naga areas became uneasy. Suspicion between the two sides and between the moderates and the hardliners increased, resulting in clashes, deaths and individual killings. Later the Indian Government unilaterally abrogated the Indo-Naga cease-fire in August 1972, in violation of its own commitment. Meanwhile Reverend Scott, one of the members of the Peace Mission, was forced to return



to England, and the Peace Mission ended in 1966.<sup>1</sup> Ineffective dialogues have continued over decades, resulting at times in ceasefires. But even if a ceasefire has materialised, peace has not returned and conflict remains perennial.

Maintaining middle space and engineering ways of continuing dialogues on justice are the two most challenging tasks of peacebuilding, because the fate of these determines the shape of the peace to come. They are also challenging because while these tasks represent the subaltern desire for peace with justice, at the same time they confront formidable obstructions in the form of governmental techniques of negotiations that combine threats, coercion and persuasion. Governmental techniques of peacebuilding are based on the idea of a war-peace continuum. Therefore the logic of the continuum most of the time prevents any definitive turn towards peace through acknowledging the incipient demands for justice that had given rise to conflict in the first place. Dialogues emerge as significant moments in this continuum.

The governmental logic of treating war and peace as a continuum and thus ignoring issues of justice becomes clearer when studied in the context of the northeast, which could be considered a laboratory in which counter-insurgency or pacification measures built on this logic are first conceived and tested. One can get a sense of this by having an overview of the series of governing measures – territorial reorganisation, peace accords, limited autonomy to assertive groups, protracted ceasefire negotiations, regrouping of villages, extensive privatisation, money laundering and elections held at gunpoint. These are accompanied by rational modes of governance meaning mainly the expansion of banking, the enlargement of government offices with nothing to govern, recruitment in army and paramilitary services, ethnic management, anti-migrant measures, border policing of the most virulent type and allowing the looting of natural resources such as timber, etc. These measures have developed over the years and here we can notice their significance in terms of the sociology of peace and peacebuilding.

### 3. Pacification, Peacebuilding and Phases of Insurgency

With the previous paragraphs in mind, one can say that the Northeast has already seen two phases of insurgency and their 'resolution'. The first phase started in 1947 and ended roughly in 1975 with the Shillong Accord. The second phase, which started roughly in 1979-80 (the United Liberation Front of Asom was born in 1979 and the National Socialist Council of Nagaland in 1980<sup>2</sup>) when it began spreading in many places, has now ended. In the development of this science there is a mix of global trends and local particularities. For instance, the policies of development aimed towards curbing social unrest are built around global models. Similarly, the restoration of government machinery also has a global model, though it has been a huge failure globally. The discourse of anti-terrorism again is a global discourse. Even thirty years ago, governments used to acknowledge poverty, inequality and injustice as causes of conflicts. Now all insurgents are terrorists, all agitators are enemies of development and all dissenters are the enemies of national integration. In this sense governance policies today carry the mark of the globalisation of politics. Yet it is also true that many of the peacebuilding measures are half concessions to local demands for democracy and an end to authoritarian governance. Civil societies in the conflict areas network with each other, they learn from each other; rebellions learn as well and alternative policies of friendship, too, are a mark of time. Governments rarely learn from dissent.

In the first phase of the conflict in the Northeast, territorial reorganisation, the granting of statehood, and the introduction of the peace accord model (albeit with parallel military operations) resulted in greater granting of autonomy. Yet more important was the way in which each major military operation was followed by major administrative measures of territorial reorganisation, regrouping of villages, introduction of

<sup>1</sup> For information on the second phase of the Naga peace process, see Samaddar 2004, chapter 6, "Governing through Peace Accords".

<sup>2</sup> To read more about the history of conflict between the ULFA or the United Liberation Front of Assam, see Das 1994 and Bhaumik 2009.



*panchayati raj*, etc. In the second phase, various territorial autonomies were created along ethnic lines during the last two decades. Likewise new forms of local volunteer groups and vigilante armies were raised (principally in Assam and Tripura). In addition, there was a continuance of the regrouping of villages, and the commercialisation of forestry alongside the development of a new middle class in the Northeast who has a different stake in the existing social order. It was also in this period that there was greater coordination of both military measures and governance in different states of the Northeast. All these have resulted in time in a stronger civilian administration which has a stake in the continuing unrest that will bring in money for it, while the insurgent *underground* (we are speaking of a phenomenon only and not any particular movement) has to co-live with civilian life and governance, thus developing multiple ties.

In addition, there were three more developments taking place. First, the strategy called “Look East Policy” aimed at opening up the Northeast to the greater commercial interests which connect India to the Southeast of Asia (Baruah 2010). Second, the opening of villages and far flung areas through new institutions (schools, colleges, banks, offices, communication networks) and thirdly, the policy of encouraging ethnic homelands, resulting in communal strife, anti-migrant measures, and ethnic policing. If the first phase of insurgency was thus controlled and pacified through direct coercive methods, the second phase has been controlled by ripping the region apart from within. Difference is now the organising norm of the political form. With the insularity of the Northeast gone, we shall probably wait for the next phase of unrest to begin, because while peace has returned, governance has failed to ensure justice. Yet, if it is true that what we face here is a situation of aporia, that is to say, a cycle of production of nativeness–linkages–immigration–nationalism–ethnicity–violence–law–linkages–immigration–nativeness–nationalism, it is also true that they are contentions that prise open the situation again and again.

To make sense of the current situation, we have to consider two sets of contemporary developments – one dealing with the political economy of resources and the other reflecting a security-oriented thinking – and how these sets of developments interrelate. As we all know, the issue of resources began with colonial trade of tea and timber. Besides the British-owned tea estates, gradually other estates came to be owned by various Indian groups and the Assamese groups. The rest of the Assamese bourgeoisie today consists of contractors, transporters, traders and people engaged in the hotel industry and real estate business, besides engaging in liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) distribution or the timber trade. While the revenue generating capacity of states in the Northeast has been extremely weak, with the entire region lagging behind the rest of the country in industrial growth, power supply, fertiliser consumption, credit flow, communication facilities and transport networks, the political class survives with central aid, with which it makes its nation. Besides public rent-seeking activities, private rent-seeking continues unabated; in some cases the percentage of the earnings given out as rent payments to private parties is as high as 25 percent.<sup>3</sup> We have thus an absolutely combustible combination: renter state, a parasite political class, massive mass discontent, weak or nil growth and the absence of any appropriate policy of local development and resource generation and utilisation – with the immigrants being seen as the cause of all miseries.

The region has a population of about 40 million, with 90 percent living in rural areas, agriculture being the primary occupation of 78 percent of the population. Yet 25 percent of the total food grain consumed in this region is imported from outside. Agro-sector reform is almost nil, while some of the big public sector enterprises marked as promising global players operate in this region. Yet, notwithstanding the presence of some of the richest public sector companies in this region, the region’s incapacity to generate revenue is stark – for instance, although Assam produces commodities such as tea, plywood, crude oil and jute, it gets only 5 percent of Rs. 700 crores’ (€102 million) worth of plywood per year, and 2 percent of tea sold through the Guwahati Tea Auction Centre. Even for the basics of flood control, the state has to depend on the centre, while its borrowing capacity decreases day by day. Out of the total tax of Rs. 30,000 crores (€4.3 billion) collected from the oil sector from 1984-1991, Rs. 26,000 crores (€3.8 billion) were deposited to the

<sup>3</sup> These figures are from the various reports of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) with respect to these states, reproduced in Das 1998.

Consolidated Fund of India. Thus, despite a satisfactory credit-deposit ratio (of commercial banks) in states like Tripura (61 percent), Manipur (71 percent), and Assam (49 percent) the credit disbursed can hardly be properly utilised in this context. The indicators relating to small-scale industrial units and manufacturing units present an equally dismal picture (Sikdar and Bhoral 1998).

The level of urbanisation in the region is quite low – only 14 percent of the population lives in towns, while population density has increased from 57 per square kilometre in 1961 to 123 in 1991. The pressure on land has grown, and the decadal population growth rate in all the states of the region has been higher than the national average, while non-agricultural productive activity has almost remained at the same level. At the same time, the mode of shifting agriculture has faced crisis. Shifting agriculture was typical for a subsistence economy, which meant collective management of forest-land. While shifting agriculture has declined, or been made impossible in a market set up, settled cultivation has also not improved. In short, the principal issue of sustainability of resource use is now in question in the entire region. Clearly the issue of sustainability of resources, contrary to the popular notion of depending on controlling immigration, is wider and more complicated.<sup>4</sup> It presents a blocked scenario which is marked by very little formal trade and economic linkages. Developed basically in recent history as what can be called an economy of “a market along the foothills”, which bears the characteristics of an extraction economy built around coal and limestone, and a plantation economy built around tea and timber, the entire scenario represents today what Dietmar Rothermund (1978) had termed long back “an enclave economy”.

In the construction of the Umiu hydroelectric project a large number of Khasis were displaced without any chance of resettlement. Later on, similar projects caused massive displacements in Chandrapur, Namrup and Bongaigaon in Assam, as well as in Tripura. Similarly, the oil industry did not benefit the ousted population in Duliajan, Noonmati, Bongaigaon, Digboi or Nazira. Paper mills were built in the late seventies of the last century in Nowgaon and Cachar, land pressure increased and the battle over resources like land became ferocious, leading at times to a bloodbath, as in Nellie in 1983. Karbi indigenous people were similarly affected. And the construction of an Indian Institute of Technology campus in North Guwahati caused the displacement of 35,000 people. The media (*Amar Asom*, 2 September 2001) reported that out of the central grant of 10.3 crores of rupees (€1.5 million) to the state government to pay compensation, only 4.3 crores of rupees (€629,402) reached the people. If the Tipaimukhi multi-purpose project comes off in Manipur, with an estimated cost of Rs. 2899 crores (€424 million at the 1995 price level), it will fully submerge 16 villages and partly submerge 51 villages affecting 15,000 people. The entire Tipaimukhi development plan presents in a condensed form the conflicts between the hill and the valley, state administration and the indigenous communities, and the ideology of development and the requirement of survival.<sup>5</sup> Similar development awaits Arunachal Pradesh with the two proposals of Siang dam and the Subansiri hydroelectric project. Similarly in North Bengal, contemporary observers have noted how dispossession of resources and displacement have played a crucial role in the making of a political community and the movement for its claims (Hazarika 2002). The battle for resources has pitted communities against the state, the army against the people, one community against another and in general has reconstructed relations.

The enclave economy has also produced distinct politics of security, where immigrants quickly became the symbols of insecurity. Therefore it should not astonish us that a discourse of security today co-exists with the discourse of retarded economy, internal colonialism and development. Indeed, political economy (that is the political discourse of economy or politics of economy) and politics of security have always gone hand in hand. This situation produces a strange combination of what we can call the architecture of macro-security with molecular insecurity or micro-insecurity.

<sup>4</sup> All figures relating to human development taken from Ganguly (1996, 29-53); it is noteworthy that Ganguly does not cite immigration as an obstructing factor in achieving the goal of sustainable human development in the region.

<sup>5</sup> For details on displacement due to development activities, see Hussain 2002, Hussain 2000 and Ruiz 2000.

## 4. Conclusion

To summarise: firstly, the colonial foundations of governance structures for peacebuilding are still intact, though these foundations have been reinforced and reshaped by the post-colonial experiences of democracy. Secondly, conflicts and insurgencies do not continue in the same way over time and the study of the various phases is important. Thirdly, the mutation of the form of conflict depends on governmental measures and the responses to these measures, and the mutation also depends on the condition of the middle spaces in conflict. Fourthly, the governmental logic of peacebuilding at times bears the imprint of the popular demands for peace and justice. Contradictions among the people are real and cannot be glossed over by a synthetic version of politics, since they are often marked by collective violence. Moreover, the discourse of security can be seen as the link between the two types of politics that co-exist: the nation form and the homeland form. And finally, the governmental logic of peacebuilding runs counter to the phenomenon of dialogic peace and justice, and overall security reinforces ‘molecular insecurity’, which leaves us with the question of how to build a model of ‘molecular security’?

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# Interaction between Internal and External Governance Initiatives in Bosnia and Herzegovina

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Post-war Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH) has seen the involvement of many international actors, be it intergovernmental organisations, non-governmental organisations, citizens' associations, states, companies or educational institutions. Given the plethora of actors present, the number of external governance initiatives in BiH has been vast and the scope diverse. Inevitably, this not only makes one aware of the multiplicity and diversity of governance initiatives that fall within the category one identifies as 'external', but it also demonstrates the necessity of distinguishing between the different types of 'external' governance initiatives. Similarly, in a country with a complex governing structure and a great number of non-governmental organisations, citizens' associations and foundations, the diversity and hence the need to distinguish is also present within the 'category' of 'internal' governance initiatives.

Looking at both 'external' and 'internal' governance initiatives, this paper aims to address the question of whether and how internal and external governance initiatives interact and how conceptualised norms of peacebuilding (such as the liberal peace framework, etc.) either merge with or compete with one another against the background of political conflict and socio-economic diversity in BiH.

In the context of this paper, the term 'governance' is based on the assumption that the state authority is fragmented and sovereignty is distributed among actors and initiatives below and above the state as well. These might include local and municipal governments, international organisations, NGOs (both national and international). Most importantly, however, 'governance' as understood here encourages the engagement of civil society actors in the governing of the society.

There are two important caveats that ought to be kept in mind and that add to the uniqueness of the BiH case. The long and devastating war in BiH was at last settled with the General Framework Agreement for Peace, commonly referred to as the Dayton Agreement, initialled at the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio on 21 November 1995, and signed in Paris on 14 December 1995. According to Annex IV of the Agreement, which is the Constitution of BiH, the country is composed of two entities, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska, and Brcko District, which has a special status. At the same time, in the newly created state structures in BiH, as laid down in Annex X of the Dayton Agreement, the Office of the High Representative (OHR) is to act as the Agreement's guarantor and the one to facilitate the signatories' efforts to implement the peace agreement. The High Representative (HR) is appointed by the international community, i.e. the Peace Implementation Council (PIC), and is meant to be a senior foreign diplomat (coming from an EU country) able to settle disputes. Moreover, the HR is double-hatted, acting both as a High Representative and an EU Special Representative (EUSR). As stipulated in Article II.9 of Annex X of the Agreement, the HR has no authority over any military or police forces, but oversees solely the implementation of the civilian aspects of the Agreement.

What makes the role of the OHR so critical in the governing of the BiH society is that it has been endowed with executive powers. Namely, with the situation remaining unstable and calls for violence being broadcast on public media, the PIC authorised the HR in May 1997 to stop these incitations – a decision that led to a surprisingly successful handling of the Republika Srpska public television broadcast. This success



led to the PIC handing “new powers [to the HR] in the crucial areas of institutional reform, substantial legislation, and the personnel of public office,” for the sake of implementing the Dayton Agreement (Knaus and Martin 2003, 64). It is worth noting that the EU military mission to BiH, EUFOR Althea, charged with overseeing the implementation of the military aspects of the Dayton Agreement, also has certain executive powers, although its role in the governing of the BiH society is significantly less prominent than the OHR.

Second, and parallel to this, BiH is one of the aspirant countries for EU membership. In June 2003 at its Thessaloniki summit, the European Council reiterated its “unequivocal support to the European perspective of the Western Balkan countries,” and its vision that “[t]he future of the Balkans is within the European Union” (EU-Western Balkans Summit 2003, 2). With BiH being part of the Western Balkans, the country’s membership ambitions are not unfounded. This, along with the overwhelming support that the EU membership aspirations receive from the public and from politicians across parties, boosts the EU agenda in BiH to one of the country’s top priorities. That said, with the leverage the Union has, it makes BiH the EU’s Sinatra case in the field of reform (if it can’t make it there, it can’t make it anywhere), and with that in governance and conflict resolution as well.

Finally, a characteristic that is worth emphasising when it comes to some of the assumptions most of the external governance initiatives in BiH were conceived on, is the mutual exclusiveness of democracy and nationalism.

## 1. Three Types of Governance Initiative Interaction

As noted above, the facets of both the ‘internal’ and the ‘external’ governance actors are innumerable. To name but a few, aside of the aforementioned EUFOR, the presence of the EU in the country is embodied in several other forms, including the EU Delegation and the EU Police Mission. The United Nations (UN) has also been present through its various agencies, such as the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the UN Development Programme, the UN Children’s Fund, as well as the UN Mission to BiH. In addition, there are numerous embassies and other bilateral initiatives operating in the country, as well as many organisations and associations dealing with issues ranging from humanitarian to human rights, development, sport, education, business, etc. The wide range of foreign foundations and donors only adds to this crowded landscape of ‘external’ governance actors.

When it comes to the ‘internal’ governance actors, the situation is equally intricate. Starting with the governing structures, as noted above, the country is formed of two entities, the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Republika Srpska, and the Brcko District, which has a special status. Furthermore, the Federation is divided into ten cantons, with the entire territory of BiH also being organised in municipalities. Each of these levels has its own governing bodies, which makes for a total of 14 governments and an equal number of parliaments, as well as 150 ministers (Partos 2005). Outside these structures, countless non-governmental organisations and citizens’ associations have been formed in the period after the war. In addition, although few in number, some businesses have also been active in taking the lead in different governance initiatives.

Given these broad parameters within which the interaction between different governance initiatives is to be analysed, three types of interaction occur: (1) the interaction between ‘internal’ and ‘external’ governance initiatives, (2) the interaction between ‘external’ and ‘external’ governance initiatives, and (3) the interaction between ‘internal’ and ‘internal’ governance initiatives. Each of these will be zeroed in on individually.

### 1.1. Internal-External

Even though a distinction was made above between the ‘internal’ and ‘external’ governance actors, when it comes to the actual initiatives, the boundary is often blurred. Not only does it happen that, for instance, the

governing bodies of the different forms of civil society are composed of both local and foreign nationals, but so too is their funding. It is precisely the funding that often determines the actual activities and initiatives the organisations take. Namely, it is common practice for the civil society actors to plan activities with the goal of targeting a specific call for applications, where the donors have specifically defined the kind of initiatives that can be supported. In these cases, it becomes increasingly difficult to classify the governance initiative in either one of the two categories. Moreover, various foundations, such as the Open Society Institute, the Konrad Adenauer and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, have established local offices, which are led by locals and whose activities are planned and implemented by locals, but nonetheless, the overall activity of each and every local office is subjected to the goals set by the international headquarters of the foundation.

Beyond the blurred boundary between ‘internal’ and ‘external’ in the civil society sector, the same is true, although to a lesser degree, in the government sector. As mentioned before, one, if not the only one, of the goals that most political parties have in common across party lines is the EU membership. To that end, many of the initiatives undertaken by the elected representatives follow the directions of Brussels in bringing the country closer to the EU. In this instance, while the overall goal comes from within, the specifics of how to reach that goal are external.

Turning to the outcomes of this ‘internal-external’ interaction, two scenarios are possible. One is that of ‘cooperation’, when the ‘external’ initiative is accepted as dominant, be it in its overall goal or the specific activities leading up to it. The other scenario is that of ‘conflict’ between the ‘internal’ and the ‘external’ initiative, in which case, there are two possible outcomes. The obvious option is for the initiatives to take place side by side, or turning a deaf ear to each other. This, of course, is possible solely if the two are not dependent on each other, which is rarely the case. The second, and more likely, option is that of a ‘hybrid’ outcome, when the initiatives that are to a certain extent determined by external actors are adjusted and modified in their implementation, with the reality on the ground and the locals’ interests also factoring in.

## 1.2. External-External

When it comes to the ‘external’ governance initiatives, even when they are somewhat clearly demarcated, things are still not straightforward. In the case of foreign governance actors, one ought to differentiate between the political, or the level of high politics and decision making, and the implementation level, i.e. those involved in carrying out the different activities. In the case of BiH, this can often point to the distinction between the internationals located in the capitals of both entities, and their colleagues in the field offices around the country. It is usually inevitable for the governance initiatives in the same field to interact at the implementation level. Interviews in the field have shown that even in cases when the initiatives diverge at the political level, there is often a high degree of cooperation on the implementation level.

Another mode of interaction between ‘external’ governance initiatives is when they converge at the ideological level and the overarching goal, yet the actual activities and visions of how to achieve that goal differ. In these cases, when there is a ‘conflict’ between ‘external’ governance actors and/or initiatives, an opportunity arises for the local actors to step up. Such an instance in recent BiH political life relates to the initiative by the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council (PIC), which is the body overseeing the work of the OHR, to close the OHR in foreseeable future. In order for this to happen, the Steering Board established five objectives and two conditions that have to be met. The five objectives are: “(1) acceptable and sustainable resolution of the issue of apportionment of property between State and other levels of government, (2) acceptable and sustainable resolution of defense property, (3) completion of the Brcko Final Award, (4) fiscal sustainability (promoted through an agreement on a permanent ITA co-efficient methodology and establishment of a National Fiscal Council), (5) entrenchment of the rule of law (demonstrated through Adoption of National War Crimes Strategy, passage of Law on Aliens and Asylum, and adoption of National Justice Sector Reform Strategy)” (Steering Board of PIC 2008). The two conditions outlined are: (1) signing of

the Stabilisation and Association Agreement with the European Union, and (2) a positive assessment of the situation in the country by the Steering Board based on full compliance with the Dayton Peace Agreement.

At the same time, however, parallel to the efforts of meeting those objectives and conditions, the EU members of the Steering Board had repeatedly emphasised that an EU membership application by BiH could not be considered as long as the OHR existed or, as it was later framed, until the transition of the OHR to a reinforced EU presence had been decided. This was used by the political elites in Republika Srpska to label the OHR as an obstacle to European integration and to oppose suggested decisions and policies coming from the OHR. A change in such approach by the EU was noted in the autumn of 2010, when the European Commission progress report, unlike on previous occasions, did not make the aforementioned link between the closure/transition of the OHR and the EU membership of BiH. Similarly, no such reference could be found in the December 2010 PIC Steering Board communiqué. Nevertheless, the change of rhetoric by the EU has not led to change of rhetoric in Republika Srpska when it comes to the role of the OHR in the Euro-Atlantic aspirations of BiH (Dodik 2011). The politicians of Republika Srpska have not failed to grasp the opportunity presented by clashing foreign initiatives to advance their own agenda.

### 1.3. Internal-Internal

In the case of interaction between ‘internal’ governance actors and initiatives, one has to consider both the interaction at different governmental levels, as well as that between the state and the non-state actors.

In the first case, whether the initiatives diverge or converge depends to a large extent on which political party, as well as which nationality, the decision-makers belong to. Similarly, given the demographics of the country, it also depends on the geographical area where the initiative is taking place. At the same time, even in the cases of the same initiative being conducted at the state and the entity level, the interpretation usually differs and might cause ‘conflict’ at, for instance, municipality levels.

The interaction between initiatives of state and non-state actors, on the other hand, is one that is probably common for most transition countries. Namely, while it is usually assumed that the civil society acts as the one holding the governing structures accountable, in the case of BiH, the civil society in the post-war period has not entirely lived up to such a role. To that end, the civil society governance initiatives do not affect the government or its initiatives to any significant degree. When the state and non-state actors (including business) do, however, affect each other’s initiatives is when there is an interest in doing so, such as resources, publicity, or scoring points with the international donors. In the case of the government, this is usually done through consultations with the civil or the business sector, while in the case of the non-state actors, it is often determined by the various funds or tenders available.

## 2. Conclusion

This paper has outlined the way in which internal and external governance initiatives interact in post-war Bosnia-Herzegovina. It has explained the unique relationship between BiH and the international community, which plays a significant role in the governing of the country. However, understanding ‘governance’ beyond the mere framework of governing structures, the paper has explored the line between what would be commonly understood as ‘internal’ and ‘external’ governance initiatives, and how they complement or contradict each other. Furthermore, it has also examined the interaction between the external and the internal governance initiatives, shedding light on several possible outcomes of such interaction.

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# Reflections on the CORE Workshop: The Potential of Norms for Conflict Transformation

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This final paper revisits some of the crucial points raised in the preceding papers (and the presentations during the workshop on which they are based) in an attempt to critically reflect on the commonalities and differences in the socio-cultural and political premises of European and Indian governance/conflict resolution initiatives. This involves asking a lot of open-ended questions, which the CORE project will, in its due course, attempt to answer.

The European and Indian conflicts chosen for the project's case studies (Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), Bihar, Cyprus, Georgia, Jammu and Kashmir, and Northeast India) have very different historical backgrounds and socio-cultural and political contexts. This is indeed one of the more intriguing aspects of the entire project. Nevertheless, these differences became all the more evident during the workshop and were continuously emphasised in the discussions throughout the day.<sup>1</sup>

In particular, the socio-cultural and political premises from which the project partners are working vary dramatically between the European and Indian contexts. Furthermore, there are fundamental differences in the conflicts themselves, which affect the conflict resolution initiatives being implemented within these conflict situations. Although all the conflicts are unique and are therefore difficult to compare, in general, the conflicts in Europe have much more in common with each other than they do with the conflicts in India, as is the case the other way around.

One of the most striking differences between the European conflicts chosen for the CORE project and those taking place on the Indian subcontinent is the marked absence of actual violence in the European conflicts. Such conflicts are often referred to as 'frozen' or 'contained'. The principal issues currently being addressed with regard to the conflicts in BiH, Cyprus, and Georgia are those of reconciliation, transitional justice, socio-economic development and final status – reunification or recognition of independence (Georgia and Cyprus) and accession to the European Union (BiH). In essence, these are issues that are generally confronted *after* a conflict has been resolved. In contrast, the three case-study conflicts in India can all be classified as low-intensity violent conflicts, which are responsible for thousands of deaths each year.<sup>2</sup> With this in mind, the conflict resolution initiatives that are implemented in each conflict setting will differ dramatically, perhaps not in the ultimate aim of the initiative, but certainly in terms of the context and background in which the initiatives are designed and implemented. For instance, a third-party mediation initiative may have the same goal regardless of the status of the conflict (bringing the opposing sides to the negotiating table), but the implementation of the initiative will vary greatly depending on whether the two sides are at peace or at war.

Another prominent difference between the conflicts in India and Europe and the resultant conflict resolution and peacebuilding initiatives is the level of international involvement. Without exception, the

<sup>1</sup> For examples of this, see the discussions around norms and hybridisation in Anna Bernhard's paper (Pg. 5-11)

<sup>2</sup> In 2008, the conflict in Kashmir alone was responsible for 541 deaths, while the conflict with the Naxalites was responsible for 717 fatalities. In Manipur and Assam in Northeast India, there were a combined 768 deaths in 2008 and in Nagaland 265 fatalities in 2007 alone. All figures taken from the PRIO Battle Deaths Dataset, 1946-2008.



European Union plays a very large role in the three European conflicts, albeit in three very different ways. As the European Union rarely speaks with one voice regarding these conflicts, its involvement in all three of them is complex at best and the EU can therefore not always be considered just one actor. Furthermore, the USA is very much involved with these conflicts as well as Russia (Georgia) and Turkey (Cyprus). Add to this the international organisations present in these regions (OSCE, NATO, World Bank, UN agencies) and the various INGOs who are involved in conflict resolution and development initiatives, and the high level of international engagement becomes clear. The conflicts in India, in contrast, are strictly internal affairs. Indeed, it was remarked at the workshop that the Indian political establishment is not interested in what ‘outsiders’ have to say with regard to their internal conflicts. As knowledge and analysis of these conflicts could tarnish India’s international reputation as a growing economic and democratic world power, these conflicts are intentionally kept out of the international spotlight.<sup>3</sup> These conflicts are also thus excluded from the global ‘peacebuilding radar’, as talk of international intervention or peacebuilding support is unacceptable to the Indian state.

One of the principal aims of the CORE project is to compare how the “emerging EU peacebuilding framework [...] compares with regional strategies aimed at dealing with conflict on and around the Indian subcontinent”.<sup>4</sup> But in light of the information above, one could be forgiven for asking the question: Is a comparison of conflict resolution initiatives in these six conflicts feasible? And if it is feasible, what will be the benefit of such a comparison? One could answer that it should be seen as an opportunity to constructively shed light on these differences and then let the experiences of conflict resolution in one conflict inform approaches in the other conflicts, by arguing for example, ‘If this particular initiative works in Bihar, why not try it in Cyprus?’ Although attempting such a transfer of initiatives may have limited success, considering the different (socio-political) backgrounds of the conflicts, it nevertheless could prove to be beneficial, as new ideas for conflict resolution can be developed and transferred, leading to the sustainable resolution of conflicts. Furthermore, what deserves to be investigated to perhaps a greater extent are the commonalities of the conflict resolution and peacebuilding initiatives in these six conflicts *in spite of* the marked differences. Here, it may be possible to find commonalities that have gone previously unnoticed, for instance, similar approaches that are put to use successfully in conflicts in very different parts of the world. Such discoveries could certainly help the international community and national governments be more successful and efficient in transforming violent conflicts. Also worth investigating is the importance of the various contexts in shaping decision-making processes. Does the context of the conflict play a decisive role in the development and implementation of initiatives, or it is generally accepted (as is understood in the theory of liberal peace) that the context should play a small role, if any at all? Finally, although the CORE project’s title carries the term ‘conflict resolution’, what the project documents indicate and what the project partners often stress is ‘conflict transformation’ – the more long-term and process-oriented term that seeks to ‘transform’ conflicts into positive social change. To find the scope for doing so in our case studies is another crucial point that needs to be raised and re-raised in every phase of this project.

## 1. Norms

In the first presentation of the workshop, Anna Bernhard, with her discussion on norms, set the stage for the presentations that followed. This was a natural set-up, because the diagram she provided attempted to map the particular governance initiatives and the underlying norms that the workshop participants had provided in advance. Norms are crucial in shaping socio-cultural and political premises, which in turn determine initiatives of peacebuilding and conflict resolution, and this is what all the contributions to this

<sup>3</sup> While it is true that the Kashmir conflict has in the past sporadically stirred the international community, the Naxalite conflict in Bihar and Jharkhand was recently dubbed “India’s Silent War” (Al Jazeera 2011)

<sup>4</sup> CORE THEME SSH.2010.4.2-1. Part B, Description of Work, Pg. 2.

Occasional Paper have, one way or the other, alluded to.

What was interesting during the workshop was the strong discomfort of the Indian participants with the *Western* way of naming, categorising and depicting norms (see Bernhard's 'Discussion' sub-section on page 8), and especially with the claim that politically determined norms like dignity and justice are not clearly classifiable within the three categories of local/global/hybrid. This raises the question of why the same was not argued by the partners from the European institutes – aren't the concepts of dignity and justice considered universal, although perhaps with different leverages?

As suggested during the workshop, in terms of norms, it may be better to use 'overarching' instead of 'global'. 'Global' is not a homogenous concept around the globe – the perception of global from a Middle Eastern point of view, for example, could be very different from a North American one. By using 'overarching' however, we could have the leeway towards some neutrality. It was also agreed upon that instead of using 'hybrid' as a category, it may make more sense to focus on the *hybridisation process* of norms. Since, in effect, both local and overarching norms tend to become hybridised one way or the other, we cannot achieve anything useful by simply categorising a norm as hybrid. Leaving the two broader and less interchangeable categories of local and overarching as is, we can look at the remaining collection of norms not in situ but rather as they have evolved through a process of hybridisation.

However, the real concern is that given the plethora of norm-determined initiatives to resolve conflict (not only in the CORE project's case studies but in all conflicts worldwide), the question remains as to why, with so many tools at our disposal, conflicts still remain untransformed.<sup>5</sup> The clue lies in the fact that in all these conflicts there has been, and is, a tendency to 'resolve' or 'manage' them; although, as mentioned earlier, real social and structural change or 'transformation' is the broader goal. Two important questions could thus be raised, as we reflect on the contributions to this Occasional Paper: (i) How well do norms lend themselves to conflict transformation? (ii) Can norms be transformed as well to allow space for this? A further related question posed by Sandra Pogodda during the workshop was "who evaluates changing norms"? The difficulty of answering this question lies in the fact that the hybridisation of norms takes place at different levels, and while for some overarching norms it may be easier to single out actor(s) who guide the hybridisation process, for most other norms it is more of a natural social process, which, because of its complexity, cannot be easily evaluated.

## 2. Economic Liberalism and Development

In her paper Bernhard ponders if modernity and economic liberalism are the overarching norms that may have determined the BiH governance initiative of funding local banks with the ultimate goal of human development and poverty reduction. In Georgia, as Nona Mikhelidze's presentation showed, we see a similar trend of offering financial compensation for victims of the 1991-92 conflict, financial support for the Ossetian media, and other economic reforms. What the political premises are, however, behind Georgia's apparently liberal initiatives remains unclear. However, as Liana Kvarchelia (2011) reasons, Georgia's approach has been a "relatively utilitarian one dominated by short and medium-term goals" where "conflict transformation [is not] a priority". The EU plays a similar role in these conflict contexts, and this will be reflected upon in a later section.

India seems to be no different in its economic liberalism, where backward states are heavily endowed with special economic packages. This initiative is what Sumona DasGupta aptly describes in her paper as

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5 Poetically speaking, we are tempted to quote Emmanuel Jal, a peace activist and ex-child soldier from South Sudan, who in his rap song "We Want Peace", asks this very question (and much more) with style and strength:

*"Now we can send mankind to the moon  
And we can reach to the bottom of the sea  
That's why I swear to God it baffles me  
That we cannot end wars and bring peace"*

the Indian elite's "persuasive prong" of governance, which as a short-term amelioration strategy looks democratic, but has no transformative essence. As was quite often echoed during the workshop, the Indian way of resolving conflicts is indeed through 'development' (as is true for a majority of the conflict-laden countries in the world). DasGupta's presentation and the ensuing discussion also criticised the so called "all-India development" strategy which is seen by the elites as a cure-all for conflicts, but because of valid reasons, backfires. The elite policy makers may sincerely believe that "a lakh [100,000] jobs in Kashmir will change the mental make-up or the mind-set of the people",<sup>6</sup> but as DasGupta criticised, this reductionist approach unintentionally sidelines larger issues of justice and dignity. So, here we see two sets of norms colliding with each other, apparently leaving no room for transformation. Normatively speaking, the norms of justice and dignity as shared by a mass of people should weigh more than imported norms of economic liberalism as shared by a handful of elites. Thinking in terms of governance strategies, it would perhaps be more intuitive (and hopefully successful) to transform the latter to be more conducive to the former.

### 3. Socio-Cultural Sensitivity

The four most pressing socio-cultural issues almost always at stake in conflicts are identity, dignity, rights and justice. These are simultaneously political issues. In all of the CORE project's case studies, they are spelled out profoundly, although the backgrounds may be different. The liberal peacebuilding framework often shows inadequate concern for the local context, traditions and cultures in conflict areas. Elida Jacobsen and Kristoffer Lidén's paper about theoretical challenges for assessing socio-cultural sensitivity in governance and conflict resolution raises this concern.

In practice, this inadequacy is certainly not as dominant in the European cases as it is in the Indian cases, but it is nevertheless problematic. Stavrevska stated in her presentation that many of the (conflict resolution) initiatives in BiH disregard the complexity of the conflict, and this diversity of social, cultural and ethnic backgrounds is among the reasons for this complexity. In the Georgian case, as Mikhelidze's paper cites, the government's initiative of offering unconditional protection for the self-determination of Abkhazia and South Ossetia does show respect for cultural and ethnic identity. A further example is Georgia's recognition of Ossetian as an official language. However, we must put these relatively new initiatives into perspective. Had the Georgian government been successful in reclaiming Abkhazia and South Ossetia militarily, would it have been so generous in offering self-determination? Or is this newfound socio-cultural sensitivity simply a consequence of the realisation that military success is highly unlikely? If this is the case, how legitimate and trustworthy is such sensitivity? Moreover, if such initiatives are not really genuine, how can they be sustainable? Georgia's inclination post-2008 conflict towards soft power (or as Mikhelidze muses 'neo-liberal') strategies is clearly more in line with the wishes of the European Union, but it remains to be seen if such a sudden shift will be regarded as genuine and if the strategy will be ultimately successful.

India, with a liberal mode of governance, has carried out certain initiatives which seem at first to defy the above mentioned inadequacy in the framework for liberal peace. We see in Bernhard's paper how the PESA Act recognises tribal cultures and traditions and seeks to promote participation and empowerment, even if the implementation of this initiative leaves much to be desired. However, in the highly militarised zones of the northeast, in Jammu and Kashmir, and in areas of Naxalite insurgency, the state's liberal mode changes face. As DasGupta's paper tells us, the most basic grievances around identity, dignity, rights and justice are continuously overlooked by the state. The special legislations seriously threaten the human condition of the populace in these regions. This is one strong commonality in all three Indian cases.

Indeed, these issues of justice and dignity were mentioned several times during the workshop with specific reference to the conflicts in India and how the various initiatives on the part of the Indian

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6 During the workshop, DasGupta quoted the Indian Prime Minister's speech in parliament in February 2011.

government do not adequately heed the population's needs for justice and dignity. However, these terms do not surface nearly as much when discussing the European cases. Perhaps this is because (specifically in the case of BiH), there is a sense of justice – however slowly and imperfectly – being done, while in Georgia and Cyprus the conflicts have been frozen, which means no (more) bloodshed. As stated before, this is one of the main differences between the European and Indian conflicts, and could be the reason that the concepts of justice and dignity are not mentioned as often. And clearly the concepts go hand in hand, as a sense of justice being done enables individuals to (re)gain a feeling of dignity. If unjust actions are never dealt with or even addressed, the victims never have the opportunity to vocalise their grievances and see the perpetrators held accountable, which can have detrimental effects on a person's feelings of self-worth.

In her presentation at the workshop, Daniela Körppen argued that liberal assumptions in peacebuilding concepts and tools dictate the interpretation of what peace means, and shape the 'Western' way of thinking, which enforces linear and mono-casual reasoning. She argues that in order to be socio-culturally sensitive, the more 'Eastern' ways of thinking in terms of relationships and networks and the more participatory and circular modes of traditionally resolving conflicts should also be stressed and acclimatised to. While such an approach may have its merit, one should be careful about confining oneself to the "thought-prison of the dichotomy" (Galtung 1958: 14) of 'Western' versus 'Eastern' or 'North' versus 'South'. Even in the field of conflict transformation, researchers and practitioners have the tendency to not only romanticise the 'local' but also overgeneralise groupings and regions such as the 'Global South', 'African' or 'women'. Such generalisations are the opposite of the deep understanding of context that we should strive for and are, as Volker Boege (2006) convincingly states, "contrary to the very spirit" of traditional approaches to conflict transformation. A more constructive approach of citing and exemplifying useful traditional approaches is essential. One could state, for example, that the traditional approaches to dealing with land conflicts among the Zulus are more appropriate than the external initiatives carried out there to deal with such conflicts and that such traditional approaches could even potentially be useful in the resolution of the Kashmir land conflicts. Giving detailed examples of such traditional ways of thinking allows us to broaden our horizons for conflict transformation and enables us to learn from each other, as in a cultural exchange, rather than merely pointing out the generalised differences.

A topic related to socio-cultural sensitivity which also deserves ample space for thought is the concept of the 'local'. Jacobsen and Lidén's paper has gone deep into this discussion and it was discussed in some detail during the workshop. Although there was an attempt to define what we mean when we use the designation of 'local', it was generally agreed that such a designation varies according to the context (and conflict) in which it is used. For this reason, it was suggested that during the CORE project, all of the partners should ideally define what they mean by the term whenever it is used. In our eyes, this should prove to be a sufficient solution, rather than attempt to force the concept into a narrow definition that will not satisfy all of the CORE project partners. After all, such a definition is not only impossible to determine, but may prove to be unnecessary to carry out the project. Furthermore, Roger Mac Ginty's queries during the workshop of "whose local?" and "who owns the local?" make the matter of defining the concept all the more complicated. Jacobsen also made a very good point when she remarked that when the local speaks, it is not necessarily what is said that matters, but rather the translation of the elites.

## 4. Democracy and Peacebuilding

As with many other post-conflict countries in the world, democracy and liberal thinking has shaped the peacebuilding processes in the countries of our case studies as well. As Ranabir Samaddar rightly pointed out during his presentation – because of the diversity of conflicts and conflict resolution approaches, no European or Indian archetype for peacebuilding can be named, but procedural democracy has paved the path towards resolving conflicts. In this regard, Samaddar described a paradox that since conflict and

violence are “alien to the spirit of democracy” – the logic being that resistance to the representative system must be ill-intentioned – “democracy is always yet to come.” While this may well annex Derrida’s thought on a messianic *à venir* (to come) democracy, in the matter of peacebuilding, the question must be raised as to what opportunities within this ‘yet to come’ democracy are available to address and transform conflicts. Furthermore, although procedural democracy may have “paved the path towards resolving conflicts”, democracy alone cannot be expected to solve conflicts; indeed, all of the case studies in the CORE project are democracies, if imperfect ones. Here it is important to note that the (albeit contested) concept of ‘democratic peace’ (democracies do not wage war against each other) does not apply to intrastate conflicts within democracies. Although it might be assumed that a democracy would provide its constituents with more opportunities to voice their grievances peacefully and within a democratic system, rather than resorting to violence, James Fearon (2004) has shown that the measure of democracy actually has no systematic relationship on at least the duration of civil wars. Furthermore, Paul Collier (2010) has shown how governments have time and again resorted to violence and election-rigging in order to attain the mere appearance of democracy, and he asks the very controversial question of the worth of emphasising such a focus on building democracy and democratic institutions in post-conflict countries if such an emphasis may lead to more violence in the short run.

Navnita Behera’s paper, on the governing praxis in India, mentions how the Indian state regards conducting elections in Jammu and Kashmir as evidence of democratisation and not as instrumentalisation. But considering that such elections tend to be manipulated and corrupt, can one really regard them as evidence of democratisation? As a specific conflict resolution strategy, elections have not been successful and remain, as Behera points out, a point of contestation. In BiH, the building of a functioning democratic state that included all ethnic groups was one of the major goals of the international peacebuilding initiatives. In order to build such an inclusive government, one of the major (external) assumptions of these initiatives was that democracy and nationalism were ‘mutually exclusive’, as Stavrevska points out in her paper. But this assumption has had difficulty becoming established (and therefore implicit) in an environment of high political tensions along ethnic lines. Such an assumption about democracy could also be difficult to establish with all parties in Kashmir and Cyprus, as nationalism is a major factor in both of those conflicts.

Two of the underlying assumptions in democracy – inclusion and participation – are also emphasised greatly in peacebuilding norms. But might there be the danger of a “tyranny of inclusion” – in the sense of “too much participation” – so that in the end, it is neither inclusive nor democratic? This thought-provoking question was posed by Rachel Brulé during the workshop<sup>7</sup>. It was then suggested by Behera that, in the end, it really depends on where one draws the line – which is indeed a difficult decision. There are also diverse linguistic and religious factors that make things even more complicated. Behera also stated that in the context of the huge mobilisation of civil society in India over the issue of corruption in 2011, some sections of the Indian government have been talking about the tyranny of the *unelected* shifting the discourse towards procedural issues of who is entitled to make laws, rather than addressing the broader question of how the process of law making and policy making itself can become more representative and inclusive.

During Behera’s presentation we were reminded of the difficulty of the Indian state in dealing with mass non-violent protests and the paradox that lies in the state’s tendency to ignore such protests until they turn violent and then to ask the parties to give up arms to negotiate. Hans J. Giessmann noted that this paradox is not unique to India, as it happens also in Europe, but this strategy frequently does not work because weapons are often the only power the militant groups have. He also concluded that within democracies it is difficult to deal with mass movements and that a paradox exists here as well: armed groups contest the power of a government, while mass movements contest the legitimacy of the power of the government.

As we can see, emphasising the norm of representative democracy in peacebuilding strategies brings

<sup>7</sup> Rachel is a Stanford PhD student who has spent some time at Berghof for her research and has contributed much to our CORE project work.



with its various problems of its own. Although there is general agreement that democracy in and of itself is positive, questions remain unanswered as to how to best create and maintain democratic structures. How soon after a conflict should representative democracy be introduced and elections be held? What kind of democratic system is best for the country? How can democracy truly be representative and inclusive? Could too much participation make a democratic system unruly? And finally, can a corrupt and/or flawed democracy still be considered a democracy and is it capable of transforming conflicts within its borders?

## 5. (Conflict) Governance

The European Union is clearly one of the major actors in our European cases. But perhaps the EU could do a better job by changing and enhancing its role in the conflict regions. As Mikhelidze points out, the EU frames its policy in conflict governance within the liberal peace paradigm, which views the development of democracy both as a goal of statebuilding and as a means to induce conflict transformation. The EU's strategy is therefore one of conflict 'management' (in contrast with 'resolution'), which focuses more on that of the Georgia-Russia relationship and not on the regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Georgia's need for internal reconciliation appears to have received lower priority because it is overshadowed by the EU's priority of managing the interstate conflict between Georgia and Russia. This tension between externally imposed priorities and domestic interests could potentially accentuate the internal dynamic of the conflict.

In BiH, on the other hand, the international community has made a much better attempt to sustainably resolve the conflict – with various economic, political, security and civil society initiatives – but even here many of the initiatives in place disregard the complexity of the conflict and are therefore insufficient for peacebuilding. (Furthermore, it could be argued that the international community only became involved after the conflict turned too violent to justify turning a blind eye. Will it take something as dramatic in Georgia for international actors to initiate such a response?) Although there is a clear lack of direct violence in BiH, tensions continue to run high and there is a myriad of political problems. In essence, the conflict in BiH has not been resolved, but rather institutionalised, as Stavrevska pointed out during the workshop. This is clearly better than a return to violence, but falls short of positive peace. Furthermore, although the EU is present on the ground, the international community is in the process of departing, no more peacebuilding initiatives are being implemented, and the transfer of authority is caught in a vicious cycle.

In India, in comparison, governance structures can be traced back to colonialism, as Samaddar pointed out during his presentation by stating “[g]overning meant governing conflicts”. While post-colonialism per se may have little or nothing to do with our European cases, it profoundly relates to the Indian cases. Samaddar makes the crucial observation that peacekeeping and peacebuilding methods in India's post-colonial era were heavily influenced by colonial peacekeeping methods, which were not well equipped for conflict mitigation and did not assimilate the dialogic aspects of the traditional Indian society.

No discussion of governance is complete without mentioning the concept of 'good governance', which is frequently used nowadays, thanks in part to the mode of thinking in the developmental community. In terms of state governments, good governance essentially means the ability to effectively and transparently manage public resources and to provide for its citizens. A good governance agenda is generally pushed for anywhere where developmental organisations are at work, certainly in all conflict countries in which the international community is involved. But is good governance really anything more than just another technocratic term used by NGOs and research bodies in order to acquire funding for their projects? Michael Merlingen had observed in this regard at the workshop that the modern form of technocratic governance uses the vocabulary of good governance principles (e.g. ownership), but only uses the vocabulary and doesn't necessarily implement it in the proper way. In other words, they don't practice what they preach. Moreover, as Western governments are generally portrayed as having good governance, can this pressure on non-Western governments to adopt the principles of good governance be seen as sufficiently culturally

sensitive? Finally, and certainly most importantly for the CORE project, can good governance truly improve a state's ability not only to provide for its citizens but also to successfully and sustainably manage and resolve its conflicts?

## 6. The Role of Geopolitics

In conflicts such as BiH and Georgia, as Merlingen pointed out during the workshop, geopolitics also plays a big role. In BiH, for instance, the United States wants the High Representative to stay – if the HR is eliminated and the EU moves in, the influence of the US would be sidelined. In Georgia, clearly the dominant global player is Russia, whose influence and role in the conflicts in South Ossetia and Abkhazia can be seen as uncooperative at best. Because there are so many global issues which ideally need the support and cooperation of Russia to address, from sanctions against Iran, to collaboration with NATO, to Europe's dependency on Russian gas, there is a hesitancy within the EU (and beyond) to boldly challenge the destructive role that Russia is playing and a tendency, as mentioned above, to 'manage' the conflict rather than 'resolve' it. Particularly in times during which the other issues are at the forefront of global politics, the EU most likely feels there is no need to 'rock the boat' with Russia over the issue of small, geopolitically unimportant regions of Georgia. Furthermore, the EU finds itself in a difficult position when confronted with the issue of independence (and Russia's acceptance thereof) for breakaway regions such as South Ossetia and Abkhazia. Why support independence for Kosovo, but not for the Basque Country in Spain or for Transdniestria in Moldova? On this issue, the nations of the EU do not speak with one voice. In Cyprus, the historically poisonous relationship between Greece and Turkey is still having a disastrous effect on the conflict, and the games of geopolitics have entered the EU itself with the accession of the Republic of Cyprus in 2004. As a member state, Cyprus is able to veto any decision of the EU regarding the resolution of the conflict which it feels is unsatisfactory. For its part, Turkey is taking advantage of Cyprus's obstinacy (for instance, its refusal to open up Cypriot ports to Turkish ships) to justify the slowdown in the preparations and reforms needed for its eventual succession to the EU.

As for the Indian conflicts, the obvious actors are Pakistan in Kashmir, and Bangladesh and China in the Northeast. Given that Kashmir is one of the longest protracted conflicts in history and Pakistan is to share half the blame, we feel that some specific attention to the India-Pakistan relationship in the Kashmir case needs to find its place in the CORE project's study. Bangladesh is a small but not insignificant pawn in India's Northeast game, given the problematic enclave economy that the two nations share and have a great deal of problems with. India's recent tactics of dealing with the proposed transit routes across Bangladesh to the Northeast could also be brought under a microscope. The transit project may not be merely about development, and the strategic thinkers in Bangladesh have begun suspecting that India may be trying to take advantage of Bangladesh's low-lying land for transporting army supplies to the Northeast in order to better manage the insurgency in Nagaland and Manipur (The Economist 2011). Given that there has been a long (lately latent) dispute between India and China over the right to Arunachal Pradesh, if the Indian army tries supplying its expanding divisions parked high on the border with China, using Bangladesh as a military marshalling yard, there is a good chance that China would not just keep quiet (*ibid.*).

## 7. Technocracy and Reflective Practice

We have seen in Mac Ginty's presentation how meticulously he looks at the technocratic turn in peacebuilding, showing how technocracy forms a foundational socio-cultural premise for contemporary peace governance interventions. In 'norms'-talk, he makes a crucial observation that a near hegemonic position exists with technocracy so embedded in conflict response mechanisms that it becomes an unquestioned norm. While technocratic solutions can be superior because they are scientific and devoid

of local and historical bias, their suggestion that limited participation insures more efficiency goes against one of the crucial norms of peacebuilding. By not overly generalising technocratic initiatives, however, it can be seen that the last ten years have seen more participatory, reflective and innovative approaches in the realm of technocracy, but these approaches still remain strictly within the language and framework of the technocrats.

During the discussion following Mac Ginty's presentation at the workshop there were appeals from some participants to not see peacebuilding projects as totally devoid of participatory and reflective practices. Possibly as a result of extensive research on systemic thinking and reflective practices by think tanks or perhaps from a realisation that their approaches up until now have not had the intended outcomes, many development cooperation organisations and INGOs have begun rethinking their peacebuilding strategies. GIZ, for example, hosted a conference on Systemic Approaches in Evaluation<sup>8</sup> in early 2011 and their recently developed (2009) management model called Capacity WORKS<sup>9</sup> is engrained with more reflective practices than ever before. The latter seems to have outgrown the technocratic discomfort of participation by allowing for greater use of multi-organisational and multi-institutional frameworks. In terms of 'process-orientation', Daniela Körppen suggested at the workshop that this should really mean developing peacebuilding strategies together with those people on the ground whom the strategy will affect, not creating a strategy at a desk in some city of the Western world and then implementing it. Real process-oriented strategies, she observed, are rare. Merlingen added that process-orientation also means that the end goal must not be decided at the beginning but rather along the way.

## 8. Conclusion

After having discussed the above issues concerning conflict in detail and having posed numerous questions that will have to – for the time being – remain unanswered, one is left with the realisation of the ultimate difficulty in resolving or, rather, transforming conflict in a culturally-sensitive and sustainable way. Any conflict resolution initiatives undertaken should provide opportunities for the development of the conflict regions, without simply 'throwing money' at the regions with no thought for the unintended outcomes or side-effects. The initiatives must take the issues of identity, dignity, rights and justice into consideration, which means understanding the conflict within its context and making space for its various complexities. Oversimplifying the conflict and ignoring the basic grievances of the people regarding these fundamental issues will never lead to successful and sustainable conflict transformation. The initiatives should furthermore be aware of the inherent dangers of emphasising democracy and democratic structures, as such an emphasis can lead to manipulation, violence, and (more) corruption, while the positive aspects of inclusion and participation can lead to stalemate and political chaos. Any initiative should ideally promote and espouse the principles of good governance, yet understand not only the limitations of such principles with the ultimate goal of transforming conflicts but also the perceived hypocrisy of using such language without properly implementing it on the ground. Lastly, any conflict transformation initiative must take into account the various geopolitical manoeuvring that is taking place on the world stage and understand and anticipate the effect that it will have on the initiatives. As one can see, developing and implementing culturally-sensitive and sustainable initiatives along these complex principles is certainly a tall order and one can see with perhaps more clarity why there is a tendency to rather 'manage' such conflicts. However, to answer our original question of how well norms lend themselves to conflict transformation, it could be argued that they do indeed lend themselves to the task, but only if the actors involved in the process have a deep understanding of the conflict and its context and are creative, innovative and inclusive in the development of the initiatives.

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.evaluation-conference.de/en/index.html> and <http://www.gtzt.de/en/unternehmen/33087.htm>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.gtzt.de/en/unternehmen/31610.htm>

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# About the Contributors

**Navnita Chadha Behera** is Professor at the Department of Political Science, University of Delhi. She has more than 15 years of research experience on Kashmir and has authored two books, ‘State, Identity and Violence: Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh’ (Manohar Publishers, 2002) and ‘Demystifying Kashmir’ (Brookings Institution, 2007), which have been rated among the top non-fiction books in India. Her other research interests include International Relations of South Asia, particularly issues of war, conflict and political violence, and international security.

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**Sumona DasGupta** is currently Senior Research Consultant with the Society for Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA) in New Delhi. Her previous appointments have been as a Lecturer in Political Science at Loreto College, Kolkata, and as Assistant Director with a New Delhi based initiative called Women in Security, Conflict Management and Peace (WISCOMP). Her research and writing in recent years has been centered around issues of security, peace and conflict, especially with reference to Jammu and Kashmir, where she was actively engaged in an action research project from 2001-2008. Her recent publications include “Women Renegotiating Internal Boundaries in Jammu and Kashmir” in Paula Banerjee and Anasua Basu Ray Choudhury (eds.) *Women in Indian Borderlands* (Sage, 2011) and *Citizen Initiatives and Democratic Engagements: Experiences from India* (Routledge, 2010). Sumona is currently on the International Advisory Group of International Conflict Research (INCORE), at the University of Ulster, UK, the research steering group of an IDRC project on Trauma, Development and Peace Building, as well as being a corresponding member of the International Peace Commission for the Tim Parry Jonathan Ball Foundation for Peace.

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**Hans J. Giessmann** is Executive Director of the Berghof Foundation, and was previously the Director of Berghof Conflict Research (BCR). Giessmann holds two doctorates, in Philosophy and Political Science. He is the co-editor of the Berghof Handbook for Conflict Transformation and coordinates the State and Non-State Relations research programme area. His key research areas include the interaction between non-state and state actors within key areas of crisis prevention, conflict transformation and peacebuilding; and innovative approaches to the prevention and resolution of violent conflicts, particularly in Asia. Before



coming to BCR Hans J. Giessmann was head of the Centre for European Peace and Security Studies and Deputy Director of the Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg. Among other commitments Giessmann is a member of the steering group for the collaborative FP7 Project “Peacebuilding Design, Monitoring and Evaluation” which is headed by CARE International UK and he is a member of the Advisory Board for Civilian Crisis Prevention at the German Federal Foreign Office. His list of academic publications comprises over 300 articles, books and essays.

**Elida Kristine Undrum Jacobsen** is a Researcher at Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) and a PhD candidate at the School of Global Studies at Gothenburg University. She holds an M.A. in Peace, Conflict and Development Studies from the Universitat Jaume I, Castelló, Spain. Since 2007, Jacobsen has been the academic Program Manager of an undergraduate program in Peace and Conflict Studies in South Asia in Pondicherry, India, run by Oslo University College. Her research interests are in particular post-colonial India, conflict transformation in South Asia and gender issues.

**Daniela Körppen** was working as a Researcher for Berghof Peace Support and Berghof Conflict Research from 2006 to 2011. She coordinated an action research project on systemic conflict transformation, which explored the potential of systemic thinking for conflict transformation strategies. One of the results of this project is the edited volume “The Non-Linearity of Peace Processes – Theory and Practice of Systemic Conflict Transformation” (co-edited with N. Ropers and H. J. Giessmann, Barbara Budrich, 2011). Additionally, she is engaged in the development of systemic methods for strategy planning, assessment and conflict analysis. She has several years of work experience as a consultant and trainer for the German Civil Peace Service and has participated in numerous seminars on systemic mediation and systemic conflict management. She has a M.A. in Sociology and Latin American Studies and an M.A. in Peace and Conflict Studies.

**Kristoffer Lidén** is a Researcher and PhD candidate at Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), affiliated with the University of Oslo, where he is also a member of the research school of the Ethics Program. He holds an M.A. in Peace and Conflict Studies from the University of Oslo, and has a background in philosophy, sociology and social anthropology. Lidén has a special interest in issues of peaceful conflict resolution and peacebuilding, and is writing his PhD thesis on the political philosophy and ethics of liberal peacebuilding. In 2006, he was a Young Researcher in the European Research Network on Applied Global Justice. Lidén has also been a lecturer and academic coordinator of a university program in Peace and Conflict Studies in Pondicherry, India.

**Roger Mac Ginty** is a Reader at the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of St. Andrews, UK. He will shortly take up a new position of Professor of Peace and Conflict Studies at the Humanitarian and Conflict Response Institute and the Department of Politics at the University of Manchester. His main interests are in peacemaking processes, political violence and post-war reconstruction. He has conducted research in Sri Lanka, Lebanon, Jordan, Bosnia, Croatia and Northern Ireland. Recent publications include *International Peacebuilding and Local Resistance: Hybrid Forms of Peace* (Palgrave, 2011), *No War, No Peace: The Rejuvenation of Stalled Peace Processes and Peace Accords* (Palgrave, 2006) and *Contemporary Peacemaking: Conflict, Peace Processes and Post-War Reconstruction* (edited with John Darby, Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

**Nona Mikhelidze** is a Researcher at the Istituto Affari Internazionali. She holds a M.A. in Regionalism: Central Asia and Caucasian Studies from the Humboldt University Berlin (HU), where she was awarded the Volkswagen Foundation Scholarship as a Research Fellow at HU. She also holds M.A. and B.A. degrees in International Relations from Tbilisi State University. Currently she is participating in European Commission 6th and 7th Framework projects MICROCON, CORE, EU4seas and Mercury. Her research interests include the European Neighbourhood Policy and conflict resolution in the South Caucasus, the wider Black Sea

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**Mir Mubashir** is a Research Assistant and the Coordinator of the CORE project at the Berghof Foundation. His research interests in the field of conflict transformation include traditional methods, cultural dimensions, systemic aspects and the creative use of performance arts (particularly interactive theatre methods and music). Mir has a Master of Peace and Security (M.P.S.) from the Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg. Previously, he worked in Bangladesh for the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ, now GIZ) as the head of the Information Technology department. At GTZ he was actively involved in the processes of Systemic Communication and Decision Making and of Mainstreaming Conflict Transformation in project work, and was part of the multiplication and trainers teams for both processes.

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**Ranabir Samaddar**, described by a critic as ‘India’s Boswell’, belongs to the critical school of political readings in India. He is the Director of the Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group (MCRG), and has pioneered along with others peace studies programmes in South Asia. He has worked extensively on issues of justice and rights in the context of conflicts in South Asia. The recently published *Politics of Dialogue* (Ashgate, 2004) is the culmination of his work on justice, rights, and peace. His particular research has been on migration and refugee studies; the theory and practices of dialogue; nationalism and post-colonial statehood in South Asia; and technological restructuring and new labour regimes. He has worked on various commissions and study groups on issues such as partitions; critical dictionary on globalisation; patterns of internal displacement in South Asia in the light of the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement; institutional practices of refugee care and protection in India; rights of the minorities and forms of autonomy; technological modernisation; and occupational health and safety. He serves on the editorial board of several journals and as a member of the Calcutta Research Group was the founding editor of *Refugee Watch*.

**Elena B. Stavrevska** is a PhD student in International Relations and European Studies at the Central European University (CEU). Her research focuses on forms of local resistance to and unintended consequences of liberal democratic peace processes in post-conflict societies, analysing the cases of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo. She holds an LL.B. in European Law and an M.A. in International Relations and European Studies, with her final thesis entitled *EU Intelligence-Sharing: The British Quid Pro Quo?* In 2009-2010, she was a fellow of the Study Programme on European Security run by the Institut für Europäische Politik in Berlin and funded by the Volkswagen Foundation. Her project looked at the impact of EU police missions in the Western Balkans on the local security sectors. She has conducted extensive interviews in Sarajevo, Skopje, and Brussels. Elena’s published work has appeared in English and German.

**Birte Vogel** is currently a PhD candidate at the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of St. Andrews, where she also obtained her Master’s in Peace and Conflict Studies. As part of the programme, she conducted fieldwork in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Her team specifically researched how culture influences peacebuilding initiatives in a post-conflict environment. Her current research project is on informal local systems of governance and their contribution to conflict resolution. Birte completed a B.A. in Economics and Political Science at the University of Münster, Germany. She also worked in the field of international cooperation with the former Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) on a project aiming at strengthening local government structures in Afghanistan’s Northern provinces.

# List of Participants

## CORE Workshop:

**“The Socio-Cultural and Political Premises of European and Indian Initiatives in Areas of Conflict Transition/Resolution” (Theme A)**

**Berghof Foundation, Berlin, Germany**

**Tuesday, 28 June 2011**

- Anjoo Sharan Upadhyaya, *Banaras Hindu University / Malaviya Centre for Peace Research* (BHU/MCPR)
- Hans-Joachim Giessmann, Anna Bernhard, Rachel Brulé, Janel B. Galvanek, Daniela Körppen, Mir Mubashir, *Berghof Foundation* (BF)
- Michael Merlingen, Elena B. Stavrevska, *Central European University* (CEU)
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- Jonas Gräns, Elida Kristine Undrum Jacobsen, *Peace Research Institute Oslo* (PRIO)
- Roger Mac Ginty, Sandra Pogodda, Birte Vogel, *University of St. Andrews* (USTAN)\*

\* The University of Manchester has become a new partner in the CORE project, replacing the University of St. Andrews. The CORE team at USTAN, including Oliver Richmond, Roger Mac Ginty, Sandra Pogodda and Birte Vogel, will now be part of the CORE team at the University of Manchester.