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Editor’s Introduction

Welcome to our 2015 edition of the journal!

We have several strong research articles in this issue that explore a wide range of peace and conflict concerns. The issue opens with two articles that present examples of how ritual and religion can be better understood as influencing social transformation from violence to constructive engagement in communities pulled apart by conflict over differences. Zaros focuses on the historic tensions along religious lines in Mindanao, Philippines, and calls for scholars and activists in peacebuilding to pay closer attention to the importance of ritual. Hrynkow and Westlund use ideas core to multiple faith traditions to call for efforts in peacebuilding to take a more environment-centric approach to discussions around human-human relations and human-earth relations.

Whether the cases of focus are times past (Shifferd) or current crisis (Bamidele), analysis of what war and acts of terror do to society remain significant areas of contribution for scholars of peace. Shifferd uses the poetic form to honor yet problematize the recent century anniversary of World War I. Bamidele carefully lays out the social and political breakdown accompanying the rise of transnational terrorism in the African context. He argues that the current rising use of terrorism in African states is deeply problematic and deserving of more attention in the discussion of addressing the needs of fragile states.

Showing the broad stretch and relevance of peace studies, the final three essays offer insight into the interweaving between direct violence and structural violence. Dobransky provides an in-depth analysis of how then President George W. Bush and the events of September 11, 2001, deeply impacted the priorities and approaches taken to foreign aid. This case study elucidates the question, who is deserving of aid and why do we select some aid recipients over others in need? Kanyako analyzes a related question, to what extent do resources and approaches to managing resources impact and perhaps fuel the rise of conflict? Studying carefully the oil extraction industry in African states, Kanyako finds a relationship between community backlash and agitation with the emergence of a petro-culture in areas with high levels of oil as a strategic resource. Braatz takes the concept of structural violence and uses the case of Little Bighorn and the clash between U.S. and Lakota governments to develop a deeper understanding of the work of Johan Galtung around direct violence, structural violence, and cultural violence as opportunities for intentional peacebuilding policies and conflict transformation.

This issue closes with our much-loved section, the book reviews, which in each issue offer scholars and teachers alike insight into recently published work in the field of peace and justice studies. The four books reviewed in this issue reflect the broad-ranging research that scholars are conducting related to peace at all levels, from the micro-organizational to the macro-global settings. The books reviewed also recognize the interdisciplinary nature of our field and the wide relevance of the work published by scholars of peace.

As always our editorial team extends its thanks and appreciation to all the volunteer hours that make this journal possible. From reviewers to editors to dedicated staff of WIPCS, it takes many hands and minds to move submissions from possibility to a cohesive reality.

Dr. Lynne M. Woehrle, Editor
Professor of Sociology, Mount Mary University
Interreligious Ritual as a Grassroots Peacebuilding Tool: 
A Mindanao Case Study

Anna Zaros*

Abstract

In the conflict-affected region of Mindanao, rituals are often used as a key component of interreligious peacebuilding activities. Based on in-country interviews, participant observation, and a review of the literature I will describe the use of ritual in Mindanao and argue that ritual has a unique, positive function in peacebuilding processes. Ritual has the potential to bring a mystical element into the peacebuilding activity, open up a space for learning about the other, and transform destructive relationships into harmonious ones. Some of the challenges to the use of ritual, particularly as seen in Mindanao, can be addressed by fostering new rituals, maintaining an awareness of power, and intra-faith preparation. Lastly, I argue that viewing peacebuilding through the lens of ritual can enhance the work of the field as a whole.

Keywords: ritual, interreligious dialogue, Mindanao, peacebuilding, religion

In the Southern region of the Philippines, on the conflict-affected island group of Mindanao, Muslims, Christians, and Lumads (indigenous people) have been working together for decades to heal the deep prejudice among each other created by the conflict between the Government of the Philippines (GPH) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). Many peacebuilding efforts seek to bridge these divides through various forms of interreligious dialogue (IRD). These interreligious efforts are often marked by ritual, such as the recitation of an inter-faith prayer at a peace conference or participation in one another’s religious festivals. While a routine marker of peacebuilding efforts in Mindanao, rituals have rarely been analyzed for their effectiveness in fostering peace among Muslims, Christians, and Lumads. Why are rituals used as a peacebuilding tool in this setting? How do these rituals work to overcome hatred? And how can their efficacy be increased? By analyzing the use of ritual in Mindanao as a case study, I will seek to understand how ritual contributes to the enterprise of grassroots peacebuilding, as well as explore challenges to the use of ritual, and possible solutions.

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3 Myla Leguro (Peace and Reconciliation Senior Program Manager, Catholic Relief Services/Philippines), interview with the author, November 11, 2010.
I will begin with an overview of the conflict in Mindanao and a brief summary of how interreligious dialogue, where peacebuilding rituals often take place, is used as a grassroots peacebuilding tool. Also, I will describe how ritual is used and understood in interreligious settings for peacebuilding in Mindanao, according to my research. Secondly, I will develop a richer understanding of ritual by exploring some of the literature on the subject. As a starting point, ritual can be defined as a symbolic action, that is usually repetitive, and represents some connection to the transcendent or belief.⁴ Linking the work of ritual theorists with my research in Mindanao, I will also explore the literature on ritual and peacebuilding, thereby strengthening the argument that ritual is an important peacebuilding activity. Yet challenges still arise. I will describe various challenges to the use of ritual in Mindanao, and possible solutions. I will end this paper by extrapolating lessons from this study of ritual to advocate for a certain understanding of peacebuilding as a whole.

Understanding the Conflict in Mindanao

Conflict in Mindanao can be traced back centuries: to the entrance of Islam into the region, brought by Arab traders between the 10th and 12th centuries, and to the colonization of the archipelago by Catholic Spain in the mid-16th century. The Spanish colonizers, and later the United States, instituted policies and actions that attempted to repress and control the Moros (the Spanish name for Muslims) and Lumads in Mindanao.⁵ The post-World War II, independent Philippine governments also encouraged peasants from Luzon and the Visayas, the other main island groups of the Philippines, to migrate to Mindanao.⁶ As a result of these policies Moros and Lumads became minorities on their own islands, and their traditional practices and claims to ancestral lands were largely ignored.⁷

In the 1970s this history of marginalization and oppression led to growing tensions between Christian settlers and displaced Moros and Lumads, eventually erupting into violent conflict. Christian Filipinos and Moros formed paramilitary groups to protect their respective populations.⁸ Also at this time, the Moro movement for the right to self-determination consolidated and formed into the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF). By 1972 president and dictator Ferdinand Marcos had imposed martial law on the country, and the conflict escalated into full scale civil war between the MNLF and the GPH.⁹ Violence continued until the 1996 peace agreement, which granted a portion of land in Mindanao to become the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). Although peace talks began with the MILF, a group that had split from the MNLF after an attempted peace agreement in 1975, escalations in violence made these unsuccessful.¹⁰ In 2014 President Benigno Aquino successfully negotiated a new peace agreement with the MILF, the Bangsamoro Basic Law. However, as of

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⁴ Based on works by Catherine Bell and Lisa Schirch (cited later in this paper), this is roughly the definition used in interviews for this research.
¹⁰ Gaspar, “The Philippines,” 101-103. The MILF differ from the MNLF in that they seek greater self-governance, mainly through the implementation of Sharia law in the ARMM (Rudy and Leguro, “The Diverse Terrain,” 8).
March 2015, violent clashes, particularly the Mamasapano incident, have stalled the approval of the agreement in Congress.\(^{11}\)

The MNLF/MILF-GPH conflict can largely be characterized as a conflict of religious dissimilarity. That is, the conflict is fought over issues that are not religious, but the groups at odds with one another are marked by religious identity.\(^{12}\) The issues at stake in this conflict involve disagreements over autonomy, governance, and rights to land and resources.\(^{13}\) Decades of fighting and antagonism, however, have led to a situation in which Muslims and Christians in particular, and Lumads to a certain extent, perceive their religions, as well as their identities, lifestyles, and even food, as irreconcilable.\(^{14}\) Thus, an incredible amount of prejudice and hatred exists in local communities among Muslims and Christians.\(^{15}\)

Interreligious Dialogue and Ritual as Peacebuilding Responses

One of the critical components of building peace in Mindanao is transforming the destructive relationships between Muslims and Christians into relationships of harmonious coexistence. Much of this work takes place at the grassroots level.\(^{16}\) As Fr. Bert Layson, a Mindanaoan peacebuilder, explains, “[Peace] has to start from the bottom up....We have realized that the Peace Talks could not guarantee instant peace in our communities for as long as there is an unseen war going on in the hearts of our people in Mindanao...”\(^{17}\)

In the last three decades, interreligious dialogue has emerged as one of many peacebuilding efforts used to foster constructive relationships among Muslims, Christians, and Lumads at the

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\(^{11}\) Rudy and Leguro, “The Diverse Terrain,” 28. Violence also affects the islands as a result of the conflict between communist rebels (located mostly in the northern area of Mindanao) and the GPH, the activities of Islamic extremist criminal groups, Abu Sayyaf and Jemaah Islamiyah (located mostly in the western islands of Mindanao), and other criminal groups involved in kidnapping for ransom schemes. Lastly, rido, or inter-clan conflict, leads to incredibly violent altercations in Mindanao, particularly when clans vie for political power. (Rudy and Leguro, “The Diverse Terrain,” 1). Lumads have also organized and argued for respect of their traditional practices, ancestral lands, and right to self-determination. Lumads, however, have not taken up arms in their struggle (Conciliation Resources, “Compromising on Autonomy,” 14). For updated information on the current state of the conflict, including the Mamasapano incident and the clashes between the MILF and BIFF see also, Richard Javad Heydarian, “Philippines’ Mindanao Dilemma: Aquino, the Mamasapano Tragedy, and the Future of the Peace Process, Huffington Post, February 18, 2015, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/richard-javad-heydarian/philippines-mindanao-dile_b_6683288.html, accessed March 21, 2015, and John Unson, “Rival Moro forces clash on Maguindanao border,” PhilStar, February 17, 2015, http://www.philstar.com/nation/2015/02/17/1424761/rival-moro-forces-clash-maguindanao-border, accessed March 21. 2015.


\(^{14}\) A discussion of “religious incompatibility” in conflict can be found in Powers, “Religion and Peacebuilding,” 319. For a discussion of the prejudice and animosity that exists among Muslims and Christians in Mindanao, see Gaspar, “The Philippines.”

\(^{15}\) The greatest amount of animosity exists between Christians and Muslims. There is discrimination against Lumads, but it is more directed towards viewing the indigenous culture as inferior, rather than hating Lumads personally. Cecile B Simbajon (Director, Ateneo Peace and Culture Institute), and her co-worker Toots, interview with the author, September 7, 2010.

\(^{16}\) See, for example, Rudy and Leguro, “The Diverse Terrain.”

interreligious dialogue can be organized into four different categories; dialogue of theological exchange, dialogue of social action, dialogue of religious experience, and dialogue of life. In Mindanao, many interreligious dialogue efforts take the form of dialogue of social action. For example, there are multiple organizations, such as the Interreligious Solidarity Movement for Peace, Peace Advocates Zamboanga, and the Oblates of Mary Immaculate-Interreligious Dialogue, that organize social actions involving Lumads, Muslims, and Christians, such as organizing the Mindanao Week of Peace, implementing peace education and trainings, and releasing statements condemning incidents of violence.

Many of these organizations also promote dialogue of religious experience activities. These organizations create programs in which Lumads, Christians, and Muslims share in one another’s rituals or pray together. One of the predominant ways in which dialogue of religious experience is fostered throughout Mindanao is in the celebration of Duyog Ramadhan and Duyog Pasko activities. These activities, meaning “Solidarity with Ramadhan” or “Solidarity with Christmas,” are activities in which Muslims and Christians join each other in celebrating some of the most important rituals of their religious calendar.

There are also efforts aimed at fostering dialogue of life, “where people strive to live in an open and neighborly spirit, sharing their joys and sorrows.” For example, the Silsilah Dialogue Movement is an interreligious dialogue organization in Mindanao that specifically focuses on promoting a “culture of dialogue.” Their conviction is that Mindanaoans must live dialogue in every part of their lives in order to develop peace. Lastly, there are theological exchanges that occur among Muslims, Christians, and Lumads involved in peacebuilding, such as the discussions within the Bishops-Ulama Conference. These personal exchanges, however, largely take place apart from formal peace programming. It is important to remember that

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18 For a discussion of the use of interreligious dialogue to build peace in Mindanao, see Myla Leguro, “Pursuing Just Peace: The Journey of Faith-Based Actors in Mindanao,” lecture at the Pursuing Just Peace Book Launching, October 2008.


20 For one example of the work of an interreligious dialogue organization, see the pamphlet, Interreligious Solidarity Movement for Peace (IRSMP), IRSMP-Jayapura (Papuan) Religious Leaders Interfaith Exchange Forum, Lantaka Hotel, Zamboanga City, December 1-3, 2008.

21 See the IRSMP pamphlet and Layson, “Christian-Muslim Dialogue.”

22 The Federation of Asian Bishops’ Conferences, as discussed by Peter Phan, “Peacebuilding and Reconciliation,” 334.

23 Nor Asiah Madale Adilao (Muslim Coordinator, Silsilah Forum Davao), interview with the author, August 27, 2010.

24 Ibid.

often an interreligious dialogue activity may combine more than one type of dialogue or may not fit one category alone.

A key component of these interreligious dialogue efforts is the use of rituals. For example, Catholic Relief Services never opens a peace workshop or activity without first sharing a prayer by a Muslim, Christian, and Lumad.\textsuperscript{26} Thus, it is important to understand how interreligious rituals function within the Mindanao context, their impact on peacebuilding, and ways to enhance this impact. Although rituals do occur as part of top-level, political peace processes, I will focus this paper on how interreligious ritual is used to promote peace at the grassroots level, by encouraging constructive relationships among Muslims, Lumads, and Christians in local communities.

**Ritual as a Peacebuilding Tool: The Mindanao Case**

**Research Methods and Limitations**

To understand the use of interreligious ritual as a tool for grassroots peacebuilding in Mindanao I undertook research, through interviews and participant observation, during a stay of six months in Mindanao in the latter half of 2010. I completed 23 interviews: interviewing thirteen Christians, six Muslims, three Lumads, and one person who self-identified as secular. In the beginning my goal was to interview an even number of Muslims, Lumads, and Christians. However, since most interreligious dialogue efforts are directed towards fostering positive relationships between Christians and Muslims, as I came to learn, my interviews lacked participation from Lumads. I myself am Catholic and became connected to interviewees while working with Catholic Relief Services (CRS). Additionally, the last month of my research coincided with another research project on Catholic-led peacebuilding efforts (with CRS). Thus, near the end of this research project, I was gaining access to mostly Catholic peacebuilders.

My respondents are spread out geographically. Thirteen of my respondents live in Western Mindanao, four live in Eastern Mindanao, and six live in Central Mindanao. Thirteen of my respondents are women and ten are men. All of my participants are involved in peacebuilding in some way. A few are parents whose children are heavily involved in youth peace activities, most are leaders or staff within peacebuilding organizations, one is an Ustadz (an Islamic teacher), two are priests, and one is a Catholic religious brother.

As described above the rituals in which I was a participant observer mostly included interreligious opening prayers to peace conferences and workshops. I was able to join two breaking of the fast rituals during Ramadhan in which Muslims, Christians, and Lumads were present. Lastly, I participated in the opening prayer ceremony of the Mindanao Week of Peace in Davao, as well as an interreligious youth peace camp during the same week.

A major constraint on my understanding of these activities, and my research as a whole, was my inability to speak the language. Most of my interviewees spoke English quite well, however, many of the ceremonies or rituals I attended were in Bisaya or Tagalog. Often, I interpreted what was happening based on the conference schedule or a friend’s explanation. During interviews and observations I often had a local NGO worker nearby to translate for me when necessary, but I believe these translations were not always the best.

\textsuperscript{26} Leguro, interview.
Another problem I encountered was the difficulty I had distinguishing whether my respondents were discussing interreligious dialogue in general, or the use of ritual within interreligious dialogues in particular, when answering my questions. I began most of my interviews by asking about the interreligious dialogue activities my respondents were involved in. With this basic understanding of their work, I then moved on to ask about the particular use of ritual within these activities. When I began to ask questions about the impact of rituals, however, it became hard to distinguish if my respondents were referencing interreligious dialogue, ritual, or both. I came to understand that my respondents intuitively knew more than I did -- the line between interreligious dialogue and ritual is unclear. Often interreligious dialogue is ritual, particularly in a context such as Mindanao where interreligious dialogue becomes ritualized as NGOs and communities carry out similar activities year after year. Abu-Nimer, writing about interreligious dialogues in the Middle East, echoes this sentiment, stating that interreligious dialogue is, arguably, ritual.27 Abu-Nimer quotes Michael A. Barnes; “Dialogue is not about religious experience, it is religious experience. The entry into and the experience of dialogue has about it something of the nature of ritual.”28 This understanding of ritual and dialogue as overlapping and inseparable will be adopted for the purposes of this research, and will be further explored in the conclusion.

Stories of Ritual Experience

A group of about fifteen members and friends of the Silsilah Dialogue Movement in Davao, consisting of almost an even number of Lumads, Christians, and Muslims, and two international NGO workers spent the day at the Davao City jail to celebrate the Iftar, the breaking of the fast for Ramadhan, with the inmates. The group first went to the male side of the jail and gathered in a small mosque in the prison. The group all sat together around the podium, hearing various speakers share about their religious experience. First, members of Silsilah gave an overview of the interreligious peace movement. They also shared in a recitation of the Quran and heard from the inmates what it was like to observe Ramadhan in prison. Many shared how it was easier to observe Ramadhan in prison because they were more free from distractions -- they were able to focus on deepening their faith in this environment. Inmates from other faiths echoed this sentiment in their own practice. In contrast to the concrete building of the male side of the jail, the women lived in a fenced in area of small houses and a yard. On this side of the jail the group had a similar program - they shared in an opening prayer and discussed the women’s experience of Ramadhan that year. The women were much more talkative about their lives in general and casually shared their experiences. The female inmates and the group from Silsilah then shared in a simple, traditional Moro meal at sundown.

A week later many of the same participants who had gone to the jail met for Silsilah Forum Davao’s weekly faith sharing. The group opened with a prayer from a Christian, a Muslim, and a Lumad, each in their own language. Then they discussed their experience of

28 Ibid.
joining the inmates for Iftar. To end their time together the group shared in silent prayer, a song, and recited Silsila’s harmony prayer, a universal prayer for peace.

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The 2010 Mindanao Week of Peace (MWOP) kickoff in the city of Davao was held in a local neighborhood’s gathering space -- the basketball court. Local religious leaders, community members, and young adults gathered for the program, which began with an interreligious opening prayer, an extended version of many such prayers that take place during peace conferences and trainings throughout Mindanao. First, an Islamic prayer was offered by the director of the Salmonan Islamic Institute. Next, all present sang the Philippine national anthem, followed by a welcome message from a Davao barangay (or village) captain. All the participants present were acknowledged and the background, objectives, and the 2010 theme of the MWOP, “Responsive and Responsible Governance,” were shared. Then, an Ustadz read from the Quran and a Pastor read from the Bible. One representative from the Christian, Muslim and Lumad communities each shared a message of peace. The ceremony ended with closing words, an interreligious closing prayer, and a communal singing of “Let There Be Peace on Earth.”

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Emerging as an important body of ritual within peacebuilding efforts in Mindanao are newly created rituals. These rituals are not taken from a preexisting religious tradition of Mindanaoans, but instead they are created specifically for a peacebuilding activity. One respondent described one such ritual in which a plant was put in the middle of a circle of participants. After “having a sharing around it, [the participants] then symbolically water[ed] the plant,” symbolizing growth.\(^29\) Another new ritual entailed a group of Christians and Muslims who wrote down their prejudices against one another and then burned the papers.\(^30\) A third example is a program that was created for 20 Subanen (an indigenous tribe) women, 20 wives of MNLF ex-combatants, and 20 wives of men in the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) who were killed in battle. The purpose of this ritual was to encourage women to bond over their unique experiences of the conflict as wives or women. Their identity as women with direct involvement in the conflict offered them a starting point to find common ground. First, through discussions and personal development, each homogenous group worked internally to prepare themselves for the event. Next, the whole group came together to share their experiences of conflict. The event ended by the women asking one another for forgiveness. To seal the activity they washed their hands, symbolizing their commitment to forgive one another.\(^31\)

**Research Findings**

*“There is Just Something There:” Defining Ritual and Its Effects*

What can these stories tell us about ritual in Mindanao and how it is used for peacebuilding? First, it is important to understand how ritual is defined by those involved in interreligious peacebuilding in Mindanao. Most respondents did not give a specific definition of

\(^{29}\) Simbajon and Toots, interview.

\(^{30}\) Ibid.

\(^{31}\) Ibid.
ritual when asked, but instead described examples of shared prayer or joining in Muslim or Christian rituals. Some described newly created rituals. Most described ritual, at least in some way, as a sacred act, a form of prayer, worship, or displaying one’s love of God. Also, most respondents envisioned ritual as something mystical, symbolic, and unexplainable. These definitions reflect much of what ritual theorists have described as basic to ritual (as will be explored below): an act that has symbolic meaning and is connected to something transcendent.

When I asked my respondents what effect ritual has on peacebuilding, almost all stated that when an interreligious group participates in a shared prayer “something is there.” And that something is noticeably missing, or the activity does not flow as smoothly if an interreligious activity is done without some piece of spirituality or ritual. One respondent explained that since ritual is “infused with emotion” it adds “a special something to an otherwise ordinary event.” Similarly, another respondent stated, “with rituals the regular becomes raised to the sacred. Rituals bring a mystical air to relationships [and] ways of doing things.” For example, in one of the rituals described above, the washing of hands by the women marks that expression of forgiveness with a certain depth that a simple “I’m sorry,” may be unable to attain.

Another important effect of ritual is that it is an opportunity to learn from one another. When Christians and Muslims join in each other’s rituals they show a genuine curiosity to learn about one another. “When we follow these curiosities and try to learn we allow the peace and harmony to enter in ourselves and our relationships with ‘the other.’” When Muslims and Christians participate in or observe the rituals of one another the space is opened to ask, “why

32 Simbajon, interview.
33 Adilao, interview.
34 Paul R. Ersando (president of Zion Evangelical School, attorney, pastor, and IRSMP member), interview with the author, September 9, 2010.
35 Toots, interview.
36 Ahmad Cadir (principal, Mariki grade school), interview with the author, September 8, 2010.
37 Although my respondents came to similar definitions regarding ritual, the word often initially registered with them differently. For example, for some of my respondents ritual is most strongly associated with the Lumad tradition. Other respondents, mostly those who were highly educated, understood the term theoretically and gave a voluminous definition. Respondents who were less familiar with the term often needed some help conceptualizing ritual. As the interviewer I would offer them a definition or an example of ritual, drawn from previous interviews, and then I asked them to articulate what effect they think this example would have or does have on peace efforts in Mindanao.
38 Adilao, interview and Arweda B. Jalilul (staff, Peace Advocates Zamboanga), interview with the author, September 8-9, 2010.
39 Adilao, interview and Jalilul, interview.
40 Simbajon and Toots, interview.
41 Grace Rebollos (president, Western Mindanao State University and IRSMP member), interview with the author, September 7, 2010. Jalilul stated similarly that interreligious prayer is a “mystical experience” and an “enlightening moment.” Furthermore, since this something special marks events, one may remain connected to a particular peacebuilding activity, not by remembering what was specifically discussed, but rather by the feel of what occurred during a ritual. Rebollos and Marcelina G. Carpizo (director, Center for Peace and Development, Western Mindanao State University and IRSMP member), September 7, 2010.
42 Adilao, interview.
Interreligious dialogue helps participants exchange ideas and overcome misconceptions of the other. For example, the sharing about Ramadan in the Davao city jail and the interreligious celebration of the Iftar helped Christian participants gain a better understanding of what Ramadan means to their Muslim counterparts.

This space to learn helps Christians and Muslims break down prejudice of the other as they come to understand that they are not so different from one another. Almost every single respondent stated this as an effect of ritual. For example, through interreligious rituals Christians and Muslims become aware that many of their scriptures have similar messages or that they have similar religious practices (such as similarities between the Catholic rosary and the Muslim Tasbih beads).

Notably, one of the major realizations Muslims and Christians have about one another is that they realize they share the same god, even if they pray to that god in different ways. Experiencing one another’s rituals and learning one another’s customs does not mean Muslims and Christians agree with all of each other’s practices, but they at least begin to understand one another, feel much more comfortable in each other’s presence, and cease speaking badly about one another.

Another reported effect of ritual is that it can bring unity into being. As my respondents indicated, when a group takes part in a symbolic activity it “signifies oneness and appreciation of others...Ritual allows us to be one...Ritual is something that binds us with others.” For example, at Ateneo de Zamboanga, a Jesuit University, administrators claim that little discrimination exists among Muslims, Christians, and Lumads. They believe this is largely because the various interreligious dialogue activities and rituals the university hosts have created an atmosphere of harmony.

Many respondents stated that multiple positive effects then flow from this transformation: Muslims and Christians form friendships, build trust, participate in social action together, and ultimately reduce animosity between one another.

A final effect of ritual is linked to the spiritual or sacred aspect of ritual. Practically, since spirituality and religion are important aspects of life for almost all Mindanaoans, it is necessary to infuse these elements into peacebuilding for the activity to be relevant to participants. On a deeper level, Bro. Karl Gaspar, a Mindanaoan peacebuilder, notes that throughout the history of religion it has become clear that ritual is a basic human act. The “mystical and magical” element of ritual is something all can relate to because its effect is intuitive to all.

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43 Rufina Cruz (professor, Western Mindanao State University and IRSMP member), interview with the author, September 7, 2010.
44 Cadir, interview.
45 Adilao, interview.
46 Adilao, interview and Carpizo, interview.
47 Jaafar B. Kimpa (founder and director, Jabu-Jabu and IRSMP member), interview with the author, September 7, 2010.
48 Simbajon and Toots, interview.
49 Ibid.
50 See, for example, Cadir, interview and Father Larry Sabud (Christian Coordinator, Silsilah Forum Davao), interview with the author, November 10, 2010.
51 Darwin Wee (peace journalist), interview with the author, September 9, 2010. Furthermore, opening a peace program without prayer is almost unheard of. And even those who view themselves as secular recognize the utmost importance the sacred is to the people of Mindanao (Wee, interview).
humans. Thus, when Lumads, Christians, and Muslims participate in ritual with one another they are put in touch with the basic meanings of humanity and faith. With something so familiar being shared the defenses of all those participating go down. Participating in ritual intuitively reminds those involved that they are spiritually connected to one another on the basis of their shared humanity, thereby building bridges between conflicting groups.

Ritual Theory and the Mindanao Case

Although my respondents largely believed ritual to be an important part of peacebuilding efforts in Mindanao, how can these claims be substantiated? How does the example of ritual in Mindanao for peacebuilding efforts resonate with the work or theologians and anthropologists, among others? I now turn to the work of ritual theorists to evaluate the Mindanao case and the effectiveness of the use of ritual for peacebuilding efforts.

Over the course of the 20th century, the work of Emile Durkheim, Mircea Eliade, and Clifford Geertz has created much of the foundation for the development of ritual theory. While these three ritual theorists place their study of ritual within different frameworks, and argue different conclusions, they all view ritual as an aspect of the sacred or religion that exists in dialectic with belief, or as Geertz terms it, worldview. Ritual is the act that embodies belief or thoughts about the sacred or religion. For example, Eliade would describe going to a Christian church on Sundays as ritual because it is the reenactment and reflects Christians’ belief in the Judeo-Christian god resting on the seventh day after creating the heavens and the earth.

52 Brother Karl Gaspar, interview with the author, November 27, 2010.
53 Ibid.
54 Ibid.
55 Eliade, a historian of religion, states through an analysis of “archaic religions,” that this world gains meaning through its connection to the transcendent, to the cosmos or gods (Cosmos and History, 3-4). For example, people often worship objects in this world because they are manifested with the sacred, not because of what the object is itself. Eliade labels such objects “hierophanies.” (Sacred and Profane, 11-12). Human acts can also reflect belief in the sacred. For human acts to have sacred meaning, they must be a reproduction of some “primordial act (Cosmos and History, 4).” For example, marriage rites are reenactments of the first union of cosmic elements or two gods. The human reenactment of the first cosmic acts leads us to Eliade’s understanding of ritual, that is, ritual is the repetition of the first acts of god (Cosmos and History, 21-27, Sacred and Profane, 99, 202). Mircea Eliade, The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1959) and Mircea Eliade, Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return (New York: Harper & Row, 1959).

Simplistically, Durkheim, a sociologist who studied the societal construction of religion, understands religion as the realm of the sacred (the profane beings its antithesis). This realm is constituted by beliefs and rituals. Beliefs are “states of opinion (51).” Beliefs explain those things that are sacred, the relationship between things that are sacred, and their relationship with the profane (56). On the other hand, rituals are “determined modes of action (51)” that are “rules of conduct” for a human’s relationship to the sacred (56). See Emile Durkheim, The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life (New York: The Free Press, 1915).

Geertz, a cultural anthropologist, explains that any given culture has both an ethos and a worldview. An ethos is that which is moral, “the underlying attitude [a culture has] toward themselves and their world... (127)” On the other hand, worldview is a culture’s “concept of nature, of self, of society (127).” Geertz associates religious belief with worldview and religious ritual with ethos (127). Worldview (beliefs) and ethos (ritual) interact with one another to become “an essential element of religions,” their values, orders, or meanings (127). See Clifford Geertz, The Interpretation of Cultures (USA: BasicBooks, 1973).

56 See, for example, Eliade, Cosmos and History, Durkheim, The Elementary Forms, and Geertz, The Interpretation of Cultures.
These definitions largely align with how my respondents in Mindanao would describe ritual -- their use of worship, prayer, or sacred acts as examples of ritual, aligns ritual with a religious meaning -- an act that reflects and reinforces belief.

Much of the early work of ritual theorists, including Durkheim and Eliade, is understood as “structural-functional” theories of ritual, that is, these theories state that rituals seek to maintain “the cohesion of a social system” by repeatedly reenacting the way the world should be ordered and imbued with meaning.\(^5\) In contrast, the work of peacebuilding is often changing the current, unjust or violent social system into something new. While this basic understanding of ritual as a sacred act placed in this structural-functional system is echoed by my respondents, for ritual to adequately contribute to peace, peacebuilders must understand how to use ritual to create the possibility for positive change (in contrast to ritual being used to maintain the status quo or support violent ends, of which historical examples there are many).

Are these interfaith rituals in Mindanao simply maintaining the current system, or are they contributing to positive change, as my respondents claim? To understand how this can be done, one must turn to Victor Turner.

Turner, a cultural anthropologist, drawing on van Gennep’s concept of liminality, describes how ritual can contribute to change. Turner explains that within rituals there is a middle stage where the ritual participants are in a liminal state, or in other words, are “in between.”\(^5\) This liminal state is characterized as the opposite of the everyday structure of society. Turner labels this anti-structure “communitas.”\(^6\) Turner primarily describes communitas as a moment in which the ritual provides an experience of egalitarianism among the participants.\(^7\) An episode of communitas “revitalizes” the participants as they carry these lessons of equality back into their daily, structured lives.\(^8\) Thus, exposure to communitas should make “structure less divisive or alienating and more egalitarian, less constrained and more open. Ritual is a principal means by which society ‘grows’ and moves into the future.”\(^9\) In

\(^5\) Bobby C. Alexander, Victor Turner Revisited: Ritual as Social Change (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1991), 3. Geertz does attempt to move away from this static theory by explaining how rituals can effect change. Generally, Geertz states that ritual can effect change in a society when that ritual fails. A ritual fails when the meaning that constitutes a culture’s belief (their worldview) no longer correlates with the “patterning of social interaction,” or the way the people within a culture carry out their ethos in the patterns of daily life (169). Geertz’s view of ritual’s ability to effect change, however, is still limited. Ritual simply reflects the change already occurring within a group’s patterns of their daily life. See Clifford Geertz, The Interpretation of Cultures (USA: BasicBooks, 1973).

\(^6\) Ibid., 512. Turner borrows the concept of liminality from van Gennep.

\(^7\) Ibid., 513. The communitas experienced in ritual is the opposite of the structured, unequal society experienced in our daily lives. Since ritual participants cannot remain in this liminal state, either the ritual will end and the participants will return to their usual structured lives, or a structure will be created to govern the communitas.

\(^8\) Ibid., 518-519.

\(^9\) Alexander, Victor Turner Revisited, 3. Tom Driver, a Protestant theologian, deepens the work of Turner by explaining his concept of the “transformative performance” of ritual. Driver argues that for anyone to participate in rituals they must view the world as spiritual and see their own potential as a free agent able to transform this world (175-176). This “transformative performance” is not only the ability to envision a different world, but also the ability to “expose society’s injustices and contradictions (190).” See Tom F. Driver, The Magic of Ritual: Our Need for Liberating Rites that Transform Our Lives and Our Communities (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1991).
his essay, Oblivion, Marc Augé further describes how rituals of liminality bring about this possibility of change, when he discusses three different forms of rites, or rituals (which for purposes of his essay, he corresponds to the three forms of oblivion). The second touches on this idea of liminality -- he speaks of rites of inversion where this liminal space is experienced, explaining it as a time when the past and future is forgotten, and participants are rooted in the present.

In the Mindanao case, many of the rituals described were set apart from or opposite of the everyday structure. Rituals took place in retreat settings, in an unfrequented part of town, in a shared inter-faith space. The simple act of setting apart from the everyday division and derision, or the simple act of having Muslims, Christians, and Lumads in a shared space, can be a radical action. Furthermore, many rituals ensure that Christians, Lumads, and Muslims have equal time to share a prayer, or speak about their beliefs -- an equalizing moment not present in everyday life. As Turner explains, these rituals can be creating liminal spaces, allowing for a certain egalitarianism that is difficult to attain in one’s everyday life. This liminal space is key -- it allows for the possibility of something different than the status quo, “The potential fluidity of liminality is central to understanding why rituals are often essential in enabling social groups to adapt to and institutionalize change.” Thus, in ritual one could experience and express the hope for a transformation of violence into peace, even though it may still be too soon to actually live this outside of the ritual space. From Augé’s perspective, ritual has the potential to provide a space to “suspend” the conflict. One way it does this is by allowing for “exceptional moments” where participants “no longer resemble themselves,” and have the opportunity to “surrender themselves lovingly to the gaze of the other.” In other words, participants can forget the past and the future, and just be with one another in the present moment, genuinely experiencing each other, in potentially new ways. The liminal space allows for the possibility of peace to break through the everyday, largely divisive, experiences of participants.

While ritual theorists can help us to understand the impact of ritual in peacebuilding efforts in Mindanao, it is also important to turn to the study of ritual within the field of peacebuilding. Lisa Schirch, a peacebuilding scholar and practitioner, has pioneered this study. Using examples from case studies, including the use of ritual within diplomatic negotiations, indigenous right to self-determination campaigns, and community building activities with youth, Schirch essentially argues that ritual should be a tool peacebuilders draw on to supplement other traditional peace processes, such as negotiations or mediations.

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64 Marc Augé, Oblivion, (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2004), 56.
65 Turner in Grimes, Readings in Ritual Studies, 513.
68 Augé, 56.
69 Augé, 79.
70 Noting the wide disagreement on the definition of ritual Schirch defines it as follows: “ritual uses symbolic actions to communicate a forming or transforming message in a unique social space (Schirch, Ritual and Symbol, 17).”
71 Schirch, Ritual and Symbol, 1.
Conflicts can be caused or fueled by material needs (food, water, shelter), by social needs (sense of belonging, participation in decision-making), and by symbolic or cultural needs (freedom to practice one’s religion or express one’s identity). Usually conflicts are fueled by a conglomeration of unmet needs, not just one category of needs alone. Thus, a myriad of tools are necessary for peacebuilders to holistically respond to a conflict. Ritual is one such tool. When a conflict is being fueled by clashing values or perceptions and experienced through “physical senses, emotions, and values,” the unique functions of ritual, which often express worldview and identity through symbolic modes and draw on senses and emotions, can become avenues for transforming these issues.

Practically, Schirch explains, one function of ritual is that it can be a “peacebuilding pantomime.” Echoing Turner’s thoughts on liminality, the unique social setting in which ritual takes place allows for people to try out new ways of being with one another. In Mindanao it may be difficult for Muslims and Christians to live together in peace immediately, but in a ritual these same people have the opportunity to express a willingness to do so and try to make small steps towards this peace. For example, the opening prayer of the Mindanao Week of Peace took place in a Muslim area of the city, where Christians rarely go. By standing together in this neighborhood, Christians and Muslims demonstrate a willingness to live together in peace, even if this is still quite difficult to do outside of this special event or prayer space.

Furthermore, Schirch claims that ritual can be performative -- ritual has the power to bring into being what it symbolizes. Not only does ritual allow participants to try out having constructive relationships, but the symbolic act begins to actually foster these constructive relationships. Thus, in Mindanao the act of saying that Lumads, Christians, and Muslims are one in a ritual context in some way begins to transform the barriers between these communities into constructive relationships. This supports what my respondents stated about ritual bringing unity into existence, such as the administrator at the university that attributed interreligious harmony among students to the various dialogues and rituals that take place. These rituals created harmony on the campus.

The understanding of ritual within peacebuilding is further defined by the work of Robert Schreiter and Mohammed Abu-Nimer. These scholars offer both depth to the understanding of ritual, as well as an understanding of how ritual can be used within specific settings, such as Catholic peacebuilding (Schreiter) and interreligious dialogue efforts (Abu-Nimer). Since I am analyzing ritual within the realm of religious peacebuilding, and as a part of interreligious dialogue efforts, the insights of Abu-Nimer and Schreiter are invaluable.
First, Schreiter and Abu-Nimer discuss the unique way ritual acts as a communication tool. Abu-Nimer states that since ritual is a “powerful means of communication among members of the same religion,” it also has the potential to become a form of communication in interreligious settings. Schreiter, writing from a Catholic perspective (but discussed here are his general thoughts on ritual), states “ritual is the grammar that makes certain actions intelligible and capable of being shared within a group.” For example, ritual has the power to “express the inexpressible.” Often the trauma one experiences in a conflict setting is too difficult to articulate, particularly when trying to connect with adversaries who may be viewed as perpetrators of that violence. Ritual allows one to express those emotions when words are inadequate.

Schreiter and Abu-Nimer also argue that ritual as a form of communication can be used to help one share her worldview with others and transform preexisting biased worldviews. Schreiter highlights how ritual does this through the use of drama to share one’s personal story. When there is an acute need for adversaries to see one another’s worldview, ritual can become a place for creatively unfolding personal stories for “the other” to understand. And Abu-Nimer claims that interreligious rituals can open “a window onto the meaning system of the other...to temporarily experience the other’s worldview,” thereby breaking down the prejudice and bias of adversaries.

This theory is supported by my respondents in multiple ways. First, respondents find it helpful to simply have a space to communicate and share their religious beliefs with one another -- ritual opens up a space for curiosity, or it opens up the lines of communication. This communication, in turn, helps participants break down prejudices and build bridges among themselves. Participants also stated that rituals allow the expression of the inexpressible, such as apologies in the ritual of women washing their hands or participants burning pieces of paper.

democracy and market economies (Daniel Philpott, “Introduction: Searching for Strategy in an Age of Peacebuilding” Strategies of Peace, 5).” Religion has little or no role. However, Gerard Powers states that viewing peacebuilding with a strategic, holistic lens, requires us to reject this view, and instead include all actors or ideas that could contribute to peacebuilding, including religion. While religion has the potential to foment violence, it also has a wealth of resources that can be used for peacebuilding, such as core principles of love, forgiveness and solidarity, often a rootedness in the culture of the conflict-affected area, and a mass of people that can be mobilized, just to name a few. See Gerard F. Powers, “Religion and Peacebuilding” in Strategies of Peace. Powers draws much of his argument from scholars of religious peacebuilding R. Scott Appleby, Marc Gopin, and Mohammed Abu-Nimer. These authors all argue religion can be used to foment violence or promote peace. See, for example, R. Scott Appleby, The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence, and Reconciliation (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2000), Mohammed Abu-Nimer, Unity in Diversity, and Marc Gopin, Between Eden and Armageddon (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

83 Abu-Nimer, Khoury, and Welty, Unity in Diversity, 24.
85 Ibid., 224.
86 Ibid.
87 Ibid., 225.
where they wrote their prejudices. In this ritual, the sacred act communicated more than language could. These small openings in communication between conflicting groups may seem insignificant, but they are the building blocks of creating peace at the grassroots level.

Furthermore, this communication is of a spiritual kind, what Abu-Nimer and Schreiter call opening up one another’s worldview and meaning system, my respondents stated was sharing in the “basic meanings of humanity and faith.” This element of spirituality is different form of “communication” that helps participants share their worldview in an abstract way, potentially, performatively bringing unity into being. While this last effect may seem somewhat abstract, it resonates with Abu-Nimer’s claim that the spiritual and emotional aspects of ritual allow the participants to have a deeper experience of the interreligious dialogue or peace activity and a deeper connection with one another. Davidheiser, for example, describes from an anthropological perspective that peacebuilding rituals can be effective because they reflect both agency and structure -- they allow for participants to creatively redefine their violent reality, but by drawing from pre-existing structures, that is, rituals are often rooted in the participants existing norms, values, and practices. In the Mindanao case, rituals have buy-in from participants because they draw from the participants’ known spiritual practices, but they move the participants towards constructive relationships because the rituals are adapted to promote a new meaning of peacebuilding.

The work of these ritual theorists supports the claims of my respondents with regards to the effects of ritual in a peacebuilding context. The theory gives deeper context and language around what ritual participants in Mindanao say they experience through interreligious ritual. However, while many believe that ritual is effective and brings about unity and peace, how can the understanding of ritual as a peacebuilding tool be enhanced? How can we further our understanding of how ritual exposes injustice and moves society towards a more egalitarian structure in a conflict setting? Also, drawing on the work of ritual theorist Catherine Bell, how are power dynamics embedded in peacebuilding rituals? How can we create rituals that avoid dangerous pitfalls, and create positive, peaceful change? I will now draw on the theory of ritual theorists and my research in Mindanao to identify areas for improvement in the use and study of ritual within peacebuilding efforts, particularly in Mindanao.

Questions Posed by the Use of Ritual and Possible Answers

Although ritual has several positive effects on peacebuilding in Mindanao as described by my respondents, and verified by ritual theorists, there are also challenges posed by its use. One of the difficulties in using interreligious rituals in Mindanao arises from the very problem they seek to address: it can be challenging to overcome the divisions between Muslims and Christians, even in attempting to bring them to share in a ritual together. David Smock, who has spent years studying the use of interreligious dialogue for peacebuilding, explains:

When two religious groups have been on opposite sides of an armed conflict, even when religion has not been the principal basis for conflict, participants confront a history of hostility, injuries inflicted, and varying combinations of anger, hatred, and guilt that seriously compound the complexity of the dialogue process. If participants are

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89 Ibid, 17.
90 Davidheiser, “Rituals and Conflict Transformation.”
expected to move beyond the past to joint planning for the future, the process is further complicated.\textsuperscript{91}

I encountered this complexity when one of my respondents who is heavily involved in interreligious activities in Zamboanga stated that Christians cannot participate in the rituals of Muslims -- since he is a Christian, he is strictly an observer during these rituals.\textsuperscript{92} Does his lack of participation indicate that he still holds barriers between himself and Muslims? Or is it simply a statement of fact? Is this attitude an example of how rituals can further divisions rather than heal them? There often seemed to be a sentiment from my respondents that ritual shows them they can live together in peace, but that they will still remain separate in their daily lives and practices. Is separate but peaceful enough for the development of positive peace?

Fr. Larry Sabud of Silsilah offers a suggestion for navigating this difficulty -- all who are involved in interreligious dialogue are on their own path. Some, such as many of those involved in Silsilah, may have the education and experience to feel comfortable fully participating in one another’s rituals. Others may only be comfortable with witnessing for now.\textsuperscript{93} And even witnessing is important, it is a first step.\textsuperscript{94} “Interreligious dialogue is not automatic, you can’t program it...Be open to surprises...The arrival is not very important, it’s the journey...You don’t know where you [will go], but the day to day friendship building is important.”\textsuperscript{95} The most important step for peacebuilding, suggests Fr. Sabud, is for people to get involved.\textsuperscript{96}

Similarly, Mohammed Abu-Nimer explains that interreligious dialogue processes often happen in four phases (although the process “is not linear and its phases cannot be mechanically separated”).\textsuperscript{97} When participants first become involved in interreligious dialogue they partake in polite discussion of commonalities, coupled with a promotion of the positive elements of peace and forgiveness in their respective traditions. In the second phase participants still focus their attention on their shared similarities, but also begin to uncover some of their differences and prejudices.\textsuperscript{98} In this phase “dialoguers tend to create rituals or ceremonies that all allow them to practice their faiths separately but beside each other.”\textsuperscript{99} The third phase is marked by heightened tension and mistrust as differences are finally deeply explored. In the fourth phase the participants come to a level of comfort with their differences, trust one another, and begin to organize actions to promote peace.\textsuperscript{100} Perhaps, for example,

\textsuperscript{91} Smock, “Introduction,” 9.
\textsuperscript{92} Ersando, interview.
\textsuperscript{93} Sabud, interview.
\textsuperscript{94} Simbajon and Toots, interview.
\textsuperscript{95} Sabud, interview.
\textsuperscript{96} My respondents at the Ateneo Culture and Peace Institute pointed towards a similar, long-term development of Mindanaoans opening up to the use of ritual. My respondents explained that at first many people do not want to be involved in ritual because they find it “too mushy or weird. Then they are forced to participate and in the process they begin to participate freely, they [cannot] resist it (Simbajon, interview).” Initially, ritual may have little effect on participants, but instead of ending this activity, this is a reason to continue it -- the life-changing effects of ritual can only be seen after they are repeated over the course of a long-term journey of peacebuilding (Carpizo, interview and Cruz, interview).
\textsuperscript{97} Abu-Nimer, “The Miracles of Transformation,” 27.
\textsuperscript{98} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{99} Ibid., 28.
\textsuperscript{100} Ibid., 28-29.
the Christian respondent who stated he could not participate in Muslim rituals, only observe, was somewhere in these phases -- where he was not yet comfortable entering into the rituals of others, or downright experiencing mistrust and tension. These four phases, coupled with an understanding of how difficult it can be for Christians and Muslims in Mindanao to participate in dialogue and ritual together, offers lessons to peacebuilders doing this work. Peacebuilders must understand that involvement in interreligious dialogue is a long-term process, and it will take much time, effort, and patience to help participants lose their prejudices and participate freely. In dialogue and ritual “one must begin with people where they are, not where one might wish them to be.”

Not only does the animosity among Muslims and Christians complexify the use of interreligious rituals, but so do divisions that may not be negative. There are differences that need to be respected, but that may complicate the dialogue process and be difficult to navigate in a culture of prejudice. For example, according to Muslims in Mindanao, Christians cannot participate in the formal, five times a day prayers of Muslims. Silsilah has avoided breaking this rule by explaining that the Muslim prayers Christians participate in are du’a, or spontaneous prayer, not the salat (or salah), or formal Muslim prayers. Some Christians, however, have taken it personally that there were Muslim prayers they could not participate in, since Christians do not have the same restrictions in their tradition. This issue highlights that Christians and Muslims, regardless of how much ritual and interreligious dialogue helps them to share in commonalities, do have differences that will need to be maintained. The question arises, then, how can interreligious dialogue and rituals bond Lumads, Muslims and Christians while also respecting traditional practices? Does a focus on commonalities in interreligious dialogue processes seek to avoid facing the difficult fact that there are necessary divisions among Mindanaoans?

To work with this issue Fr. Sabud notes that he no longer says Muslims and Christians learn what they have in common through interreligious dialogue, but that they learn they have “common concerns.” Changing the terminology allows space to respect the important differences Christians and Muslims do have, while recognizing that together they can work for their common need for peace and justice. Furthermore, he believes that after time, once a deep enough friendship is developed among Muslims, Christians, and Lumads, “differences are no [longer] an issue.” Again, Abu-Nimer’s phases explain that groups in conflict with one another can get to a place where they are comfortable with one another’s differences while also celebrating their similarities and promoting peaceful action. This stage, however, is the very last one in the process of interreligious dialogue.

102 Adilao, interview.
103 Ibid.
104 Ibid., and Sabud, interview.
105 Sabud, interview.
106 Ibid.
107 Ibid.
Rituals can actually act as a unique tool for helping interreligious dialogue participants make this move from focusing on commonalities to becoming comfortable with one another’s differences. Rituals have the power to transform a destructive system or relationships, not by completely doing away with them, but by slowly changing them into something positive. Groups in conflict “need ritual spaces to build their relationship as well as nonviolent elements to express their differences.” As one respondent noted, “by participating in rituals we are not less Christian or less Muslim, nor do you become the other faith...rituals help us to belong.”

Furthermore, Schirch explains that ritual, because of its ambiguous nature, is an important tool for bringing together people who are at odds with one another. Symbols can be interpreted differently and are “flexible enough to adapt to many different worldviews.” Thus, if people disagree with one another they will at least be able to share in a ritual, because they do not have to agree on the interpretation of the ritual. Schirch draws on Durkheim to state that “it [is] ritual’s symbolic nature that allow[s] individuals to come together, delicately dance around their differences, and participate in an action that [is] meaningful to all.” Ritual is a tool for “meeting people where they are,” its ambiguous nature allows participants in any of Abu-Nimer’s phases of interreligious dialogue to participate in the ritual in whatever way they feel comfortable, whether that is celebrating diversity or merely witnessing. As Schirch argues, even if participants interpret the ritual as they wish, the ritual will still have a positive impact.

Despite these positive suggestions that ritual can foster peace no matter the individual position of a participant, Bell’s ideas regarding power point toward the need for a deeper understanding of this issue of participation and maintaining difference. Just as Turner contributes a theory of change to the use of ritual, Catherine Bell, a professor of religious studies, provides a theory of power. She disagrees with Durkheim that ritual is merely a form of social control. Instead, Bell draws on Foucault’s theory of power to argue that powers of ritual and peacebuilding in need of further research.

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110 Ibid., 141.
111 Carpizo, interview.
112 Schirch, Ritual and Symbol, 82.
113 Ibid.
114 Ibid.
115 Ibid., 82-83. Of course it is important to be aware of the possible negative effects of this ambiguous nature of ritual. Ritual can be used for violent, destructive purposes. A peacebuilder who uses ritual must allow space for the participants to interpret it according to their comfort level, but not so much ambiguity that the ritual could be exploited for any purpose, especially violent ones (Schirch, Ritual and Symbol, 143-145). This is an area of ritual and peacebuilding in need of further research.
116 The other major contribution of Catherine Bell to ritual theory is her overall critique of the theory. Bell deconstructs ritual theory by uncovering how it is often marked by a “predetermined circularity (viii).” That is, many theorists describe ritual as an action, opposed to belief as thought, but then also state ritual is a “mechanism to reintegrate this thought-action dichotomy (20).” To avoid this circularity Bell chooses not to create a new theory of ritual. Instead she argues ritual would be better understood not as a separate type of act, but as a way of acting. Bell describes this as “ritualization,” a “way of doing things to trigger the perception that these practices are distinct and the associations that they engender are special (220).” See Catherine Bell, Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).
117 Bell, Ritual Theory, 171 and chapter 9.
Social control and of resistance are inherently evident in any ritual.\textsuperscript{118} Ritualization, whether intended or not, will always be rooted in a particular construction of domination that is imparted onto participants through their involvement in the ritual.\textsuperscript{119} However, because ritual participants choose to participate, and bring into the ritual their own history and identity, they appropriate that domination in their own way -- an appropriation that can become a site of resistance.\textsuperscript{120} In this way, Bell’s theory of power lends itself to the idea that rituals can be executed with a goal of subverting a particular construction or narrative of control and domination (e.g. the dominant Christian culture in Mindanao supporting unjust systems that oppress Muslims and Christians, or changing the narrative of Muslims as terrorists), to support peaceful ends. Nevertheless, it is easy to conjure examples of how rituals have been used to support violent conflict -- the regular meetings used to indoctrinate Hitler Youth, the rituals of boot camp that form soldiers,\textsuperscript{121} and the blessing of soldiers before they enter battle by religious leaders are just a few examples. Rituals clearly “have a complex role in violence and peacemaking,” and peacebuilding must ensure to use rituals for peacebuilding efforts, in place of using rituals to deepen divisions.\textsuperscript{122}

What elements of power in Mindanao are subtly reinforced or subverted in these peacebuilding rituals? Bell reminds us that ritual is an inherently political act -- in creating a ritual a person attempts to strategically impart onto the participants (whether consciously or not) certain values.\textsuperscript{123} Does lack of ritual participation come from a deep subconscious need to resist this embodiment, or to resist the change ritual may bring? Is participation easier to garner from participants if the ritual is planned by all three groups in Mindanao? Is resistance to a ritual stronger if representatives of only one religious group are organizing the event? The conflict in Mindanao has created a situation in which Lumad and Muslim populations are largely disempowered. In any attempt to use ritual as a peacebuilding tool, the peacebuilder must ensure that such marginalization is not embodied in the ritual.\textsuperscript{124} The question of power as a part of ritual and peacebuilding is clearly an area in need of further research in Mindanao and peacebuilding ritual theory.

Two important ways to begin to address these difficult issues of power is by fostering intrafaith dialogues and the creation of new rituals. Many peacebuilding NGOs who have been doing interreligious dialogue for years are now taking a step back and forming intrafaith dialogues. Marcelina Carpizo, director of the Center for Peace and Development at Western Mindanao State University, explains:

We need to first get in touch with our own cultures, that is the only way to appreciate each other. Before interreligious dialogue you need intrafaith dialogue. Let’s first clean

\textsuperscript{118} See Ibid., chapter 9.
\textsuperscript{119} Ibid., 206.
\textsuperscript{120} Ibid., 207-208.
\textsuperscript{121} Davidheiser, “Rituals and Conflict Transformation.”
\textsuperscript{122} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{123} Bell, Ritual Theory, 206-207.
\textsuperscript{124} Abu-Nimer, in his work, states the need to address power imbalances in any interreligious dialogue process: “Addressing the imbalance of power that exists outside the dialogue room (or in reality) is central in designing and managing an effective interfaith dialogue process. The interfaith dialogue framework cannot bring such imbalance of power into the dialogue without intentionally addressing it through various arrangements (Changes in the locations, timing, set-up, and so on).” Abu-Nimer, “The Miracles of Transformation,” 21.
our own house, let’s first understand ourselves, and then when in interreligious dialogue you can speak passionately about your own faith in an interreligious dialogue setting. You can only help others understand your faith, traditions, and culture if you really know your own faith. If we are confident about our faith we don’t have to be worried about being converted, which is a common criticism of interreligious dialogue.\textsuperscript{125}

The more Christians and Muslims are comfortable with their own traditions the more they are sure of themselves when participating in interreligious activities. With such confidence, fear of losing one’s self in the dialogue, or being converted, or being unable to explain one’s own faith can disappear.\textsuperscript{126} Furthermore, intrafaith dialogue can give participants the tools, from one’s own faith, such as spiritual resources or theological language, to participate in dialogue.\textsuperscript{127} This preparation empowers participants to take part in interreligious activities and rituals, thereby lessening the fear that the ritual will have power over the participants.

Another way to improve the use of ritual is by increasing the creation of new rituals.\textsuperscript{128} Muslims, Christians, and Lumads in Mindanao are often referred to as the “tri-people.”\textsuperscript{129} While this label is intended to respect the triple diversity present in the Southern Philippines, it risks over-emphasizing that the people of Mindanao are primarily divided by religious identity, a division which has often been a source of violence.\textsuperscript{130} Are Mindanaoans not also teachers, spouses, parents, youth, boxers, etc.? In conflict one individual or group identity is usually threatened.\textsuperscript{131} Thus, the groups in conflict tend to define themselves by that one threatened identity, rather than the myriad of identities they live by. Then, conflicting groups appear at odds with one another since this one identity is deemed incompatible with that of the other.\textsuperscript{132} For Schirch, ritual can alleviate this situation because it “transforms the focus of identity and locus of conflict from one identity, such as ethnicity, to a more inclusive, complete, and varied set of identities.”\textsuperscript{133}

Newly created rituals in Mindanao move away from a sole focus on religion, but instead can be used to highlight the other aspects of identity of Muslims, Christians, and Lumads.\textsuperscript{134} The example of the ritual in which women shared their experience of the conflict, as women,

\textsuperscript{125} Carpizo, interview. It is important to note, however, that intrafaith processes may not always be possible. At times, the intensity of the conflict necessitates immediate interreligious dialogue efforts and the preparation process is opted out of. During lulls in the conflict, however, intrafaith efforts can be fostered so as to ensure the improved use of interreligious dialogue during these calm times and in violent outbreaks of violence. Leguro, interview.

\textsuperscript{126} Sabud, interview.

\textsuperscript{127} For example, Phan writes about the Catholic doctrine and theology in support of interreligious dialogue in an effort to foster intrafaith dialogue on the topic, and to encourage Catholics to participate in both intra- and interreligious dialogues. See, Phan, “Peacebuilding and Reconciliation,” Peacebuilding: Catholic Theology, Ethics, and Praxis.

\textsuperscript{128} Calvo hinted at this in an interview when he stated that “there is a need to create rituals together.” Calvo, interview.

\textsuperscript{129} See, for example, Rudy and Leguro, “The Diverse Terrain,” iii.

\textsuperscript{130} This paragraph, as well as the following, greatly benefits from discussions with Chernor Bah (master’s student, Kroc Institute for International Peacebuilding), Fall 2010.

\textsuperscript{131} Schirch, Ritual and Symbol,123-127.

\textsuperscript{132} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{133} Ibid., 127.

\textsuperscript{134} Carpizo, interview and Simbajon and Toots, interview.
forgave one another of violence, and washed each other’s hands is a prime example. Instead of highlighting that the participants represented the tri-people and that shared prayer demonstrated the ability of the tri-people to get along with one another, the ritual helped the women connect with one another based on a completely different identity -- their gender. Additionally, newly created rituals avoid the sticky issue of whether Christians can participate in Muslim rituals and vice versa. Lastly, power imbalances, while they still exist between the implementers of the ritual and the participants, are diminished in new rituals since there is no risk of overemphasizing one religious tradition over the other. Abu-Nimer calls these new rituals a “third culture.” He contends that these rituals may allow for a “deeper level of dialogue, because they are still rooted in the symbols, practices, and rituals of participants’ tradition, but create the space for shared newness.” These “third culture” rituals allow for a new, shared culture, apart from the cultures embedded in the conflict, to be created among the divided groups.

Ways Forward for Improving Ritual in Mindanao

Above I explored a number of issues that arise from the use of ritual and interreligious dialogue in peacebuilding in Mindanao, while also offering some preliminary suggestions for improvement for peacebuilders engaged in interreligious dialogue and ritual. Ritual is in no way a panacea for healing conflict, and, like any method, can be fraught with pitfalls (e.g. unhealthy power dynamics), however, it offers one potential way to bring together divided groups, and open up a dialogue. In addition to their support of using ritual for peacebuilding, my respondents also suggested immediate changes that can be instituted to increase the effectiveness of ritual as a peacebuilding tool in Mindanao.

First, a major gap in my research is the lack of indigenous voices and rituals. This represents a general gap in peacebuilding efforts in Mindanao. Much more needs to be done to include Lumads. For example, during the opening prayer of the Mindanao Week of Peace in Davao a Muslim read from the Quran, a Christian read from the Bible, but a Lumad was not given the time to do the equivalent -- to perform a ritual. Two of my indigenous respondents who attended this activity felt this was insensitive. Furthermore, many respondents noted the need to draw on the wisdom and rituals of Lumads for peacebuilding. “Old wisdoms can be used as a guide to the future.” It is important to “revive rituals and traditional practices of the past” to inform the peacebuilding work of today.

Another area in which rituals can be improved as a tool for peacebuilding is by increasing these activities. There are not enough interreligious rituals being conducted in

136 Abu-Nimer, Unity in Diversity, 25.
137 Rebollos, interview and Simbajon and Toots, interview.
138 Doris Roa and Melania B. Ayag (interreligious youth peace camp chaperones), interview with the author, November 25, 2010.
139 Rebollos, interview.
140 Carpizo, interview and Rebollos, interview. Rebollos states that it is important to revive indigenous rituals, but peacebuilders should not merely appropriate Lumad rituals for their own purposes. This would be disrespectful of the Lumad tradition and culture.
Mindanao in order for them to have an expansive impact. For example, in Mariki, a barangay in the city of Zamboanga, youth peace camps have successfully brought Muslim, Christian, and Lumad youth together, but this work has not been spread to other barangays in the city. Furthermore, “rituals need good leadership and good funding to continually spread them in the community and thus increase their effectiveness.” An increase in interest and resources for interreligious rituals can help to expand their impact all over Mindanao.

Lastly, interreligious dialogue and ritual can be improved in Mindanao by balancing the use of dialogue and ritual to strengthen relationships and transform worldviews, with using these efforts to address specific conflict issues. Some of my respondents stated the need for interreligious dialogue “to touch the realities of the people.” For example, Fr. Eliseo Mercado, director of the Institute for Autonomy and Governance in Mindanao, stated that interreligious dialogue must address the issues at stake in the conflict in Mindanao, such as ancestral domain or governance, or it is useless. If interreligious dialogue does not address the issues of the conflict, it can alienate people who may feel momentarily happy by the experience, but will still face the same conflict issues in their lives. He laments that the tendency in the peace process is to put religion first, when the conflict is about political issues.

Like ritual theorists Turner and Driver, Mercado wants ritual to be used to uncover injustices. Abu-Nimer echoes these sentiments, stating that interreligious dialogue often needs to include a collaborative task, or some element of doing something to promote peace. “For the religious majority, insight and empathy may often be sufficient. But members of the religious minority tend to demand more than ‘talk’ and ‘insights.’” Ritual and interreligious dialogue can ignore the valid political and historical reasons behind the conflict.

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141 May M. Manduzo (member, WEZWASPAN), September 8, 2010.
142 Cadir, interview.
143 Cruz, interview.
144 The call to increase this work is particularly pertinent at this time in the peacebuilding history of Mindanao. Peacebuilding has not yet recovered from an escalation of the conflict in 2008. Much of the dynamism with which interreligious dialogue processes began a few decades ago has now fizzled and many peacebuilders are burned out. Some organizations, including Silsilah and Peace Advocates Zamboanga, and universities, including Western Mindanao State and Ateneo de Zamboanga, are still leading the way, but these are only pockets of peacebuilding. There is a serious need to re-infuse these efforts with energy (Gaspar, interview).
145 Calvo, interview.
146 Father Eliseo Mercado (director, Institute for Autonomy and Governance), interview with the author, December 2, 2010.
150 Ibid.
and further disempower the minority groups involved if no concrete changes are made to alleviate discrimination.\textsuperscript{151}

Nevertheless, ritual (and interreligious dialogue) as a way to form relationship and intimacy, and ritual (and interreligious dialogue) as a way to deal with the conflict issues do not have to be opposed to one another. As Lederach advocates, peacebuilders do not have to see these functions as either/or, but as both/and.\textsuperscript{152} When ritual is used within the strategic peacebuilding context it becomes apparent that ritual can serve any number of functions.\textsuperscript{153} For a peacebuilder to use a strategic lens, he will use a peacebuilding tool as is needed to respond to the particular conflict environment, he will link his efforts with those of other peacebuilders, and he will adapt his methods depending on the needs of those he is working with.\textsuperscript{154}

Ritual, when viewed as a strategic peacebuilding tool, can be adapted depending on whether the ritual is being used at the grassroots or high-level diplomatic negotiations, or whether the participants need to focus on commonalities, celebrate differences, or respond to a conflict issue. In short, ritual can be used to deal with conflict issues and to foster harmonious relationships. One important principle to remember, however, is that regardless of how interreligious dialogue and ritual is used, the intended purpose must always be communicated clearly to participants.\textsuperscript{155} A clear, communicated purpose will help avoid any confusion for participants as to whether they are participating to build relationships or to discuss conflict issues.

\textbf{Conclusion: Ritualizing Peacebuilding}

Throughout this paper I have sought to explore the use of interreligious rituals as a tool for fostering peace among Muslims and Christians at the grassroots in Mindanao. Most of my respondents affirmed the importance of ritual within peacebuilding. To them ritual is a sacred act that deepens the meaning of a peacebuilding activity, that opens up spaces for learning among Muslims and Christians, and results in the building up of constructive relationships among these groups. My respondents, however, do not shy away from the challenges that arise from using ritual for peacebuilding purposes. Often it can be difficult to bring Christians and Muslims to even sit down together, and it is a delicate process to respect the diversity of the participants, while also emphasizing the commonalities they share, and maintaining a balance of power. Nevertheless, with the help of my respondents, I have explored possible solutions for navigating these difficulties, including, practicing patience with the various phases of dialogue,

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item ibid.
\item Strategic peacebuilding can be defined as peacebuilding that “nurture[s] constructive human relationships. To be relevant, it must do so at every level of society and across the potentially polarizing lines of ethnicity, class, religion, and race....It focuses on transforming inhumane social patterns, flawed structural conditions, and open violent conflict that weaken the conditions necessary for a flourishing human community.” John Paul Lederach and R. Scott Appleby, “Strategic Peacebuilding: An Overview,” Strategies of Peace, 22.
\item See Ibid., 35-37.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
promoting intrafaith dialogue processes, increasing the use of new rituals, and maintaining a strategic lens when planning a ritual or dialogue.

Ritual, however, remains an abstract concept. Some of the rituals described here are quite thin, that is, they are newer rituals that are not deeply rooted in a pre-existing spiritual tradition, or they are simple rituals with little symbolic content. Indeed, one could think of a scale of ritual, ranging from thick (such as the Catholic mass or the Iftar during Ramadhan) to thin rituals, such as a simple opening prayer to a peacebuilding workshop. It may be more convincing that a thick ritual can create constructive change than a thin ritual, but in either case it remains difficult to actually prove how any ritual fosters peace. One would most likely have to qualitatively test various groups over a long period of time, controlling for various experiences of ritual, to gain any scientific data on the topic. Clearly, more observational research is necessary to give a detailed picture on exactly how rituals, with a potential to both foment violence and peace, are effectively creating peace, in order to support the claims of my respondents and ritual theorists alike.

Despite the inability to scientifically prove any of my respondents’ claims, their defense of ritual strongly resonates with much of the academic literature on the power and effect of ritual. Furthermore, whether one accepts these specific claims or not, a deepened understanding of ritual can expand one’s understanding of peacebuilding generally. In When Blood and Bones Cry Out, John Paul Lederach and Angela Lederach describe the importance of the metaphor of ritual in understanding social healing in post-conflict societies. They write:

Ritual, however, often involves significant elements of repetition, of repeating ceremony over and over again. While repetitiousness may be seen from a political or programmatic view of linearity and productivity as a weakness -- defective and unproductive (in other words going in circles but not getting anywhere) -- when seen in terms of the directional metaphors of ritual and ceremony, recalling, reiteration and repeating provide spaces that permit people to be present; to touch a deeper sense of self and reality, to find, nurture or build a deeper sense of voice, place and meaning.

Thus, ritual should not only be viewed as a peacebuilding activity, but as a way of doing or conceptualizing peacebuilding. Understanding peacebuilding in light of ritual reminds peacebuilders that the peace they seek is often promoted through non-linear, repetitive processes. Just as ritual seeks to overcome prejudice and connect opposing groups to each other by way of something sacred, so do peacebuilding processes seek to build constructive human relationships for the greater goal of a positive peace. Understanding the power of ritual and how it causes change can offer great insight into how peacebuilding creates change. One can understand peacebuilding in terms of its ability to pantomime peace, or its transformative performativity. Viewing peacebuilding through a ritual lens, can keep peacebuilders from falling into the tedium of routine programming and grant requests, and challenges peacebuilders to continually infuse their activities with transcendent elements that

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156 This section greatly benefits from discussions with R. Scott Appleby (former director, Kroc Institute for International Peacebuilding), Spring 2011.
157 John Paul Lederach and Angela Jill Lederach, When Blood and Bones Cry Out: Journeys through the Soundscape of Healing and Reconciliation (St. Lucia, Queensland: University of Queensland Press, 2010), 95.
158 Schirch, Ritual and Symbol, chapter 6.
159 Driver, The Magic of Ritual, 190.
reach the spiritual and emotional aspects of humans. By ritualizing peacebuilding practitioners can better foster, what Lederach terms, “a new depth of wholeness” in conflict-affected societies.
Wisdom Traditions, Peace and Ecology: Mapping Some Wellsprings of Integral Connectivity

Christopher Hrynkow* and Stephanie Westlund†

Abstract
This article seeks to make a contribution toward raising levels of ecological consciousness and nature literacy in the field of peace and conflict studies. A suggested path toward this goal is presented in the form of dialogue with select wellsprings of integral connectivity sourced from within Indigenous, Buddhist, Christian and Muslim wisdom traditions respectively. The authors begin by focusing on the importance of ecological relationality for peacebuilding, before exploring expressions of integral connectivity via successive sections mapping aspects of each wisdom tradition. We end by noting some specific ways that peace and conflict studies can benefit from dialoguing with integral worldviews.

Keywords: peace and conflict studies, ecological literacy, wisdom traditions, integral worldviews, peacebuilding, conflict transformation

Introduction: Ecological Crisis, Relationality and Peace

Renowned peace activist, sociologist and Quaker, Elise Boulding observes that “the human need for bonding can now be understood as including the need for bonding with nature itself, and the human need for autonomy and space can now be extended to a respecting of the need for space of all living things” (2000, p. 257). As peoples from different traditions around the world awaken to the dangers of ecological degradation and destruction and, perhaps particularly, reflect upon the implications of climate change and species loss, such shifts in consciousness are leading to the emergence of an ecological ethic. A groundswell of deep care for the planet and concomitant concern about the Earth entering a crisis phase is becoming more prominent in Western consciousness. Yet, in light of this prominence, philosopher and cultural critic Slavoj Žižek warns against underestimating the radical quality of ecological crisis:

The crisis is radical not only because of its effective danger, i.e., it is not just that what is at stake is the very survival of humankind. What is at stake is our most unquestionable presuppositions, the very horizon of our meaning, our everyday understanding of ‘nature’ as a regular, rhythmic process ... the ecological crisis bites into ‘objective certainty’ – into the domain of self-evident certitudes about

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which, within our established ‘form of life,’ it is simply meaningless to have doubts. (1992, pp. 34-35)

This “socio-ecological crisis” challenges the horizons of human meaning and understanding (Eaton, 2013), including in the field of peace and conflict studies. Despite increased human understanding about the social and ecological effects of planetary crisis, there is much reluctance and resistance to substantively address the base causes of the problem. Issues such as environmental degradation and climate change continue to persistently take lower priority than economic decline and intra-human conflict—the latter tension can be understood to constitute part of what Žižek (above) terms ‘objective certainty.’ For example, while some Palestinian and Israeli non-governmental organisations began working together on environmental issues in the late 1990s, their joint projects almost completely stopped during the 2001 Intifada (Chaitin et al., 2002). Furthermore, at the height of the ‘economic crisis’ in 2008, efforts to reduce greenhouse gases and climate change stalled around the world (Cappiello, 2008). There remains too little momentum for binding and effective legislation to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions today. With economies around the world once again worried about slipping (or tumbling further) into recession, not only are we faced with pressures to address ailing ecological systems around the planet, we also face daily and competing moral imperatives to heal troubled economic and social systems, both locally and globally. Indeed, the ecological crisis too often seems to be taking on less importance compared to “the economic situation,” as individuals, corporations, and governments argue that environmental degradation is worthwhile if it leads to economic growth and stability. As a result, concern for the socio-ecological crisis seems to be slipping away from a priority placement in our mass consciousness. This shift is reflected in mass media reports of manifestations of planetary crisis. For instance, news coverage of climate change declined 42 percent between 2009 and 2011, despite a global increase in severe weather in recent years (Fischer, 2012). Further, academic analysis by the Australian Centre for Independent Journalism found that nearly one third of 602 articles on the topic of climate change analyzed from samples taken in 2011 and 2012 question or dismiss the scientific consensus that human activity was contributing measurably to shifting climatic patterns (Millman, 2013).

However, most climate scientists would concur with the sentiment expressed by ecologist William Rees that “a stable productive ecosphere remains prerequisite to everything else” (2006, p. 221). In a similar light, ecological thinkers emphasize that a healthy Earth community is necessary for humans to flourish (e.g., Berry, 2006). Taking the implications of such insights seriously, the peacebuilding and conflict transformation fields can benefit from attention to ecology and socio-ecological relationships. With some notable exceptions such as Boulding, who highlights that a culture of peace “involves living gently on the earth, in tune with the planet’s regenerative capacity” (2000, p. 192), a nature literacy and ecological consciousness, which understands that human experience takes place within complex interdependent ecosystems and rejects any human/nature and mind/body splits wrought by Cartesian dualistic thinking or the mishearing of religious texts as sanctioning the domination, othering and abuse of nature, is underdeveloped in much peacebuilding and conflict transformation scholarship.
For example, Stephanie Westlund (2012) undertook a sampling study to analyze all full-length articles in five international peace and conflict journals published over three years (2008-2010), with the aim of understanding how nature is discussed (or dismissed) in the peace and conflict literature. Overall, she found that most articles were economic, political, and/or social in focus, and the majority contained no reference to nature or natural contexts. Of the 360 articles reviewed, only five percent (or 20 out of 360) included nature as a major focus or theme. Westlund also found that none suggested that nature itself might be an active participant in peacebuilding, conflict transformation and recovery from conflict. However, elsewhere she convincingly argues just this, by examining three case studies of peacebuilding processes in which participants interacted with one another in natural settings. Westlund observes that “each case becomes understood as tied to the ecologies of the place where participants engaged with one another, thus suggesting that nature is an active yet overlooked participant in conflict transformation and peacebuilding” (2010, p. 279). Considering the implications of nature and non-human beings as having agency within peacebuilding processes is potentially crucial in transforming “rubrics” of environmental peacebuilding in the peace and conflict studies literature. In this regard, the language of nature literacy and ecological consciousness seeks to move beyond technical or utilitarian “environmental” framings (the term “environment” connoting that which surrounds the human, who becomes the centre for value) to more relational socio-ecological worldviews that invoke the interconnectivity of all things within a reality of complexity, differentiation, interiority and diversity (cf. Berry, 1988).

To aid in increasing nature literacy and raising ecological consciousness within peacebuilding and conflict transformation scholarship, this article brings insights from different wisdom traditions – principally Indigenous, Buddhist, Christian and Muslim worldviews – into dialogue with insights relevant to these fields. There are many foundations for a fruitful dialogue in this regard. For example, in examining the moral and epistemological issues surrounding ecological degradation, Bishop Desmond Tutu, well-known for his peacebuilding and reconciliation work in South Africa, has asserted that human responses to our current “earth crisis” cannot be left solely to scientists (2001, p. 7). Furthermore, reflecting on various wisdom and Indigenous traditions around the world, Harold Coward observes that “in traditional Jewish, Islamic, Hindu, Buddhist, Chinese and Aboriginal societies self-identity is constructed not by individual choices but by participating in a ‘family’ that may extend out to include caste, tribe, and all humans as well as plants, animals and the cosmos” (2000, p. 44). Moreover, many ordained and lay members of different wisdom traditions have a long history of both peace advocacy and, often socio-ecological, activism. For example, ecological activist, educator, and former Jain monk Satish Kumar (2002) undertook an 8,000-mile pilgrimage for peace during his early 20s to gift each leader of the world’s four nuclear powers at the time with a package of ‘peace tea.’ Carrying no money, Kumar relied solely on the generosity of strangers during his walk from India, through Europe, and then to the United States, stopping along the way in Moscow, London, Paris, and finally Washington, D.C. Influential academic and activist Adam Curle, who was an important contributor to the development of the discipline of Peace Studies, drew on his Quaker roots (Woodhouse, 2010). Similarly, renowned conflict transformation theorist and peacebuilding practitioner, John Paul Lederach (2010) is grounded and inspired by his Mennonite upbringing and adult faith. Sustainability educator Joanna Macy (1991), too, draws from the wellspring of her Buddhist practice in her scholarly and activist
work for peace, justice, and ecological health. Martin Luther King, Jr., can also be understood as addressing environmental racism and ecologically-destructive war tactics in his nonviolent human rights work and campaigns for social justice and equity that accompanied his public opposition to the war in Vietnam in what became the latter stages of his activist career (King, 1967a). Similarly, Vietnamese Buddhist monk and ecological thinker Thich Nhat Hahn has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize on several occasions including by King (1967b).

With such foundations in mind, while we explore several political incarnations of integral worldviews, this article focuses at the level of insight rather listing outcomes (cf. Moore, 2011) to begin to demonstrate the importance of embedding ecology into peacebuilding theory and practice, wherein the ecosphere is purposefully understood as both the location and limit for all human peacebuilding and conflict transformation. Rather than providing a complete overview of the potential latent in such a methodological approach, we seek to offer a humble contribution to the academic conversation by beginning to map select insights offered by wisdom traditions that foster a symbiotic relationship between ecological insight and peacebuilding. Such symbiosis seems particularly necessary in this time of both fragile ecosystems and fragile peace, and we hope to bring a deeper and more nuanced conversation that will inform both theory and praxis in the coming years.

We focus principally on four wisdom traditions—Indigenous, Buddhist, Christian, and Muslim traditions—as indicative of the potential stimulate discussion. It is crucial to recognize that these traditions are not monoliths. Indeed they represent diversity within themselves, comprising adherents with different understandings of faith and sometimes divergent sets of spiritual practices. To take a significant example, when speaking and writing about Indigenous peoples’ perspectives, it is important to emphasize the diversity of cultures grouped together under the label ‘Indigenous.’ This term enfolds thousands of languages, customs, and spiritual belief systems, none of which can be generalized across the many peoples in the world considered to be Indigenous (Smith, 1999). The diversity within Christian practice ranges from Appalachian snake handlers to monks living as hermits. Similarly, there are many different Buddhist traditions, ranging from the forms practiced in East Asia and India to those practiced in North and South America (Williams, 1997; Lancaster, 1997). And Islam is truly a world religion, practiced in multiple cultural contexts and a diversity of forms around the globe. This diversity extends to different approaches to human-Earth relations, people who identify with each of these faiths have participated in both terrible acts of ecological destruction and heroic acts supportive of socio-ecological flourishing and substantive peace. While recognizing a mixed bag of results in this regard, it is nonetheless important to also acknowledge that each of these traditions can foster transformative insights supportive of substantive peace in this world. As Buddhist scholar David Loy points out, “religions are vehicles for self-transformation. Not only do they reassure us, they provide us with principles and precepts and practices that can change us or show us how to change ourselves” (2003, p. 3).

**Indigenous Wisdom and Ecology**

Once, when peace theorist and conflict transformation practitioner John Paul Lederach presented his peacebuilding framework to a group of Guatemalans, an indigenous Mayan priest spoke with him during the lunchtime break. The priest told Lederach that his framework was
“missing one overarching element” (2005, p. 140). Lederach was initially puzzled and could not imagine which “political, economic, or historic piece” he had omitted from his presentation. The priest continued:

Your framework is missing the earth and skies, the winds and rocks. It does not say where you are located. In a traditional Mayan view, if there is a problem in the community, the first thing we would ask is: Did you greet the sun today? Did you thank the earth for the corn? It is not the only thing, but it is the first. We always must know where, [in] what place and time, we are located (2005, p.140).

While Indigenous perspectives are anything but homogenous, many Indigenous scholars do point to some similarities, especially in views about nature. Winona LaDuke suggests that most Indigenous peoples share an understanding that “all societies and individuals are accountable to natural law” (1996b, p. 266). While both LaDuke and Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) warn that Indigenous peoples’ relationship with the land is often over-romanticized, LaDuke reflects that a certain level of truth may underlie this stereotype since “the ongoing relationship between Indigenous culture and the land is central to most Native environmental struggles” (1999a, p. 88). In addition, as Clarkson, Morrisette, and Régallet (1992) observe, most indigenous peoples are guided by “the central belief that the whole of creation is a sacred place” (p. 5).

The centrality of land in the lives of Indigenous peoples derives from the understanding that “power flows from respect for nature and the natural order” (Alfred, 1999, p. 60). Peter Cole, who is of Stl’alt’imx ancestry, shares how Indigenous peoples recall the intimacies between human lives and the natural world. For example, Cole cites a Stl’alt’imx spiritual (and practical) understanding of trees “whose breath gives us breath” (2006, p. 132). By way of another example, Gitxsan law explicitly connects concern for both future generations and nature through the persons of the Sidigim haanak’a who are charged with ensuring that “the environment is conducive for the animals to continue their lives” (Mills, 2008, p. 119). And as Joe Sheridan observes, Indigenous oral traditions often involve “a chorus of rocks and trees and an animal choir” (2001, p. 203). Frequently within Indigenous contexts, stories and words themselves are articulated as originating from the natural world. Indeed, James (Sákéj) Youngblood Henderson states that all “Aboriginal worldviews, languages, knowledge, order, and solidarity are derived from ecological sensibilities” (2000, p. 256).

In the speeches of nineteen Indigenous leaders from around the world to the United Nations in 1993, common themes involved sharing a worldview holding that (1) the world comprises an interconnected community of living beings, and (2) there are deep ties between Indigenous peoples and nature (Ewen, 1994). A similar perspective is named, for example, by Richard Atleo, who presents the Nuu-chah-nulth theory of Tsawalk that “everything is one” (2004, p. xi). Moreover, Leroy Little Bear observes that extending outwards from a Plains Peoples worldview, “interrelationships between all entities are of paramount importance” (2000, p.77). Additionally, Giichi Nomura reflects on the Aina word Ureshipamoshiri, which represents the “concept of the world as an interrelated community of all living things” (in Ewen, 1994, p. 71). Leroy Little Bear further shares that from an Indigenous perspective, “Earth is our Mother (and this is not metaphor: it is real)” (2000, p. 78).
Adding a significant element to these naming of worldviews, Judy Atkinson (2002), of Jiman and Bundjalung descent, highlights that the land itself holds the stories of generations of human survival. Indigenous peoples’ knowledge is “local knowledge, adapted to the culture and ecology of each population, and matured over a period of time encompassing thousands of years” (Clarkson, Morrisette, and Régallet, 1992, p. 63). From an ecoethical perspective it is true that all human societies or cultures are dependent on the Earth, which provides an impetus for seeking out positive human-Earth relationships. However, in the contemporary period it is perhaps easier for high-consumption cultures to forget this truth because they are separated from the source of their goods. During pre-contact times, Indigenous peoples flourished only when they lived in concerted relationship with the rest of the ecological world, and understood how they were affected by the days, seasons, and other living creatures. People learned to migrate from place to place as the seasons changed so that plants and animals were never depleted in one location (Clarkson, Morrisette, and Régallet, 1992). These experiences and understandings gave rise to what many Indigenous peoples refer to as ‘original law.’ As reflected by Clarkson, Morrisette, and Régallet, the concept of original law holds as its foundation that: “We are placed on the earth (our Mother) to be the caretakers of all that is here. We are instructed to deal with the plants, animals, minerals, human beings and all life, as if they were part of ourselves. Because we are a part of Creation, we cannot differentiate or separate ourselves from the rest of the earth” (1992, p. 4).

Effectively summarizing many of these tenets, in 1985 the World Council for Indigenous Peoples issued the following statement:

> The Earth is the foundation of indigenous peoples. It is the seat of spirituality, the foundation from which our cultures and languages flourish. The Earth is our historian, the keeper of events and bones of our forefathers. Earth provides us food, medicine, shelter and clothing. It is the source of our independence; it is our Mother. We do not dominate her; we must harmonize with her (in Das, 2001, p. 60).

Such harmonization is supported by the Seventh Generation principle, which was first crafted amongst the Haudenosaunee and subsequently codified in their Great Law of the Iroquois Confederacy. It involves an understanding of responsibilities not only to ancestors and present generations and living beings but to seven generations forward (Lyons, 2003). The source of this wisdom is understood to be a prophetic gift: “The prophecy given to us, tells us that what we do today will affect the seventh generation and because of this we must bear in mind our responsibility to them today and always” (Clarkson, Morrisette, and Régallet, 1992, p. 14).

Further supporting the principles underlying this prophecy, Atkinson writes: “For Aboriginal people, being human . . . is defined by the value given to where we have come from, who we are, and where we are going in relationship to country [i.e., land] and kin” (2002, p. 30). Furthermore:

> When your ancestors have walked these places for millennia, they hold an energy of timelessness that invokes serenity and the feeling that one is not alone, but in the presence of these ancestors, who are able to communicate via
the senses and convey the feelings and thoughts that are most conductive to healing. When we are able to sit on our land in contemplation and hear, feel or see the spirits of our old people, then we have been to a place within ourselves of great depth and connectedness. (Clarke and Fewquandie 1998, p. 3 in Atkinson, 2002, p. 31)

Oren Lyons (1980) notes that as a result of such an ethical orientation, the history of his people, the Haudenosaunee, involves a long tradition of peacebuilding, and this notion of peace incorporates not only human livelihoods and wellbeing but “the welfare of all living things” (pp. 171-173). Elsewhere, Lyons reflects upon his experience at a United Nations forum in Geneva as one amongst a group of representatives for Indigenous peoples in the Western Hemisphere. He recalls the fervour for human rights in the discussion at the time, to which the Indigenous peoples replied:

What of the rights of the natural world? Where is the seat for the buffalo or the eagle? Who is representing them here in this forum? Who is speaking for the waters of the earth? Who is speaking for the trees and the forests? Who is speaking for the fish—for the whales—for the beavers—for our children? ... without the water, without the trees, there is no life.” (2004, p. 105)

**Buddhist Wisdom and Ecology**

Buddhist philosophy and practice holds at its heart a teaching of interdependence, the insight that all things are connected (Gross, 2000). The Buddha himself experienced his enlightenment not within the walls of a classroom but rather while sitting under a bodhi tree observing the world of relationships that surrounded him. It is also said that the Buddha both was born and died beneath trees. The Buddha’s gratitude for trees and plants is expressed often in the Pali scriptures. These narratives can be understood as pointing to socio-ecological interdependence. Tenzin Gyatso, the 14th Dalai Lama, teaches that interdependence in Buddhist thought is concerned “with maintaining the balance of the outer and the inner world, and with the purification of the inner world” (2003, p. 19). He continues: “I believe that every individual living being, whether animal or human, has an innate sense of self. Stemming from that innate sense of self, there is an innate desire to enjoy happiness and overcome suffering” (2003, p. 19).

In a similar light, American Buddhist writer and scholar Robert Thurman reflects that accepting the Buddhist concept of karma and infinite life arising out of philosophies on reincarnation involves accepting that one has an “infinite interconnection with all other beings” (2004, p. 23). His compatriot David Loy also emphasizes that the concept of interdependence in Buddhism is representative of a non-duality—a lack of separation—between humans and the world/other beings, which is crucial to an understanding of Buddhism’s “respect for all living things” (2003, p. 186). East-Asian Buddhist traditions recognize Buddha-nature in everything, not only in people but also in “the rocks, trees, streams, mountains—all have Buddha-nature” (Lancaster, 1997, p.13). As Loy underscores: “All beings are potential Buddhas or bodhisattvas”
These insights can inform an integral ecological ethic that is supportive of substantive peace.

For example, encouraging “active hope” in the face of sustainability challenges (Macy and Johnstone, 2013), Buddhist peace educator and writer Joanna Macy argues that “To experience the world as an extended self and its story as our own extended story involves no surrender or eclipse of our individuality” (1991, p. 13). She continues: “In the first movement, our infancy as a species, we felt no separation from the natural world around us. Trees, rocks, and plants surrounded us with a living presence as intimate and pulsing as our own bodies” (1991, p.13).

Working within such a worldview, Buddhist peacebuilder and monk Thich Nhat Hanh describes a practice called “Beginning Anew,” which he suggests is based on the human connection with the earth and, quite literally, touching the earth:

When we touch the earth, we take refuge in it. We receive its solid and inclusive energy. The earth embraces us and helps us transform our ignorance, suffering, and despair. Wherever we are, we can be in touch with the earth. Wherever we are, we can bow down to receive its energy of stability and fearlessness. ... Touching the earth communicates our gratitude, joy, and acceptance to our Mother Earth. With this practice, we cultivate a relationship with the earth and, in doing so, we restore our balance, our wholeness, and our peace (2008, pp. 1-2).

As Hanh describes elsewhere, “Touching the Earth is a traditional Buddhist practice called prostration. ... To touch the earth is an act of reconciliation, not an act of worship. It is an act of coming home to what is here and what is now. It is an act of embracing and being embraced by our mother Earth” (2010, p. 227). He continues, “The earth has tremendous capacity to receive our pain, and give us back renewed energy. The earth does this with compost every day, all the time” (Hanh, 2010, p. 228).

After being exiled from Vietnam (1966-2005), Hahn and Sister Chân Không founded Plum Village, France, in 1982 as a place of compassion and loving-kindness—an educational center for raising consciousness about the plight of people in Vietnam and a place of learning and retreat for Engaged Buddhism (Sawatsky, 2009). Buddhist scriptures typically speak of four communities of persons: monks, nuns, laywomen, and laymen. At Plum Village they include trees, birds, water and air as members of the community. One of the Engaged Buddhist precepts that Hanh delineates is, “Do not live with a vocation that is harmful to humans and nature. Do not invest in companies that deprive others of their chance to live. Select a vocation that helps realize your ideal of compassion” (1993). The goal of these teachings is to unite inner and outer self (in community and society) with “being peace.” The resultant transformative community serves as a base to seek substantive change on both the individual and socio-political levels (Hanh 2005b). Justice then becomes “being peace” for the benefit of the whole world.
Christian Wisdom and Ecology

Christian interpretations of the first creation story in the book of Genesis, as reflected in Western culture, are often cited as the root of modern human aspirations to dominate the Earth and all its creatures. Indeed, an ecologically-unfriendly orientation can all too often be sourced in the interpretation of the Judeo-Christian tradition that has permeated Western thought (cf. White, 1967). David Kinsley has labelled this interpretation “the mastery hypothesis” (1996, p. 116). In short, the mastery hypothesis represents an almost pure anthropocentrism, which is manifested in the idea that because humans are made in “the image and likeness of God,” they are to be considered above all other creatures. According to this view, the Earth and all “its bounty” are for humankind to use as it chooses. In an interesting (though condescending) analogy, theological ethicist Janet Martin Soskice labels such sentiments as “divine hamster cage anthropocentrism.” Within such a disentancing and potentially socio-ecologically harmful ethical framework: “God is the hamster owner and we are the hamsters. God creates the world as a kind of vivarium for human beings. The rest of the created order is our lettuce leaves and clean sawdust, completely at our disposal” (1995, p. 64).

Those who seek support for the mastery hypothesis in Christian thought have interpreted the granting of “dominion” over the natural world that occurs in Genesis 1:28 as a divine ordinance providing justification for subduing and exploiting the Earth (Carmordy, 1983, p.6). This misinterpretation has translated into a situation where, for the most part, not only Christians but most Westerners could feel “quite self-righteous in their quest to tame, civilize and otherwise dominate nature even if that meant destroying large parts of it” (Kinsley, 1996, p. 116). Yet, along etymological lines, the Hebrew word for ‘human,’ Adam, as used in Genesis 2-3, springs from Adamah (land, ground), which expresses the connection of humanity with the Earth. The words traditionally translated as “to till and keep” can also be interpreted as “to serve and protect,” thus indicating an alternative understanding of this passage—that humanity was created to “serve and protect” the Earth (Weinberg, 2008). Such points have help grow an increasingly common understanding among those interested in issues at the intersection of religion and ecology, namely that the first creation story in the book of Genesis (1:1-31) needs to be read in the light of the repeated affirmation that creation is “good” and as a totality “very good.” This understanding extends to peace-oriented biblical scholars.

A case in point is the work of the late Walter Wink (1935-2012), former US Institute of Peace Fellow, nonviolent activist and professor of biblical interpretation. Wink (1999) argues that we are in a rather unique situation of being able to choose our own worldview. Surveying a variety of options, he concludes that we ought to choose an integral worldview, which understands all things as spiritual and interconnected, due to its propensity to foster the nonviolent transformation of the world. As part of his case demonstrating the need for an integral worldview, Wink argues “the myth of redemptive violence” is employed by those exercising unjust control of the domination system to explain how things become the way they are. Wink traces this discourse back to the earliest creation story known to humankind, the Enuma Elish (c.1250 BCE). According to this Babylonian creation myth, it was violence that preceded the good. In killing Tiamet (the mother god who gave birth to all the gods), Marduk (the patron god of Babylon) also finds the building materials needed to make the cosmos. The Enuma Elish is a story of blood and guts, which employs this graphic imagery to extol the
principle that violence is necessary for order. Wink (1999) holds that this story is the self-replicating prototype for today’s violent television shows and Hollywood movies. Further, he points out, the elements of this story, wherein a male god residing in the sky defeats a female deity from the abyss, are widespread in human societies. In this manner, Wink synthesized his research and reflection to discern a typology of the creation story that implicitly justifies the type of violence that is needed to form and maintain an imperial order.

For Wink, however, this expression of the myth of redemptive violence is notably a typology of story that is absolutely contrasted by the narrative found in Genesis 1. In this light, the first pages of the Bible remove violence from creative actions and assert that God and the natural world are good. This is a particularly important contrast given that Genesis 1 was written in Babylon during the Jewish captivity. This contextual information lends support to Wink’s assertion that a biblical witness can be called upon to assert that the cosmic order does not require, as per the Babylonian imperial order, the subjugation of women to men, or of people to a ruler. In the Enuma Elish, the entire natural world is the product of deicide—horrible violence was needed for humankind to come into being. For the ever-present threat of chaos to be overcome, the myth of redemptive violence leads people to believe that they are in need of order from above. Salvation is found in the political order. The state is the supreme marker of the good, and men rule over women, priests control the laity, the peasant toils for the aristocrat, and masters repress slaves, all with divine sanction (Wink 1999). Significantly, in the Hebrew Scripture’s example most forms of evil and violence are sourced in human action. In terms of this article, understanding creation as very good thus illustrates an alternative to the domination system and thereby becomes its own wellspring nourishing substantive peace.

Drawing on similar scholarship, ecologically-concerned Jewish and Christian writers therefore argue that even the early chapters of Genesis, and indeed despite some problem texts, the Hebraic worldview taken as a whole, express an earth consciousness that was obscured by modern Western Christian interpretations (cf. Herriot, 2004). While the authors of this article are reticent to employ Judeo-Christian framings due to their problematic tendencies towards supersessionism, which glosses over of a Christian history of anti-Judaism and their deployment in exclusionary politics (cf. Cohen, 1970; Neusner, 2001), it remains crucial to emphasize that any Christian wisdom on ecology owes much to the Jewish wisdom tradition from which the former emerged. The ancient Israelite and latter Jewish traditions offer an impressive wellspring of inter-connectivity deeply respectful of nature and buttressed by the existential imperative of tikkun olam, to heal and transform the world (cf. Tirosh-Samuelson, 2002), which in turn provides fertile ground for Jewish wisdom to support the pursuit of peace (cf. Eilberg, 2014).

Jesus himself was born, lived and died within a “Jewish Matrix” (O’Collins, 2009). It was within a Jewish context that Jesus preached to and healed marginalised people. In the face of the Roman Empire’s domination of Palestine, provisions such as the redistributive jubilee prescribed in the Hebrew Torah disappeared. As a result, poor farmers were pushed off the land and natural resources were redirected for the profit of those with positions in the imperial apparatus (cf. Crossan, 2007). Jesus is here read as offering an alternative based on simple quality relationships (cf. Luke 9: 1-6). He lived simply, walked to most places, and avoided the accumulation of wealth. Even from an anthropocentric (human-centered) view, the type of relationships he was advocating between people would go a long way towards healing
exploitative relationships, in general, inclusive of damaged political and human-Earth relationships.

In a similar vein, Nakashima Brock and Parker (2008) note that Jesus’s narrative teachings used stories of paradise to present his critique and resistance to the Roman Empire. For instance, their exegesis argues that Jesus breaks the power that Roman Emperors garnered by distributing bread to the poor when he feeds the multitude, “suggesting that he—not Rome—was the true source of life” (Nakashima Brock and Parker, 2008, p. 30). For Nakashima Brock and Parker, such actions show that the material and the spiritual were inseparable for Jesus. Today we tend to think that those who need to concern themselves with material things (such as peoples who lead a subsistence lifestyle) are somehow less important than those who can meditate on inner spiritual truth. In contrast, Jesus, like the Hebrew prophets before him, connected abundant life in the created world with spiritual well-being. In making this integral link, which accords with the notion that Wisdom/Sophia does not abandon Earth, Nakashima Brock and Parker observe that we see here how “the Bible understands heaven as infusing the practical and the ordinary rather than being separate from it” (2008, p. 34).

It follows for Nakashima Brock and Parker that Christian baptism acted like a portal to locate humans within an Earthly paradise marked by the power of the Logos/Sophia. Through such Wisdom, Christians could strive towards lives of grace marked by joy, efforts to enact justice, nonviolent peace witness and love. In light of this power of integral transformation supported by grace, consider Nakashima Brock and Parker’s translation of John 3: 16-17:

> God so generously loved the world [kosmos] that he placed his only Son here, so that everyone who has confidence in him may not be lost or be destroyed but may have eternal life. God did not send his Son into the world to put the world on trial, but so that the world might be rescued through him (Nakashima Brock and Parker, 2008, p. 30).

This is an image of paradise flowing into the world, one that allows access to eternal life based on an integrated understanding of kosmos as “the dwelling place of God” (Nakashima Brock and Parker, 2008, p. 47).

Jesus’s integrated example is brought forward by Paul of Tarsus’s formulation that all of creation suffers because of human actions and all the world is deserving of renewed life and redemption (cf. 2 Corinthians 5: 18-20). Integrated theology is also present among the Church Fathers and Mothers, like Irenaeus of Lyon and Symeon the New Theologian, particularly as they argued for more earthly Christian positions in the face of challenges from dualistic faith systems like Gnosticism, which were world escapist (cf. Schaefer, 2009; Keselopoulos, 2001). Examples of integrated Christian thought are also actively present in the medieval period, even in the West, through the contribution of people like Hildegard of Bingen (Craine, 1997), Francis and Clare of Assisi (Nothwehr, 2012), Bonaventure (Delio, 2009) and Thomas Aquinas (Northcott, 1996).

According to Elizabeth A. Johnson’s (2000) analysis, the obscuring of Earth literacy in church life today is reflective of the enlightenment turning to the self and the post-Reformation style of reflection on God, which together mark so much of contemporary Western and Christian thought. This loss of Earth consciousness further represents a barrier that has failed to
be fully overcome through a holistic realisation of the biocentric realities of the web of life in much theological ethical reflection. American Catholic Theologian John Haught succinctly sums up the charge against Christianity:

Hasn’t Christianity been too anthropocentric, too androcentric, too otherworldly and too cavalier about the intrinsic value of nature? Hasn’t theology so overemphasized the need to repair the “fall” of humanity that it has almost completely ignored the original goodness of creation? Hasn’t it heard the words of Genesis about human “dominion” over the earth as an imperative to exploit and deface it? (1996, p.270).

In itself the fact that these questions can be asked with some legitimacy today necessitates an effective response from the Christian tradition. Haught (1996) suggests that Christianity has a unique contribution to make amongst the world religions in the effort to mitigate planetary ecological crisis, due to its ultimate eschatological vision of nature as promise. Other thinkers working in the area have proposed to move toward healing the relationship between Christianity and the ecological world. For instance, proposals have been made for greener understandings of the significance of Jesus Christ (McFague, 2000), integrated understandings of the Holy Spirit (Wallace, 2000) and ecofeminist liberation theologies, which cast the religious project “in light of making justice, of right relationships with women, men, and all living beings” (Gebara, 2003, p.103). At the heart of such efforts lies a basic orientation centered on the belief that a Christian faith combined with ecological literacy will bear moral witness to “the intrinsic connection between all forms of oppression, and especially between that of poor people and degraded nature” (McFague, 2000, p. 33).

In the contemporary period, of particular interest in this regard is the development of Christian spiritual ecology. Spiritual ecology centers on the idea that right relationship with the transcendent and amongst humans includes an aspect of right relationship with the natural world. According to this worldview, human embodiment ought to lead humans toward seeing the value of this world, not only in terms of testing ground for the afterlife, but as morally worthy in and of itself. This type of religious ecological perspective hopes to establish diverse ways of existing in life-giving creative tension amongst the transcendent, the natural world, and humans.

This perspective is also well poised to discern what ecofeminist theologian and Professor of Conflict Studies, Heather Eaton, calls “interlocking layers of oppression,” which in terms of structural violence and militarism mark not only the natural world, but along with other forces, such as patriarchy, coalesce to suppress marginalized humans (2005, p. 114). It is perhaps telling that Latin American liberation theologian Leonardo Boff’s book, Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor (1997), makes this connection explicit. Boff specifically demonstrates how ecological health is an issue for those seeking a socially just peace. Additionally, in reflecting on her praxis-based work with economically disadvantaged peoples in North Eastern Brazil, ecofeminist liberation theologian Gebara (2009) connects the suffering of humans in poverty with the suffering of the Earth community. From a liberationist perspective this link between ecology, poverty, and violence is ubiquitous, hence the importance of the vision of the future Arthur Walker-Jones discerns as operative in the biblical book of Psalms in which “social justice
is interrelated with the well-being of Earth” (2009, p. 65). As evidenced by the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Sandy in the United States and the 2003 European heat wave’s effect on those living in poverty, environmental harms are unequally distributed, even in more economically wealthy contexts. This raises important ecojustice issues about the health and well-being of both people and the planet. These observations serve to ground and expand upon an ecological perspective that understands the fate of humans and the planet, not as separate but as deeply intertwined, while considering the fate of each to be important in its own right. As the Catholic cultural historian and self-describe “geological” thinker Thomas Berry states succinctly: “There is no way that the human project can succeed if the earth project fails” (2000, p.127).

Islamic Wisdom and Ecology

In the academic world, the American-Iranian scholar, Sayyed Hossein Nasr (b.1933), whose efforts can be traced back to the 1950s, has been at the forefront of demonstrating the religious roots of the ecological crisis in the West. Raised in the U.S. and a graduate of both MIT and Harvard, Nasr gave the Rockefeller Series Lectures at the University of Chicago in 1966, speaking of environmental crisis and tracing some of its spiritual roots. Lynn White Jr.’s (1967) classic article on the historic and religious sources of the ecological crisis only appeared in the journal Science the following year. In the wake of the interest raised by White’s thesis, Nasr’s Rockefeller Lectures were published as Man and Nature (1967), which remains essential reading for anyone studying issues at the intersection of faith and sustainability. Amongst Nasr’s most telling contributions to the field of Religion and Ecology have been his critiques of “scientism,” and the destructive application of technology, shaded as anthropogenic forces that simultaneously serve to oppress and otherwise damage people and the natural world. In general terms, Nasr’s solution to this malaise is to recover the spiritual resources that will provide humanity with the necessary energy to navigate our way out of ecological crisis.

Due to the transnational nature of Islam centered on the umma (community), ecologically conscious Muslim academics tend to focus on the greening of particular cultures within a global framework. For similar reasons, scholars like Tazim R. Kassam (2003) have also demonstrated a basis and requirement in the Islamic tradition for sustainable international development models, which more fully take into account natural limits. The unity of all being (wahdat al-wujud) along with the impetus in Islam to know the creator has been invoked by peace and conflict resolution scholars Abdul Aziz Said and Nathan Funk (2003), who collaborated to suggest principles for navigating the perils of modernity and development in a manner that holds together peace, ecology and the pursuit of unity.

On a more popular level, Ibrahim Abdul-Matin has written about a green deen (way), suggesting an eco-friendly spiritual path based on Islamic principles. In Green Deen (2010), drawing on his experience as community organizer and civil servant, Abdul-Matin delineates ways in which Muslims can contribute to socio-ecological flourishing in partnership with others from different faith traditions. Specifically, he sets a course for eco-friendly living based on the understanding of the unity of God with creation (tawhid), perceiving signs of God (ayat) everywhere, acting as a steward (khalifah) of the Earth, striving for justice (adl), working to
protect the balance of the natural world (*mizan*), and honouring the sacred trust with God that humans have to be protectors of the planet (*amana*).

Combining insights of writers like Nasr and Adbul-Matin with the basic premise that all who recognize Mohammed as the Messenger of God are called to a life of service and devotion marked by the integration of sound ethical principles, suggests the importance of orienting human spiritual energy with a view towards critiquing and transforming modern social organizations that are contributing to social and ecological ruin. The path laid out by the Prophet can provide direction, both in terms of his general approach to living and in light of specific examples and teachings that contribute to a socially just and ecologically sustainable human existence on this planet.

Many other Islamic writers have picked up on similar themes. For instance, in terms of a contextual need to re-sacralise nature discerned by many theo-ecological ethicists, it is telling that Mohammed equated the whole Earth with a mosque (*Sahih Muslim* Book 4: 1062). This example lends a sacred quality to the natural world, which in line with the five principles laid out by Adbul-Matin, acts to re-enchant nature so that it can no longer be exploited and degraded to the extent is has been by modern economic systems. This ecological insight can be understood as reflected in Islamic prayer practices, which involve moving from standing to touching the forehead in humility to the sacred Earth. Moreover, an imperative for the re-sacralisation of the world as inspired by Mohammed has been cited by ecologically-minded Muslims from diverse constituencies and even remarked upon by public figures outside the faith tradition such as Prince Charles (2010), as having the potential to provide a deep set of reasons to respect and care for the planet. It also encourages humans to move away from consumption excesses that result in economic exploitation, hording of goods, and waste, which as the Prophetic tradition holds, are especially problematic because they betray a lack of faith in the bountiful nature of God’s blessings.

Given the importance of the *sunnah*, or authoritative example and teaching of the Prophet in Islamic wisdom, it is noteworthy that in his leadership role of the early Muslim community, Mohammed practiced aspects of good ecological governance. He taught that to remove litter from the street was a branch of faith. He declared bees to be what today would be termed a ‘protected species.’ Additionally, Mohammed ordered and encouraged the planting of trees, including his beloved fig trees. The Prophet further decried the destruction of vegetation, even denouncing the practice during times of war. He personally established a large area around Medina where no tree was to be cut. This was part of the Prophet’s system of governance, whereby specific *hima*, or conservation zones, were founded with varying levels of protection given to the natural world. The most famous of these were established around Mecca and Medina, where contrary to pre-Islamic practice, hunting was prohibited and flora protected. The *hima* and *haram* (inviolable sanctuaries) laid out by the Prophet during his lifetime served as the model for local conservation areas established by Islamic governments that were, if acting in accord with Mohammed’s lead, geared towards the benefit all people (not just the wealthy) and other members of the Earth community (Haq, 2001). The hope for restoration of even severely degraded environments can also be sourced in the Prophet’s counsel, as opposed to world-escapist or overly spiritual versions of faith, not to live only for the next world. Rather, he urged people to live in this world as though they will live here
forever. He even indicated that if the last hour comes and someone has a shoot of a palm tree in his hand, that person should still plant the tree (Explore Islam Foundation Staff, 2010).

This respect for the natural world extended to a specific concern for animals. In the Mishkat al-Masabih it is reported that the Prophet taught that anyone who wrongfully kills even a sparrow, will be held to account by God. The same collection reports that Mohammed forbade causing undue pain to any animal when it was slaughtered for food. He also decried blood sports, using animals for target practice and the branding or striking of animals on the face, calling on God to curse those who followed those practices. Another hadith, found in multiple places, tells the story of a holy person bitten by an ant who subsequently ordered the creature’s ant hill to be set on fire. Mohammed reports that God rebuked the man, saying that he had destroyed a whole nation that celebrated the glory of God simply because he was stung. A different story from the life of the Prophet, also recorded in multiple sources, tells of a time when one of his companions took some eggs from a bird’s nest, which left the mother bird quite flustered. Observing this, Mohammed told his companion to return the eggs, saying that no mother should be made to have her feelings upset needlessly. Additionally, Mohammed is said to have frequently rebuked those he found resting on the backs of camels, reminding them of the basic point that animals are not chairs (Foltz, 2006). These narratives recall a certain moral parity assigned to animals by the Prophet, whereby another hadith records: “A good deed done to an animal is as meritorious as a good deed done to a human being, while an act of cruelty to an animal is as bad as an act of cruelty to a human being” (Hadith Mishkat, Book 6, Ch. 7, 8:178).

At this point, in line with Abdul-Matin’s analysis, we appropriately return the concept of tawhid that Mawil Izzy Dien (2000) sees as foundational for all Islamic thought and practice. A perspective concerned with issues at the intersection of religion and ecology can understand tawhid as the oneness of God that radiates to the unity of creation. This is a vision of monotheism that simultaneously supports a principle of solidarity and compassion amongst all peoples and creatures. The unity of the one God can therefore, with help of Mohammed’s teachings and example, be firmly linked to our shared connectivity with the divine extending even to creatures such as stinging ants that may seem to be mere pests. This wellspring of integral connectivity presents a shared vision of faith and fate from which human duties to bees, camels, palm trees, donkeys and other members of the created world must follow. Such a spiritual understanding of human moral duties perhaps provides a foundational nexus for a renewed green concept of morality and action that is supportive of a flourishing of the complete ecology of the planet, inclusive of social justice for human members of the Earth community.

Why Wisdom Traditions Matter to the Discussion of Peace and Ecology in Peace and Conflict Studies

Peace and conflict scholars Ho-Won Jeong and Charlotte Bretherton (2001) suggest that “the root of the modern ecological crisis is attributed to the disconnectedness of humans with the larger whole” (p. 231). In thinking about ecological crisis, however, it might be worthwhile to remember that the root of the word ‘crisis,’ the Greek krisis, means ‘turning point’ and bears no judgment on how things will turn out. Yet, wisdom-tradition-based ecological scholars are
increasingly coming to the conclusion that in this time of ecological crisis we need more than response. These thinkers assert that sustainable visions of socio-ecological flourishing are essential (Boff, 2011; Van Wieren, 2013). Leaders situated within Wisdom traditions are increasingly recovering this insight as part of initiatives that support or are supported by interreligious dialogue and peacebuilding. For instance, invoking another sense of well-springs of interconnectivity and working within the framework of Abrahamic traditions, which recognizes common origins and ethical traditions amongst the three large monotheistic wisdom traditions, Jewish, Christian and Muslim religious leaders (2013) have recently crafted a *Covenant for the Jordan River*, which seeks to foster the revitalization of a sacred watercourse in a dry and conflict-plagued geography.

In today’s secular academic world, we all too often quickly eschew the insights from sacred wisdom when looking for ways to foster responses to social and ecological crises that provide nourishment for integral visions of the sort that can, in turn, sustain green transformative praxis. However, despite the fact that ecology tends to be absent from modern academic discussions of peacebuilding and conflict transformation (Westlund, 2012), the traditions highlighted in this article demonstrate some senses in which concern for ecological matters has been an active concern for thousands of years. Further they serve as indicators of much larger wellsprings of wisdom to draw from in order to replenish energies that can contribute to fostering socio-ecological flourishing. These wisdom traditions demonstrate common concern for ecological relationships, despite differences in philosophy and practice. Accordingly, they point to possibilities for incorporating integral ecological consciousness and substantive nature literacy into peacebuilding theory and praxis.

To demonstrate a contextual imperative in this regard, we might note Berry’s statement that: “We need to understand that in all our activities the Earth is primary, the human in derivative” (2006, p.43). As Berry’s sentiment illustrates, the planet and the universe provide (quite literally) the ground for all human activity, meaning that humans share a common fate with the natural world. Bringing this point forward, ecologist William Rees implores us to heed the fact that humanity is now “on a collision course with biophysical reality [as] humans are literally consuming the material basis of their own survival” (Rees, 2006, p.221). In this light, Westlund’s (2010, 2012) ecologically-literate analysis adds cogent layers to Lederach’s critique of peacebuilding and conflict resolution practices (including his own) for focusing too much on technical aspects and linear processes, and not enough on the interdependencies and possibilities created through imaginative and creative acts. Lederach notes that “in the field of conflict resolution we have for far too long taken the art out of education and learning” (2005, p. 124). In the spirit of the worldviews mapped in this article, the perspective advanced by Lederach can be extended to remind peacebuilding and conflict resolution practitioners that positive peace cannot be achieved and maintained without also paying attention to the relational interdependencies of all life on earth.

The present Dalai Lama (2005) amplifies this point by encouraging spiritual practitioners to reach outside their traditions to, for example, integrate insights from modern science. Lederach (2005), too, brings attention to the importance of the complex relational interdependencies that exist among human communities, and to how imagination may be critical for bringing about better understandings of these relationships. Indeed, he contends that in order to find a pathway out of repeated patterns of violence, individuals and
communities must develop their capacity “to imagine” themselves in a web of relationship even with their enemies” (p. 34, emphasis added). Incarnating this ethical orientation has been part of the goal of those participating in dialogue amongst wisdom traditions for decades. These efforts at inter-faith dialogue can be considered a form of peacebuilding (Musser and Sutherland, 2005). One result of such dialogue has been the Parliament for World Religions’ (1993) statement on a Global Ethic. In a slight reworking of the Parliament for World Religions document, the Santa Clara Interfaith Conference (South Bay Interfaith, 2005) discerned five moral imperatives growing from a global ethic: (1) treat every human being humanely—related to the golden rule, (2) have respect for life—encompassing cultures of peace and nonviolence, (3) deal honestly and fairly—including economic justice and ecological consciousness, (4) speak and act truthfully and (5) respect and love one another—no abuse of gender or sexuality. Thurman (2004) summarizes the grounds for such partnership and mutuality by noting that: “All the world religions share in common ethical precepts about love and mercy, wisdom, compassion, generosity, altruism, and so forth” (p. 20).

Hanh also encourages an inter-religious approach to discerning core compatible values when he writes in Together We Are One: Honouring our Diversity, Celebrating our Connection: “As a true Buddhist, we embrace all non-Buddhist elements. We don’t discriminate against Christianity, Judaism, Islam, or any other religion... We can see Buddhist elements in other traditions. And we can help others to unearth and discover the beautiful things that have been hidden in their traditions” (2010, p. 59).

Similarly, peace and conflict transformation studies scholar, Jarem Sawatsky (2009) emphasizes the need to avoid the institutionalisation of healing justice with relational-focused governance recommendations: (1) transforming human-Earth interactions, (2) drawing on sacred wisdom without institutionalizing spirituality, (3) shifting the Western justice systems away from costly models of responding to harm, and (4) supporting the growth of small communities. In practice, political transformation on this relational level, though based in accessible principles, is difficult to implement in large polities. However, it is such a challenging undertaking, focused on cultivating positive relationships, that Sawatsky demonstrates is at the heart of both healing justice and culturo-political vitality in the communities he has studied.

Notwithstanding Sawatsky’s example and the integrated work of a creative minority of scholars cited above, peace and conflict studies and the disciplines from which it is immediately descended are most typically situated within the manifestations of the Western philosophical tradition that dominate modern thought and, for example, uphold the notion that the human ability to reason separates us from and places us above other animals. As a result, as discussed previously, there is a general deficiency of nature literacy and lack of ecological consciousness in the field. However, there are also many spaces in which peace and conflict studies can grow such greener literacy and cultivate Earth consciousness.

Conclusion

Given its short genealogy conflict transformation practice and peace theory is dependent on scholars like Westlund, Boulding, Funk, Said and Sawatsky for nature literacy and ecological consciousness. Accordingly, a key purpose of this article is to dovetail with those contributions, demonstrating the potential for mutual-enhancement when peace theorists and
conflict transformation practitioners dialogue with wellsprings of integral connectivity sourced in wisdom traditions. Future projects would involve looking more in depth at these wisdom traditions, including more sustained explorations of additional traditions. As well, it will be important to trace the transition from wisdom-based ecological insight into action in peace activist events such as those associated with engaged Buddhism (see above) or with the Indigenous spiritual energy presently informing the Idle No More movement. This creatively nonviolent group intimately joins positive human-Earth relationships and Indigenous cultural health. For instance, the Idle No Movement’s website prominently features the following quotation from Eriel Deranger (2013) of the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nations:

OUR PEOPLE AND OUR MOTHER EARTH CAN NO LONGER AFFORD TO BE ECONOMIC HOSTAGES IN THE RACE TO INDUSTRIALISE OUR HOMELANDS. IT’S TIME FOR OUR PEOPLE TO RISE UP AND TAKE BACK OUR ROLE AS CARETAKERS AND STEWARDS OF THE LAND (Emphasis in the original).

Idle No More’s actions have included flash mob round dances, blockades, and teach-ins to highlight the possibilities of cross-cultural solidarity amongst various aboriginal and settler cultures. These actions seek to build substantive peace through disrupting both commercial and governmental exploitation of marginalized human and non-human communities as expressed in enterprises like tar sands oil extraction, nuclear mining, hydro electricity development, logging and pipeline construction. All endeavors undertaken within the framework of Idle no More are nourished through strong identification with the value of ensuring the integrity of the land community on traditional territories and the use of ceremonies from aboriginal wisdom traditions (Lee, 2015).

Lisa Schirch describes such peacebuilding endeavors as envisioning “a set of economic, political, cultural, and social structures that support equal relations between people” (2005, p. 37). Spirituality-infused movements such as Engaged Buddhism and Idle No More represent contextually cogent examples of wisdom-based insight. As the human population surpasses seven billion, and the violence incubating pressures of the reduced carrying capacity of the planet on all species become increasingly apparent, the key peacebuilding challenge of our times may be realizing and acting in accord with humanity’s essential location within the ecosphere. Schirch’s vision might benefit from an additional realization that “we are as dependent on nature as we are on each other. Without air to breathe, food to eat, clean water to drink, and the sun to provide energy and warmth, human beings could not exist. Indeed, there would be no life at all” (Roach, 2003, p.132); and as ecofeminist philosopher and theologian Catherine Keller (1990) highlights, “a grounded self, unlike a fixed ego, thrives in its dependence on earth and only as earthling, on the matrix of relations to all the other earthlings” (p. 221).

What, then, might it mean for peacebuilders and conflict resolution practitioners to accept this role of ‘earthling’? How might peacebuilders recall that human needs are met not only through other humans but also through ecological relationships—through our interdependence with not only human others, but with all others? What would it mean for strategies, approaches and praxis in conflict transformation and peacebuilding to work from an
understanding that “a stable productive ecosphere remains prerequisite to everything else” (Rees, 2006, p. 221)?

To remember that, like all other human activities, reconciliation, coexistence and conflict recovery need the natural world? It would mean questioning what Žižek terms “objective certainty” (1992, pp. 34-35) in order to develop strategies that understand social (and economic) systems as existing within ecosystems. It would mean integrating the insight that humans not only symbolically need to know who they are and how they relate to their environment— that we ourselves as embodied beings are inseparable from the ecological world and need our environment, physically, culturally, and psychologically. The wisdom traditions mapped in this article, as vital expressions of human identity, offer spiritual wellsprings to encourage deep reflections on our essential location within the Earth community. As this mapping has worked to demonstrate, reflections about integral connectivity in the spirit of deep solidarity can only serve the cause of incarnating substantive and truly sustainable peace in this world.

References


“Til All Need For Witness Cease,” A Prose Poem Play In Three Parts
To “Celebrate” The Hundredth Anniversary of World War I

©By Kent Shifferd*

Program Notes

In his definitive history of World War I, John Keegan writes, “The First World War was a tragic and unnecessary conflict.” Nobody was expecting a major war in the summer of 1914. But a minor conflict in the Balkans, set off when a Serb nationalist assassinated the Austro-Hungarian Grand Duke, became the “Great War,” due to a web of alliances in which the European nations had pledged each other to go to war should their partners be attacked. It was the first truly modern, mechanized and industrialized killing field (although millions of horses were mobilized along with tens of millions of men in August 1914.) In the beginning there was absolute certainty it would be over quickly, “before the leaves fall,” as everyone said. Crowds of common folk greeted the outbreak with wild enthusiasm, a chance to exchange the dullness of the clerk’s office or the factory for heroism and glory. But by Christmas a million of them were dead and the war in the west had turned into a stalemate of mud-filled trenches that stretched from the English Channel to Switzerland. The war of attrition went on for four years. The Americans got into it in 1917 on Wilson’s rationale that it would be “The War To End Wars.” Somewhere between eight and ten million died, over twenty million were maimed, thousands simply disappeared into the mud. Exhaustion finally set in and an armistice was declared at eleven A.M., November 11th, 1918, 100 years ago. The diplomats then so botched the treaties that World War II was an inevitable result along with Adolph Hitler, the Nazis and the Holocaust. Other results included the end of imperial rule in Russia and the Communist Revolution that led to Stalin’s gulags, the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian and German empires and, in the second war, the incineration of Germany from the air and the founding of Israel and subsequent conflict in the Middle East. Certainly to be ranked as one of humanity’s greatest follies, the Great War shaped the future of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

Teaching Notes at the end.

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PROLOGUE

It’s All Planned

It was all planned out very carefully in advance, scientifically, one could say. The generals knew, and the Kings and Kaisers, But most folks missed those meetings in the War Departments Where the experts worked out the timetables for troop movements, Right down to the minute, and the preplanned mobilization plans For millions of men, Who would report where and exactly when, and how many rifles would be issued. How the big cannons would get to the front and how many coffins they’d need. And the common folk were probably drinking in the pubs when the diplomats met And drew up the entangling alliances so that one thing triggered another, An automatic cascade into total war. “But it won’t really happen, will it?,” asked the Kings and Kaisers. And the generals said, “Not to worry. Just making sure we’re ready if it does.” So it was all a big Surprise.
Home by Christmas (Or Even Sooner)

(Note: Britain declared war on Germany on August 4th, 1914)

Much excitement.
Brass Bands and pretty girls waving flags,
Men marching up and down,
Lads running to enlist since “It will be over by Christmas,”
And lying about their age just to get into “The Big Show.”
Everyone knew it couldn’t last long.

The economists said it would be a short war because anything longer
Would wreck the world economy, and men were rational, after all.
The technical experts said an industrial war would be short because
It would quickly use up all the ammunition and then they’d have to stop.
The Germans knew it would be short because
Their plan called for surrounding Paris in a few weeks.
The French knew it would not last because
Their troops had such fighting spirit they’d drive right on through to Berlin.
The British knew it would be over right away because they had the best navy.
The Russians knew it because they had overwhelming numbers and would overwhelm.
The theologians knew it would be a short war because
“If God is with us, who can stand against us?”
The Austro-Hungarian Imperialists knew their job was just to
punish little Serbia and how long could that take?
God knows what the Turks knew, but I’m sure they didn’t mention Christmas.
But it was the common folk who just couldn’t wait, who were sure they’d be
“Home before the leaves fall” and wouldn’t it be glorious? (as Rupert their poet had said: “Now God be thanked who has matched us with His hour”).
And the artist, Kandinsky, said it would “purify Europe.”
Then there was that young Cambridge toff who rushed off to join because
He knew he’d be back at university for the start of Winter Term on November 7th.
So they all rushed off to enlist and “Devil take the hindmost,”
Which he did, and then some.
ACT ONE: 1914--1918

April 19th, 1915, or 1916, or 1917, or 1918

Mud,
Mud,
Blood,
Attack!
Rats feasting on the dead.
Mud,
Fear,
Filth,
Attack!
Lice. . . by the millions.
Mud,
Bombs
Gas
Running,
Away, too late
Attack!
Corpses
Mud
Bodies. . . in pieces.
Mud,
Shit,
Guts,
Attack!
Oh, Oh! Bayonet in Sarge’s chest.
Mud
Blood,
Bones
Wire,
Corpses caught in it. . . decaying.
Mud,
Mud,
Mud,
Generals. . . “not all were stupid.”
Agree?
Service Revolver

(Note: Issued to British officers, the Webley Mark V was a large, top break pistol weighing 2.4 pounds, firing a .455 cartridge at a muzzle velocity of 620 feet per second, “a very reliable and hardy weapon, well suited to the mud. Highly effective at 50 yards.”)

If you were a German lad there were various ways of being served by a Webley, since at 50 yards you only had half a second to dodge the bullet.
The worst was gut shot and left in No Man’s Land,
Stomach and intestines spread out in the mud and vomiting a bloody substance with the consistency of coffee grounds.
Took hours to die
Or, shot through the heart. Lucky death. Felt like a sledge hammer to the chest but no more oxygen to the brain.
Quickly to sleep.
Or shot in the knee. Hurts like hell—ground up, fragmented bone and cartilages, but this might be
The lucky wound that gets you out of the war, if you can just pull yourself up the slick sides of this damned shell hole with eight feet of cold, liquefied mud in the bottom.
Don’t slip back!
Mort Aux France--A to Z

(Note: In every French village there is a memorial plaque in the square with the names of the local men listed in alphabetical order. Total French dead in the war: 1,689,800.)

T. Aubertin
L. Bearibeau
P. Cassin
D. Castonguay
G. Davault
O. Emile
R. Faubert
R. Gaboury
D. Henri
P. Illian
R. Joli
J. Kirbeau
R. Laframboise
M. Machine
R. Normandeau
R. Ouilette
G. Perodin
B. Quebedoux
A. Reyome
G. Regaud
O. Simeneaux
X. Thibedeaux
M. Urbain
D. Vibert
L. Wion
R. Xavier
C. Yon
K. Zenon

Might I have just pulled these from a list of French names? Did I just make them up? Does it matter?
Tommy’s Ditty

(Note: British soldiers were called “Tommies.” The Allies called the Germans “Huns” after the medieval barbarian invaders.)

Hi didley, didley dum,
They gave me a haircut, a tin hat and a gun,
Taught me to march to the beat of a drum.
I saluted the flag and packed up me bag,
Made me farewells to me mum
And marched off to meet with the Hun.

Hi didley, didley dum.

He had a haircut, a hat and gun,
Had saluted his rag, packed up his bag
And marched off to the beat of a drum.

Hi didley, didley dum.

We met in the mud and the slop and the blood
In a ditch we’d mucked out in the ground.
A shell burst overhead and,
“By God! We’re both dead!”

Hi didley,
Dideley,
Dumb.
Nobody Asked The Horses

(Note: over two million horses were mobilized for the Western Front in 1914.)

Nobody asked the horses
If they wanted to be led into the maelstrom,
Into the mud where they sometimes sank out of sight,
Struggling to the end,
Into the cannon fire which ruptured their bellies
And spilled out mountains of guts.
The men spoke of how the wounded ones shrieked
Until somebody “put them down,”
The lucky ones, that is.
But millions of men were also being “put down”
So it was hard to pity the horses,
Although I think the fellows who cared for them
Often wept silently, at night, where no one could hear them.
It’s better now.
Horses get to stay home.
Machines do all the killing.
Sacrifice Trap

About midway through the war some leaders had begun to talk,
Very tentatively . . ,
About an armistice.
This thing wasn’t going anywhere
And millions were already dead.
But then someone said,
“If we quit now, all those boys will have died for nothing.”
So they went on, and on, and on
Hurling soft bodies against machine guns and cannon fire.
’Til millions more were dead and wounded.
That made sense to them

Sometimes I think it would have been nice if all the dead and wounded
Could have been gathered together in one place.
All ten million dead and twenty some million wounded.
It would have made a city four times as big as Chicago,
Just think of the square miles of cemetery,
All carefully cared for by the ambulatory wounded
Stumping about on their wood and leather prostheses.
Of course there wouldn’t be anything for the blind to do,
Or the insane.
Missing In “Action”s

(Note: “Action”—an abstraction; a euphemism for violent combat as in “action films” and “action toys”)

Decades later
In the Vietnam War, 2,586 Americans went “missing in action.”
It’s a terrible thing—to disappear.
At the Battle of the Somme in 1916, 76,000 British boys went
Into the mud,
Never to be found.
Oh, maybe an arm picked up by a burial party, or a torso.
Not enough to ID.
Wrapped in a linen cloth and thrown (carefully) into a pit with the other bits.
Covered with lime.
Or maybe not even that.
Just “gone.”
Into the mud.
Awards In Science For Contributions To Human Welfare, 1914-1918

*The First Award in Chemistry*
To
*Alfred Nobel*
for
*The Invention Of High Explosives*
Presented by
*The Piecemeal Men of the Western Front*

*The Second Award in Chemistry*
To
*The Inventors of Poison Gas*
Presented by
*The Honorable Legion of the Choked to Death*

*The Award in The Science of Mechanics*
To
*Hiram Maxim*
For
*The Machine Gun*
Presented by
*The Bullet-Riddled Boys of Verdun, Corpses Division*

*The First Award in Naval Architecture*
For
*The Designers of the Dreadnaught Class of Battleships*
Presented by
*The Ordinary Seamen Who Dreaded Them*
And the
*Bones On The Bottom Society*

*The Second Award in Naval Architecture*
To
*The Inventors of The Submarine*
Presented by
*The Society of Grateful Fish*
The Award in The Science of Ballistics
Jointly For
The Physicists Who Figured Out Trajectory
And
Artillery Captain Harry Truman
Who, on the last day of the war, knowing it was to end at 11:00 A.M.,
Fired Off 10,000 shells into a French Village so the Army
Would Not Have to Carry Them Home.
Presented By
The Villagers

(Note Bene, Truman would get an even bigger award in 1945 from the Children’s Radiation Society of Hiroshima, Non-survivors Division.)
Leftenant Tommy

It was a clean shot.
Through the front of me head and out the back and bang,
Face down in the mud I went.
Only way to get out of that war.
Other lads had it worse—gut shot, gassed, legs blown off (died right there of shock).
Leadin’ yet another charge, I was.
“Follow me, lads!”
I’d rather have made it home to Surrey, married Mattie,
Taught a little boy to hold a cricket bat,
Held a little girl’s hand on the way to chapel.
You know, they didn’t even find me for almost a hundred years
Excavatin’ for a road in Picardy, they wuz.
Face down skeleton, rusting tin hat, rotting boots,
Me rusted Webley still clutched in me boney right hand
Facin’ the enemy.
The newspapers printed some crap about
“Finally going home to rest at last in England.”
“Goddam them all!”
The Yanks Are Comin’

“Over there, over there,
Send the word, send the word over there,
That the Yanks are comin’, the Yanks are comin’,
There’s drum, drum drumin’ everywhere.
So beware, say a prayer,
Send the word, send the word over there,
That the Yanks are comin’—
It’ll soon be over over there.”

In 1917 young Bill Skorcowski left the farm and went to town
To hear the Government Men
Hawking war bonds and the war,
And he saw the famous poster,
“Uncle Sam Wants You!”
When he got home his girl, Betty, said,
“Oh Bill, you’d look wonderful in a uniform!”
So he enlisted and there was a big crowd, almost like a party,
The band played “Over there” and people sang that bouncy little ditty—

“When you come back if you do come back,
You’ll hear the Yankee cry ‘Atta boy Jack,’
And when you return remember to bring
Some little thing that you get from the king,
And drop me a line from Germany,
Doo, Yankee Doodle Doo,
When you come back and you will come back,
There’s a whole world waiting for you.” And so forth.

So Bill went off to save France from the Hun.
He got there just in time for the big one at Chateau Thierry.
Bill huddled in his trench during the constant bombardment,
Day and night
Watching the big ones go up just in front,
Enormous geysers of mud globs and bits of equipment and dead boys.
And the noise, the noise, the noise!
Lucky Bill, though,
Nothing landed on him.

When Bill was mustered out in December of 1918
The Army told his folks that he was a little different,
But they got him back to the farm in Wisconsin OK.
He never talked again.
Just dug miles of trenches in the back forty, year after year after year.
ACT TWO: 1918-1945

“The War To End War”: Post-war Interviews

Well, what do you think now, Professor Wilson?
And Kaiser Bill?
And Franzi, once great “Austro-Hungarian Emperor”?
And you, Mr. “Czar of All the Russias?”
And all you be-medaled admirals who “ruled the waves,”
Where are all your Dreadnaughts now?

Here’s a question for the professional diplomats.
Did it take a lot of thought to set the whole thing up so that one damn Serb could bring the whole house down with one damn shot?

An “Outcomes Based Review” of your work might point to:
Russian Communism and Stalin’s gulags,
Hitler and the Holocaust, carpet bombing, fire storm,
(“We will never know how many died at Dresden.”),
Hiroshima (Whisper it slowly—it sounds like a snake, doesn’t it?)
H-bomb.
“The War To End All Wars” was it?
Exactly when do the wars end?
Performance Review of a Front Line Fighter

Well, art school didn’t work out but along came
The Guns of August and
You thanked God “for the favor of being permitted to live in this hour.”
Thought you had a starring role.
Front line fighter! Storm Trooper!
That’s really something!
Then the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month, 1918.
Unemployed.
Couldn’t believe your guys lost.
Still, you were clever, made it your launching point.
The Ruckstab you called it, Mr. Mein Kampf.
“Damn Jews lost the war for us” you said.
Started talking it up then, the next war.
Poor marks for logic and history but
A first prize for foaming at the mouth oratory.
Let’s do a little performance review.
“Germany will never be bombed”, you said.
Ach! Guess no one told British Bomber Command:
Hamburg, Dresden, Cologne, Frankfurt. . . undsoweiiter
And how about “great military strategist”? 
Couldn’t finish the Brits when you had them down.
Dunkirk a bit embarrassing was it? Battle of Britain?
Low marks for follow through.
But terrific marks for start-ups.
I mean, “A Thousand Year Reich”? What a great idea, Mein Herr!
Too bad it only lasted twelve.
Like the Yogi man said, “Predictions are hard, especially about the future.”
And the Russian thing. Nothing in your schooling about the little Frenchman?
And Normandy? Got fooled there, too.
Thought we were coming ashore at Calais.
Held the tanks ‘til it was too late.
But great marks for overall lethality.
Overall accomplishment?
Germany a charred ruin.
Took the coward’s way out.
Fuhrer ash.
End of Act Two.
ACT THREE: the Present

Farmer Souchery, Or April 19th, 2014

Monsieur Bertrand Souchery, riding along on his tractor,
Plowing for the golden wheat that would make yet again
The bread of peace for the European Union.
Monsieur Souchery fancies himself a philosopher as well as a farmer,
So he contemplates mysteries past and present as he steadily moves
Back and forth and back and forth in the morning sun
To the quiet drone of the engine.
He knows this field was well-fertilized in the long ago war.
Just over the hill is another field filled with the markers of the
“Heroes of France” who fell here way back then.
So long ago. So far in the past.
All that violence long since over, and the spring sun shining,
Peacefully
On the fertile fields of France.
WHABANG!
Broken bits of Bertrand and tractor rise lazily in the air.
A German “heavy,” (or was it one of ours?), buried in the soft, liquid mud
A hundred years ago without detonating, now accomplishes its designed end,
The end of farmer Souchery. 10
POSTLOGUE

Great Oaks

Great oaks stand in silent silhouette
Against gray English skies;
Planted long ago to memorialize
Young English boys who fell in twisted pirouette
Of death on some forgotten field of battle
Amidst the rattle of the guns.
And those who mourned these fallen sons
Are themselves long since laid low
In the restful peace of earth,
Having found, at last, release.
And still these towering oaks endure, deep-rooted,
Bearing witness to the loss
'Til all need for witness cease.
Teaching Notes.
What follows are notes that add more historical context for this now long ago war which nevertheless set up the world of international conflict in which we are yet mired.

1 The war began on 28 July 1914 and lasted until 11 November 1918. Sensing approaching war and knowing that the side that struck first had the best chance of winning, the major powers began mobilizing their troops. The Germans knew they would have to fight a two-front war, so when they saw the Russians mobilizing, they struck at France according to a preplanned strategy (the “Schlieffen Plan”) which required them to drive through neutral Belgium in order to quickly knock France out of the war so they could turn east and face the large Russian armies. Britain, which had guaranteed Belgium’s neutrality, was drawn in at that point. It was a war of attrition. Between eight and ten million soldiers died as well as some seven million civilians. Nothing like it had ever happened before.

There is something almost eternal about the nature of combat. Matthew Arnold’s 1867 poem, “Dover Beach” captured the primeval chaos of battle: “And we are here as on a darkling plain/Swept with confused Alarms of struggle and flight/Where ignorant armies clash by night.” (Kenneth Allot, ed., *The Poems of Matthew Arnold*, 2nd ed., London: Logan, 1979). What war does to the human soul as the fortunes of battle ebb and flow has also been constant. The essence of battle is a combination of violent force, exhaustion, rage and fear. Simone Weil writes about its effect on those caught up in it. “Force turns whoever comes under its sway into a thing... it makes a person a thing in the most literal sense: it makes him into a corpse.” (*Iliad: Poem of Force* in Dick Ringler, ed., *Dilemmas of War and Peace: A Sourcebook*, Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1993). But even those who kill but are not killed, are dehumanized by the experience. Weil observes further: “... the conquering warrior is like a scourge of nature: maddened by war, he has turned into a thing and words have no more power over him than they have over inert matter.”

2 John Keegan, *The First World War* (New York: Random House, 1998). Only the Kindle edition is currently available as of this writing. The quote is the opening line of the book which is dedicated to “the men of Kilmington who did not return from the Great War of 1914-1918.” Keegan, a prominent military historian was Senior Lecturer at the Royal Military Academy where British officers are trained.

3 “In any event, large-scale war is never a spontaneous event. International war requires large bureaucracies on both sides. ... It requires careful, advance planning of strategies, tactics, procurement, replacements, dealing with the wounded and veterans, promotions, training, and the psychological preparation of the civilian population through carefully constructed propaganda.” Kent Shifferd, *From War To Peace: a Guide To the Next Hundred Years* (McFarland Publishers, 2011), p. 16.

4 The conditions in which men fought were horrendous. They dug deep trenches and bunkers which then turned to mud when the spring rains came. Not able to get dry, their boots, and then their feet, rotted. The rains filled the millions of shell holes in No Man’s Land (the area between the opposing trenches). During the winter fighting season snow and bitter cold attacked their bodies along with the bullets, bayonets, shells and gas. The main method of fighting was to wait for an artillery barrage to “soften up” (literally) the enemy and then to charge out from the trenches and try to cross No Man’s Land in the face of a hail of machine gun fire (aimed about a foot off the ground to cut off men’s feet, and then make it through the barbed wire to the enemy trench. The generals ordered them to do it repeatedly, year after year. The corpses piled up.

5 Paul Fussell, a historian who fought in a World War II rifle company from Normandy all the way to the end of the war in Europe, writes about “the bizarre damage suffered by the human body in modern war.” While soldiers were often shot with rifle and machine gun, the wounds they feared the most were those that dismembered. Concussion and shrapnel could tear a man’s body to pieces and sometimes that is all that would be found by comrades. Heads would get blown off, hands, fingers, testicles, legs. Sometimes only the trunk of a man was found.” (quoted in Shifferd, *From War to Peace*)
The 20th century had opened on a mood of great optimism. There had been no major war in Europe for a hundred years, science was turning out new marvels almost daily (electricity, the telephone, the motor car and even the airplane). Mass production was turning out huge numbers of easily affordable products. International disputes had arisen and been settled by negotiation. It was believed by many that a new golden age was just around the corner. Then it all went wrong in 1914 and the marvels of science and mass production were put to the service of mass death.

“Swedish scientist Alfred Nobel had invented high explosives in 1863 by combining nitroglycerin, which was an extremely high explosive but also extremely volatile, with silica to make a paste which, while more stable, could be detonated by his patented detonator cap. Production began in 1865 primarily for the mining industry, but the world’s militaries were quick to see another obvious use. By 1914 they were ready with the awful dismembering cannonades of World War I, with the entire battlefield being torn up into craters and mounds of earth. Tens of thousands of shells would be fired prior to the charge out of the trenches. World War I saw the use of long range artillery, capable of launching a shell over several miles. Massed over miles of front, these guns were armed with Nobel’s high explosives and with poison gas shells. The high explosives were both concussive and scattered shards of hot steel (shrapnel) over a wide area. The explosions made the ground tremble. An artillery barrage is perhaps the most terrifying experience a human can undergo. At the Battle of Verdun the French fired 24 million artillery shells and the Germans 21 million.

By 1918 at sea, naval guns were capable of hurling 500 pounds of high explosives some twenty miles. Submarines could lurk underwater and destroy unsuspecting ships with high explosive torpedoes, causing horrendous, violent explosions and frequently sinking the target in a few minutes with total loss of life as men burned alive, were blown to bits, or drowned in the oily sea.”

In World War I the artillery was complemented by another mass killing device, the machine gun. It was invented by Hiram Maxim in 1881. By World War I, a later variant, the Vickers machine gun, could fire 600 bullets per minute over a range of 4,500 yards. Mounted on pivots, these guns could sweep a battlefield with a hail of metal. The machine gun accounted for 90 percent of the casualties on the Western Front.” (Shifferd, From War to Peace, pp. 34-35).

Harry Truman was President of the United States in 1945 and gave the final order to atom bomb Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

President Woodrow Wilson was reelected on the campaign slogan that “He kept us out of war.” The U.S. population was loathe to get involved in a European war, although we were supplying England and France with supplies carried on supposedly neutral ships—food and other material (including, it turned out later, some weapons). Desperate, the Germans declared unrestricted submarine warfare on January 9, 1917. Still, the United States hesitated and did not declare war until April 17, 1917. Popular opinion shifted to pro-war over night. Some Protestant ministers even declared it a holy war and argued that Jesus would kill Germans who were the agents of Satan. (Cf. Ray H. Abrams, Preachers Present Arms (Round Table Press, 1933, p. 60).

Wars don’t end when they stop. The consequences go on for generations. Woodrow Wilson had been a well-known college professor and then briefly governor of New Jersey before he was catapulted into the Presidency on a Progressive ticket. “Bill” here is Kaiser Wilhelm II, the first and last German emperor. When Germany lost the war he abdicated and fled to the Netherlands where he lived until 1941. The “Czar and Autocrat of all the Russias” was Nicolas II. He abdicated during the Russian Revolution of March 1917 and in April of the following year was murdered along with his family by the Communists. “Franzi” in this poem is the Hapsburg Emperor Franz Joseph I, born in 1830 and still on the throne of Austria-Hungary at the outbreak of World War I. He died in 1916 realizing the war was lost and the breakup of the empire into many parts was inevitable.

After the war, the Communists took over Russia and formed the Soviet Union, led by Lenin who died in 1924 and who was succeeded by the vicious megalomaniac, Stalin. “Gulags” were Stalin’s slave labor camps. “Dresden” is a city in Germany which the Allies fire-bombed in World War II. The plan was to create a fire storm which would start hurricane force winds blowing from the edges of the city into the center, thus setting the whole city on fire. It worked. Something like 100,000 people burned to death.
The Second World War was in many ways a direct outcome of the first. After the 1918 Allied victory the winners imposed brutally harsh terms on the Germans including paying a fabulous sum of money to the winners and requiring the Germans to admit in writing sole blame for starting the war even though most historians believe all the European great powers were to blame for the debacle.

Corporal Adolph Hitler fought and was wounded on the Western Front, something of which he was immensely proud. His early dream of becoming a famous painter had been shattered by the rejection of his application to art school (for lack of talent) and he greeted the onset of the war with enthusiasm. He could not believe Germany lost in any legitimate way and so he drew on his philosophy of anti-Semitism and without evidence accused the German Jews of treason, the so-called “stab in the back.” In fact, the entry of America into the war had tipped the balance on the battlefield and the Germans were running out of ammunition. Unfortunately, their army had been allowed to march home with its weapons, looking fully intact when in fact they were thoroughly beaten.

In World War II the British Expeditionary Force was quickly defeated and driven into a tiny enclave around the Channel city of Dunkirk but Hitler was unable to finish them off. Valiant rear guard action allowed the British Navy and thousands of small private craft to bring the army off the beach and although they had to leave their weapons behind they lived to fight another day. When the Allies returned to Europe in June 1944 with the Normandy invasions, Hitler ignored the advice of his commanders to commit the deadly Panzer tank divisions until it was too late to repulse the invasion.

“The little Frenchman” here is Napoleon Bonaparte, from whose disastrous invasion of Russia in 1812 Hitler learned nothing. The Nazi armies in the East were eventually gutted by the Soviets and rolled back on Berlin. With Germany in ruins, Hitler (“der Fuhrer” or “Leader”), committed suicide and his body was burned outside his Berlin bunker. The “Yogi man” here is Yogi Berra, New York Yankees catcher who was famous for his malapropisms. This one is attributed to him but I can’t prove he actually said it.

It is estimated that only one in three shells fired in WWI actually exploded. Millions just buried themselves in the mud, still live and waiting until some chance encounter detonates them. The French Army still maintains a core of demineurs who constantly search out the unexploded ordnance from World War I, though sometimes they are too late. Since the work began in 1945, they have recovered twenty million shells but lost 600 men killed (“Aftermath; the Remnants of War,” http://www.storylineentertainment.com/aftermathpictures/aftermat/demineur.html). Civilians like our M. Bertrand also die. World War I is still killing people on the battlefields of France.
The Salient Need to Develop New Understanding: An Analysis of Approaches to Transnational Terrorism (TT), Armed Conflict, and Fragility in African States

Oluwaseun Bamidele*

Abstract
Transnational Terrorism (TT) poses a significant and growing threat to national, regional and international security, with dire implications for public safety, public health, democratic institutions, and economic stability across the globe. Not only are criminal networks expanding, but they also are diversifying their activities, resulting in the convergence of threats that were once distinct and today have explosive and destabilizing effects. Transnational Terrorism (TT) has grown and its tentacles have extended along various border lines in African national territories affecting the peace and stability of Africa and its populace. Equally, it has led to the proliferation of armed weaponry and trade in arms or weapons with profiteers now finding an operational ground in the African states. Thus, the common place of armed conflicts and fragility on the African territorial space. Viewed from this perspective, this paper sets out to examine the evil troika of TT, armed conflict and fragility in African states. And, it argues that while attention is being paid analytically to the opportunistic environment that armed conflict and fragility create for TT, this is not translating into effective response strategies. In order for that to happen, experts need to better understand the dynamics between these forces, and space must be provided within the policy debate to consider the interrelationships and how to address them.

Keywords: Transnational Terrorist Networks (TTNs), Transnational Terrorism (TT), Armed Conflict, Fragility, Africa

Introduction
Transnational Terrorism (TT) is now a challenge posing serious threats to our collective peace and security in African region. But in armed conflict-affected and fragile states the threats of TT present particular and insidious challenges requiring new and innovative responses. Not only does TT undermine the strength of the state, it further affects the critical and often contested relationship between the state and society. Regional efforts in preventing and combating TT have a long history. These efforts culminated in the 1999 African Union

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Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Transnational Terrorism adopted by the 35th Ordinary Session of the AU Summit, held in Algiers, Algeria, in July 1999, in which it rejected all forms of extremism and terrorism, whether under the pretext of sectarianism, tribalism, ethnicity or religion. The Convention requires that States Parties criminalize terrorist acts under their national laws as defined in the Convention. It defines areas of cooperation among states, establishes state jurisdiction over terrorist acts, and provides a legal framework for extradition as well as extra-territorial investigations and mutual legal assistance. The Convention entered into force in December 2002 and forth Member States have ratified it. In order to give concrete expression to the commitments and obligations of Member States under the 1999 Convention and the other international CT instruments, the AU High-Level Inter-Governmental Meeting on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism in African states, held in Algiers in September 2002, adopted the AU Plan of Action on the Prevention and Combating of Transnational Terrorism.

In additional Protocol to the 1999 Convention the decision of the Assembly of the Union [Assembly/AU/ Dec.311(XV)] on the Prevention and Combating of Transnational Terrorism, adopted at its Kampala Session in July 2010, where it underscored the need for renewed efforts and increased mobilization, the Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union appointed, in October 2010, the AU Special Representative for Counter-Terrorism Cooperation. The Special Representative serves, concurrently, as the Director of the ACRST. Since his appointment, the Special Representative undertook a number of important assignments to mobilize support for the continent to fight the scourge of TT, assess the situation in various Member States and identify, with the concerned national authorities, priority security issues to be addressed. And as part of the implementation of the relevant provisions of the 2010 AU Plan of Action on the Prevention and Combating of Transnational Terrorism, which entrusts the Commission with providing advice on matters pertaining to counter-terrorism action, including preparation of model legislation and guidelines to assist Member States, the Commission developed the African Model Law on Counter Terrorism, which was endorsed by the decision [Assembly/AU/Dec.369(XVII)] adopted by the 17th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union, held in Malabo, in July 2011.

2 African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT). For more information, see: http://www.caert.org.dz/ACSRTDocs/seminars/AUCTED2.pdf.
3 Ibid.
6 African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT). For more information, see: http://www.caert.org.dz/ACSRTDocs/seminars/AUCTED.pdf.
and encouraged Member States to fully take advantage of it to strengthen and/or update their national legislation. The Model Law is developed to assist Member States in fragile and armed conflict-affected African states in the various continental counter-terrorism instruments. Here the African Union (AU) is helpful. In its 2 September 2014 Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Transnational Terrorism adopted by the 455th Meeting at the level of head of state and government of the AU Summit, held in Nairobi, Kenya, the AU defines terrorism as any "act intended to cause death or serious injury to a civilian, or to any other person not taking an active part in the hostilities in a situation of armed conflict, when the purpose of such act, by its nature or context, is to intimidate a population, or to compel a government or an international organisation to do or abstain from any such act".  

In fragile and armed conflict-affected African states, it is precisely the degraded nature of this relationship that often prevents progress toward greater peace and prosperity. While there is now an established correlation between armed conflict and state fragility, much less is understood about the link between TT, armed conflict, and fragility. This paper examines the dynamics between armed conflict, state fragility, and TT, demonstrating how the three fit together in an uneasy triumvirate, and it presents ideas for a more effective response. Roughly half of all illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons transactions in African states are taking place in states experiencing a range of weak enforcement mechanisms, low levels of economic well-being, insufficient government capacity, and significant societal divisions.

In these contexts, Transnational Terrorist Networks (TTNs) further erode state legitimacy by incentivizing corruption, infiltrating state structures, and competing with the state in the provision of services. Yet the prevalent approach to tackling TT, termed a “law-and-order” strategy, frequently fails to account for the complex dynamics associated with terrorist networks in fragile and armed conflict-affected contexts. This strategy, which is primarily focused on security, sanctions, and the rule of law, is rarely tailored to the needs of African states suffering from severe governance deficits or those with a history of armed conflict. On the contrary, it has the potential to reinforce historical enmities between the state and its citizens and notions of state power as coercive control rather than legitimate representation. In African states with a history of weak states, or where faith in the system is lacking due to societal divisions and armed conflict, citizens often rely instead on religious, tribal, and many other kinds of networks to fulfill their economic and social needs.

In their efforts to tackle TT, governments and AU should reach out to and engage with these social and economic networks rather than sidelining them and potentially driving them further underground. For example, by expanding the options for legitimate, regulated lines of work, domestic governments can reduce incentives for citizens to engage in the informal economy, increase economic viability, and strengthen resistance to incursions by transnational terrorists. And by strengthening collaboration between state bodies and social networks at the local level, domestic governments and regional organisations can more effectively gather information on shifting terrorism patterns, understand vulnerability, and identify opportunities

for building resilience to TT threats. Given the scope of the problem and its implications for peace and security, a more sophisticated strategy is needed in contexts where TT, armed conflict, and fragility intersect. Regional cooperation and law-and-order interventions must be part of a larger strategy that takes into account the political, economic, and social realities in each context. In the long run, building and reinforcing the connections between state and society in fragile and armed conflict-affected contexts will be essential to undermining TTNs and ensuring lasting peace and development.

**Transnational Terrorism [TT], Armed Conflict and African States Fragility**

The events of September 11 2001 and the Middle East and North African Revolutions from 2010-12 have shaped much of the African regional community’s focus in the years that followed. More recently, that attention has begun to shift away from a near-singular focus on armed conflict and violent extremism to other security threats, some of which have been left to linger and even prosper while attention was diverted. Top among these is the impact of TT on African peace and security (Bapat, 2011). Expanding illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons transaction routes are threatening African states in new ways, re-invigorating existing networks and creating new ones. Illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons vendors are forging alliances with terrorist groups and providing new sources of financing. Transnational terrorists are also expanding intersection lines to include, for example, illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons, forged documents, and more (Kwaja, 2012). While violent death from armed conflict has been steadily decreasing since the end of the Cold War, in some African states death rates due to transnational terrorist activity are higher than those experienced during armed conflict (Human Rights Watch, 2003). TT affects nearly two-third of African states in the region today (Forest and Giroux, 2011). Yet much remains unknown about the triangular relationship between TT and states considered to be fragile or having experienced recent, current, or recurrent violent armed conflict ("armed conflict-affected" states). African fragile states tend to exhibit high capacity deficits, weak government institutions, and a substantial reliance on nongovernmental and traditional support structures and processes; while armed conflict-affected states tend to have significant internal divisions, depleted infrastructure, high poverty rates, and subgroup hostility toward the state.

These conditions not only create ideal environments for TT, but the presence of transnational terrorists also threatens the very process of peacebuilding needed to address armed conflict and fragility (Stewart, 2011). Just as there is an established correlation between armed conflict and fragility (Tull and Mehler, 2005), this paper aims to demonstrate similar correlations between TT and armed conflict on one hand and between TT and fragility, on the other hand and to show how they all fit together in an uneasy and potentially deadly triumvirate. Similar to the convergence of fragility and armed conflict, there has long been a dotted line between armed conflict and acts of TT. North Africa, Sahel-Sahara and sub-Saharan African regions are now home to the highest number of death rates per capita of anywhere in the world (Hübschle, 2011). The states with the highest rates are those that have a history of armed conflict that was brought to an end through some type of negotiated solution, including Somalia, Chad, Central African Republic, Algeria, Lybia, Mali, Egypt, Kenya and Nigeria etc (Luttwak, 1999). While the increase in violence has multiple reasons, the end of active violent
conflict also fostered environments in which the state was weakened, economic opportunities were few, and societal divisions were paramount.

The process of building citizen confidence in the state is a long one and one that, in some, is being regionally undermined by actors who have an incentive to maintain weak state functions. The implications of the presence of TTNs is almost as broad as the range of activities they can be involved in—from killing of people to illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons. TT can undermine governments in a variety of ways, from fuelling domestic violence to the terrorist infiltration of state structures. In all instances, TT strategies affect not only the strength of the state but also the critical and often contested relationship between the state and society (Connell, 2005). In armed conflict-affected and fragile states in Africa, this poses a real threat to the long-term prospects of peaceful development. Transnational-driven terrorists often operate with ingenuity and speed, taking advantage of any opportunity to pursue their goals. Exploiting societal divisions and forming relationships with actors hostile to the state can be a rational byplay calculus. Similarly, transnational terrorists will seek to exploit opportunities where state structures can be easily co-opted for political gain, which is often where the rule of law is weakest and citizens cannot hold their government accountable.

Ultimately, as TT further weakens state-society relations, it undermines stability, legitimate governance, and long-term prospects for peace and development. This paper does not presuppose any causal relationships among TT, armed conflict, and fragility. Rather, it argues that while attention is being paid analytically to the opportunistic environment that armed conflict and fragility create for TT, this is not translating into effective response strategies. In order for that to happen, experts need to understand better the dynamics between these forces, and space must be provided within the policy debate to consider the interrelationships and how to address them.

The prevailing strategy to date has very much focused on security, sanctions, and the rule of law, including anti-transnational terrorism measures, all of which are broadly defined here as ‘law-and-order’ interventions. There is no question that these areas require greater investment. However, as TT becomes more pervasive in African states with severe governance deficits and contested political settlements, too narrow a focus on law-and-order assistance is not only insufficient, it may actually be counterproductive. In these environments, justice systems are often utterly ineffective, while security forces often have a history of predatory and abusive behavior. Further increasing the strength of systems that are already oriented against equitable, fair, or legitimate treatment for the majority of the citizens could provide fodder for renewed violence or the backlash of a population that may perceive state actions to be biased and crackdowns on transnational terrorists to be a smokescreen for further marginalization of specific groups. If these dimensions of state-society relations are not factored into current discussions on TT, overly heavy-handed approaches in these contexts may ultimately do more harm than good. Domestic governments should complement any efforts at fighting TT with community engagement and reform efforts that underscore accountability loops to ensure they are not undermining longer-term peacebuilding, and regional actors should encourage this among their co-operators.
Transnational Terrorism [TT] Groups in Africa

“Since the Middle East and North African revolution in 2011, the African regional security organisations have seen a surge in the number of TT groups emerging in safe havens of weak, armed conflict-prone states,” (Howard, 2010). While one should be cautious about asserting connections between different terrorist organizations and other militant sects in the absence of credible evidence, one should also be wary of arbitrary distinctions and classifications that do little justice to more fluid realities. That being said, there are some tantalizing linkages between Boko Haram (Nigerian terrorist group) and other terrorists’ movements (Albert, 2005). The former has clearly absorbed the signature tactic of some of the latter: the use of vehicle-borne IEDs in repeated attacks against high-profile public targets, resulting in a spectacular increment in record of casualties, especially in cases where the bombs are deployed in near-simultaneous or otherwise coordinated attacks. At the very least, the existence of suicide attacks indicates some level of foreign influence since such episodes had been practically unknown in Africa until recent years, when this group became a part of AQIM’s repertoire (Zenn, 2013).

AQIM itself has had a discrete number of Nigerian recruits since the Algerian Groupe Salafiste pour la Prédication et le Combat (GSPC, or the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat) was rebranded as al Qaeda’s franchise in the region. This is a fact Abdelmalek Droukdel acknowledged in 2008 when he gave an extensive interview to the New York Times (Nossiter, 2012). The group has never hidden its ambition to bring in African Islamists in order to exploit tensions in Africa (Albert, 2005). It is noteworthy, in fact, that both AQIM and Boko Haram leaders (Abubakar Bin Shekau) have issued statements complimenting each other and pledging mutual support (Zenn, 2013). AQIM has permitted the militant Islamist groups to employ its media operation, al Andalus (Zenn, 2013).

Furthermore, there is the question of the role currently being played within Boko Haram by the Chadian-born Mamman Nur, formerly third highest-ranking figure in Boko Haram’s leadership after Mohammed Yusuf and Abubakar Shekau (Nossiter, 2012). In the aftermath of the government’s crackdown in 2009, Nur was believed to have gone to Somalia, where he and his followers trained in al Shabaab camps in Somalia and forged links with TTNs (Nossiter, 2012). He returned to Nigeria in early 2011 and was alleged by Nigerian authorities, who placed a 25 million naira ($175,000) bounty on him, to have masterminded the attack on the United Nations building in Abuja. Certainly, Boko Haram spokesmen in Nigeria boasted of their ties

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10 In addition to the previously mentioned links between Boko Haram and AQIM, there is the case of the Chadian-born Mamman Nur, at one time the third highest-ranking figure in Boko Haram’s leadership behind Mohammed Yusuf and Abubakar Shekau, who, after Boko Haram members dispersed in the aftermath of the government crackdown in 2009, is believed to have gone to Somalia, where he and a small group of followers are thought to have received training in camps in territory controlled at that time by al-Shabaab and, presumably, forged links with various transnational jihadist networks before returning to Nigeria in early 2011. A January 2012 report by the United Nations noted that Boko Haram members had also received training in Mali the previous summer and that seven others were arrested in Niger with names and contact details of AQIM militants. Also, see Adam Nossiter, “In Nigeria: A Deadly Group’s Rage Has Local Roots,” New York Times, February 26, 2012.
with militants in Somalia. These links have been confirmed by African Union regional troops in that country (Onuoha, 2011).

One should also keep it in mind that the successful establishment or acquisition of an active affiliate in Africa has been a goal of al Qaeda for some time (Pham, 2007). In June 12, 2006, for example, Sada al-Jihad [Echo of Jihad], the magazine published by the group that was then al Qaeda in Saudi Arabia, published a lengthy article by Abu Azzam al-Ansari entitled “Al-Qaeda is Moving to Africa” (Pham, 2011). The author was quite upfront about the jihadist agenda for Africa: There is no doubt that al-Qaeda and the holy warriors appreciate the significance of the African regions for the military campaigns against the Crusaders (Pham, 2011). Many people sense that this continent has not yet found its proper and expected role and the next stage of the conflict will see Africa as the battlefield (Alli, 2012).

As important as the operational links between Boko Haram in Nigeria and Islamist militant groups outside Nigeria are, so are the rhetorical connections (Zenn, 2013). Abubakar Bin Shekau increasingly draws on narratives used by other violent Islamist movements. In fact, the conflation of local and global grievances has been an important milestone in the evolution of other militant groups—including the GSPC before it was transformed into AQIM—providing the organizations’ leaders with a platform where upon to seek support and legitimacy above and beyond the confines of the struggle they had hitherto been engaged (Marret, 2008). TT interacts with governments in fragile and armed conflict-affected states in a variety of different ways, catalogued here as corrupting, infiltrating, and competing (Goïta, 2011).

In the first case, TTNs buy off government officials to give them the space or consent to carry out their operations. Corruption can take place at the top; Corruption can also impact society closer to the ground. Corruption is part and parcel of many fragile and armed conflict-affected settings, in part because lack of economic opportunities and stable environment provide incentives for short-term decision making and risk taking (Shelley, 2005). Recent study by Annan and Danso, (2013) suggests that individuals change their behaviour depending upon their expectations of the future. “When the future is expected to be worse than the present, the incentives move towards living in the present: profligate consumption and reduced infrastructure investment” (Annan and Danso, 2013). For individuals who have lived through armed conflict or domestic violence and other forms of hardship, imagining a future they can invest in can be a real challenge. Turning down compromising offers of immediate financial reward may not only be economically challenging, it could also be cognitively irrational. This has very real implications for both small-scale players in the TTNs and higher level networking agents.

In the context of Africa, Pitcher, Moran and Johnston (2009) argued that patrimonial conceptions of the state, in which public benefits are believed to accrue to individual leaders, reinforce environments dismissive of the rule of law and institutional resiliency. When combined with the lucre incentive offered by transnational terrorist groups, the benefits may be too great to resist. As Witting (2011) will puts it, “They [the terror militias] have millions of dollars and you need to be a saint to reject that.” The challenge lies in maintaining the long-term outlook required to shift views and practices while also addressing the immediate need to mitigate the insidious impacts of TT infiltration.

The second way in which TT interacts with the state is infiltration. Infiltration takes corruption to the next level by capturing state leadership while ensuring the maintenance of
the basic state apparatus. Enders and Sandler, experts on TT, describe this scenario as a “criminalized state” in which the leaders of the state are themselves part of the initiative and devote state assets to the terrorist plan. This can also be described as a symbiotic relationship in which state authorities are the initiators of acts of terror in or relationships with terror groups rather than being persuaded or threatened by terror groups to consent to their activities. In other words, states are not always the victim of a group of criminal outsiders but can be criminal instigators themselves (Enders and Sandler, 2000).

In one version of such a pattern, the state essentially leases out or franchises part of its territory to terrorist groups for production, processing, or shipment. According to Bueno de Mesquita (2005), this type of pattern is on the rise in sub-Saharan Africa and Sahel Saharan Africa, whether territory is being franchised or not, a state complicit in terrorist activity essentially makes accomplices of the entire population. Individuals negatively impacted by illicit activity have no form of redress in a state where the government not only allows, but promotes the same unlawful behavior. For the individual, therefore, there is an increased incentive to join the ranks rather than fight a battle that could prompt a government backlash. In this type of scenario, the regional community’s engagement, whether with state governments or local populations, will be most challenging.

The final way that TT interacts with the state is through competition. In such cases transnational terrorism networks are directly at odds with the state. Competition can happen in various ways. In some contexts, domestic terrorism networks provide services for populations that in other circumstances would be provided by the state. Many groups, from Hezbollah in Central African Republic to the Tuareg in the Sahel-Sahara to the Al-Shabaab of Somalia to the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and to the Boko Haram in Nigeria, have competed for popular support in part by providing services to the population. In Africa local “militias” are considered more legitimate than the state in some areas, taking on roles as varied as settling disputes and providing welfarism for people (Krueger, 2008). In these contexts, the legitimacy of the state is further eroded, particularly if nonstate actors are more effective service providers. When this strategy is being utilized, the state and its regional partners need to work from the ground up to counter the competitive advances. Indeed, attempts to eliminate the competition by focusing exclusively on terrorist leaders and taking a forceful law-and-order approach can do more harm than good. The heavy-handed African Union Counter-Terrorism troop and AFAMIS-backed raids in pursuit of Al-Shabaabs in 2009 did not just result in civilian loss of life—they failed to address the needs of the community that they had controlled (Roggio, 2009). They were not accompanied by attempts to amend the structural inequalities in the society, nor did they help to address allegations of government complicity in illicit transaction (Piazza, 2011). Rather than capitalize on an opportunity to bridge government action with citizen needs and human security, the intervention reinforced the separation between state and society, and may have further weakened prospects for domestic peacebuilding.

11 In April 2012, Gerhard Schindler, director of the German intelligence service, (Bundesnachrichtendienst, BND), declared in an interview with Der Spiegel that “the terrorist threat has definitely increased in North Africa in recent months. In Nigeria the terrorist group Boko Haram has joined al-Qaeda. In Somalia it’s the Shabaab militia... We are also observing that al-Qaeda is reorienting itself in North Africa. I think there are good conditions for a terrorist organization there: We have high unemployment in these countries, in some areas the population isn’t being provided with basic services and there aren’t proper security structures based on the rule of law”.

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Competition can also take the form of direct confrontation between TTNs and the state, as in present-day Somalia and Nigeria. While the terrorism groups’ violent methods may do little to inspire citizen support, their overwhelming use of armed force means that they do not need popular backing. This form of competition undermines the state monopoly on the use of force, and it is likely the most debilitating in terms of citizen security, as people get caught in the crossfire. Egypt, Nigeria, Mali, etc., for example, are home to a plethora of nonstate armed groups with a complex mix of religious, political, social, and economic interests. Many of these groups are engaged in some type of transactions in unlawful commodities, including small arms and light weapons. Whereas some of these groups have formed alliances with the state, others battle regularly with the state and the African Union Standby force stationed in the different states. The consistency of aggression between these terrorist groups and the state and among the groups themselves for maintenance of control has resulted in an environment that is fundamentally insecure, with devastating impacts on civilian security in particular.

A 2009-2013 mortality survey completed by the International Rescue Committee found an excess of a thousand of civilian deaths since the beginning of formal aggressions in between 2009 and 2013. The presence of these transnational terrorist groups has also prolonged grievances and undermined attempts to foster peace and stability while simultaneously diminishing perceptions of state effectiveness. A competitive model often prompts calls from government leaders for additional regional support for their efforts. However, there are tradeoffs associated with a strong, regionally supported campaign for the national government itself and in terms of how the regional community comes to be perceived by the population. As Bamidele (2014) puts it, “Specifically, African governments are advancing both repressive and regionalized actions against domestic terrorists in order to avoid taking action on much more tricky issues relating to exclusion, inequality and lack of job creation.” Countries seeking to reinforce their own internal strength by mobilizing external support and using scare tactics risk diminishing broad popular support internally. The way in which the regional community commits to engaging in these contexts can be of paramount importance.

Finally, it is likely that TT groups pursue multiple strategies at once in order to ensure the highest level of risk mitigation. Governments are not monolithic structures, and transnational terrorist groups may choose to use guerrilla warfare with some groups and competition with others. The common thread that runs through all the strategies is their ability to demonstrate the vulnerability and weakness of the state, even in relatively strong states, such as Nigeria, Kenya, Egypt, Mali, etc. Leaders who have gone through a rational process of analyzing their ability to withstand TT may conclude that collaboration with TTNs is the best way to preserve their position and even maintain some level of peace rather than risk a large and prolonged confrontation with a group that has significant resources. Understanding this negative incentive structure and finding ways to address it will be critical for developing strategies to tackle infiltration. As terrorist groups shift into countries with a history of armed conflict or strong internal divisions between state and society, there are two broad concerns: first, TTNs can further enrich groups with historic animosity toward the state, facilitating a renewal of domestic violence; second, by enriching the state through infiltration, these

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12 International Rescue Committee, 2013 Mortality Survey, 2009-2013
networks can deepen the divide between state and society, exacerbating state fragility and elevating the associated risk for armed conflict. As Fearon and Laitin (2003) articulated, the overlap between unlawful transaction and social crises is more complex today than it has been since the end of the Atlantic slave trade. The next section details how current responses may be insufficient to address these challenges.

The Predominant Strategy to TT in Fragile Settings

Regionally, “TT activities are transforming the regional system, upending the rules, creating new histrians, and reconfiguring power in regional politics and economics” (Enders, Sandler and Gailulliev, 2011). In recent regional terrorism lexicon, TT was spoken of as a hierarchical phenomenon structured by militias with identifiable and therefore easily targeted leaders. It was thought that if the leaders of these transnational terrorist organizations were captured or killed, the whole system would crumble in turn. Pinpointing leaders was a simple way to describe a messy operation, thereby helping law enforcement agents to easily document and advertise success stories when targets were apprehended or killed. The problem was that this targeting of leaders did not result in actual reductions in TT. Rather, terrorism networks shifted, morphed, and adapted. Instead of conceiving of terrorism groups as snakes that one can decollate, thinking needed to shift to networks as plants with complex root-and-stem systems—cut one stem and another will grow in its place in an eager drive to reach the sun, or in this case, to achieve massive success in their attacks.

Interestingly, terrorism experts have become much more sophisticated in their understanding and for the most part have moved beyond the simplified unknown gunmen depiction (Drakos and Gofas, 2006). Different terms have been used to describe the intricate systems of interaction between individuals and groups, ranging from highly embedded structures to those with no social support. Even these models, however, at times fail to capture the significant adaptability of the networks, which is what makes networks so difficult to pin down and so resilient in the face of opposition. As our understanding of the complexity of TTNs is advancing, we must also advance our understanding of the ways by which regional actors, particularly dominant powers such as the South Africa, Nigeria, Kenya, Algeria, Egypt and so on, influence the incentive structures of regional government (i.e., AU) in their approach to fighting TT. Consider, for example, Kenya provided a support for Somalia to battle illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons transaction and TT (Omar, 2002). Although it took many months, this involvement helped to tip the scales in favour of the government in their competition with transnational terrorists. The challenge is that regional attention on TT shifts and evolves according, in large part, to short term threat assessments. Regional attention on illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons transaction in Somalia, for example, grew exponentially during post armed conflict in the light of the threat then posed by that country’s harbouring of al-Shabaab. As regional dynamics shift, the regional community revises its threat assessments. With the withdrawal of Kenyan Defence Forces from Somalia beginning in 2014, it

13 The Nairobi Protocol for Prevention, Control and Reduction of Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa, 21 April 2004. (The signatories are: Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Rwanda, Seychelles, Sudan, Uganda and Tanzania.)
will be interesting to see whether efforts to fight illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons transaction and transnational terrorists diminish simultaneously. While shifting priorities are a natural facet of regional relations, the challenges resulting from TT require more sophisticated solutions in armed conflict-affected and fragile states. Illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons flows are twice as volatile in armed conflict-affected and fragile states as in stable states (Hehir, 2007). This is mainly because sponsors tend to (over)react negatively to signs of instability as a way to manage the risk to their illegal arm sales business. Economic aid volatility matters. It has been found that economic growth and levels of domestic investment are negatively impacted by unstable flows of economic aid (Young and Findley, 2011). Therefore, states are faced with a reinforcing risk.

First, as TTNs impose themselves, they risk negative reactions from donor partners. Second, as sponsors pull money out, domestic economic security is compromised thereby reinforcing an enabling environment for the same TTNs and potentially fuelling domestic violence. The very reaction, in this case, enables the condition to which sponsors are reacting. A secondary issue is that while development assistance may be highly volatile, this may not hold true for other types of direct support to the country. Assistance that promotes stronger societies by investing in people and fostering dialogue between citizens and their government is often dwarfed by military or police spending. In African states with histories of predatory security structures and illegitimate or ineffective governing bodies, such an imbalance could provide fodder for future violent confrontations between the government and terrorist groups which perceive themselves as marginalized. In these contexts heavy-handed government actions with secondary consequences for the broader population can inflame domestic grievances and re-trigger domestic violence, particularly when compounded by external influences.

Put another way, “Investments in security and the rule of law should not, indeed, compete with investment in development, but rather act as their necessary support” (Transnational Terrorism, Security, and the Rule of Law, 2008). The African Development Bank and other African financial institutions have pointed to the limitations of a security and legal approach without complimentary efforts being made at overall reform and accountability (World Bank, EC, and AfDB, 2008). In African states today, the challenge posed by TT is increasingly compounded by the terror-merchandising nexus. It is easy to visualize a convergence of threats as TTNs expand at the same time that groups utilizing terror as a tactic are taking root. At least five groups considered to be terrorist organizations by the US government are demonstrative of this convergence: the al-Shabaab, Hezbollah, Ansaru [JAMBS] and Boko Haram in Nigeria (Madu Onuorah et al, 2013). Regionally, African Union Counter Terrorism Framework has projected that up to 60 percent of terror organizations are also involved in illegal arms business (African Union Peace and Security Council (AUPSC), 2013). The lesson for policymakers from these findings is that not only an acts of transnational terrorism is economically and socially devastating, it can also have significant impacts on national and

14 The Kenyan army entered Somalia in October 2011 to pursue Al Shabab fighters whom they have alleged for kidnappings and bomb explosions inside Kenya. The KDF then joined the African Union led mission in Somalia [AMISOM] in the following year. The Kenyan army backing Somali troops helped the liberation of Kismayo, the biggest port town under Al Shabaab control. http://www.raxanreeb.com/2014/02/somalia-kenyan-forces-to-withdraw-from-kismayo/.
regional peace and security if it’s contributing to TTNs. However, this information does not tell us what percentage of unlawful merchandising is funding TTNs, and regional actors must be careful about any language that conflates these or risks placing all anti-transnational terrorism efforts in the prism of national and regional security threats rather than national and regional economic threats. Overutilization of a national security prism can help to justify heavy-handed responses that do not appropriately capture the socioeconomic dimensions and can reinforce structural marginalization or inequality in armed conflict-affected and fragile states. This can have very real implications for peace, stability, and development. Powerful actors such as Egypt, Algeria, Nigeria, Kenya and South Africa that demonstrate an overarching paradigm of engagement based on law-and-order approaches will impact the way domestic governments engage domestic terrorists on their own soil (Young and Findley, 2011).

Finally, a key challenge for regional organisations when tackling TT in fragile states relates to the very way the regional community is structured. States are the avenue for communication and collaboration. They are also the unit through which geography is ordered and analyzed. However, in many fragile and armed conflict-affected states population groups do not necessarily respect national borders, which they may view as illegitimate or externally imposed. In order for regional governments to have a strong sense of what is happening within these groups and to ensure that they are working with institutions that have the buy-in of the population, they must move beyond a single-actor model of development and engage with a multiplicity of institutions. The AUCTF, established by the African states in 2004, represents the main regional tool for countering TT. Although very important, the AUCTF fails to adequately capture the dynamics of TT because it does not reflect on the social, political, and economic consequences; the fluidity of transnational terrorist structures. The AUCTF remains rigidly state-centric with a law-and-order focus. As IPI (2012) notes, “These groups thrive in the seams of the regional system, while the regional response has been a state-centric strategy that matches the twenty-first century, not this one.” This is not only politically challenging, it also poses significant logistical and human resource costs. However, the risk of assuming the legitimacy of the state and therefore working only through state structures is high enough to warrant the additional toll.

Challenges in the Predominant Strategy

Many efforts to combat TT to date have focused on legal and security measures and systems for regional cooperation (e.g., Interpol). However, a more nuanced understanding of the overlap between fragility, armed conflict, and TT requires a better understanding of political, economic, and social dynamics within affected African states. In contexts in which reliance on and faith in the state are weak, where social networks are paramount, and where economic opportunities are limited, transnational terrorists are attracted to weak regulatory and enforcement environments. Many of these African states also present geographical opportunities for TT, including porous borders and exploitable transaction of illicit proliferation of illegal arms routes.15 Unfortunately, once individuals, groups, and possibly government

15 For more information, see Regional Center of Small Arms, http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/files/portal/issueareas/inventories/inventories.html , 30 September 2014.
officials begin to realize the effects of illicit transaction of small arms and light weapons, the systems will become more entrenched and more difficult to tackle. This could very easily feed cycles of continued or historical unrest, and state failure. This paper has already discussed the challenges of TT and current responses to it. This section looks specifically at situations in fragile and armed conflict-affected environments and the kind of threat that TTNs pose in these circumstances, explaining why a new approach is needed. This has two implications of relevance to this paper. First, the AU membership of an expanding number of states has placed issues on the agenda that may not otherwise have been there, and it has given a seat at the table to a host of actors who otherwise would not have been present. The second implication is the realization that the process of building states (with all inherent associations, from institution building to citizen engagement to capacity building) is both technically and politically challenging, requiring corresponding solutions in both areas.

These two factors have, in part, forced regional organisations (especially African Union) to do a better job of understanding the nature of peacebuilding. The description of states as “fragile” came into popular use within the past years. It gained wide currency as a way to describe the experience of Somalia. Fragile state terminology provided a way for the regional community to describe a country with institutional capacity deficits and legitimacy weaknesses, as well as potential for discord and domestic violence. This helped to categorize other states with similar patterns, including those that might pose similar threats to regional peace and security in fragile states. While there has been much resistance to the usage of the term “fragile state,” the categorization has been useful for differentiating the needs of these states from those of more stable low- or middle-income states.

Recent work on fragility and peacebuilding has pointed to the central importance of strengthening the relationship between the population and the state (Brinkerhoff and Johnson, 2008). This represents a real shift in thinking within the regional community, which historically conflated peacebuilding with the strengthening of state capacity only. Yet experience has demonstrated that in contested environments, institutional legitimacy cannot be taken as given. Perception of legitimacy or the lack thereof often reflects divisions that exist within society. A lack of institutional legitimacy and a history of state predation means that citizens not only have little incentive to engage with the state, they, in fact, have a strong rationale for seeking alternatives. They tend to be suspicious of and in some cases hostile toward the central state apparatus. In such contexts the assertiveness of state actors can motivate violent responses if perceived to be threatening to one or more social groups.

Government effectiveness still matters, of course. In African countries with low levels of public sector capacity, population interactions with the state tend to be limited, particularly outside the capital cities in rural areas. The inability of states to demonstrate their utility negatively impacts public perceptions. If this shortcoming is perceived to be due to clientelism, it in turn undermines efforts to build legitimacy. “When the rulers are perceived to be working for themselves and their kin, and not the state, their legitimacy, and the state’s legitimacy, plummets…. The social contract that binds inhabitants to an overarching polity becomes breached…. Citizens then naturally turn more and more to the kinds of sectional and community loyalties that are their main recourse in times of insecurity, and their main default source of economic opportunity” (BMZ, 2009). While this scenario may appear somewhat linear, it succinctly captures the essence of the problem. The terminology of fragile states has
helped the regional community to better organize itself with regard to peace and security. While states considered fragile do not always experience violent conflict, there is a strong correlation between the two. According to the 2013 Foreign Policy Failed State Map, of seventeen states coded as fragile between 2000 and 2013, fourteen of them experienced some type of armed conflict, with twelve having seen major armed conflict.\textsuperscript{16} The report speculates that “states lacking the institutional capacity and accountability to absorb systemic stress are more likely to experience armed conflict-and less able to extract themselves from it or to contain its effects” (United Nations Security Council, 2011). Fragility often means that the institutional capacity and accountability needed to withstand and manage stresses is weak or nonexistent. Fortunately, our knowledge is beginning to catch up with reality, and just as work on fragile states has advanced, so too has our understanding of armed conflict. For the second half of the twentieth century, the majority of armed conflicts were internal, generally between one or more armed groups and the state. In the 1970s and 1990s, there was a relatively even split between the onset of a brand new armed conflict versus the recurrence of previous armed conflicts. A shift occurred in the 1980s with the majority of onsets of armed conflict taking place in states that had experienced a previous armed conflict, a pattern that has persisted to this day (Fearon and Laitin, 2003).

The analysis is striking: 70 percent of armed conflicts that took place in the 2000s took place in states that had experienced civil conflict in the previous few years (Fearon, 2002). At the same time, the causes of domestic violence today have become much more diversified, with overlaps between political and terroristic motivations (IPI, 2012). And globalization has increased groups’ abilities to interact with one another for economic, political, or social ends. The rapid growth of the regional economy has expanded these opportunities and created new ones. Whereas many historical armed conflicts remained local, today’s speed of travel and communication has meant that alliances can be formed and dissolved rapidly for maximum attack and minimum risk. It has also facilitated the export of grievances across national and continental lines, forging networks where they otherwise would not have been possible. The ability of transnational terrorists to adapt and change is an inherent aspect of their attack strategy that must be anticipated regardless of the context. Experts will have the best chance of confronting TT if they can understand what this adaptability will look like, both within society and in terms of the relationship with governments, and how networks will respond to countermeasures.

Very few studies have been done on historical TTNs and their adaptability. Studies of acts of transnational terrorism in Progressive-era Middle-East found that various terrorist groups were involved in the illicit transaction of small arms and light weapons, and they would form, dissolve, and create new partnerships as opportunities arose and challenges shifted (Obasi, 2002). Similarly, research from Keili (2008) demonstrates that, when the authorities outlawed small arms and light weapons transaction, TTNs adapted by changing their delivery systems, co-opting government officials, and otherwise changing their operational strategy. We see similar examples today. In Nigeria, termed Africa’s first “terrorstate” by many, when political tension escalated with the murders of large number of people between 2009 and

\textsuperscript{16} 2013 Foreign Policy Failed State Map. For more information, see http://foreignpolicy.com/2013/06/24/failed-states-2013/.
2012, Boko Haram terrorists purportedly shifted their operation out of the country due to the increased attention the killings generated (IRIN, 2012). Their departure from Nigeria may have been in part responsible for increased activity in neighbouring Cameroon, Chad and other nearby states. A balloon metaphor is often used to describe the effect: squeeze one section and the air will simply shift to another. The risks to those engaged in TT are generally twofold: judicial and economic (Herbst and Mills, 2003).

Transnational terrorists want to limit their exposure to prosecution while ensuring their maximum attacks in their operations. To mitigate these risks transnational terrorism groups place a high priority on trust, utilizing entrenched social networks as avenues to conduct operations. Transnational terrorists depend on effective communication, flexibility, adaptability, and trust. “[T]errorist planners exploit embedded social ties and interpersonal networks, often based on participants’ family and friendship connections, to recruit conspirators, generate trust, and discourage malfeasance among participants” (Bey and Tack, 2013). This allows terrorists to be both hands-on and far enough removed to protect themselves. There is also an incentive to proliferate and decentralize so as to distance oneself from direct transactions and therefore minimize risk exposure (Checkel, 2010). By seeking out opportunities among social groups with a degree of internal trust and cohesion, transnational terrorists will help to ensure a level of protection for their activities. Similarly, as these groups engage more in insurgency activities, they themselves will seek to proliferate and duplicate, thereby spreading opportunities, risks, and illicit transaction of small arms and light weapons more broadly.

Transnational terrorists groups also tend to seek maximum attention of the domestic government through the diversification of their operations (Andres, 2008), in other words, increasing attacks through multiple attacks streams. Given the strength of their social networks and the under-reliance of their populations on state structures, armed conflict-affected and fragile states make ideal partners for TT. Armed conflict experts (Vlassenroot and Raeymaekers, 2004; de Waal and Abdel Salam, 2004) know that bad neighborhoods can increase the risk of violent conflict as nonstate armed groups, weapons, and historic animosities tend to cross international borders. TTNs may seek to leverage historic regional dynamics to maximize operations in ways that could reignite tensions and domestic violence. Kofi Annan recently articulated widely held concerns regarding sub-Saharan Africa: “There is the risk that terrorists link up with other criminal elements or, worse, terrorist groups that may be trying to infiltrate and destabilize the region” (Olawale and Adisa, 2012). The socio-political dynamics of an entire region then worryingly become fodder for terrorists to exploit, thereby both enriching themselves and endangering entire swaths of the region. While this may sound overly dramatic, the threat is considerable, particularly for those states with fractured pasts and vulnerable presents. African states affected by domestic violence face higher poverty rates than those that have not been subjected to major domestic terrorism violence (DFID, 2010).

In some cases the difference can be quite high; the 2012 World Development Report estimates that African states experiencing severe major domestic terrorism violence lag sixteen percentage points behind in terms of poverty reduction. The experts of the report and the members of the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding have, out of recognition of this challenge, placed job creation and economic opportunity high on the list of what’s needed to move African states out of fragility (Cox and Hemon, 2009). Indeed, jobs are among the top
three priorities laid out in the United Nations Development Report 12, along with security and justice. Economic opportunity ranks as one of five priorities of the International Dialogue’s “New Deal for International Engagement in Fragile States,” (UNDP, 2012) which has been endorsed by more than forty states and organizations. The prospects of large sums of money in these otherwise economically constrained environments can easily draw the interest of illicit transactions and encourage individuals to engage in TT. It is relevant to consider that 46 percent of surveyed terrorist groups cite economic reasons for joining terrorist groups (Tsokar, 2012). Although group membership does not necessarily correlate with participation in TT, the two share similar characteristics that one could speculate a certain degree of similarity in motivation.

Fragile African governments that have also experienced a history of armed conflict face serious impediments to their very survival. Armed conflict imposes huge costs on states, ranging from direct military costs and depletion of infrastructure to physical impairment of individuals and education gaps resulting in severely weakened human resource capacities. These weaknesses can contribute to a state of extended fragility if not addressed, and evidence demonstrates that even states that are aggressively reforming require a generation to address key governance challenges (Rotberg, 2003). A continued inability to address these weaknesses in turn often heightens population frustrations, reinforcing fragility and creating conditions for future armed conflict; hence the cyclical nature of violence and fragility. Most fragile and armed conflict-affected states therefore find themselves struggling to rebuild infrastructure, address human resource breaches, gain the confidence of their population, attract investment, and strengthen economic opportunities, among a plethora of other priorities. Addressing these challenges alone is hard enough. Doing so in contexts where spoilers are actively working to prevent progress is an added and complicating hurdle that in some contexts could be significant enough to derail the entire process. The way in which these internal vulnerabilities and divisions can either resist TT or provide an enabling environment for it requires greater attention. The next section provides some thoughts on how to address these breaches.

**Addressing the Challenges: Nurturing Networks to Combat TT**

A history of weak, predatory, or failed state control creates an environment in which economic decision making tends to be short term, adherence to the rule of law tends to be occasional, and faith in “the system” has often broken down or indeed never existed (Mamdani, 2010). In these contexts populations tend to rely in large part on nonformal and noncentral systems of governance, whether provided by religious structures, traditional leadership constructs, tribal groupings, or other types of networks (broadly defined for the purposes of this paper as “social networks”). Reliance on these networks stems not only from perceived or actual corruption, but also from perceptions of effectiveness and of whether state or nonstate entities are more likely to deliver. In some contexts these networks are defined by ethnicity or religion, but they can be defined by a diversity of characteristics, including labour practice and age group. Shifting demographic such as urbanization are also creating new networks. For example, in African states as youth depart rural areas for urban environments, they often join new social networks defined more in terms of current social and economic status and less in terms of their place of origin. Indeed, as rapid urbanization breaks down social cohesion,
traditional social networks are giving way to more modern manifestations (GTZ, 2008). An example of this is the new type of network developing in region that builds on Nigerian models with job-oriented objectives. These networks are small, loose, flexible clusters of individuals that correspond well to today’s non-hierarchical style of transnational act of terrorism (Aning and Bah, 2009). Yet for the most part, there are binding internal characteristics, whether ethnic, linguistic, or otherwise, that bring together small clusters of individuals. This can increase internal confidence and allow for links to be made with other actors in the chain.

Once established, these networks can also be easily utilized for a variety of purposes. For example, historic transnational terrorism routes in Africa can easily absorb new generations of terrorist groups with linkages based on a mixture of social networks and dangerous motive (Taylor, 2013). Of course, social networks differ in size, scale, organization, operation, and intention, and they cannot be thought of as monolithic. What’s important for understanding the connections between TT, armed conflict, and state fragility is the inherent value that these networks have. What is needed in environments where TT, armed conflict, and fragility intersect is exactly the kind of involvement in communities that will help to build or reinforce the embryonic connection between state and society. How this is done is necessarily different in every context, as states must be responsive to actual citizen demands, not merely perceptions thereof or determinations of what is needed based on external assessments. However, one potential action to consider would be to expand the options for legitimate, regulated transnational actor to consider would be to expand the options for legitimate, regulated transnational, for example, by making it easier for individuals and groups to register legitimate transactions. By reinforcing economic viability, governments reduce incentives to engage in the informal economy and increase people’s ability to resist incursions by transnational acts of terrorism.

Another idea would be to strengthen the connections between state structures and traditional societal structures in the fight against TT. For example, by forging stronger ties between customary land boards (also known as councils of elders, land chiefs, etc.) and state-run land commissions, even a weak state structure could more effectively gather information on new patterns of use. The emergence of new patterns could indicate shifting TT patterns or even shifting transactions of illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons patterns.

In addition, strong ties between customary and statutory systems could help in efforts to dissuade populations from engaging in either transactioning or production by better understanding their vulnerability and possible resilience to TT threats. Regional governments should also recognize the huge potential that exists between some of the networks that cross state borders. For example, while motorcycle crews in border regions of Africa could pose threats as vendors of illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons, they are also expanding effectual transaction and easing the process of moving dangerous weapons and people across borders in economically underserved areas. Similarly, cell phone connections and other technological advances can provide significant opportunities for cross-border deals. Governments should work to reinforce these networks for the benefit of society by explicitly reaching out to them and engaging them in a way that brings them into the formal economy, which can be regulated. Finally, given migration trends, governments should be investing heavily in urban planning in order to foster environments in which under-ground activity has a harder time staying underground and in which people have a sense of pride of place. Investments should also be made to ensure that governance institutions in urban environments
can keep up with massive population increases rather than only being fit for an outdated population map. When services are provided by legal, legitimate, and effective state or private sector actors, illegal providers of services have less appeal within communities. None of the above is easy or short-term tasks, particularly in environments with limited resources and a variety of priority needs. However, illicit transactioning of small arms and light weapons is not a short-term challenge. It has always existed and will continue to exist. Rather than reacting in a heavy-handed, short-term oriented fashion, the regional community needs to invest in a way that will reinforce resilience over the long term.

Conclusion

The rise of TT in armed conflict-affected and fragile African states reflects dynamics of social disorder, economic opportunism, global integration, governance deficiencies, and historic animosities. Although any single intervention need not address all these aspects, all approaches need to be well considered in the light of these dynamics. A decade of concerted thinking about counter-terrorism has revealed that regional governments can no longer apply only a militaristic or state-centric strategy. Indeed, after a decade of terrorist attacks in Middle East [especially in Afghanistan], it is only recently that the international community and the Afghan governments itself are recognizing that political negotiations with the Taliban may be required for long-term peace and stability. That same lesson needs to be learned when it comes to armed conflict-affected and fragile states and TT in African States. Rather than making ethical pronouncements, efforts should be made to better understand the motivations and incentives that feed TT and address them. This may prompt some difficult conversations-for example, about the importance of social networks in environments lacking in state service capacity or in those with historical patterns of marginalization or state predation. However, these conversations are necessary in order to tackle the massive challenge posed by TT. The level of pressure TT is placing on the African national and regional system is stretching our collective ability to respond. There is no one-size-fits-all solution to the problems outlined above.

Indeed, any efforts to impose cookie-cutter solutions will inevitably be as limited in their effectiveness as previous strategies that revolved around cartel leadership. The very social cohesion that makes networks reliable lifelines in armed conflict-affected and fragile African states can also serve as mobilizing forces exploitable by transnational terrorists seeking to capitalize on rifts within society for their own selfish interest. The exploitation of historical grievances is made easier in African states unwilling or unable to face contested pasts and engage in the kind of conversations necessary to build a common future. In the national and regional security organisation’s response to TT, these sociological factors must be incorporated if effective solutions are to be found. Areas such as terrorist psychology that look into individual and group patterns of acts of transnational terrorism and the motivations behind them warrant closer attention in the struggle against TT. Improved knowledge in these areas may help us to better understand why decisions are made, how they are made and how social networks either resist advances by transnational terrorist conversely are attracted to them and absorb them.

The regional governments must continue to invest more in law-and-order actions and cooperation to tackle the massive challenges presented by TT. However, this must necessarily be part of a larger strategy, and in armed conflict-affected and fragile African states such
strategies are generally lacking. Not only will such solutions have limited effects in these contexts, overly heavy-handed approaches may actually do more harm than good in both the near and long term. The potential to reinforce historical enmities between the state and population groups is a real risk for law-and-order strategies that do not include concern for the social contract and do not engage in broader reform efforts. Regional organisations (e.g., AU, ECOWAS, etc.) should be wary of reinvigorating longstanding divisions and reinforcing state-centric notions that power is about dominant control rather than legitimate representation. The intention of this paper has been to broaden the conceptual understanding of the link between TT, armed conflict, and fragility in order to inform context-specific solutions. Just as historical security-based responses to issues of fragility were insufficient because of their lack of political content, so too will responses focused exclusively on security and the rule of law be of limited effectiveness today given their lack of social, political, and economic content.

More study is needed to inform policy decisions, including research on popular perceptions of state led law-and-order responses to TT for example, in African states that are starting to take aggressive action, such as Mali, Kenya, Nigeria, etc. What is the relationship between these perceptions and overall conceptions of peacebuilding and prospects for peace? How does regional support for these efforts undermine or reinforce these perceptions? And if it is the case that in many contexts there is a lack of popular knowledge regarding the negative consequences of TT in the long term, are there cases in which a security and legal response looks more like a tool of state repression than of state benevolence? Answering these questions will not bring about a world in which TT is not an issue. However, garnering more information of this nature should help regional security organisations to design better counter-terrorism measures and interventions.

References


Humanitarianism Goes to War: 9/11 and the Origins and Framing of the Millennium Challenge Corporation

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Abstract
This paper analyzes the creation of the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC). It specifically examines the significant influence of 9/11 on the origins and framing of an entirely new foreign aid organization. The paper argues that President Bush developed a very effective political frame, or justification, for the MCC within the context of 9/11 and the fear that it entailed. The paper evaluates chronologically Bush’s efforts in formulating foreign aid and the MCC. It approaches the topic in a qualitative research manner, using mostly official government documents. It concludes with an overall assessment of Bush’s successful approach to persuading the public and Congress to support the creation of the MCC on January 23, 2004. And, it makes recommendations for future research on the MCC and other issues that involve framing in policy making.

Keywords: foreign aid, Millennium Challenge Corporation, international assistance, soft power, framing

Introduction

President George Bush signed into law the Millennium Challenge Act on January 23, 2004. It had been a long and difficult political road to such a high-minded conception. The MCA created the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) for the purpose of global economic development and, more specifically, “to provide such assistance in a manner that promotes economic growth and the elimination of extreme poverty and strengthens good governance, economic freedom, and investments in people” (Millennium Challenge Act, 2003). The MCC was inspired by the United Nations Millennium Development Goals that were declared for the Year 2000 Jubilee.

This paper analyzes the origins of the MCC from Bush’s initial goals upon entering office in 2001 to the official proposal on March 14, 2002 and final passage in January 2004. It stresses the importance of 9/11 in altering the overall political landscape to support increased foreign aid and an entirely new foreign aid organization. The research investigation finds that George Bush was the leading proponent of the MCC and it, therefore, focuses on his specific framing to generate public and political support for it. The research, moreover, recognizes that there had been strong opposition to foreign aid before 9/11 but the terrorist attacks transformed the political environment and Bush capitalized on the fears to gain widespread acceptance for more foreign aid and the MCC. Prior to 9/11, very few people inside and outside of Congress

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supported Bush’s proposal for expanding foreign aid, despite his appeals to their hearts and values. After 9/11, Bush changed his framing and added the fear and security variables to the equation. He declared that increasing foreign aid would promote global economic development and that, in turn, would reduce the chances of terrorism taking root and striking back at America. Bush made foreign aid a central component of the war on terror and a means to, possibly, saving thousands of American lives in future terrorist attacks. The new framing, eventually, worked and the MCC was passed by Congress.

This paper examines the evolution of Bush’s framing of foreign aid from day of the 9/11 attacks to the establishment of the MCC. It contributes significant evidence to the scholarly debate that framing can be an essential component of successful policy making. It uses a qualitative approach to analyzing Bush’s foreign aid approach in the pre- and, especially, post-9/11 periods. It evaluates a substantial number of primary and secondary sources to extract Bush’s signature frames in promoting his new foreign aid program. It notes, at first, that Bush’s argument is a general theme that frames the new environment and lays the foundation for the MCC. It stresses thereafter Bush’s growing advocacy for including humanitarianism as an instrument to fighting terrorism and, ultimately, a new foreign aid organization (MCC) to focus on the new war.

This research project acknowledges that there are limitations to selecting key quotes from speeches and, then, assessing them. There is a matter of subjectivity on both the speaker (Bush) and the scholar trying to assess statements and connect the lines of thought to the ultimate objective. The intellectual value, however, obtained by collecting and presenting substantial evidence on Bush’s reinterpretation of foreign aid is profound. One can acquire a much better understanding using this approach in assessing how an entirely new foreign aid organization and significant humanitarian spending was pushed through a previously obstinate Congress. There can be other approaches to enhance our view, but this is one that has yet to be done on this particular topic, which is one of the best examples in framing and its effectiveness.

The research paper concludes with the overall results, from the subsequent passage of the MCC to its creation and funding operations. It emphasizes how framing does not necessarily mean telling the truth, as much of the MCC’s financial allocations ended up going to recipients who were not considered by most measures and people to be on the frontlines of the war on terrorism. It makes clear that perceptual changes may lead the public and Congress to support a policy program but, once it is passed and set in motion, the original intentions may return to the forefront and determine its course and objectives. It addresses and answers the key research questions: 1) Was President Bush’s framing of the war on terror after 9/11 a significant factor in the MCC’s creation and the subsequent major increases in foreign aid allocations? And, 2) Did President Bush’s framing of the MCC mislead—whether deliberately or inadvertently—the American people and Congress regarding the true nature and focus of the new foreign aid expenditures? This paper underscores the important lessons derived from these questions and the particular project in general. And, it makes recommendations for future policy formulation and scholarly research on the positives and negatives of framing.
A Brief Overview of Framing in Scholarly Research

Mintz and Redd (2003), in “Framing Effects in International Relations,” present a detailed set of frames that can be measured and defined objectively. They declare that framing is “an attempt at political manipulation,” and that it “occurs when an actor targets a decision maker and attempts to influence attitudes and behavior” (194). Mintz and Redd make a number of distinctions in terms of the types of framing. The most relevant to this study is what they call “purposeful framing,” which is “an attempt by leaders and other influential actors to insert into the policy debate (or into a group deliberation), organizing themes that will affect how the targets themselves as well as the public and other actors (e.g. media) perceive an issue” (194). They elaborate further by saying that “frames focus attention on specific dimensions (explanations) for understanding issues...frames highlight connections between issues and particular considerations, increasing the likelihood that these considerations will be retrieved when thinking about an issue” (193-194).

Woehrle, Coy, and Maney (2009) emphasize the environment in which a frame exists within, noting that “well-publicized events constructed as threatening the physical safety of the general public are likely to generate strong emotional responses, ranging from fear and anger to grief and pain. In this context, power holders can strengthen their legitimacy by emphasizing threats and linking the reduction to their rule and policies” (116). This suggests that a frame is partly or wholly dependent on another issue or person that can create and sustain the danger. The frame, thus, has to be attached carefully, even if its presentation thereafter comes across as reckless and a threatening in itself.

Woehrle, Coy, and Maney (2008) note the distinction between discourse analysis and framing by describing discourses as the “large bodies of language and ideas arising from multiple instances of contestation, [while] we think of frames as specific instances of identifying and contextualizing ‘a view’ of a particular situation (6). They stress that framing is about what the articulators want others to concentrate on at the expense of other alternative interpretations (6). They contend that “frames that do not fit into the dominant discourse or attempt to shift it too quickly or too radically are likely to be at risk for negative feedback from general audiences. When a frame does fit well, it resonates with the general public and its potency may be increased. In addition, frames that are used consistently gain legitimacy and develop a deeper resonance. They develop historical momentum and create a future trajectory reaching well beyond the initial framing act” (8).

In addition, Mintz and Redd identify multiple variations of framing including “sequential framing” in which different parts of a frame are presented at separate time periods to produce a build-up and climax that have a more favorable public reaction and is more understandable, or politically digestible. In short, a more complex frame or marketing plan may include a deliberate and strategic plan of conveying particular parts of a frame in a certain order and then have all of them coalesce at the end to create the maximum effect (Mintz and Redd, 2003, 197).

Framing can be summed up as the following. Framing, essentially, is about rhetorical and/or image construction with the goal of persuading the necessary audience to agree with the frame or at least not oppose it, that is to neutralize the audience. Framing, often, can be critical in policy decision making. If the right frame is not activated, then the policy argument
and program could be lost, at least for the time being. Failure means that either the frame was poorly/insufficiently constructed or that there were other factors involved in the equation beyond the users’ rhetorical/image arsenal.

Moreover, framing is focusing on one or more relatively short and powerful themes that can be absorbed by the intended audience and, then, can be translated into something favorable along the lines of the articulator. It is about establishing the dominant narrative in society or the political debate. The better the frame, the more persuasive and effective the case can be made. Good frames are expected to produce successful policy outcomes. The speaker must create and transmit the proper frame that coincides with the existing issues and circumstances, as well as be attached to society’s dominant values, beliefs, and ideas. In other words, the best frames are made for the right time, place, and people. If a window of opportunity arises, then the existing frame must be used to push through an issue/program or a new frame has to be created to move the issue so that it is aligned accurately with the window. The user, thus, is required to define carefully the frame and adjust it accordingly so that it can pass straight through and on to the intended destination.

**Bush and Foreign Aid Prior to 9/11**

George Bush came into office on January 20, 2001, with the desire to expand foreign aid. Bush had advocated “compassionate conservatism” throughout his presidential campaign, but his focus was primarily on domestic affairs. His support for helping America’s poor, including school children, had an element of religious fidelity and messianic overtones. In his inaugural address, Bush declared that the ambitions of some Americans are limited by failing schools and hidden prejudice and the circumstances of birth….America at its best is compassionate….persistent poverty is unworthy of our Nation’s promise….Abandonment and abuse are not acts of God; they are failures of love….Where there is suffering, there is duty….And all of us are diminished when any are hopeless (Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George W. Bush 2001, Inaugural Address, January 20, 2001).

Bush’s address to the nation on February 27, 2001 continued the theme of domestic concern and rebirth but gets applied to the rest of the world. In his speech, Bush proclaimed that America has a window of opportunity to extend and secure our present peace by promoting a distinctly American internationalism. We will work with our allies and friends to be a force for good and a champion of freedom. We will work for free markets, free trade, and freedom from oppression. Nations making progress toward freedom will find America is their friend. We will promote our values. We will promote the peace, and we need a strong military to keep the peace (Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George W. Bush 2001, Inaugural Address, January 20, 2001).
This brief glimpse into Bush’s vision of the world showed clearly that democratic and free market values were major factors in Bush’s equation of who was good and bad in the world. Bush, furthermore, stressed a more unilateralist approach to foreign policy. He indicated that he was breaking away from Clinton’s more multilateralist approach in international affairs. He did not mention the United Nations or any other international institution. Bush was willing to work with friends and allies but mainly upon his terms and goals. On the one hand, he wanted to maintain the status quo and the U.S.’s world leadership. On the other hand, he wanted to expand America’s ideological values and beliefs to the rest of the world. He suggested that the U.S. should reward those countries that pursue the same domestic values and institutions as the U.S.

George Bush was committed to helping the world’s poor. When he came into office, Bush admitted that he really wanted to expand foreign aid and help fight poverty and HIV/AIDS throughout the world, especially in Africa (Baier, 2010). He made a conscious effort to appeal to Americans’ hearts and sense of righteousness. He stressed the morality of humanitarian assistance to the most impoverished and vulnerable peoples of the world. Bush, however, had to deal with a Republican-controlled Congress that had reduced significantly foreign aid from a FY1985 high of $33 billion to one of less than $14 billion by FY1997 (Hook, 2003, 26). The Republicans, under Newt Gingrich and a very strident conservative wing, took over Congress in 1994 and made a number of major changes to foreign aid and many other aspects of government. President Bill Clinton went along with these changes, despite being a previous supporter of foreign aid. North Carolina Senator Jesse Helms took the lead in condemning and cutting foreign aid, describing foreign aid as a “rat hole” of corruption and waste (Hook, 2003, 26). Not only did many conservative Republicans oppose large amounts of foreign aid based upon previous numbers (which were a tiny proportion of the overall government budget, less than one percent), but they also were very critical of the previous disbursement of foreign aid, especially in terms of going to dictatorships and not producing any significantly measurable results after years of delivery.

Despite his desire to promote American values throughout the world and expand America’s foreign aid budget, Bush was not able to gain any new political support or traction on his worldly mission before 9/11. It may have been as much a part of international tranquility as it was that Bush did not make his international program a prominent political issue. Bush’s use of the bully pulpit was focused mainly on his domestic agenda. He wanted to help the poor, but mostly America’s poor. He pushed a lot of issues, including foreign aid, but he tried to work more behind the scenes (it is understood that successful politicians limit the number of key policy proposals that they make, especially when entering office). The country, furthermore, did not seem intent on shaking things up and increasing foreign aid, especially during an economic recession. In the end, from inauguration day on January 20, 2001, to 9/11, Bush’s humanitarian goals for the world fell mostly on deaf ears.

9/11 and the New Framing of Foreign Aid

9/11 changed the political equation and framing of Bush’s foreign aid program. The highly visible terrorist attacks on New York and Washington, D.C. shocked the country and world. The attacks mobilized the nation for a long-term war on a global scale. Americans not
only wanted to get back at the terrorists who planned and supported these operations, but they also wanted to know why so many thousands of innocent people were murdered.

Bush’s initial responses to the 9/11 attacks focused on the evils of terrorism and he framed the attacks as direct assaults on this country’s core values. Bush declared hours after the Twin Towers fell that “freedom, itself, was attacked this morning by a faceless coward, and freedom will be defended” (Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George W. Bush, 2001, Remarks at Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana, on the Terrorist Attacks, September 11, 2001). Bush addressed the nation later that night and he declared that “these acts of mass murder were intended to frighten our Nation into chaos and retreat, but they have failed. Our country is strong” Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George W. Bush, 2001, Address to the Nation on the Terrorist Attacks, September 11, 2001). He stated that “today our Nation saw evil, the very worst of human nature. And we responded with the best of America...” (Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George W. Bush, 2001, Address to the Nation on the Terrorist Attacks, September 11, 2001). He goes on to say that America and our friends and allies join with all those who want peace and security in the world, and we stand together to win the war on terrorism....America has stood down the enemies before, and we will do so this time. None of us will ever forget this day. Yet, we go forward to defend freedom and all that is good and just in the world (Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George W. Bush, 2001, Address to the Nation on the Terrorist Attacks, September 11, 2001).

Bush’s 9/11 response was telling for its general messianic call to destroy terrorism across the globe. On one front the goal is to pursue those responsible for the 9/11 attacks. But Bush pressed further and declared an all-out war on terrorism in general and anyone who opposes America’s core values. He rallied the nation and world to a global crusade. But, it was noticeable that he explained the initial causes of 9/11 on people who hate America’s core values. He did not state that poverty and hopelessness have anything to do with 9/11 or terrorism in general. Bush made a battle cry and declared an ideological crusade. He, however, laid down a very general framework of good versus evil. Anyone not like us and who opposes our interests through violence was our enemy. The root causes were ideological at this point and not socio-economic. The acts and personal sources behind this behavior were described as evil and hateful. There was no attempt to determine on a more sophisticated level as to why these terrorists carried out their attacks or why many people throughout the world, especially in the Middle East, jumped up in celebration. The terrorists and their supporters were portrayed as an ideological and illogical fringe of people opposed to freedom and democracy. Bush’s policy agenda was set to attack and destroy these people and their support bases throughout the world.

Bush addressed a televised joint session of Congress on September 20, 2001, and stirred up the Congress and nation to war. He portrayed the terrorists as threatening the entire planet, stating that “enemies of freedom committed an act of war against our country....All of this was brought upon us in a single day, and night fell on a different world, a world where freedom itself is under attack” (Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George W. Bush, 2001, Address Before a Joint Session of Congress on the United States Response to the Terrorist
He pointed out that many foreign citizens died on 9/11. He referred to the strong support and sympathy from many countries throughout the world. 9/11 was now becoming a global act and threat to many other countries. The initial spotlight was more on America and its values. By September 20th there was an increasing international factor in the overall portrayal of the good versus evil showdown. Bush not only divided the world into America’s team (us) against all terrorists and their supporters (them), but he concentrated much more on the foreign domestic sources of antagonism. He stated that not only are Osama bin Laden and Al Qaida responsible for the 9/11 attacks but he noted that there were many other terrorist groups in more than 60 countries. Bush, thus, linked all terrorists with the 9/11 ones. The war on terrorism was no longer just focused on the 9/11 perpetrators but on all terrorists from Uzbekistan to Egypt, from Africa and Asia to across the globe (Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George W. Bush, 2001, Address Before a Joint Session of Congress on the United States Response to the Terrorist Attacks of September 11, September 20, 2001).

Regardless of the terrorist cause and location or complete lack of affiliation to bin Laden, Bush constructed a monolithic image of terrorism in general, very similar to the fascist and communist monoliths during the 1940s. In the televised address, he in fact stressed that we are not deceived by their pretenses to piety. We have seen their kind before. They are the heirs of all the murderous ideologies of the 20th century. By sacrificing human life to serve their radical visions, by abandoning every value except the will to power, they follow in the path of fascism and Nazism and totalitarianism. And they will follow that path all the way, to where it ends, in history’s unmarked grave of discarded lies (Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George W. Bush, 2001, Address Before a Joint Session of Congress on the United States Response to the Terrorist Attacks of September 11, September 20, 2001).

Bush’s historical references suggested clearly that America cannot retreat into isolationism or appeasement. America had to fight, contain, and weaken the new enemy and any of its sources. America, furthermore, had to stamp out any potential fire in the world that could breed terrorism. Bush underscored this point by declaring that “our Nation has been put on notice: We are not immune from attack. We will take defensive measures against terrorism to protect Americans” (Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George W. Bush, 2001, Address Before a Joint Session of Congress on the United States Response to the Terrorist Attacks of September 11, September 20, 2001). The national security goals have now broadened well beyond what Bush had first started off with. Every terrorist group’s unique set of characteristics and factors were to be incorporated in the new equation. It made things extremely complicated on one end but very simplistic on the other end in terms of political rhetoric.

Bush emphasized in his address the key differences between America and pro-terrorist forces regarding domestic rule. This becomes central to Bush’s call for a global crusade against terrorism, not only on the battlefields but at the dinner tables, homes, and villages of ordinary people across the world. Bush moved beyond a solely military-style approach and attempted to
portray this new war as one to be fought on many fronts, including the political, social, and economic. He declared that in Afghanistan, we see Al Qaida’s vision of the world. Afghanistan’s people have been brutalized. Many are starving, and many have fled. Women are not allowed to attend school. You can be jailed for owning a television. Religion can be practiced only as their leaders dictate. A man can be jailed in Afghanistan if his beard is not long enough (Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George W. Bush, 2001, Address Before a Joint Session of Congress on the United States Response to the Terrorist Attacks of September 11, September 20, 2001).

Bush added here a whole new dimension to the war on terrorism. Anything related to the terrorists’ rule, from socio-economic to cultural, are now considered targets of America’s arsenal, both violent and non-violent. America would focus on attacking all the underpinnings of any terrorist group or supporter. The entire analysis and portrayal of terrorism would be contrasted explicitly or implicitly with America’s values and beliefs, particularly freedom, individualism, choice, sexual equality, and respect for other religions. Domestic pluralism and other aspects are now prisms in which the global war on terror is intended to be viewed by the American political leadership and public.

This new focus soon became a major component of Bush’s push for increased foreign aid. The U.S. was now fighting a war against fundamentally different domestic and global visions and values. Whatever domestic structures and ways of life the terrorists and their supporters had, they were considered dangerous and, therefore, had to be transformed completely by the U.S. Whatever the key domestic characteristics of a terrorist-leaning society, the more they needed to be rooted out and prevented across the globe. Bush was now making the war on terrorism an issue of how the average citizen lived his/her life. There was the American/Western/civilized way and then there was the terrorist way, according to Bush. The former must be protected and promoted throughout the globe. The latter must be stamped out everywhere. Bush concluded his speech by declaring that

...we have found our mission and our moment. Freedom and fear are at war. The advance of human freedom, the great achievement of our time and the great hope of every time, now depends on us....The course of this conflict is not known, yet its outcome is certain. Freedom and fear, justice and cruelty have always been at war, and we know that God is not neutral between them (Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George W. Bush, 2001, Address Before a Joint Session of Congress on the United States Response to the Terrorist Attacks of September 11, September 20, 2001).

Bush made his next big speech when he announced the first strikes against the Taliban and Al Qaida in Afghanistan on October 7, 2001. He focused on the military actions and goals and he stressed that this was against terrorism and not Islam or the Afghan people. Bush continued to separate the radical Islamic terrorists from the one billion-plus Muslims across the globe. Bush made no mention of the domestic Afghan factors in this speech or what he planned to do after the military operation (Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George

It was important to understand that Bush’s framing of U.S. foreign aid as one of national security necessity evolved in his speeches during the first month following 9/11. He formulated a very bipolar world of freedom and democracy versus terrorism and totalitarianism. He laid down the context of a long-term and global effort to root out the terrorist actors and their support bases. Bush emphasized that Americans’ very own lives and values were at stake. And, he warned that the potential terrorist threats could emerge anywhere in the globe and, then, suddenly appear in America itself, as it did on 9/11. There was a strong element of fear and paranoia in Bush’s portrayal of America’s war on terrorism. It may be a natural outgrowth of 9/11 but it also created an extremely broad and vague mandate to pursue the real and imaginary demons that John Quincy Adams once warned Americans not to pursue. Some may contend that Bush was just inspiring Americans along a very rhetorical and dichotomous depiction of the world, but his previous statements from his inauguration up to this time all had a very religious and all-encompassing tone to them. Bush, certainly, wanted to demonstrate that these were universal values worth fighting for, both at home and abroad. 9/11, it appears, sped up the seemingly inevitable process of Bush translating his domestic vision of America to the world stage. Many of Bush’s domestic themes were universal, including his desire to help the poor and improve their conditions and opportunities in life (No Child Left Behind was one example). He seemed sincerely moved by mass poverty and misery, regardless of where it existed. He was a born again Christian and that may have enhanced the effects and emotions within him. Politics led him to focus on the domestic agenda first. 9/11 took him into the international arena.

Bush’s address to the United Nations General Assembly in New York City on November 10, 2001, was a key point in which he merged his original desire to expand U.S. foreign aid with the new context of an international war on terrorism. Bush linked the two but it was obvious that they were not necessarily a perfect fit. The two frames of humanitarianism and the war on terror were an uneasy alliance at best, hard to prove but quite simple to describe. They, nonetheless, ended up being close enough to persuade many people that there was a possible link between a country’s socio-economic conditions and terrorism.

In his speech to the UN, Bush declared that the world itself was at war with the terrorists. He pointed out that the UN was born out of WWII and that thousands of lives were lost just recently right down the street from the General Assembly. He described the terrorists as wanting to “encourage murder and suicide....they set out to kill innocent men, women, and children” (Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George W. Bush, 2001, Remarks to the United Nations General Assembly in New York City, November 10, 2001). He went on to say that the terrorists “kill because they seek to dominate. They seek to overthrow governments and destabilize entire regions” (Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George W. Bush, 2001, Remarks to the United Nations General Assembly in New York City, November 10, 2001). Bush portrayed the terrorists as threats against all states, especially vulnerable ones. States were being targeted possibly based upon their weakness. Bush really turned up the rhetoric when he proclaimed to the General Assembly that few countries meet their [the terrorists’] exacting brutality and oppression. Every other country is a potential target. And all the world faces the most horrifying
prospect of all: These same terrorists are searching for weapons of mass destruction, the tools to turn their hatred into holocaust. They can be expected to use chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons the moment they are capable of doing so. No hint of conscience would prevent it (Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George W. Bush, 2001, Remarks to the United Nations General Assembly in New York City, November 10, 2001).

Bush made it absolutely clear what the consequences were for failure to confront and defeat the terrorists. The stakes, his terms, were astronomical. Nuclear destruction, holocaust, and every other sort of mass death and annihilation. And, the threat could emerge anywhere on the planet. Bush, thus, called on the world to unite against terrorism. He gave the General Assembly a progress report on the war in Afghanistan. He pointed out that the U.S. was trying to free women and stop the export of heroin as well. He incorporated a strong humanitarian element to the war operations by stating that many nations, including mine, are sending food and medicine to help Afghans through the winter. America has airdropped over 1.3 million packages of rations into Afghanistan. Just this week, we airlifted 20,000 blankets and over 200 tons of provisions into the region. We continue to provide humanitarian aid, even while the Taliban try to steal the food we send (Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George W. Bush, 2001, Remarks to the United Nations General Assembly in New York City, November 10, 2001).

Bush told the world that humanitarianism and the war on terrorism went hand in hand. It was good public relations and it neutralized many people who tended to focus solely on power politics and military issues. The fact that major humanitarian efforts were occurring as this war effort was ongoing was quite distinct in terms of the levels and, later, durations. But, Bush could not divorce the war on terrorism with the moral drives of helping people across the world. He knew that the war on terrorism could last for years and decades, so he made every effort to complement the war effort with winning the hearts and minds of people throughout the world, as well as the American public. Bush underscored this point very succinctly when he told the General Assembly that we must press on with our agenda for peace and prosperity in every land. My country is pledged to encouraging development and expanding trade. My country is pledged to investing in education and combating AIDS and other infectious diseases around the world. Following September 11th, these pledges are even more important. In our struggle against hateful groups that exploit poverty and despair, we must offer an alternative of opportunity and hope (Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George W. Bush, 2001, Remarks to the United Nations General Assembly in New York City, November 10, 2001).

Bush, here, has told the world that his original foreign aid program, including AIDS funding, was critical to the war on terrorism. He, moreover, explained that “poverty and despair” made many countries vulnerable to terrorism and, therefore, they had to be helped. Bush fused his original argument and framing for increased foreign aid with his global war on
terrorism in addition to his long-term and complex view of it. Of course, the 19 hijackers on 9/11 came from very wealthy families and backgrounds. Bush, nevertheless, attributed the socio-economic environment of countries to being the potential magnet for terrorism and, even, the leading cause for the manufacture of one violent product.

Bush’s second State of the Union address on January 29, 2002, highlighted the success in Afghanistan and the long-term policy of keeping the terrorists from coming back to power. Bush extended the war on terror to countries that sponsor terrorism. Bush declared North Korea, Iran, and Iraq to be part of the “axis of evil” (Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George W. Bush, 2002, Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union, January 29, 2002). He tied their efforts at pursuing nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons to possibly delivering these weapons to terrorists. Weapons of mass destruction, it was pointed out, could be accessible to terrorists through this axis. Bush declared that he would protect the country, win the war on terror, and improve the economy. He did not talk about foreign aid or the conditions that he described at the UN General Assembly just a few months ago. He returned to the initial stages of his framing and focused on terrorists as the enemy that hated America’s values and freedoms. He did not tell the American people that socio-economic conditions throughout the world must be dealt with to reduce the chances of terrorism and defeat them in the long term. It was telling, although he acknowledged in his speech that the U.S. was in an economic recession. Increased foreign aid, probably, was not what most Americans wanted to hear, but Bush could have tried linking it to the war on terror, which he did at the UN. Bush, however, saved this final act for six more weeks later (Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George W. Bush, 2002, Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union, January 29, 2002).

The Millennium Challenge Account Proposed

Jump ahead about six weeks and it becomes transparent that President Bush had been planning a major new program to fight the war on terror. While he was promulgating his idealistic calls and framing the new global threat and objectives, it appears that he and his administration were developing a very specific structure to achieve America’s goals on the international socio-economic front. It, soon, emerged that Bush’s old policy goals on foreign aid were being revamped and re-characterized to fit the new and threatening environment, in order to appeal to a more susceptible public and Congress. It, essentially, was new packaging and marketing for the same old product, as would be seen.

Everything built up and was finally revealed on March 14, 2002, which was a day to remember. President Bush, it was recalled, sat in his office as his aides rushed frantically around him. A very important visitor was scheduled to see him next to discuss a newly proposed foreign aid approach called the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA). The MCA was intended to be a major funding project administered by the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC). The MCC, itself, was supposed to be structured along business lines and hold potential foreign aid “customers” to much higher standards of progress and accountability in receiving U.S. foreign aid. It, also, by its name reflected a link with the UN’s Millennium Development Goals to reduce extreme poverty and misery—hence, its similar name.
It was notable that many people were unsure (even to this day) why the MCC was selected to play a leading role in U.S. foreign aid instead of USAID, the traditional arm of humanitarian assistance. No specific person or group was given credit for the proposed MCA and its distinct structure and operations. Bush, certainly, was at the center of the issue and, as his many speeches above showed, he wanted to promote the most effective foreign aid service in order to reduce poverty and hopelessness, as well as fight terrorism. The MCC was meant to create the appearance of a fresh start rather than a rehashing of previous political battles. It, very likely, was an attempt to avoid a very hostile Congress that had for years condemned USAID for allowing major waste and corruption within many foreign aid recipients, especially dictatorships. USAID’s credibility was very low among a host of conservative Republicans, especially those who controlled the top leadership positions in Congress and were on key budgetary committees.

Of all the major events and speeches on foreign aid, there were serious questions as to whether the president was ready for this upcoming visitor to the White House. Foreign aid was the only thing on the agenda. Bush’s aides prepared for all possibilities, questions, and contingencies. They grilled the president like he had never been grilled before. Question after question, the president had to know all the details on foreign aid and be able to make at least a persuasive case on every possible point.

Everyone in the White House understood that today would be a very historic day. Would the president meet the challenge and rise to the occasion? There was uncertainty in many minds but no one wanted to really show it. The upcoming visitor had such a great stature and an encyclopedic knowledge of many important issues, in addition to being a very strong critic of the president. He was expected to have every single piece of data and argument available to him to make the strongest case possible for his cause. The visitor was too important for White House aides to ignore the implications of a possible lapse or failure in the president’s political acumen.

The world watched as the president met with one of the most powerful people on the planet. Into the Oval Office walked none other than…Bono of U2. Bono was there to support the president as he made his case to the world for the creation of the MCC and a significant increase in U.S. foreign aid (Bush, 2010, 348-350). Unlikely bedfellows, Bush and Bono were uniting for a great moral cause, which Bush also saw as having major national security implications. After their significant and affable discussion on foreign aid, they headed to the venue in which Bush would make his proposal to the world.

Bush delivered his speech for the MCC at the Inter-American Development Bank on March 14, 2002. It was well attended. Besides Bono, audience members included U.S. Treasury Secretary Paul O’Neill, Cardinal McCarrick, World Bank President Jim Wolfensohn, Andrew Natsios of USAID, UN Ambassador John Negroponte, and a number of members of Congress.

Bush’s speech illustrated a very fine-tuned framing of foreign aid as a major component of the war on terror. Bush acknowledged that “as we fight to defeat terror, we must also fight for the values that make life worth living, for education and health and economic opportunity. This is both the history of our country, and it is the calling of our times” (Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George W. Bush, 2002, Remarks at the Inter-American Development Bank, March 14, 2002). Bush gave his audience and the world a precise set of
reasons for linking foreign aid and economic development with combating terrorism. He argued that this growing divide between wealth and poverty, between opportunity and misery, is both a challenge to our compassion and a source of instability. We must confront it. We must include every African, every Asian, every Latin American, every Muslim, in an expanding circle of development.

The advance of development is a central commitment of American foreign policy. As a nation founded on the dignity and value of every life, America’s heart breaks because of the suffering and senseless death we see in our world. We work for prosperity and opportunity because they’re right. It’s the right thing to do. We also work for prosperity and opportunity because they help defeat terror.

Poverty doesn’t cause terrorism. Being poor doesn’t make you a murderer. Most of the plotters of September the 11th were raised in comfort. Yet persistent poverty and oppression can lead to hopelessness and despair. And when governments fail to meet the most basic needs of their people, these failed states can become havens for terror (Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George W. Bush, 2002, Remarks at the Inter-American Development Bank, March 14, 2002).

Bush finally outlined in detail how his vision of socio-economic development tied in with terrorism. He addressed the hijacker issue and looked more at the general or narrow pockets of poverty, especially extreme poverty, in countries. Bush focused on the conditions that may increase the chances of someone getting angry and then becoming a terrorist. He also suggested that the 9/11 hijackers and other terrorists could have been motivated by the poverty of others and, then, blamed the U.S. and other wealthy countries for this. Bush, now, made the U.S. responsible in a significant degree to the socio-economic conditions of everyone throughout the world. Every inch of the planet could become a terrorist producer or lair and, thus, the U.S. must search out, identity, and then deal with any sizeable degree of socio-economic problems and inequality. It was an extremely tall order. Bush did not explain how the U.S. and others were going to achieve this and what the benchmarks should be for socio-economic levels that make countries safe or unsafe to being terrorist havens and manufacturers. Bush, however, made it very clear that it is less the money that is important than the conditions that are attached to the economic assistance. Bush, thus, testified that many of the old models of economic development assistance are outdated. Money that is not accompanied by legal and economic reforms are oftentimes wasted. In many poor nations, corruption runs deep, private property is unprotected; markets are closed; monetary and fiscal policies are unsustainable; private contracts are unenforceable.

When nations refuse to enact sound policies, progress against poverty is nearly
impossible...counterproductive...subsidizes bad policies... (Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George W. Bush, 2002, Remarks at the Inter-American Development Bank, March 14, 2002).

Bush, then, stated that the

needs of the developing world demand a new approach....a new vision of development...[that] unleashes the potential of those poor, instead of locking them into a cycle of dependence. This new vision looks beyond arbitrary inputs from the rich and demands tangible outcomes for the poor (Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George W. Bush, 2002, Remarks at the Inter-American Development Bank, March 14, 2002).

Bush reached the climax of his speech as he proclaimed that the U.S. supported the U.N. Millennium Development Goals and that

I call for a new compact for global development, defined by new accountability for both rich and poor nations alike. Greater contributions from developed nations must be linked to greater responsibility from developing nations. The United States will lead by example. We will increase our development assistance by $5 billion over three [years].

These funds will go into a new Millennium Challenge Account. Under this account, among other efforts, we will expand our fight against AIDS. We will bring computer instruction to young professionals in developing nations. We will assist African businesses and their people to sell goods abroad. We will provide textbooks and training to students in Islamic and African countries. We will apply the power of science and technology to increase harvests where hunger is greatest (Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George W. Bush, 2002, Remarks at the Inter-American Development Bank, March 14, 2002).

Bush elaborated on his grand plan by emphasizing that

in return for this additional commitment, we expect nations to adopt reforms and policies that make development effective and lasting....Good government is an essential condition of development, so the Millennium Challenge Account will reward nations that root out corruption, respect human rights, and adhere to the rule of law. Healthy and educated citizens are the agents of development, so we will reward nations that invest in better health care, better schools, and broader immunization. Sound economic policies unleash the enterprise and creativity necessary for development, so we will reward nations that have more open markets and sustainable budget policies, nations where people can start and operate a small business without running the gauntlets of bureaucracy and bribery (Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George W. Bush, 2002, Remarks at the Inter-American Development Bank, March 14, 2002).
Bush assured the audience that Secretary of State Colin Powell and Secretary of the Treasury Paul O’Neill would “develop a set of clear and concrete and objective criteria for measuring progress” (Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George W. Bush, 2002, Remarks at the Inter-American Development Bank, March 14, 2002). Bush presented the key general criteria for this new program. He stated that “countries that live by these three broad standards—ruling justly, investing in their people, and encouraging economic freedom—will receive more aid from America” (Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George W. Bush, 2002, Remarks at the Inter-American Development Bank, March 14, 2002). These three categories, later, become the basis for the MCC’s seventeen sets of criteria for judging countries and their eligibility to receive funds from the MCA. They also would later be judged and graded by sources outside the U.S. government (such as Freedom House and the World Bank), in order to ensure more credibility and objectivity. Bush contended that those countries that abided by these strict standards and values would set-off a chain reaction in economic development, since “…nations with sound laws and policies will attract foreign investment. They will earn more trade revenues, and they will find that all these sources of capital will be invested more effectively and productively to create more jobs for their people” (Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George W. Bush, 2002, Remarks at the Inter-American Development Bank, March 14, 2002). Bush maintained that there was more than enough proof that “where nations adopt sound policies, a dollar of foreign aid attracts $2 of private investment” (Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George W. Bush, 2002, Remarks at the Inter-American Development Bank, March 14, 2002).

The Successful Framing and Establishment of the MCC

Bush’s proposal on March 14, 2002, led to the creation of the Millennium Challenge Corporation on January 23, 2004. This case study demonstrates that the framing of the MCC was critical to its final approval by Congress and the public. Bush’s original argument upon arriving in office was not sufficient to change the foreign aid policy and structure. Good, compassionate, and moral reasons did not persuade Congress and the American people to alter the continuing decline and stagnation of foreign aid expenditures. Bush’s pre-9/11 calls fell on an unrelenting and conservative Congress that had reduced foreign aid to extremely low levels and kept them there throughout Bush’s first year in office. There had been no change in the political equation when it came to Bush’s foreign aid program and vision.

9/11 injected a national security element that allowed Bush and others to incorporate a new frame into the old argument. By framing foreign aid in the context of fighting the war on terrorism, Bush was able to create a substantial amount of fear and urgency into the foreign aid debate. It was no longer an international social justice issue but an immediate national security necessity. Many more Americans, it was argued, could be killed by terrorists if the roots of 9/11 were not eliminated throughout the world. Bush framed the MCC in the context of a righteous and compassionate cause that was now part of an ongoing war effort. Different than the Marshall Plan and Cold War, this was a hot war on a global scale and the socio-economic conditions were fueling support and personnel for terrorism. Bush emphasized this new frame and it turned out to be a very successful political approach.
Bush’s framing and proposal for substantial increases in foreign and the establishment of the MCC generated strong Congressional support from both sides of the aisle, which contrasted notably with his pre-9/11 cries for support. There were still some politicians, like Representative Tom Lantos, who supported increased foreign aid but they continued to question why USAID could not be the primary instrument for this new program. There also were questions on the MCC’s strict criteria. Representative Lantos and others called for less stringent conditions so that more countries could receive the new form of aid. This suggestion led to compromise and the creation of the MCC’s threshold program, which delivered aid to countries moving towards democracy and free markets but were not there yet.

The Millennium Challenge Act of 2003 was introduced in the Senate by Senator Richard Lugar, the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and in the House of Representatives by Representative Henry Hyde, the Chairman of the House International Relations Committee, in March of 2003. Nearly a year had elapsed between Bush’s MCA proposal and the Congressional introduction. Little evidence was available that could tell us what exactly happened during this time period, but one could assume that the MCC’s details were created, experts and political leaders were sought out for support and input, and draft legislation was created. The MCA ended up having broad bipartisan support, as it was demonstrated in the hearings and floor speeches that followed. Bush’s new frame for foreign aid was used conspicuously multiple times by Senator Lugar and others to support the MCA. Representative Hyde also stressed Bush’s demand for higher standards and verification for foreign aid. Senator Lugar, in a committee hearing dealing with the MCA on March 4, 2003, declared that

in my judgment, the primary goal of American foreign assistance must be to combat terrorism. And, in some instances, this requires direct military and economic aid to key allies of the war on terrorism. But our foreign assistance must also be aimed at broader objectives that aid in the fight against terrorism over the long run.

These include strengthening democracy, building free markets, and encouraging the civil society in nations that otherwise might become havens or breeding grounds for terrorists. We must seek to encourage societies that can nurture and fulfill the aspirations of their citizens and deny terrorists the uncontrolled territory and abject poverty in which they thrive.

To do this, all of us should begin to think about foreign assistance as a critical asset in the war on terrorism [emphasis added] (United States Congress, Senate, March 4, 2003).

Bush’s new frame on foreign aid, clearly, had a significant impact on Congress. This was much different than the old frame that was employed before 9/11. Other Congresspersons picked up the new frame and used it persuasively to push through the MCA with flying colors. A whole new organization was created and billions of dollars were given to it all because of Bush’s new frame in foreign aid. Nothing else changed in terms of Bush’s original goals, intentions, and recipients. Humanitarianism had to officially go to war before it could win the early political
battles in Congress and achieve Bush’s original dream of contributing much greater amounts to poor countries.

The MCA was incorporated into the Congressional appropriations budget and was passed in both houses by January 2004. The President signed it into law on January 23, 2004. The Millennium Challenge Corporation, thereafter, became the centerpiece and new model for U.S. foreign aid. It, however, reflected Bush’s original frame of foreign aid as a humanitarian mission but it included stricter standards of eligibility, which appealed to conservative Republicans. The MCC, as noted earlier, used seventeen sets of criteria for scoring applicants and determining eligibility to receive foreign aid. There, however, was nothing in the criteria and scoring that had anything to do with the war on terrorism or a country’s vulnerability to terrorists. This was quite amazing since the driving frame that pushed through the MCC and billions of dollars in foreign aid emphasized directly all those countries that were most susceptible to terrorists taking root (Millennium Challenge Corporation online). There was nothing stressed at all about funding countries that were well out of the way of terrorism.

The MCC’s criteria and later disbursement of approximately $8 billion indicated that most of the recipients had little to do with terrorism and were not at all likely going to collapse into failed states. Many of the recipients were small countries far from the Middle East wars on terror. The majority of recipients were African countries and most of the MCC’s funds went to them, which was Bush’s original goal before his initial frame failed.

In the end, the MCC was constructed with only 300 employees, a 9-member Board of Directors, and a fund that was very slow to disburse and extremely cumbersome to apply and process. But, the operations and goals reflected Bush’s old frame and mindset (Millennium Challenge Corporation online). This was a powerful example of framing, since there were tremendous differences between what Bush said prior to 9/11 as opposed to after 9/11 and, then, what actually happened following the MCC’s creation. Framing, thus, proved to be critical to policy decision making but, once the policy was approved, there was less of a need—if any—to continue with the frame, at least not tangibly. Rhetorically it remained for years thereafter, but the substance and direction of the bulk of resources said otherwise. This was very telling. And, very supportive of framing.

The Aftermath: The MCC’s Initial Operations and Results

After the MCC was created in January 2004, the proposed MCC budget was originally slated for $5 billion a year starting in 2006. Congress, however, authorized much less and the MCC disbursed approximately $1 billion to $3 billion a year since then. So far, the MCC has made a total of nearly $7.9 billion in compacts to 22 countries, which tended to be large grants over a five-year period. The MCC also has signed threshold programs totaling $495 million with 21 countries, who were defined as close to eligibility and were pursuing appropriate political, economic, and social policies. Approximately $6 billion of MCC funds have gone to Africa, $1 billion to Eurasia and the Pacific, and $1 billion to Latin America (Millennium Challenge Corporation online).

The first compact was made with Madagascar in July 2005. Malawi was one of the more recent, signing a compact in April 2011. The MCC established a total dollar amount usually for five years, committed a certain amount annually, and then oversaw the implementation of the
specific agreements. Up to 2010, 15 countries had less than half of the committed compact money disbursed, with three having slightly more than 50% disbursed. Only Madagascar had 74% of its money disbursed, but this after half a decade since the original compact was signed (Millennium Challenge Corporation online).

Let us examine the MCC’s overall funding and disbursement from 2005 to September 2009, from the initial release of funds to the last release that George Bush had set in motion before he left the Presidency. Note the lack of Middle East countries and prominent terrorist fronts in the recipient list. Some of these states may have had a small degree of domestic terrorism, but most recipients did not have any al-Qaeda connections at the time or even to this day, except for Mali (which was caused by the U.S.’s attack on Libya in 2011).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Compact Entry</th>
<th>Total (millions)</th>
<th>Committed (mil)</th>
<th>Disbursed (mil)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Madagascar</td>
<td>July 2005</td>
<td>$109.77</td>
<td>$86.70</td>
<td>$81.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honduras</td>
<td>Sept. 2005</td>
<td>215.00</td>
<td>193.10</td>
<td>109.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cape Verde</td>
<td>Oct. 2005</td>
<td>110.08</td>
<td>99.80</td>
<td>61.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>April 2006</td>
<td>395.30</td>
<td>331.30</td>
<td>146.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vanuatu</td>
<td>April 2006</td>
<td>65.69</td>
<td>63.50</td>
<td>38.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicaragua</td>
<td>May 2006</td>
<td>174.71</td>
<td>98.10</td>
<td>75.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armenia</td>
<td>Sept. 2006</td>
<td>235.65</td>
<td>107.80</td>
<td>41.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benin</td>
<td>Oct. 2006</td>
<td>307.30</td>
<td>200.30</td>
<td>49.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>Feb. 2007</td>
<td>547.01</td>
<td>342.00</td>
<td>89.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>Sept. 2007</td>
<td>460.94</td>
<td>177.80</td>
<td>49.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mali</td>
<td>Sept. 2007</td>
<td>460.81</td>
<td>168.50</td>
<td>46.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mongolia</td>
<td>Sept. 2008</td>
<td>284.91</td>
<td>13.90</td>
<td>7.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morocco</td>
<td>Sept. 2008</td>
<td>697.50</td>
<td>120.30</td>
<td>22.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mozambique</td>
<td>Sept. 2008</td>
<td>506.92</td>
<td>73.90</td>
<td>11.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanzania</td>
<td>Sept. 2008</td>
<td>698.14</td>
<td>40.90</td>
<td>8.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesotho</td>
<td>Sept. 2008</td>
<td>362.55</td>
<td>73.70</td>
<td>17.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burkina Faso</td>
<td>July 2009</td>
<td>480.94</td>
<td>21.10</td>
<td>31.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Namibia</td>
<td>Sept. 2009</td>
<td>304.48</td>
<td>10.60</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>Sept. 16, 2009</td>
<td>540.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be very interesting to examine the MCC’s overall financial commitments up through 2009. According to its Annual Report (page 28), the MCC made $7 billion of commitments as of September 30, 2009 (the fiscal year end that was set originally by Bush just before he moved on). What was illuminating was the specific percentage breakdown of the disbursements: 38% Transportation; 22% Agricultural; 9% Program Administration and Oversight; 8% Water Supply and Sanitation; 7% Financial Enterprise Development; 6% Health, Education, and Community Services; 4% Energy; 4% Governance; and, 2% Monitoring and Evaluation (Millennium Challenge Corporation online). This distribution suggested that despite its official declarations of emphasizing democracy and free markets, the MCC spent most of its money on transportation and agricultural programs, which was very similar to USAID and other
older foreign aid programs that promoted infrastructure development. What was also notable was that the MCC contributed more money on the administration and oversight of its programs than on governance, finances, education, and water. One could ask why more money goes into overseeing the program than to promoting directly democracy and free markets, let alone other important programs. This evidence indicated that the MCC was regulating strenuously its operations and disbursements to the point that some may consider extreme. This could become a significant problem in the future, both politically and diplomatically, especially when the fear of terrorism settles down from its 9/11 heights. For now, however, the MCC appeals emotionally to the domestic public and the dominant political base.

Regarding the MCC’s seventeen sets of criteria for receiving U.S. foreign aid, the MCC used a number of external sources for defining whether or not a country was politically and economically free and, thus, eligible to receive aid. The primary sources were Freedom House and the World Bank. The specific scoring methods and final results were taken from the most recent Freedom House, World Bank, and other sources to determine the final score of a recipient’s political and economic freedom. The final score determined whether or not that recipient would be considered for U.S. foreign aid. There, of course, were different degrees of political and economic freedom and a complexity of other factors. How a country could be scored with so many political and economic factors could in itself be a major research study. The fact that these potential recipients were understood to be imperfect but on their way to democracy and free markets made the overall calculation even more complicated and somewhat perplexing.

The MCC’s seventeen sets of criteria were based upon three key categories, as George Bush had described in his March 14, 2002, speech: 1) good governance/ruling justly, 2) economic freedom, and 3) investments in citizens. Good governance/ruling justly would be graded upon six (6) indicators: civil liberties, political rights, voice and accountability, government effectiveness, rule of law, and control of corruption. Freedom House rankings would be used for the first two indicators and the World Bank Institute would determine the other four indicators. Investing in People, the second category, would be based upon five (5) indicators: public expenditure on health, immunization rates, public expenditure on primary education, girls’ primary completion rate, and natural resource management. The World Health Organization (WHO) statistics would be used to judge the first indicator, WHO and the UNICEF (United Nations Children’s Fund) the second, UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) Institute of Statistics as well as national governments would supply the third indicator, UNESCO the fourth, and The Center for International Earth Science Information Network and the Yale Center for Environmental Law and Policy the last indicator. Finally, for the third category of Economic Freedom, there were six (6) indicators to measure, including: inflation, fiscal policy, business start-up, trade policy, regulatory quality, and land rights and access. In respected order, the grading sources were the International Monetary Fund’s (IMF) World Economic Outlook Database for the first two indicators, the International Finance Corporation for the third, the Heritage Foundation’s Index of Economic Freedom for the fourth indicator, the World Bank and Brookings Institution’s Worldwide Governance Indicators for the fifth one, and the International Fund for Agricultural Development and International Finance Corporation for the last indicator (Millennium Challenge Corporation online).
A concise overview of the seventeen sets of criteria with their three categories and grading sources could be given as follows (Millennium Challenge Corporation online):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Civil Liberties</td>
<td>Ruling Justly</td>
<td>Freedom House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Political Rights</td>
<td>Ruling Justly</td>
<td>Freedom House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Voice and Accountability</td>
<td>Ruling Justly</td>
<td>World Bank and Brookings Institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Government Effectiveness</td>
<td>Ruling Justly</td>
<td>World Bank and Brookings Institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Rule of Law</td>
<td>Ruling Justly</td>
<td>World Bank and Brookings Institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Control of Corruption</td>
<td>Ruling Justly</td>
<td>World Bank and Brookings Institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Public Expenditures on Health</td>
<td>Investing in People</td>
<td>World Bank and Brookings Institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Immunization Rates</td>
<td>Investing in People</td>
<td>World Health Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Public Expenditures on Primary Education</td>
<td>Investing in People</td>
<td>UNESCO and National Governments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Girls’ Primary Completion Rate</td>
<td>Investing in People</td>
<td>UNESCO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Natural Resources Management</td>
<td>Investing in People</td>
<td>Center for International Earth Science Information Network and the Yale Center for Environmental Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Inflation Rate</td>
<td>Economic Freedom</td>
<td>IMF World Economic Outlook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Fiscal Policy</td>
<td>Economic Freedom</td>
<td>IMF World Economic Outlook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Business Start-up</td>
<td>Economic Freedom</td>
<td>International Finance Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Trade Policy</td>
<td>Economic Freedom</td>
<td>Heritage Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Regulatory Quality</td>
<td>Economic Freedom</td>
<td>World Bank and Brookings Institution</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, there was a comprehensive and wide-range of issues underlying the MCC that seemed to misdirect people from its originally stated goals, that is to fight and contain terrorism and, ultimately, to win. The overly complex issues and, more importantly, who in the world could evaluate accurately all these elements made the MCC a typical version of unproductive and bogged down bureaucracy, despite its intended business model. The relatively small numbers of employees guaranteed that few if any could ever leave their workplace and investigate firsthand the applicants, let alone examine the implementation and
success of all these financial disbursals. The MCC appeared to be a classic version of good intentions run amok in bureaucratic paperwork. It, therefore, was not a surprise that so many applicants had problems with this system and that the MCC’s disbursals were delayed far beyond anyone’s expectations.

If one chose to remember what the MCC was created for, then one could conclude that this was a major failure in the war on terrorism and that it was threatening the lives of thousands, if not millions, of people throughout the world. The MCC’s extremely slow operations and minimally observed effects could be tantamount to a national security crisis—if it was truly intended to be a critical instrument in fighting terrorism. There, likely, were few people who noticed how far off the MCC went from its initially stated public justifications and where it ended up. If, however, one considered George Bush’s original pre-9/11 foreign aid intentions and goals to be the true and primary justifications, then the MCC turned out to be exactly what one would have expected and could have observed for half a century under USAID and other foreign aid programs. As the terrorist threat decreased to be a dominant fear in the American public’s mind, the MCC faded away and was lost among the many other failed foreign aid programs, both from a socio-economic perspective of the recipients and the fact that terrorism expanded massively throughout the world during the MCC’s time.

Conclusion

Overall, this research paper demonstrates the importance of framing in policy decision making. It shows the evolution of one particular frame and its successful outcome in terms of being accepted by the general public and government. The case study highlights a policy program and goal that had failed miserably in generating support initially but was rebranded after a new set of factors changed fundamentally the political environment and public perspectives. The new colors, so to speak, altered the image but not the product’s nature and goals. This research project stresses that politicians can take advantage of a new worldview that captures the public’s psyche, even for a short while. And, it confirms that the public tends to move on and not look back once the old theme fades away—leaving all the previous programs in place, without large numbers of people demanding to know why they failed and why they are continuing as is.

Despite the extensive amount of research and data on the MCC, there has been a strange disconnect between its originally-stated intentions and its implementation. One can wink at George Bush’s elaborate campaign to align his original foreign aid plans with the war on terror, especially after he had failed completely in persuading the public and Congress to approve his increases. Bush’s full circle can be credited to framing, but the lesson here is that fear and paranoia can help any politician pass his/her policies, even if the claims are not in-sync with the real intentions. This finding should encourage people to be much more demanding of political proposals that come forth in hostile environments and are wrapped in threatening rhetoric. It also suggests that the public needs to remain attentive after the programs are implemented, in order to ensure their integrity with the previous justifications.

There are a number of areas that can be suggested for further scholarly research. Questions remain regarding the details of why exactly the MCC was proposed over USAID and who suggested the distinct structure and process. What type of debates, if any, went on within
the administration, especially the State Department in which USAID was housed and the MCC ended up in? What was the time frame of these conversations and decisions leading to Bush’s March 14, 2002, speech? The USAID Administrator was in attendance at the March 14th speech, so there must have been input on the matter.

In addition, further research needs to be done on the period between March 14, 2002, and March 2003, when the MCC was introduced in Congress. What occurred during this period? Who was involved in writing up the legislation, from the Executive Branch to, possibly, Congressional officials? Was there anyone from outside of the government involved, especially someone from one of the future grading sources for the seventeen sets of criteria? And, how were all the specific criteria and structural and procedural details determined, as well as every other factor that later became part of the MCC’s evaluation methods?

Finally, who decided on the MCC’s corporate model and why? How come the number of employees was set at just 300? Was cost far more important than effectiveness? Once the organization was established and money started flowing, was there less interest in ensuring the MCC be successful? Why is the MCC so reliant on outside sources for grading? How come the MCC refuses to evaluate on-site all the applicants and current members’ existing programs? In the business world, many would consider spending money the easiest thing, so why has the MCC had such severe problems on this matter? Can the MCC ever be successful in promoting socio-economic development and fighting terrorism if all/most of the bureaucrats remain cloistered in a building in Washington, D.C., let alone have no exceptional business experience themselves?

These are just some of the questions to base further research on. There are many more stories and details yet to be found in the creation, evolution, and outcome of the Millennium Challenge Corporation. Direct interviews with the principle actors and archival research, especially in the Bush Library, may yield a treasure of new and important information. Going out to the real world and seeing the MCC’s projects and impact would be another valuable approach for scholars. All of this research can add to the framing model and expand its depth and impact on the political and academic realms. And, we may see eventually what develops if the driving frame of war, insecurity, and fear ends and the MCC is challenged again but in a new light and frame. This may lead to further expansion and modifications of the framing model, if not condemnation on the potential deception and lies that led to a multibillion-dollar program being created.

All of this makes the future very exciting for scholars, but it also means a lot of hard work. Given the billions of dollars meant to help impoverished people throughout the world and supposedly to stave off terrorism, research on the MCC continues to remain important, if only to eventually conclude that it failed to achieve its original objectives and, thus, should be ended. Scholars are needed to journey through this politically loaded mind field that is fraught with smoke and mirrors and includes every type of superficial and complex trap. For those bold enough to charge forth and search for reality within frames, may the journey commence with vigor.
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**Periodicals**


**Government Documents**


Drill and Grievance: 
Oil and Community Grievance Articulation in West Africa

Vandy Kanyako*

Abstract
The incursion of petro-capitalism into West Africa has activated grievances among the region’s crude oil host communities in unprecedented ways. From Pujehun district in southern Sierra Leone to Takoradi in Western Ghana, from Bomahun in south eastern Liberia to the well-publicized Niger Delta in southern Nigeria, the ancillary effects of oil and the mode of distribution of its proceeds has inflamed passions among populations that are often exposed to enormous negative externalities with few tangible benefits. This paper discusses the symbiotic relationship between oil and grievances at the community level in West Africa. It explores the eclectic nature of these grievances and the wide array of actions adopted by oil-producing communities in seeking redress for perceived injustices emanating from the region’s emerging petroleum industry. The paper concludes that the failure of West Africa’s petroleum industry to translate oil wealth into human-centered development that meets the socio-economic aspirations of the local communities in particular and the countries in the region as a whole, has the potential to undermine the region’s precarious peace and stability.

Keywords: Grievances, Africa, Petroleum industry, Environment, conflict, corporate social responsibility

Introduction: West Africa’s ‘oil complex’

West Africa’s offshore basins contain enormous oil reserves that could potentially revive the sputtering economies of the region. The ‘oil zone,’ which is concentrated in the Gulf of Guinea holds an estimated 60 billion barrels of proven reserves and is projected to provide around 7% of the world’s total output in the next decade. (Ghazvinian, 2007). The economically viable finds have been made possible by a host of factors including technological

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advancement in the petroleum industry; relative stability in the region following the conclusion of its civil wars; perennial instability in the traditional petroleum regions such as the Persian Gulf; and huge foreign direct investment by some of the largest International oil companies (IOCs). Since 2009, both Exxon Mobil and Chevron-Texaco, two of the largest transnational corporations in the world, have spent about $10 billion annually towards the region’s oil exploration (Watson, 2010; Roberts, 2006). Not to be outdone, China, the world’s second largest net importer of petroleum products has intensified its involvement in Africa in general and West Africa in particular. China’s activities have been facilitated by its three state-run companies: the China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC); China Petroleum and Chemical Corporation (Sinopec) and the China National Oil Corporation (CNOOC). The companies, sometimes individually and in other deals as a triage, have signed a raft of trade deals and bilateral agreements with various, mainly resource-rich governments but specifically oil-endowed states such as Angola and Nigeria. Frynas and Paulo (2007: 231) succinctly summarized China’s growing involvement in the region’s emerging oil industry:

China is currently Africa’s third most important trading partner, ahead of the United Kingdom and behind the United States and France. Foreign direct investment (FDI) to Africa from China reached US$900 million in 2004. In April 2006, China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) announced that it had completed a US$2.3 billion deal to buy a 45 percent interest in an offshore oil-mining concession in Nigeria. By 2004, 28.7 percent of Chinese crude oil imports already derived from African oil-producing countries.

But rather than immunizing the region against social and political strife, the seemingly positive developments (new oil finds, foreign direct investment, relative stability, high global demands), heavy investments and ensuing oil wealth has only succeeded in generating a host of grievances at various levels of the affected societies. The ‘upstream’ (exploration and drilling) and ‘downstream’ (refining, marketing, distribution and sales) operations of a relatively reclusive but highly profitable industry often entail a potpourri of arrangements (written and unstated) with a bewildering array of actors and stakeholders including investors, employees, customers, consumers, governments, service providers of all sorts, host communities, and in some cases, even commercial rivals. Navigating and managing the needs and expectations of this plethora of actors whose interests are sometimes diametrically opposed to one another provides the perfect incubator for grievances fester. Perhaps nowhere is what I have termed drill-and-grievance phenomenon more manifest than at the oil-producing community level. Here the asymmetrical relations between a rapacious and opaque industry and an often socio-economically neglected but resource-rich community collide head-on with severe consequences for the society at large. In this sense therefore it is no exaggeration to state that the petroleum industry and grievances are made for each other with the different actors adopting a wide array of peaceful and violent tactics to redress perceived marginalization and neglect.

The different strategies utilized by the local communities should be understood in the context of the complex socio-cultural, and political economy of the region. The ongoing discoveries has raised renewed concerns about the possibilities of an entrenched “oil curse”—a phenomenon in which a petroleum-endowed nation fails to transform its abundant oil wealth
into sustainable growth. Both Angola and Nigeria epitomize this concern by which the vast oil revenue has either been squandered or the wealth has not trickled down to the general population. Even though it earns over US$ 8 billion a year from crude oil sales, Nigeria’s per capita income stands at a mere US$ 290 per year (Ghazvinian, 2007). Though Angola’s is higher at US$ 4,980 according to recent World Bank estimates, it is marked by a huge wealth disparity between a small wealthy class and an increasingly large impoverished population. The end result is that despite intensive oil production in both countries for more than forty years, the average citizenry are no better off than they were before the oil finds in 1955 and 1956 respectively.

In this sense therefore, when viewed through a rentier-state and resource-curse lens, the agitations are the perfect barometer for understanding the intractable developmental challenges faced by communities exposed to the risks from the flowing oil wealth in a region recovering from years of conflict and political instability. Consolidating the peace in the region would require developing a wider constituency as well as comprehensive modes of citizen engagement both vertically and horizontally and across multiple levels of the West African region.

To understand the complex web of grievances and the ensuing protests that a natural resource such as oil generates, I have divided the paper into five main sections. The first section deals with a general overview of the oil industry in West Africa. Here I briefly discuss the emerging oil industry and its geopolitical significance. In Section two I outline the relevant theories and conceptual framework that apply to the issues under discussion. Here I focus on the paradox of plenty, resource curse and the rentier state phenomena respectively. Section three outlines the sources and types of grievances and the various stakeholders that engage in them. The fourth section focuses on the creative strategies used by various local communities to gain concessions from the International Oil Companies (IOCs) and the host governments. The final section details the responses of the government and the IOCs as well as provides an analytical assessment of the effectiveness of these varied strategies. This section also contains the conclusion which weaves all of the core elements together.

I: Methodology and Scope of Research

The paper is drawn from a number of scholarly and practical experiences with civil society and the extractive industry in general and that of oil in particular. It has been enriched by insights gained from extensive field based engagements in the region over the last two decades. In April 2015 I spent two weeks conducting field work with various actors in the oil industry in Nigeria and Ghana respectively. The research took me to Abuja, the Niger Delta in Nigeria, as well as to Accra and the Central and Western Regions of Ghana. In Ghana I presented a paper at the 6th Annual Oil and Gas Summit on the role of Institutions of Higher Learning in ensuring oil producing countries streamline their Local Content policies to maximize their share of the oil revenue. The event was held at the International Conference Center in Accra with participants drawn from all over the world. In Sierra Leone I organized a civil society-led workshop on civic participation in the oil industry. In this and previous other field work in the region I have gained a lot of insight from engaging with a broad spectrum of stakeholders including businesswomen, students, chiefs and traditional elders, oil workers, government
employees, and even former combatants. I have directly organized or participated in specialized trainings, workshops and conferences on oil in particular and the extractive industry in general. The main findings for this piece are therefore drawn from such formal and informal engagements with civil society thought leaders and community members from countries as diverse as Ghana, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Togo, Cameroon, Guinea, Angola, the Gambia and Senegal. Interactions with experts and industry watchers both within and without the region has also contributed immensely to broadening my horizon and interest on the subject matter.

The study utilizes a regional approach, with emphasis on countries that are in the region’s two main geological oil zones, namely the Senegal Basin and the Gulf of Guinea. Such a regional approach is useful for understanding patterns and trends across a wider geographical area with similar socio-economic and political features. In *Oil and politics in the Gulf of Guinea*, (2007: 163) Soares de Oliveira advances a key reason why a regional study of petroleum industry is the most productive approach to understanding patterns, dynamics and the modus operandi of a rather reclusive industry. He argues that country-specific or firm specific studies, though important, tend to be “anodyne” partly because they utilize a pro-business approach that fail to capture the larger trends and complexities. He writes:

“The lack of knowledge about oil firm operations in the region is such that a singular company focus, while welcome as an important contribution in its own right, would not of itself unravel the broader political processes that have accompanied oil investments in the Gulf of Guinea.”

The study is significant for other reasons as well. This is the first time in the history of West Africa that one natural resource has become the common political and economic denominator in the majority of the countries in the same geological zone. More than 12 countries in the Gulf of Guinea, which runs from Guinea on Africa’s north-western tip to Angola in the south, are either oil producers (Nigeria, Ghana, Angola, Gabon, and Equatorial Guinea) or have discovered oil in commercial quantity and are therefore set to become first time oil producers. This includes Ivory Coast, Cameroon, Sierra Leone and Liberia. (KPMG, 2013: 5) Secondly because the leading oil companies in the world are heavily invested in the region, the paper provides an insight into the modus operandi of some of the most powerful and wealthiest transnational corporations in the world. Royal Dutch Shell, BP and ExxonMobil are the world’s second, third and fourth largest transnational companies respectively (Economist online, 2012). In specific terms therefore, the study provides an opportunity to evaluate the commitments (*Corporate Social Responsibility*) of profit seeking companies that operates in a regulatory vacuum with lax laws and weak implementation mechanisms.

Perhaps the most significant relevance of the study is its focus on the agency of domestic actors in the region’s petroleum industry. This is an understudied area partly because as Sikkink (2011) rightly reminds us, “scholarly literature on diffusion and cascade phenomena often talk about social change as if such change happens without either effort or planning.” As he points out, social change tends to happen through the aggregate efforts of countless individuals and groups such as the ones that are the subject of this piece. The key point, which Ugor (2013: 85) points out is that communities such as the ones that are the focus of this piece,
do not lack *agency*. They “are not automatically the passive or apolitical social weaklings depicted in extant literature on informality but active socio-political agents who seek to re-order the power relations between them and dominant political and economic forces.”

The paper addresses both peaceful and violent forms of resistance. The reason for including the latter approach is, if I may borrow Ugor’s (2013) well thought-out phrase, “not to celebrate or even valorize criminality and/or illegality.” Rather it is my belief that to understand the legal and legitimate means of expressing grievances, we also have to understand the illegal and illegitimate actions of these disparate groups and the rationale behind such actions. It is my hope therefore that this article contributes to our understanding of the agency of community groups in the political economy of West Africa. If nothing else the multi-causal, multi-dimensional and inter-connected nature of the issues surrounding oil in the region requires such a bottom-up understanding of the rationale for the evolution of community groups into what Ikelegbe (2005) refers to as a “mobilizational and agitational force.” These groups’ actions, which involves ingenuity, vision, and resilience, are an abundant manifestation of frustration emanating from the years of neglect and apathy on the part of the oil producing governments and the international oil companies.

II: Theoretical framework: Grievance articulation in a rentier state

*Oil and the resource curse debate*

The linkages between natural resources and conflicts has received immense attention from both scholars and analysts of all sorts. (Sachs and Warner, 1995; Homer-Dixon, 1999; Collier, 2000, 2002; Klare, 2002). In what has been termed as “resource curse,” the scholarly literature is replete with studies of the direct and indirect relationship between natural resources, stunted economic growth and conflict. Three main lines of inquiry are discernible in this discourse. The first focuses on the negative impact of the resource itself: the resource curse; and the second on natural resource does foster economic growth. The third school of thought questions the validity of the claims that abundant resources helps or stunts a country’s developmental growth. Using a context peculiarities approach, it focuses instead on the intricate relationship of the resource on specific contextual underpinnings. I revisit these debates with a focus on the regional dynamics and its connections to the resource curse in the coming section.

A 1995 study by Sachs and Warner was among the first to draw correlations between natural resources and stunted economic growth, especially with regards to developing economies. They argued quite vociferously that abundant natural resource negatively impacts the economic growth of a country. This is often due to a combination of overdependence on one source of revenue stream, bad economic policies, price fluctuations of the primary commodity and the perception among the political class that the resource wealth is infinite. Michael Ross (2012), among countless others have since built on this resource curse hypothesis. In his groundbreaking work titled ‘The Oil Curse: How Petroleum Wealth Shapes the Development of Nations’ (2012) he argued quite convincingly that while incidences of civil wars have declined over the last three decades, it has remained persistent and stubborn in oil producing countries. The problem, he surmised is that the more money a country receives the less accountable its political class becomes to its citizens on whom it will no longer depend for
taxation and its attendant social contract. As oil wealth becomes concentrated in the hands of the few, it provides a recipe for conflict as marginalized groups press for their share of the oil wealth. Citing the cases of Sudan, Angola, Libya, Nigeria and other petrostates in the Persian Gulf, Ross (2004) outlined three main ways in which oil wealth can trigger conflict. It creates economic instability due to the volatility of its price on the international market; it helps supports insurgencies as oil producing communities resort to force for their share of the largesse; and finally it encourages separatism where groups in the oil zones come to believe that their collective interests are best served by severing ties with the rest of the state. He concludes that natural resources in general but oil in particular is indeed a major catalyst of conflict both at the domestic level as well as at the international levels.

The second line of analysis is a bit more optimistic. While not rejecting the resource curse hypothesis outright, it stresses that the short and long term benefits of resource availability far outweigh the curse. Auty and Evans (1994); Davis (1995) all found no evidence that resource dependent economies suffer from “wide scale economic and social sclerosis in the long term.” They posited that the negative impact is often either short term and tends to be mainly restricted to certain sectors of the economy. According to this line of argument people’s standard of living actually improves in the long term. Brunnschweiler and Bulte (2008) take it a step further by pointing out that based on their findings the correlation between natural resource wealth and economic growth is “positive and significant” (pg. 617). They conclude therefore that natural resources such as oil does not necessarily spell doom for country producers. Davis and Tilton (2005) concurred positing that there is enough evidence to show that mineral deposits such as oil can be extracted profitably and that they can be converted to human or physical capital to promote growth and reduce poverty. They argue that some countries have used their natural resources to promote growth and economic development. They therefore cautioned against the rush to adopting “one uniform policy” that views the extractive industry as always bad for a country.

“...there is a widespread consensus that mining can promote economic development, and has actually done so in some countries. Even in countries where mining on balance does not promote growth, selected projects may. If we want to help developing countries and reduce poverty, to discourage mining where it promotes these goals is clearly counterproductive. It impedes poor countries from mobilizing their mineral wealth — a capital asset that for some accounts for a significant portion of their total wealth — in their struggle to develop and to shed poverty”

The third line of argument adopts a more nuanced approach to understanding the linkages between natural resources and stunted economic growth. Proponents of this school of thought prefer instead to focus on the domestic and international ‘context peculiarities’ (including size of country, size of find, history, etc). Kaldor, Karl and Said in Oil Wars (2007) argue that the polar opposite strands of explanations “can be portrayed as rent seeking arguments” at the international, state and local levels that often ignores these peculiarities. They surmised that the focus instead should be on understanding nuances such as “…whether oil increases the incidences, duration or intensity of wars and whether it makes conflicts more
difficult to settle” (Kaldor et al, 2007, 16). Building on this context peculiarities analysis, Collier and Hoffler (2005) point out that in the context of Africa, the two most important sources of rents to states are those from natural resources and foreign aid. The availability of natural resources in weak states with no monopoly over violence and price fluctuations in the international market makes them vulnerable to conflict. In such ensuing conflicts the rent from natural resources fuels rebellion and the establishment of a predatory political economy. It must be pointed out that both Collier and Hoffler’s observations—that weak states with access to natural resources makes rebellion viable—is nothing new. They were building on the ‘rentier state’ hypothesis first developed by Hossein Mahdavy in 1970. In a classical rentier state situation, Mahdavy observed, external rents from natural resources become not only the main revenue source for a country, it is generated by only a few people and accrue almost entirely to the government directly (Mahdavy, 1970:103). So in the case of the oil producing countries of West Africa, they end up becoming nothing more than rent collectors. The obvious impact is that “it divorces the government and its management from the day-to-day needs and economic activity of the population.” (Ghazavinian, 2007: 104). This is partly because weak countries and post-conflict societies, the likes of which are prevalent in West Africa, often have very complex inter-linkages between formal, informal and illegitimate economic opportunities. In other words, in a fragile state in which the majority of the citizens are squeezed out of the formal economy, some turn to illegitimate economic activity, (Junne and Verkoren, 2005), which undermines state authority and eventually leads to various forms of social conflicts.

What all of the different schools of thought agree on is that the context peculiarities or the domestic situation (type of government in power, history, ethnic composition, etc.) into which oil wealth is injected, and the prevailing international context, does matter a lot. According to Fearnon and Laitin (2003) a resource such as oil only becomes a major calculus when it combines with socio-economic issues such as nagging poverty and persistent unemployment, among others. This is what Brian Black (2012: 9) had in mind when he stated that, “chemically and politically, oil is the most explosive human undertaking.” But yet, even rent-seeking authoritarian regimes that restrict human security and basic human rights do not necessarily degenerate into open conflict. The reason, Stijns (2005: 124) points out, is partly due to “the coexistence of ‘positive’ and ‘negative channels’ of effect running from natural resources to factors that affect economic growth.” In these kinds of cases, Stijns points out, governments use the proceeds to provide a relatively decent standard of living while weakening whatever form of opposition or rebellion might lead to an open war. This is not to argue that there are no forms of political or social violence in these two countries. It’s only that enough people are placated to the point of not wanting to risk everything in an armed confrontation with a much more powerful state.

III: Sources and nature of community grievances

West Africa’s coastal communities are under intense pressure from natural, economic and social causes (Economist, 2012). The biggest of these threats is the ongoing discovery of oil and the encroachment into fragile and unique biodiversity by the oil companies. The region is extremely vulnerable to the damaging impacts of oil spills. According to a recent report by the United Nations Environmental Programme “Every year some 400-500 million tons of crude oil
and refined products, from notably Nigeria, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea and Angola, transit the East Atlantic sea route along the West African coast.” (UNEP, 2002). Because an oil spill in one coastal country can negatively affect a community’s way of life in a short amount of time, it is not surprising that agitations tend to be vocal and relentless.

There are two main categories of grievances that the local communities harbor against the producer governments and the oil companies. These could be classified as grievances around survival needs and those around identity needs. The former are largely about socio-economic issues such as social and environmental degradation; loss of sources of income, health risks; and lack of proper compensation over damages especially from oil spills. The second category is about basic human need around recognition, identity and respect. The latter are the needs that provides humans and their communities with a sense of meaning, community, intimacy and autonomy. Identity needs provides the community with a sense of who they are and their place in the oil industry. (Mayer, 2012: 25).

The core grievance includes social exclusion and disruption to ways of life, economic deprivation, disempowerment and exclusion from decision making, environmental degradation and insufficient compensation, and health risks. I will expand on each of these in more detail.

**Social exclusion and disruption to ways of life**

Coastal communities resent the disruption to their ways of life brought about by large scale oil exploration and drilling. Social exclusion has led to apathy and insecurity and the denial of basic social services. Their children are more likely not to be able to attend school and as such lack employment opportunities. More over the influx of jobseekers and service providers brings its own social problems including overcrowding, high cost of living, prostitution and the spread of venerable diseases. In Takoradi, Ghana, indigenes I interviewed revealed that they are becoming increasingly agitated as they are faced with overcrowding and overpricing in their own communities as a result of the oil boom that is occurring offshore.

**Economic deprivation**

The oil wealth is often not evenly spread among the community. Whether the oil finds is onshore (Niger Delta in Nigeria) or offshore (as in the Jubilee Fields in Ghana) large scale oil prospecting and drilling often leads to a loss of income for groups that depend on socio-economic riverine activities such as boat operators and landowners as well as those engaged in small scale commercial harvesting of fish, shrimp, and oyster. It is perhaps not surprising that West Africa’s coastal communities are often poorer than their fellow citizens elsewhere. There is a large disparity in terms of development, equality and enjoyment of human rights for these groups. Because the oil industry is highly technical it employs only few locals, with most of the jobs going to more educated groups from other parts of the country.

**Disempowerment and exclusion from decision making**

In all countries in the region, the oil management is under the direct control of the executive branch of government. In Sierra Leone and Liberia the respective national petroleum agencies are directly managed from the their respective presidents’ office. This means that decisions are made at the highest level of governance, often with little or no consultation with the local people. This, coupled with the secretive nature of the deals in which oil contracts are
treated as state secrets with the details available to only those in the highest echelons of government, has led to a feeling of discontent, disempowerment and helplessness. This has led to a loss of authority, especially on the part of the traditional leaders, who under customary law are the custodians of the natural resources.

**Environment degradation and insufficient compensation**

Oil drilling carries enormous environmental risks. The ensuing damage from oil spills requires compensation for those whose livelihoods have been directly disrupted. As Olawuyi (2012, 14) points out in his analysis of oil and the law, “international environmental law places a duty on the polluter corporation to pay victims of oil pollution adequate compensation for economic and pecuniary losses incurred.” Rarely is this requirement followed. For example when Bodo community in Nigeria suffered two major oil spills in a space of one month in 2008, Shell offered each affected person a mere £1,100. (Guardian, 2014). Because the industry operates in a sort of regulatory vacuum, rarely are the laws followed (Olawuyi, 2012, 4).

**Human rights abuses**

The oil industry is one of the most securitized in the region. In addition to security forces deployed by the companies to protect their assets, the governments also employs a military approach to law and order in the oil producing communities. Freedom of movement and of association is often restricted as the authorities deploys various military units both to ward off neighboring countries but also to suppress local dissent. The end result is that the locals become increasingly resentful of the heavy security presence that turn their communities into a system of governance akin to a police state. I saw this first hand on my April 2015 trip to the Niger Delta. On a visit to one such oil community I noticed that the security got more intense the closer we got to the village. There were heavily manned security checkpoints about every mile or so. I was strictly forbidden by my handler and local guide, an indigene of the area, from taking photos or from interviewing the locals. He was concerned, rightly so, that our presence will attract the attention of the security forces stationed nearby.

**Health risks**

Oil exploration and drilling carries enormous health risks to local populations. The common ailments include contaminated water, asthma, breathing difficulties heartaches, throat irritation and chronic bronchitis. (Olawuyi, 2012). Most of these health issues are caused by flaring (the burning of natural gas that cannot be processed or sold) and oil spills. Oil spills in particular have been a source of irritation for many local communities. Major oil spills have caused decline in local fishing, irreversibly damaged the ecosystem and soil composition (Oluwuyi, 2012: 4)

All of these factors, coupled with the absence of adequate means of redressing grievances, have created mutual mistrust and resentment and have fueled grievances and agitation at the community levels. But as Table 1 shows, the nature of grievances are much more convoluted and varied. Because the local communities are not a monolithic unit, the types of grievances are based on social standing (chief or subject) or social gradation such as age, gender. In what Watts (2009) calls ‘the oil complex’, the shifting relations among these
actors explains why oil is so often the source of ire, especially at the community levels. As the author points out...

The presence and activities of the oil companies as part of the oil complex constitute a challenge to forms of community authority, inter-ethnic relations, and local state institutions principally through the property and land disputes that are engendered.

For example, the grievances of the traditional rulers are markedly different from the gripes of the youth or the women. While the youth are concerned about jobs, the chiefs and traditional elders are concerned with loss of authority and the lack of basic facilities for their subjects. The women are concerned about the perpetuation of discrimination and the lack of opportunities. The latter have tried to navigate the problem by forming gender-focused groups such as the Young ladies progressive Wing of Nigeria, (Onishi, 2002) established with the sole aim of promoting gender equity in the oil industry.

IV: Civic response to the resource capture

The range of grievances outlined in the previous section has generated a wide array of strategies from the aggrieved communities. These responses could be broadly divided into peaceful and legal means of agitation and illegal and sometimes violent forms of grievance articulation. These are captured in tables 1 and 2 where I have summarized the relationship between the actors, issues and their mode of expressing grievances. Years of marginalization has had the overall effect of both radicalizing some communities thereby forcing them to rely on their ingenuity to get what they can from the authorities. From Cameroon to Nigeria, from Gabon to Angola communities are using alternative strategies-- formal and informal, orthodox and unorthodox, legitimate and in some cases illegal— to break the resource monopolization cycle. These “self-organizing” groups, as Watts (1992) referred to them are marked by their fluidity in part as a survival mechanism but also as part of the larger struggle between state and civic actors in search of a more equitable distribution of the enormous oil wealth.

Passive resistance and peaceful disciplined protest

The use of non-violent passive resistance to protest mal-distribution in the oil industry is the most common strategy utilized by aggrieved communities. It often involves a combination of mass direct action and radical militancy including a combination of sit-ins, picketing, letter writing campaigns and representations to various influential stakeholders. In Gabon a consortium of 22 NGOs issued a well-timed public statement that heavily criticized the relationship between the government and the oil industry (Gabon Rights and Liberties Report, 2013). In Nigeria the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) under the direction of the charismatic activist and community organizer Ken Saro-Wiwa embarked on a series of well-planned campaigns to draw attention to the excesses of the Nigerian government and the oil companies in the degradation of the environment in the oil rich Niger Delta. The group’s effort gained wide traction both domestically and international because they created the Ogoni Bill of Rights which focused on the unholy relationship between Shell company and the brutal military government of General Sani Abacha. In 2002 the Gabon Catholic Mission
wrote an open letter to President Omar Bongo of Gabon urging him to open up the oil industry to civil society participation. Part of the letter read:

The price of oil is measured not in barrels or dollars but in suffering, misery and successive wars, blood, displacement of people, exile, unemployment, late payment of salaries, non-payment of pensions

In a country in which half of the population (some 600,000) are Catholic, such a strongly worded letter from a powerful institution, carried resonance. Perhaps taking their cue from the Gabon letter writing campaign, the Nigerian Women’s Movement wrote a series of letters to Shell Texaco asking for more benefits from the oil proceeds (Onishi, 2012).

In order to draw further attention to their campaigns and to increase the pressure on the oil companies these domestic actors also turned to both the local and international press. For example, the Catholic Church in Gabon was fully aware that its campaign would attract the attention of powerful human rights institutions around the world. This was precisely what happened when the World Council of Churches prominently featured the piece on its highly popular and heavily visited website. The publicity garnered by the letter prompted the government to institute reforms in the oil sector and the political process in general. This was no small victory in a country where any form of political dissent is treated as a treasonable act and where the president has power to veto legislation that has been passed.

**Using the oil companies as surrogates**

A second set of strategies follows the classic dictum: if you cannot beat them join them. Instead of just protesting against the system, various communities have instead opted to extract as much concession from the oil companies as they could. They have become increasingly savvy in their dealings with the oil companies and the oil producing governments. They have become what I would refer to as ‘smart recipients’ who see the oil companies as surrogates. Smart recipient communities vie to be recognized by the oil companies as “oil communities”, a tag that carries what Ghazavinian (2007, 31) aptly describes as “an intoxicating raft of privileges.” They use such designation to their advantage to extract ever more concessions from the oil companies. Communities sign Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) with the oil companies by which they promise to create a peaceful oil drilling environment in exchange for very tangible goods and services such as drinking wells, clinics, roads, etc. Ugor (2013) reports the case of Benikrukru village in the Niger Delta in Nigeria, where the community requested social services such as a mobile boat clinic, generator, water tank and a primary school from Chevron Texaco. The community signed a seven-page memorandum of Understanding which to all intents and purposes make Chevron-Texaco a surrogate of their community.

**Joint ventures and strategic partnerships**

Another key intervention strategy utilized by the sub-region’s civic groups and communities is the establishment of strategic partnerships to articulate their priorities and aspirations. These are often locally-created and locally-run community-centered organizations that enable collaborative strategies with a broad spectrum of key stakeholders. It is through such institutions that communities advocate for reform at the appropriate point in the
upstream and downstream activities of the key players in the region’s petroleum industry. These mediating institutions and also offer a chance to local and state authorities to better gauge constituency needs, moods and aspirations. A key proactive strategy used by community groups is to gather and disseminate information in a timely and accurate manner to enable influence both domestic and international policy. To increase the effectiveness of civil society’s voice, they often team up with influential international advocacy organizations such as Amnesty International, Global Witness, and the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI). The latter has more resources, are media savvy and are located in media-concentrated cities such as Brussels, London and New York which in turn attracts wider international attention. For example, the efforts of the Gabon Catholic Church were heavily bolstered by its partnership with the London-based Global Witness who put out a well-timed report titled “Time for Transparency: Coming Clean on Oil, mining and Gas revenues.” The report shamed Elf Aquitaine (now Total) which it accused of helping “to mortgage the country’s future oil income in exchange for expensive loans” (Global Witness, 2002: 23). The data for these various reports which highlights massive corruption, human rights abuses and neglect in countries like Gabon and Congo, are often prepared in collaboration with or drawn from interviews conducted with opinion leaders and various stakeholders in these oil communities. Some of the other outcomes for these joint partnerships include research and publications of thematic issues in the oil industry. For example, in April 2011 the 115-member strong Civil Society Platform on Oil and Gas in Ghana issued a well-timed report titled Ghana’s Oil Boom: A Readiness Report Card. This was a laudable local effort that was only made possible with the collaboration of OXFAM America as well as Publish What You Pay, which is a consortium of civil society organizations active in the oil and gas sectors. Among the strategies used was to simultaneously organize a multi-stakeholder forum in Accra Ghana, as well as major capital cities including Washington DC and New York (OXFAM, 2002).
Table 1: Actors, grievances and grievance articulation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Grievances</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Modes of agitation</th>
<th>Object of agitation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Youths</td>
<td>Lack of jobs</td>
<td>Force change</td>
<td>Petitions, violent protests, bunkering</td>
<td>Government, oil companies, chiefs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Lack of opportunities</td>
<td>Inclusion, recognition</td>
<td>Petitions, protests</td>
<td>Oil companies, government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional leaders/ Chiefs</td>
<td>Lack of power</td>
<td>Negotiate better deal</td>
<td>Delegations, lobbying</td>
<td>Government, oil companies, youths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intelligentsia</td>
<td>Human rights, social justice</td>
<td>Create awareness and force change</td>
<td>Mass mobilization, litigations</td>
<td>Government, oil companies, youths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local government</td>
<td>Under-compensated; Infrastructure</td>
<td>More compensation; Development</td>
<td>Negotiations</td>
<td>Oil companies, central government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing communities</td>
<td>Loss of jobs and livelihood</td>
<td>Compensation</td>
<td>Petitions, bunkering Litigations</td>
<td>Oil companies, government</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: author

Litigation

From a legal standpoint oil is perhaps the most litigious-prone natural resource. There is no shortage of issues over which the oil companies can be sued: oil estimates, human rights violations, safety issues, flaring, lack of compensation and oil spills to name a few. (Oluwuyi 2012, 4). It is perhaps not surprising that civic actors have resorted to the judicial process both domestically and more recently internationally, as a way to redress perceived grievances. They use both criminal and civil suits against the producer governments in general and the oil companies in particular. In November 2009 Marc Ona Essangui, one of Gabon’s best known civil society activists won a court case against the government over his arrest and detention for being in the possession of a letter alleging financial mismanagement by President Omar Bongo. (Gabon Rights and Liberties Report, 2010). The most highly profiled of these litigious approaches occurred in October 2012 when four Nigerian farmers from the Niger Delta region sued Royal Dutch Shell in the Palais de Justice in the Hague, The Netherlands. The case garnered wide international attention about the abuse of the petroleum industry in one of the world’s poorest regions. The advantages of such a strategy to the litigants are very obvious. It may be the only choice left after all else fails. Most importantly it offered them ‘their day’ in court as witnessed by the media frenzy that surrounded the case.

Sabotage, vandalism and bunkering

Another key strategy used by groups to vent their anger and frustration is through sabotage and vandalism of company properties and assets including vehicles, communications equipment, oil rigs and more frequently pipelines. On April 18, 2013, 11 fishermen were charged in the Federal Court in Nigeria with oil pipeline vandalism. The offence is said to contravene the provisions of Sections 390 and 516 of the Criminal Code Act, 2004. The cases of deliberate sabotage of oil pipelines have increased systematically over the last few years with over 12,756 reported cases between the year 2000 and 2007 (Enogholase, 2008). In 1996 the
number of pipeline vandalism was 33 (1998), 57 (1999) and a staggering 600 by 2005. (Ghazavinian 2007, 45).

Figure 1: Range of Strategies utilized by local communities in West Africa's oil industry (Source: author)

Another form of sabotage is bunkering, which in local parlance is a reference to the process by which groups of gangs of disaffected youths tap into the oil production line and steal crude oil for sale at huge profits on the black market. The number is sobering. By 2003 an estimated 200,000 barrels of oil (worth 100 million dollars a week) was ‘bunkered’ by criminal gangs. In 2012 it was 350,000 barrels per day, representing an increase of 45%. Sabotage is dangerous to the environment as well as costly in human lives. In 2010, 2,550 people died due to fire breakouts from pipeline vandalism. (Ghazavinian 2007, 29; Ugor 2013). Unlike sabotage and vandalism bunkering is largely driven by economic gains with costly human dimensions.

Local (illegal) refinery of oil

The creativity of local groups is also evident in the way they process crude oil into an end-user product. The local refinery that has emerged is unsophisticated, environmentally degrading, outright dangerous, but somehow effective and highly profitable. This is very well captured with Ugor (2013) in his research on the illegal oil activities in a small coastal town of Igbele in Nigeria.

The improvised mechanism used for refining consists of an oven that generates fire for heating the crude, a cooling mechanism locally known as Okpuroku, which is used in regulating the temperature under which the crude is refined, and a reservoir for collecting the refined product—diesel, petrol or kerosene -- from the oven. ...Typically each refining oven is interconnected with a network of pipe that allow raw crude to flow through the refining system so the large tanks that hold the final products, usually in the form of petrol, kerosene or diesel.

They turn to locally available skills-set and in some cases reinvent “old autochthonous technology” that they have acquired from everyday life, including from the oil companies themselves. The knowledge gained from baking bread, processing palm nuts or the indigenous technique of brewing gin are all put to very good use in the crude oil refinery process. Local gin
is distilled from palm wine, the local distillation which communities have engaged in for centuries. The mechanism is the same only the product is different.

The oven are usually powered using firewood or charcoal and in some cases bitumen (coal tar) which itself is a by-product of the refining process...There is also a crude cooling system, usually comprising a standby water pump and a large water tank mixed with washing detergents (like Omo) ready for use if large fires breakout, especially where there are no fire blankets. This technique of controlling fires was learnt from some of the oil companies where they underwent safety training as contract staff”.

The end result is a highly sophisticated process that is sustained by a complex web of interconnected formal and informal networks. Such distribution network, the author points out, relies on old trade routes that followed other commodities such as small arms, diamonds, gold, peoples, to name just a few. While both bunkering and sabotage seems to be largely confined to Nigeria, there are growing concern that the problem might spread to other countries, especially prospective first-time oil producers such as Liberia and Sierra Leone.

**Key stakeholders**

Four sets of domestic actors are particularly important to understanding the evolution of grievance articulation in West Africa’s oil industry: Religious/traditional rulers, youth, women, and the intelligentsia (See Table 1). The religious and traditional rulers are a moral force in their community. While oil (and for that matter all natural resources) is owned by the government land is often under the custodianship of the traditional rulers. As the custodians of culture and tradition therefore, traditional rulers commands respect and large numbers of followers in the communities. At Ghana’s 6th Annual and Gas Summit held at the Accra International Conference Center at which I was one of several technical speakers, the traditional leaders from all over the country occupied the front row seats at the opening ceremony. In fact they were the only civil society group that were formally invited to the high profiled event. This singular indicates that they are held in high esteem and their opinions respected in the community.

But because of their coveted positions traditional rulers find themselves in a dilemma when it comes to managing the expectations of their citizens around the distribution of oil proceeds. By siding with their subjects they draw the ire of the government and the oil companies. If on the other hand they appear to be taking the side of the government, they are accused by their subjects of being sellouts. It is not surprising therefore that often they are both the sources of grievances against the government and the oil companies but also the subject of loath from their subjects, especially the youth. The chief and traditional rulers often resent their loss of power and influence in their community as governments and the oil companies encroach on their domain.

The youth (early teens to early forties) have been at the forefront of the militant agitation in the oil sector. They have formed “youth groups” that have been anything but peaceful. They have masterminded most of the direct actions and armed insurrections in highly contested areas such as the Cabinda enclave in Angola and the Niger Delta in Nigeria respectively. Most of their grievances are socio-economic, mainly around unemployment, lack
of opportunities and poor living conditions. Interestingly, as Ugor (2013) points out, the youth sees themselves as modern day Robin Hoods fighting for what is rightly theirs.

The youths generally considered themselves as “freedom fighters” rather than as militants, the term often used by the authorities. For them it is a battle for survival. The illegal refineries are radical subsistence activities. They are largely spontaneous and politically inexplicit everyday activities by young people’s search for daily survival and a “dignified life.

Another key stakeholder is that of the women, the most economically threatened social group in an oil economy. Because men have better access to education and therefore possess more necessary skills, it is perhaps not surprising that most formal jobs in the oil industry are held by the men. In other cases, discrimination is based on a combination of stereotypes within the oil industry and within the communities themselves where oil-related work is considered “men’s” work. In this sense therefore women have every reason to be aggrieved with the oil industry. Women and the families they care for are more vulnerable to the risks (social and environmental) created by the oil industry (Eftimie et al, 2009). The gendered dimensions of oil’s impact on a society is particularly important because as Ikelegbe 2005 rightly points out, Traditionally and socially, women are regarded as the embodiment of sanctity, dignity, morality and purity. Therefore women protests traditionally push issues beyond the threshold of normal behavior. The most extreme form of women protests is that of partial or complete nudity. This signifies a statement of extreme oppression, neglect and feelings of marginality …and a curse to society. But militancy is not just confined to the youth as women have also been active participants. One action in particular is worth mentioning. On July 8, 2002, “hundreds of unarmed women” raided the premises of Chevron-Texaco in the Niger Delta to demand for a share of the country’s oil wealth. 40 women from the village of Ogbure occupied the premise of Texaco, America’s biggest investor in Africa. (Onishi, 2002). This audacious and dangerous action-- borne largely out of desperation --is part of a growing trend by the womenfolk in response to the intractable oil wealth monopolization by the ruling elites and lack of corporate social responsibility.

The educated class is another group of stakeholders worth a mention. The role of the intelligentsia/ educated elites is important in understanding grievance articulation in the oil producing communities. As the most enlightened members of their communities, their opinion and actions matters a lot. Ugor (2013) gives the example of a former company engineer with Elf Oil Company who used his insider knowledge of the petroleum industry “to organize his community into a force capable of extracting concessions from the oil companies...by inventing ritual or cultural sites that had been damaged by oil companies” and for which they now required compensation. It turned out to be a very profitable venture as the guilt-ridden companies reportedly paid millions of dollars in compensation. Ken Saro-Wiwa is world famous mainly due to his activism against Shell and the Nigerian government. His well-coordinated civic movement, mentioned earlier, garnered global attention by highlighting the abuses of the oil industry in his native Nigeria. The great musician Fela Kuti was another who used his musical talents to castigate the successive military regimes in Nigeria. One of his signature tunes called
'International thief! thief!' epitomized this strategy of music as a social commentary tool. In Sierra Leone, the diaspora community from the oil rich Pujehun district in southern Sierra Leone, has also played a role in mobilizing public opinion in the country’s emerging oil industry by organizing series of events in the community and in the diaspora.

What Table 1 also shows is that the grievances are not unidirectional (directed at the government and the oil companies only) but rather multi-directional as well. All of the stakeholders in the petroleum industry have grudges against one another at one time or another. For example, because of years of societal and cultural discrimination women often tend to distrust other stakeholders such as the chiefs and council of elders (a male dominated institution) and the youths with their penchant for violence. It is perhaps not surprising therefore that when the women planned the raid on the oil platform referenced earlier, they decided to go it alone without the involvement of either the youth, men or chiefs. As already pointed out the youth see the traditional rulers as complicit and corrupt and have sometimes used violence against them as well. In short the nature of grievances and its manner of articulation is both horizontal and vertical across multiple social groups and stakeholders.

V: Analysis: counter-response from governments and oil companies

The emergence of a fluid, independent, and highly creative “self-organizing” movements at the community levels is shaping the region’s oil industry in profound ways. It is helping to foster communication in an industry renowned for its secrecy. The response from the governments and the oil companies have been swift, and generally falls into two main categories: concessions and outright hostility. Governments such as the one in Ghana has used community concerns to foster transparency in the oil industry. For example civil society was an important stakeholder in pressing Tullow, the main oil company operating in the country, to publish its production agreement online. (Burgis 2012). I interviewed several stakeholders in Ghana who were beneficiaries of the Tullow project. This led to the organizing of a citizen’s summit on oil and gas and the creation of Petroleum Revenue management Law (Civil Society Platform on Oil and Gas, 2011). But Ghana seems to be the exception to the rule.

The general trend among the key players is one of outright hostility. Across the region states have become “increasingly resentful ...towards the phalanx of activist groups ranged against it“ (Obadare, 2005). Some oil producing governments, and by extension the oil companies have not taken kindly to the vigorously interrogation they have been subjected to by the various civil society actors in the oil communities. Their response has ranged from intimidation to arrests, harassments, exile and in some cases torture and death.

In 2008, the interior minister suspended 22 NGOs for a week after they issued a public statement criticizing the government. Civil society leader Marc Ona Essangui was prevented from leaving the country to attend international conferences on four occasions in 2008. (Gabon Rights and Liberties Report, 2013)

In order to counter the growing influence of these groups the governments have embarked on a large scale process of coercing and co-opting the leadership. In some cases they encourage the emergence of pro-groups to counter the influence of independent activist groups. This is very well articulated by Obadare (2005)
As at the time of Abacha’s sudden demise in June 1998, an estimated 157 groups were at the forefront of the campaign for his transformation into a civilian president... Many of these groups were either established with direct state funds or, alternatively, the tacit imprimatur of officialdom.

On their part, the oil companies have responded mainly through their corporate social responsibility (CSR) frameworks by which they provide direct support to the oil communities. Also known as *oil for infrastructure* deals, it often involves formal and informal arrangements or memoranda of understanding in which oil companies provide citizens with infrastructure such as roads, railways, telecommunications, or even airports (Open Oil, 2012). The Chinese National Oil companies are particularly adept at these kinds of barter-system arrangements. For example all of the oil companies operating in Gabon, Ghana, Nigeria, Liberia, to name just few, engage in various kinds of corporate social responsibility schemes. KPMG gives the example of Shell which funds various conservation programs in Gabon and Total which in 2011 helped renovate the Port Gentil airport and underground cable (KPMG, 2012). All of these activities are geared towards assuaging the fears and concerns of the local populations and to creating a conducive oil producing environment through coercion if need be.

**Conclusion**

West Africa is increasingly experiencing large scale community backlash against the ancillary effects of oil exploration and drilling. As petro-culture entrenches in the region an increasingly marginalized civic sector is tapping into widespread disenchantment to press for inclusivity and the redistribution of crude oil proceeds. Using a cross-cutting regional perspective, the article explores such local-level strategies and coping mechanisms utilized by the civic sector. It starts by exploring the complex agency of a wide array of civic actors who feel increasingly marginalized in the oil wealth redistribution process and ends with the public-impact initiatives and mix of ingenuity and entrepreneurship utilized by disparate groups to compel governments and oil companies for inclusivity in both the upstream and downstream activities of the region’s oil economy. I have argued that as more of the risks of oil companies operations continue to be borne by the local communities, the nature and type of strategic responses adopted by these aggrieved groups has metamorphosed accordingly. Not only have the agitations increased in frequency, size and scope, they are also turning into virulent militant agitations that poses a threat to the nascent peace and stability of the conflict-prone region. While some of these tactics have been devised and perfected in countries with a long history of oil resource capture such as Nigeria’s Niger Delta and Cabinda in Angola, traces of militant agitation are already appearing in other prospective oil communities in the region. A people-centered approach by the industry will be crucial in diverting these genuine grievances into meaningful dialogue, sustainable development and lasting peace in one of the world’s poorest and most conflict-wracked regions.
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Confronting Violence at the Little Bighorn

Timothy Braatz*

Abstract
The Little Bighorn battlefield is a place of violence—both in the past and present. The list of books about the historic battle is long, and the telling of the Little Bighorn story continues to grow more inclusive, yet the literature generally lacks careful analysis of the nature of violence. The military historians who dominate the field tend to take for granted the presence of armed combat and may be unaware of the valuable insights offered by peace theory. Unlike the social science fields, including history, which cling to the pretence of scholarly “detachment,” peace studies admits to a specific social goal. The goal of peace studies, ultimately, is to reduce current levels of violence and to make future violence less likely. From this perspective, the traditional telling of history can be troublesome. Interpretations of the past which, however unwittingly or subtly, depict warfare as inevitable, inexplicable, admirable, or glorious contribute to war-making in the present day. This article is concerned with how history is presented in and around the Little Bighorn battlefield and how that presentation may promote violence. The article offers a brief summary and explanation of Johan Galtung’s peace and violence triangles, then applies that theory to the historical conflict between US and Lakota societies. Next, the lens is turned to the cultural violence of the Little Bighorn National Monument. Finally, because peace studies also demands application beyond the academy, this article offers a peace prescription for the region, not as a complete and authoritative solution, but as an example to promote creative, inclusive conflict resolution. In sum, this article shows how a better historical understanding of conflict and violence offers hope for a less violent future.

Keywords: cultural violence, historic trauma, internalized oppression, Little Bighorn, peace-building, Pine Ridge reservation, structural violence

Peace Theory

Peace and violence are opposites. Simply put, peace work means trying, through peaceful means, to reduce current levels of violence and to make future violence less likely. Peace is the goal and also the process. As postulated by Johan Galtung, the Norwegian polymath and founder of peace studies, one definition of peace, sometimes called negative peace, is the “absence or reduction of violence of all kinds.” Positive peace is “nonviolent conflict transformation,” understanding that conflict is inevitable but doesn’t have to lead to violence. Galtung has defined violence as “avoidable insult to basic human needs,” those needs including survival, well-being, identity, and freedom. Violence comes in different forms. Direct violence is when one party physically or verbally causes harm. Structural violence (indirect

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violence) is built into a political or economic system, and the harm it causes may be unintentional. Cultural violence includes the beliefs, language, ideologies, and cosmologies that legitimize, motivate, and perpetuate direct and structural violence.¹

To make these distinctions clear, imagine an unemployed man loses his house to bank foreclosure. In his anguish and despair, he takes his handgun to the bank and shoots several people. The shooting is direct violence. An economic system that puts property rights over human needs and allows the eviction of impoverished people from their homes is structural violence. Cultural violence is seen in a society that equates gunslinging with manliness and celebrates the physical punishment of opponents. The economic structure created the conflict, the popular culture normalized the use of violence to resolve a conflict, and the result is direct violence. Such a scenario is all too real in the United States, and how do people typically respond? The police arrive and shoot the gunman. Newscasters label them “heroes.” Prominent opinion-makers call for “more cops on the streets,” more armed citizens, and more frequent use of the death penalty as a deterrent. In other words, more violence. While a few people call for more gun restrictions, millions continue to watch titillating films and television dramas about bank shootouts and other violent crimes. The cultural violence is reinforced, the structural violence which created the conflict is ignored, and a repeat performance of the direct violence can be expected. Violence begets violence.

One can imagine three levels of violence. At the bottom is cultural violence, which is slow to change, seemingly permanent, and thus unnoticed. This provides the legitimizing base for structural violence—economic and political systems or processes that seem to have evolved “naturally.” At the top, breaking through the surface for all to see, are events of direct violence.

```
    direct violence       (events — “inevitable”)  
               ↑            ↑↑            ↑↑↑
    structural violence   (processes — “unintentional”)  
               ↑            ↑↑            ↑↑↑
    cultural violence     (beliefs — “invisible”)  
```

Without identifying the cultural violence, and without understanding the decision-making behind structural violence, the direct violence seems inevitable and unavoidable. Galtung believes “the major causal direction for violence is from cultural via structural to direct violence,” but also acknowledges the arrows of causation can point in different directions, for example when the direct violence of war reinforces the cultural violence of belief in humans as inherently warlike.² Hence, three layers of violence, but also a triangle of mutually-reinforcing violence, with causation flowing in six different directions.

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This unholy trinity has an opposite. Direct peace is nonviolent action, including acts of kindness and the refusal to cause harm. Structural peace is where political and economic systems provide for rather than violate basic human needs. A system of voting that gives all citizens, even the poorest, direct voice in the decisions that affect their ability to meet their basic needs, rather than one where political influence flows from material wealth, is an example of structural peace. Cultural peace, in Galtung’s thought, is “aspects of a culture that serve to justify and legitimize direct peace and structural peace.”

A public school instructor promoting empathy, critical thinking, and collaborative decision-making in her classroom, rather than obedience, authority, and bureaucracy, is teaching cultural peace. The diagrams are now familiar:

We return to the tragic scenario: an unemployed man who lost his house to bank foreclosure bursts into a bank and opens fire, then is shot down by a policeman. This time, though, a group of women decide their community has had enough. They successfully lobby the city government to use the power of eminent domain to purchase foreclosed houses. Under the new arrangement, the city allows the occupants to remain, with affordable monthly payments, provided they also give hours of service to community programs, such as the anti-bullying seminars initiated by the same group of determined women. A government program that reduces homelessness and that tells people they are needed in the community is structural peace. Teaching compassion to counter intimidation—Bullying ain’t cool, kindness is!—is cultural peace. A community with less anger, fear, and despair can expect fewer violent assaults, and, perhaps, fewer residents will feel the need to own a handgun, thus reducing the likelihood of accidental shootings. Peace begets peace.

Galtung’s peace theory is more complex than these few diagrams, but his arrows of causation have explanatory power. They can help us understand why some societies experience more direct violence than other societies, and how that violence is perpetuated. The diagrams can also help us understand the complexity of reducing violence and increasing peace. In fact, peace theory is an example of cultural peace as it legitimizes and directs efforts to reduce
violence. There may be value, then, in applying it to one of the most celebrated violent events in US history.

Little Bighorn

On June 25, 1876, US soldiers and their Crow and Arikara scouts charged into an encampment of Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho families along a river the Lakotas called the Greasy Grass, in what is now southeastern Montana. For over two decades, the US Army had been trying to conquer the Native peoples of the Great Plains and had found attacking villages more advantageous than facing off against highly skilled Native fighting men. In fact, eight days earlier, Lakota and Cheyenne fighters had repulsed US forces at the Rosebud battlefield. At the Greasy Grass, known to English-speakers as the Little Bighorn, the US attack was hurried, the blue-uniformed soldiers trying to reach the tipis before the women and children could escape. But, led by Crazy Horse, the Native defenders rallied quickly, drove the soldiers from the camp, and surrounded them on nearby hills. When the killing ended the following day, over 260 soldiers and at least 40 Natives were dead.

For many years, popular historical interpretation of the battle focused on identifying victims and victors, good guys and bad guys. The “heroic soldier” interpretation emphasized the suffering and death of Col. George Custer and his entire battalion—“Custer’s Last Stand.” This version, which depicted US soldiers as agents of “civilization” and Native peoples as “savage” obstacles, resonated in the US popular imagination because it struck a deep chord: white Americans as God’s chosen people with a mission to save the world. Alternatively, the “doomed defender” interpretation identified Lakotas as the victims of US conquest who, despite victory at Little Bighorn, soon lost the war, and with it their territory, culture, and sovereignty. This version gained notice, beginning in the 1960s, as US military failures overseas and greater cultural awareness at home raised doubts about the divine ordination of US imperialism. In the 1970s, the historic battlefield was again a place of conflict, as competing groups, sometimes characterized as “Custer buffs” and “Native American activists,” vied for control of the symbolism of the site.

These two interpretations have at least one thing in common, one aspect of cultural violence frequently on display in US public discourse: a tendency to glorify or romanticize warfare. The “heroic soldier” story transforms Custer’s demise into noble sacrifice, surrounded and outnumbered but going down with guns blazing for the greater good. The “doomed defender” account is essentially the same, only now the Native warriors are surrounded and

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4 This shift in popular interpretation can be seen in Hollywood films, for example, They Died With Their Boots On (1941) and Little Big Man (1970). Paul Hutton, “From Little Big Horn to Little Big Man: The Changing Image of a Western Hero in Popular Culture,” in Hutton, ed., The Custer Reader (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), 395–423.

5 Debra Buchholtz, The Battle of the Greasy Grass/Little Bighorn: Custer’s Last Stand in Memory, History, and Popular Culture (New York: Routledge, 2012), 114–115. Michael Elliott, Custerology: The Enduring Legacy of the Indian Wars and George Armstrong Custer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 2–3, points out that “the picture of a two-sided debate with clear-cut, opposing sides oversimplifies the way that history is actually written, spoken about, and memorialized in the United States today.” Still, it was the more strident voices that made the historic battlefield a focal point in the movement toward, and backlash against, increased cultural awareness.
outnumbered—by the rapidly expanding US population and industrial capitalism. Lakotas and their allies fought valiantly to defend their families and their “traditional” way of life—who wouldn’t do the same?—but in the long run their bows and arrows, rifles, and war ponies had little chance of success against steamboats, railroads, Gatling guns, and cannons. For Custer and Crazy Horse alike, there was dignity and virtue in a battling exit, dying for what you believe in, and when the fight is hopeless, when your death appears imminent, taking as many foes as possible with you. More recently, Little Bighorn chroniclers have tried to present a “balanced” account of the battle, trying to understand the motivations of all participants, rather than demonizing one side or the other. But they do not condemn the violence itself as an illegitimate form of conflict resolution, and, thus, do not actively challenge the deep assumption, found in US culture, of warfare as noble and redemptive.

Peace theory offers a different way to interpret Little Bighorn—and war generally—not only to understand the past, but to see what lessons we can learn to help us create a less violent future. But why Little Bighorn? If the goal is to reduce violence, what can be accomplished by applying the triangles and arrows of peace theory to a battle fought well over a century ago? Why not let bygones be bygones and leave the dusty Montana battlefield to the military historians trying to deduce Custer’s fateful maneuvers? Because, though Custer died in 1876, the violence on the northern Plains continues to this day, and, despite all the attention given the historic battle, the complicated connection between then and now is not fully appreciated. Reinterpreted from a peace perspective, the historic and historical battlefield, tragic yet compelling, can become a place of triumph over violence rather than violent triumph.

**Violent Societies**

Mid-19th-century Lakotas (western Sioux) were nomadic, horse-mounted hunters of bison, and violence played an important role in their society, as it did for most northern Plains tribes in that period. Archaeological evidence, including remains of fortified villages, indicates that intertribal warfare went back centuries along the upper Missouri River, and historical accounts suggest an intensification of fighting sparked by the arrival of European trade goods in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and by the depletion of bison herds after 1800. The spread of guns, horses, and epidemic diseases changed the regional balance of power, and, by 1850, Lakotas were the dominant military force. Lakotas used warfare to drive neighboring tribes off valuable hunting and grazing lands, maintain access to trade networks, and subjugate farming villages.

With group survival often dependent on martial prowess, Lakotas and other northern Plains communities held warriors in high esteem. Young men grew up training for violent combat, conducted small-scale raids on enemy villages, and gained status and leadership positions through battlefield displays of courage and skill. They took enemy scalps as trophies.

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They practiced ritual self-mutilation. Their exploits in battle and horse thievery were celebrated with dances, songs, and names. The death of kin in battle necessitated vengeance killing, which often disrupted attempts at peaceful relations. Indeed, if economic interest was the primary motivation for Lakota warfare, the warrior ethic contributed to a violent cycle of raiding and counter-raiding among rival tribes. In complex though understandable ways, direct violence encouraged cultural violence, and cultural violence perpetuated direct violence.\footnote{Guy Gibbon, \textit{The Sioux: The Dakota and Lakota Nations} (New York: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), esp. 86-94.}

With the elevation of individualistic hunting methods based on possession of horses, mid-19th-century northern Plains communities were becoming less egalitarian, less subsistence-oriented, less communal. Compared to other tribes, Lakotas were making this shift less rapidly, and had not reached an internal disparity of wealth and power that constituted structural violence. However, external structural violence emerged in the growing dependency of Plains tribes in general on foreign goods and horses, which led to the overhunting of bison for tradable hides, which contributed to food scarcity. The structural violence of this extractive and wealth-seeking economy was a motivation for the direct violence of warfare over territory, and the demand for guns and ammunition was a motivation for involvement in the extractive economy. All told, this triangle of mutually reinforcing direct, cultural, and structural violence meant the Lakotas and their neighbors lived under the shadow of violent death.\footnote{Pekka Hämäläinen, “The Rise and Fall of Plains Indian Horse Cultures,” \textit{Journal of American History} 90:3 (Dec. 2003): 848-862. Hämäläinen notes the rise of “horse-rich men who for all practical purposes had become protocapitalists” on the northern Plains, leading to “a relatively rigid rank society in which exchange and social relations of production benefited a selected few at the expense of the vast majority,” but adds that the Lakotas were able to avoid this “destructive divisiveness.”

Reginald Horsman, \textit{Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism} (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981), 1-2, explains that “By 1850 the emphasis was on the American Anglo-Saxons as a separate, innately superior people who were destined to bring good government, commercial prosperity, and Christianity to the American continents and to the world.” Early Massachusetts colonial governor John Winthrop, in 1630, famously equated divine appointment with a “city upon a hill.” A New York journalist named John O’Sullivan, in 1845, reconfigured it as “manifest destiny.” This notion of “choseness” persists today, and can be heard in the frequent expressions of American exceptionalism and indispensability made by US politicians and pundits.}

**Violence in the Lakota world, 1850**

- direct violence (raiding, warfare)
- structural violence (extractive economy)
- cultural violence (warrior societies)

The mid-19th-century United States, too, was steeped in violence. The prevalent cosmology, or \textit{deep culture}, included a belief in white male superiority with divine appointment.\footnote{Reginald Horsman, \textit{Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism} (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981), 1-2, explains that “By 1850 the emphasis was on the American Anglo-Saxons as a separate, innately superior people who were destined to bring good government, commercial prosperity, and Christianity to the American continents and to the world.” Early Massachusetts colonial governor John Winthrop, in 1630, famously equated divine appointment with a “city upon a hill.” A New York journalist named John O’Sullivan, in 1845, reconfigured it as “manifest destiny.” This notion of “choseness” persists today, and can be heard in the frequent expressions of American exceptionalism and indispensability made by US politicians and pundits.} The bigotry and sense of entitlement that flowed from this assumption underlay the structural and direct violence of expansionism, slavery, and male dominance.
Simply put, US society was organized around the violent dispossession of Native communities, the enslavement of blacks, and the marginalization of women. By 1850, the older structures of economic inequality and exploitation—chattel slavery and feudalism—were giving way to a new one: industrial capitalism. The Civil War, 1861-65, revealed the depth and complexity of US violence, as members of the plantation-owning class sounded the call for southern secession to preserve slavery, northern politicians insisted on the legitimacy of federal rule over distant lands, and leaders on both sides employed industrialized warfare, with the poorer classes as cannon fodder, to resolve the sectional conflict. Soldiers on both sides sang “The Battle Cry of Freedom.” The number of war-related deaths likely exceeded six hundred thousand, including an assassinated president.

Violence in the United States, 1850

- **direct violence** (war, corporal punishment)
- **structural violence** (oligarchy, slavery, industrial capitalism)
- **cultural violence** (patriarchy, chosenness, white supremacy)

The end of the Civil War slaughters and the abolition of slavery did not make US society less violent. In the South, former slave owners constructed a semi-feudal system (structural violence) based on the ideology of white supremacy (cultural violence) and shaped by racial segregation and terrorism (direct violence). In the West, US officers, hardened and emboldened by their “scorched earth” conquest of the South, turned their “total war” strategies against Plains tribes—slaughtering bison and pony herds, destroying whole villages, and capturing, raping, and killing noncombatants. In the North, the structural violence of unregulated, industrial capitalism created misery and dependency for the urban poor, which intensified with the 1870s financial collapse, bringing cries for more confiscation of Indian lands, territorial expansion being the favored solution to class conflict. Custer and a few other professional soldiers may have constituted a warrior class, but they led an army of poorly paid and often inadequately trained volunteers, many of them recent immigrants from Europe.

After 1862, the primary conflict between US and Lakota societies was a dispute over use of the northern Plains. Lakotas wanted to continue exploiting tribal hunting and grazing lands; US citizens wanted to transform the grasslands into privately owned farms and ranches and, beginning in 1874, to mine gold in the Black Hills. A conflict between two expansionistic, war-making societies—what was the likelihood of a nonviolent resolution? US and Lakota

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11 For evidence of US soldiers raping Native women, see Philbrick, *The Last Stand*, 138-139.
12 Lakota-US conflict has always been rooted in US claims to continental sovereignty, but in the 1850s, the immediate conflict was more about US citizens crossing Lakota territory on their way to lands west of the Continental Divide rather than white settlement on the northern Plains. Jeffrey Ostler, *The Plains Sioux and U.S. Colonialism from Lewis and Clark to Wounded Knee* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 34-42.
societies were in many ways different, but it was a similarity that made the conflict so devastating—as Lakotas clearly understood. In the oft-quoted words of Black Hawk, an Oglala Lakota, “These lands once belonged to the Kiowas and Crows, but we whipped those nations out of them, and in this we did what the white men do when they want the lands of the Indians.”

Only now it was the Lakotas’ turn to be “whipped.” Within a few years of the Little Bighorn battle, continued attacks on their villages and the extermination of the bison herds forced Lakotas and their Cheyenne allies to surrender to US forces and accept sedentary life on significantly reduced territories. These “reservations,” surrounded by the dominant US society and administered by a powerful, centralized state, functioned as internal colonies. The Native nations of the northern Plains had become subjects of the US empire.

Genocide

A Cheyenne named Wooden Leg, who fought at Little Bighorn, later said of reservation life, “It is pleasant to be situated where I can sleep soundly every night, without fear that my horses may be stolen or that myself or my friends may be crept upon and killed.” US dominance ended decades, if not centuries, of persistent warfare on the northern Plains—a Pax Americana. The powerful state claimed a monopoly on the right to employ direct violence, and essentially declared that intertribal warfare and raiding must cease. From this historical reality, apologists for empire argue that US rule brought peace, enlightenment, and progress to the Plains peoples, that US conquest was a blessing in disguise for the subjugated tribes. This is a key tenet of the “heroic soldier” interpretation, with the US Army as the spearhead of “civilization.” But the absence of warfare should not be equated with the absence of violence, and the temporary absence of direct violence, known as negative peace, should not be confused with positive peace, meaning the presence of systems, processes, practices, and beliefs—structural peace and cultural peace—that make future direct violence less likely.

Jean-Paul Sartre’s observation that imperialism is genocide certainly fit the newly created Sioux reservations. Military conquest was only one step toward the US government’s goal of eliminating Native peoples. Additional steps included the privatization of lands and the stamping out of Native leadership, languages, and religions. In most cases, reservation agents, teachers, and missionaries may not have intended the physical injury or biological death of Native individuals, but as an attack on the basic human need for identity and freedom, this “assimilation program” was violence. Indeed, the motto was “Kill the Indian, save the man”—in

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15 For an example of this thinking, see Steven Pinker, The Better Angels of Our Nature: Why Violence Has Declined (New York: Viking, 2011), 47-56, 102-106. Without carefully defining violence, Pinker argues that “states are far less violent than traditional bands and tribes” and that while “imperial conquest and rule can themselves be brutal, they do reduce endemic violence among the conquered.” It follows that “the Civilizing Process in the American West” eventually cured the “anarchy” and “mayhem” that preceded it.
other words, eliminate Native tribes and Native identities—and the destruction of a group, even without mass murder, is the precise definition of genocide.17

A different aspect of the cultural violence of white supremacy—an obligation to enlighten “inferior” peoples—inspired the direct violence of boarding schools and state-enforced religion, with additional direct violence as an enforcement mechanism.18 When reservation communities resisted assimilation, reservation officials and army officers organized the marginalization or elimination of Native leaders, kidnapping of Native children, and punishment of Native healers. In the most extreme example, thousands of US soldiers invaded the Lakota reservations, in 1890, to suppress the Ghost Dance, an elaborate ceremony some Lakotas believed would lead to restoration of their pre-reservation life. Over a decade had passed since Lakotas had given up military resistance to US empire, yet at Wounded Knee Creek, on the Pine Ridge Reservation, the US Seventh Cavalry—Custer’s old regiment—killed over one hundred fifty Lakota men, women, and children.19

Federal policy not only condemned Lakota identity, it reinforced economic structures that kept Lakotas impoverished. With the bison gone, federal officials encouraged Lakotas to take up dry-land farming and ranching, even as US confiscations continued to reduce the Lakota land base. Cattle herding was a good match for formerly nomadic, equestrian bison-hunters on semi-arid lands. In the 1890s, ranching became a significant part of the reservation economy. In the early twentieth century, though, pressure from reservation agents and the lure of consumer goods convinced Lakotas to sell off livestock and land “allotments,” leaving them without a self-sustaining economic base to withstand global depressions and years of drought on the Plains. Federal officials favored white-owned, corporate ranching interests on the reservation, while often failing to meet treaty obligations to provide for impoverished residents.20 Boarding schools mostly prepared Native children for manual labor, and the emphasis on assimilation reinforced a sense of inferiority and self-hatred. For many Lakotas, survival depended on government checks and low wages from off-reservation work. Trapped in a psychology of dependency at the very bottom of the capitalist structure, they lacked the resources to move up. The result: Across the twentieth century, Sioux reservations were home to some of the worst quality-of-life indicators in the United States. Statistics for unemployment, illiteracy, poverty, disease, infant mortality, and life expectancy suggest Lakotas were caught in “third world” misery in the midst of what became “first world” affluence.21

US conquest may have ended the direct violence of intertribal fighting, but the intensified cultural and structural violence brought by US rule all but guaranteed that some new form of direct violence would emerge. With the sources of oppression seemingly unreachable or unknowable, reservation residents often directed their frustrations at fellow tribal members.

and themselves, a phenomenon known as internalized oppression.\textsuperscript{22} Sioux communities suffered high rates of interpersonal violence (assault, rape) and intrapersonal violence (alcoholism, drug addiction, suicide). Much of this can be attributed to historic trauma, meaning the massive, cumulative, intergenerational transfer of unresolved fear, anger, and grief, which began with the carnage of military conquest and deepened with the experiences of forced assimilation. Restrictions on Native religion and medicine obstructed the healing process, and the boarding school onslaught of psychic degradation, corporal punishment, and sexual abuse created generations of abusers. Remnants of warrior society expectations may have increased the emotional burden on young Sioux men unable to match the individual achievements of storied ancestors—not as courageous battlers, not even as providers—and they often took out their misery on Sioux women. Poverty, self-hatred, unresolved trauma: the legacy of conquest is violence.\textsuperscript{23}

\textbf{Wounded Knee II}

Without sufficient therapy at all three points of the triangle, Sioux communities were trapped in a cycle of violence. To outsiders, the situation might have appeared stable, but with human needs unmet, upheaval was likely. In the early 1970s, direct violence in and around the Pine Ridge Reservation expanded from individual acts—domestic abuse, suicide, and the like—to the group activity of riots, death squads, and shootouts. Why, eighty years after the Wounded Knee massacre, did gun battles return to the northern Plains? What had changed? For one thing, the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) of 1934, a US law that allowed tribal members to establish federally approved tribal governments—following a non-Lakota model—often deepened political schisms between so-called “progressives,” who were more willing to cooperate with the US Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and “traditionalists,” who put up greater resistance to federal paternalism. If nothing else, by creating elected offices with the authority to disperse reservation jobs and federal funds among an otherwise impoverished population, the IRA raised the stakes of intra-tribal politics. In 1972, the political tension at Pine Ridge was exacerbated by new tribal council president Dick Wilson, a petty tyrant who blatantly rewarded his “progressive” or “mixed blood” supporters, while his private police force intimidated political opposition.

A second political development began, in the 1950s, when the emergence of pan-tribal organizations and the empowerment of Native activists, many of them urbanites and college educated, brought more dynamic resistance to decades-old political dominance, economic exploitation, and cultural hegemony. Inspired in part by the Civil Rights Movement, Native activists drew national attention and sympathy with “fish-ins” and the occupation of Alcatraz. The most visible and controversial Native organization was the American Indian Movement (AIM), whose leaders, particularly Russell Means, an Oglala Lakota from Pine Ridge, had a


genius for political symbolism. AIM members occupied Mount Rushmore, took over a replica Mayflower ship on Thanksgiving Day, and organized a “Trail of Broken Treaties” march to Washington, DC. But lacking nonviolent philosophy and training, their actions often disintegrated into violence, costing them the support of many otherwise sympathetic observers, and making it easier for federal authorities to characterize them as criminals.24

When AIM militancy entered the bitter tribal politics of Pine Ridge, the deeply rooted violence intensified. In 1972, hundreds of AIM members converged on nearby Gordon, Nebraska, and demanded tougher prosecution of local whites who had kidnapped and murdered an Oglala Lakota. The following year, after another off-reservation killing, AIM organized a caravan to the town of Custer, South Dakota, where a confrontation with the public prosecutor turned into a violent brawl with police.25 By taking a stand against “white man’s justice,” AIM quickly gained new members and supporters on Pine Ridge, particularly among the “traditionalists” who formed the Oglala Sioux Civil Rights Organization (OSCRO) and tried to oust tribal president Wilson. Dozens of federal marshals from an elite paramilitary group soon arrived at Pine Ridge, not to investigate the murders, but to protect Wilson and the tribal headquarters from the AIM-OSCRO alliance of militant young activists and reservation opposition. Challenged by OSCRO leaders to become warriors again and defend their people, young Oglalas and their AIM allies, numbering around three hundred, went to the village of Wounded Knee, stole rifles from the local trading post, and detained its white owner, providing pretext for a federal military intervention. US marshals, BIA police, and FBI agents, equipped with automatic rifles, armored personnel carriers, and helicopters, and advised by army officers, surrounded the village and opened fire. Eighty-three years after the Wounded Knee slaughter, US officials had, once again, sent an army to crush a Native resistance movement. Despite two deaths from sniper fire, the protestors held out for 71 days, resurrected the Ghost Dance, then agreed to a negotiated surrender, only to face arrests and trials while their demands for federal investigation of reservation injustices were quickly dismissed. For some observers, the “Wounded Knee II” occupiers were making a heroic stand, shooting it out against overwhelming odds. For others, they were dangerous militants who deserved the violent response they received. The US government and the occupiers did agree on one thing: violent conflict resolution. And more was coming.

Over the next three years, Wilson functioned as a neocolonial strongman—dependent on US funds, weapons, and political support, while his “GOON” squad, tolerated if not encouraged by FBI agents, terrorized Pine Ridge. Federal officials saw Wilson as a useful counterweight against Lakotas who pushed for greater tribal sovereignty and treaty rights. FBI agents declined to investigate the deaths of Wilson opponents, choosing instead to employ a variety of “counterintelligence” tactics—surveillance, arrests, trumped-up charges, misinformation, falsified evidence—against AIM members. In 1975, after two FBI agents were killed in a shootout at an AIM camp, the FBI conducted a massive paramilitary crackdown on


AIM members, leading to more arrests. The federal repression of AIM, and the election of a new tribal president, in 1976, eventually calmed the political atmosphere.\(^\text{26}\)

The shootouts ceased, but reservation poverty and desperation remained, with little improvement over subsequent decades. Pine Ridge was too isolated to profit from the 1990s casino boom, and, despite treaty obligations to provide housing and medical care, federal agencies failed to meet reservation needs. Only a small, elite class of “mixed-blood” ranchers and tribal officials benefitted from reservation resources. In the early twenty-first century, Pine Ridge reports unemployment above eighty percent, almost the entire population living below the poverty line, an infant mortality rate three times the national average, a severe housing shortage, and extremely high rates of diabetes, alcoholism, and suicide. Hopelessness is pervasive. No surprise then that average life expectancy (around 50 years) is much lower than the US average (about 77). Perhaps also no surprise that Pine Ridge youths have formed street gangs modeled after the violent urban gangs celebrated in popular rap music. The one reliable source of employment for reservation youths is enlistment in the US military.\(^\text{27}\) In 2000, a grassroots Lakota movement occupied the tribal headquarters in protest of tribal council corruption and neocolonialism, a resistance action invoking the spirit of Crazy Horse and the nonviolent philosophy of Martin Luther King Jr. However, with structural violence on Pine Ridge and other Sioux reservations intact, and with the cultural violence of US society frequently reinforced, it may just be matter of time before the next outbreak of armed combat on the northern Plains.\(^\text{28}\)

![Violence in the Lakota world, 2000](image)

**Peace at the Monument**

From a social sciences perspective, the work is done—this article has investigated, albeit briefly, the connection between past and present. The peace studies imperative asks us to

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apply that knowledge to reduce current and future violence.\textsuperscript{29} The reduction and prevention of direct violence in the region, particularly on impoverished reservations, requires transformation of cultural and structural violence. Much of this must come from within the tribal communities, but one imaginable first step toward structural peace is transfer of public lands in and around the Black Hills—sacred territory that the US Supreme Court has ruled was illegally taken—back to the Sioux tribes, as they have requested, along with compensation for well over a century of lost financial opportunity.\textsuperscript{30} Properly managed—meaning with greater tribal participation, transparency, and shared benefit—Native repossessions might provide a measure of economic security, reduce dependency, increase self-determination, and build self-esteem. However, a land transfer is unlikely without first reducing the cultural obstacles of “Manifest Destiny” entitlement and anti-Indian racism, mending old wounds, and addressing the fears of private landowners.\textsuperscript{31} In other words, a grand project of dialogue, negotiation, and conflict mediation is required, with a wide circle of participation, and with respect to differences in worldview and conflict resolution traditions.\textsuperscript{32} This is known as \textit{peace-building}. One place peace-building can begin—in fact, has already begun—is at Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument, a historical site and interpretive center administered by the US National Park Service (NPS), which attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors each year. In the late twentieth century, following the general trend toward greater cultural inclusion, official park interpreters gradually reduced Custer worship, which for so long had contributed to the romanticization of the battle, and made room for alternative perspectives and Native voices, culminating in the construction of a Native memorial to complement a decades-old Custer memorial.\textsuperscript{33} At present, the official interpretive program—museum, brochures, ranger talks—

\textsuperscript{29} One example of the ambivalence of many academics toward applied peace theory is a reader who insisted that an American Indian studies journal is not an “appropriate vehicle” for “advocacy for peace at the Little Bighorn,” even if such advocacy is a “valuable perspective.” (Peer review in author’s possession.) While the current content of the journal in question is overtly anti-colonial on a variety of levels (i.e., outspokenly critical of certain categories of structural and cultural violence), suggestions for a paradigm shift beyond the printed page seem to violate, for some, expectations of scholarly “detachment.” This raises two open questions: Does scholarly detachment mean advocating ways to think but remaining silent on ways to act? (The dividing line is perhaps fuzzier and more arbitrary than some realize.) If the twin towers of environmental destruction and global militarism threaten species survival, if the crisis is urgent, and if a profound cultural transformation is required to avoid a tragic end, how much detachment should one indulge?\textsuperscript{30} Jeffrey Ostler, \textit{The Lakotas and the Black Hills: The Struggle for Sacred Ground} (New York: Viking, 2010), 167-192.\textsuperscript{31} The persistence of anti-Native bigotry in the region was revealed to outsiders by the media coverage of the harassment of Pine Ridge schoolchildren at a Rapid City hockey game on January 24, 2015. For example, see http://www.argusleader.com/story/news/2015/02/18/man-charged-harassing-students-rc-hockey-game/23632653/.\textsuperscript{32} Polly Walker, “Decolonizing Conflict Resolution: Addressing the Ontological Violence of Westernization,” \textit{American Indian Quarterly} 28:3-4 (Summer-Autumn 2004): 527-549; Paul Robertson, Miriam Jorgensen, and Carrie Garrow, “Indigenizing Evaluation Research: How Lakota Methodologies are Helping ‘Raise the Tipi’ in the Oglala Sioux Nation,” \textit{American Indian Quarterly} 28:3-4 (Summer-Autumn 2004): 499-526.\textsuperscript{33} Buchholtz, \textit{The Battle of the Greasy Grass/Little Bighorn}, 114-130; Elliott, Custerology, 1-58; Edward Linenthal, \textit{Sacred Ground: Americans and Their Battlefields} (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991), 127-172. The symbolism and meaning of Little Bighorn, its significance in Euroamerican and Native American memory, is nuanced and complex, but it is perhaps most valued as a place where non-Native citizens can simultaneously celebrate national expansion and acknowledge Native suffering, and do so without guilt, because US soldiers suffered too—an irony captured in Lakota writer Vine Deloria Jr.’s famous phrase, “Custer died for your sins.”
acknowledges that Little Bighorn means different things to different people, and no single perspective should be privileged. This is peace-building, as it emphasizes inclusion not exclusion, dialogue not domination, participation not marginalization.

Despite these developments, Little Bighorn remains a source of cultural violence. Rather than reduce the legitimacy of direct violence, practices in and around the national monument continue to perpetuate, by omission and commission, the perception that war is inevitable and acceptable. The official interpretive program at the park is marked by careful omission. In an understandable attempt to minimize offense, park personnel employ the phrase “a clash of cultures” as their interpretive theme, suggesting the awful killing in 1876 was the unavoidable result of cultural differences, and no individuals are accountable, no human decision-making is to blame.34 Getting past blaming individuals may be commendable, but “clash of cultures” remains an empty phrase if the “cultures” are not investigated. Clash means conflict, but, at last check, the interpretive program avoids discussion of the root conflict between two expansionistic powers. Conflict—a contradiction of interests—does not necessarily lead to violence, still the interpretive program does not explain why Lakotas and US citizens chose armed combat to resolve their differences. In other words, the “Clash of Cultures” program leaves out the structural and cultural violence. This is understandable at such a contested public park, as serious examination of warrior traditions, vengeance killing, and tribalism might raise discomfiting questions. For example, if Sioux warrior societies were admirable institutions, why did Crazy Horse believe he needed to murder a woman to advance his spiritual development?35 Also, honest discussion of the violence of imperialism, militarism, and capitalism might appear a pointed rebuke of current US policies. Instead, the park program encourages visitors to focus on elements of the direct violence—troop movements, assorted weaponry—that occurred at the site, to ponder the unknowable details of Custer’s last moments rather than the perfectly knowable phenomena that lead to such slaughters.

Two annual Little Bighorn battle reenactments, staged outside the park, constitute cultural violence by commission. Like action-packed war movies, the reenactments are unavoidably stirring and titillating—flags and feathers, thundering horses, resounding cries—except the reenactments cannot duplicate Hollywood representations of gore and suffering. The “dead” fighters arise in full view of the audience, vengeful Lakota women do not mutilate the soldiers’ corpses, no children mourn their fathers’ deaths. Armed combat, one could conclude, is pageantry, fun and entertaining, a nice outing, something young children can happily anticipate. That such events are tolerated, in a way that reenactments of the rape of female captives or the funneling of prisoners into gas chambers wouldn’t be, is measure of just how normalized, romanticized, and sanitized warfare is in US society.36

The national monument, too, has contributed to cultural violence by hosting a celebration of warfare, though in somewhat ironic fashion. In 2003, the NPS officially dedicated the new Native memorial at Little Bighorn with a ceremony emphasizing reconciliation between

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34 For more thorough deconstruction of the interpretive program, see Timothy Braatz, “‘Clash of Cultures’ as Euphemism: Avoiding History at the Little Bighorn,” American Indian Culture and Research Journal 28:4 (2004): 107-130.


36 For more thorough discussion of Little Bighorn reenactments, see Elliott, Custerology, 224-272; Buchholtz, The Battle of the Greasy Grass/Little Bighorn, 106-107, 138-143.
former enemies—an important peace-building step.\textsuperscript{37} However, a fundamental contradiction ran through the language and symbolism of the ceremony. The theme of the day was “Peace through Unity,” the US Interior secretary declared the new memorial “another step together in seeking the peace that Black Elk spoke of,” and the Montana governor reminded listeners that “Indian and non-Indian soldiers fought side by side” in World War II. Natives and other US citizens should stop fighting old battles, they seemed to be saying, and cooperate in new ones. The ceremony paid tribute to a Hopi woman, who had nothing to do with the northern Plains but was killed three months prior in the US invasion of Iraq, and two assault helicopters flew overhead to reinforce the message: peace through unity, and unity through warfare against common enemies.\textsuperscript{38} The ceremony’s reference to the latest war—often characterized as necessary for delivering “democracy” and “freedom” to a distant land—is a reminder that the very cosmology that led to the Little Bighorn battle remains deeply embedded in US culture. A population that considers itself a superior people, views war as sport, and celebrates the power of warfare to unify “us” against “them” is likely to support calls for war-making.

The national monument does not have to be an exercise in cultural violence. Instead of “A Clash of Cultures,” the park handouts might read “Little Bighorn: Confronting Violence” and describe the tragic battle as part of a larger confrontation between two violent, expansionistic societies. Ranger talks could explain how poor European men, propelled across the Atlantic Ocean by dreams of prosperity, ended up as mutilated corpses on Last Stand Hill, and also could help visitors understand the high rates of poverty, unemployment, and direct violence on the Crow reservation next door and on northern Plains reservations in general. The museum could exhibit photos from the Wounded Knee massacre and the Wounded Knee II shootout, outline the historical connections between 1890 and 1973, and display a map or two illustrating Native land claims and court decisions regarding the Black Hills. In sum, park personnel could address the history and ongoing reality of violence in the region.

A (partial) peace prescription for Little Bighorn

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzcd}
\text{direct peace} & \text{structural peace} \\
\text{(dialogue, mediation)} & \text{(tribal land return)} \\
\text{cultural peace} \\
\text{(condemnation of warfare)}
\end{tikzcd}
\end{center}

Such a radical change in the monument’s interpretive program would, like a Black Hills land transfer, require a grand project of dialogue and mediation. Paradigm shifts don’t come easily, and imposing your own belief system on others is itself a form of violence. Thus, transformation of cultural violence into cultural peace, by definition, will require contributions from all groups with a stake in the matter. Undoubtedly, participants will come up with better solutions than the ones offered here. There will be conflict, of course—peace-building is


\textsuperscript{38} Braatz, “‘Clash of Cultures’ as Euphemism.”
controversial—but conflict equals opportunity, and the opportunity is to use the controversial park as a place to confront violence.\(^{39}\)

**Bibliography**


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\(^{39}\) One example of resistance to peace-building at Little Bighorn is the complaint of a military historian and Civil War reenactor who derided as “leftist” and dismissed as an “exercise in futility” what he characterized as a proposal to “convert a military park dedicated to interpreting the most famous Indian fight in U.S. history into an institute for peace studies.” (Peer review in author’s possession.) But why not interpret that tragic battle through the prism of peace studies rather than military studies, comparative anthropology, and international relations? Why assume US tourists will not tolerate moral challenges? If asked, most people will say they deplore direct violence, but don’t know what more can be done to reduce it; they accept it as “the human condition.” So, assuming violence reduction is a legitimate and urgent goal, then a new way of thinking is required, and the NPS has a role to play. Just as NPS interpreters at other parks unapologetically teach ecological concepts and environmental preservation, Little Bighorn personnel could promote human preservation. In fact, the US law authorizing creation of the Native memorial at the monument directed it be used “to provide visitors with improved understanding of the events leading up to and the consequences of the fateful battle, and to encourage peace among people of all races.” US Public Law 102-201, 102nd Congress, Dec. 10, 1991.


Michael J. Shapiro’s new book, *War Crimes, Atrocity, and Justice*, is an engaging text, but not for the faint of heart. The goal of the book is to draw on seemingly disparate events and with the aid of film, literature, political theory, and philosophy, innovate on the way in which war is traditionally conceived. The book is divided into five chapters: The Global Justice Dispositif; Atrocity, Secularization, and Exuberant Lines of Flight; What does a Weapon See?; Borderline Justice; and Justice and the Archives. Each chapter begins with a fictional narrative in order to highlight different notions of justice. For instance, in Chapter Two, Shapiro uses Gary Shteyngart’s novel, *Sad True Love Story* and Ridley Scott’s film *Blade Runner* (adapted from Philip K. Dick’s novel, *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep*) to give a “genealogy of control over life” (119).

Shapiro’s book takes up and elaborates on themes from his earlier work, *Studies in Trans-Disciplinary Method*. The current emphasis is on two conceptions of justice and their relationship to what he calls his “aesthetic method” (10). Under the first account of justice, Shapiro distinguishes the micro and macro politics of justice, where the former is about how individuals understand the law and the latter is about the state-level execution of the law as such. Under the second account of justice, Shapiro draws attention to the spaces of justice as it is exemplified in Mathias Énard’s novel, *Zone*.

A feature of the book that is simultaneously a great strength and a great weakness is the way in which Shapiro incorporates elements from popular culture to help explain different historical events. The success of such a methodology is contingent on whether the reader is already familiar with the references. In many cases, there is not enough background to warrant their inclusion in the text. Moreover, this methodology carries over into the way in which Shapiro incorporates the thought of other philosophical figures and arguments into his own analysis. Similar to the weakness of incorporating popular culture, if one is not already familiar, not only with the thought of Kant, Foucault, Lacan, Derrida, and Rorty (just to name a few figures of which Shapiro concerns himself) but also the way in which Shapiro understands their thought, then the reader is left trying to piece together an unclear narrative.

The methodology might have been intentional though. As Shapiro himself explains early on in the introduction, “the style of my writing, articulated as a series of interventions, must reflect my aim to resist certainties and provoke thinking rather than offering definitive explanations. Each chapter is an essay rather than an attempt at explanatory closure...this book therefore contains minimal explication and unmediated information reporting...With that mode of writing one shows connections among parallel forces and events rather than elaborately explaining how they interrelate.” (2-3) To put it simply, Shapiro leaves it to the reader to draw their own conclusions, rather than to clearly articulate and defend a thesis over the course of the book. While this might seem rather daunting, the reader might find this methodology extremely worthwhile.

One of most interesting aspects of Shapiro’s text is that instead of focusing on a clear and robust analysis of past war crimes, he instead emphasizes the conditions for the possibility of these war crimes. Unfortunately, these conditions are never made explicit. Rather, Shapiro attempts to tell a story about injustice through the lens of surveillance, sex trafficking,
peacekeeping missions, etc. Of course, there are alternative narratives that one could give to explain the possibility for the conditions of different atrocities. But Shapiro leaves it up to the reader to identify weaknesses in his story. It would have been a much stronger text had he addressed possible objections to his own argument.

Shapiro’s work is perhaps best known for drawing on aesthetics and popular culture to analyze different topics in global politics using the methodology prevalent in critical social theory. As such, the book will be of particular interest to those studying film, literature, philosophy, and political science. A caveat to this recommendation though is that for the text to truly shine, the reader should be familiar not only with their own discipline, but as is often the case in critical social theory, with other disciplines as well. For those researchers and teachers in interdisciplinary programs, War Crimes, Atrocity, and Justice will be an especially valuable resource.

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In the present volume, Randall Amster constructs a compound understanding of peace ecology. As part of this process, he demonstrates an urgent need for action to foster positive outcomes at the junction of sustainability and peace in order to ensure the inhabitability of the planet for future generations of people. Amster, formerly program chair of Peace Studies at Prescott College in Arizona, is presently the director of the Program on Justice and Peace at Georgetown University and executive director of the Peace and Justice Studies Association. These positions relate not only to his academic qualifications as a lawyer (JD, Brooklyn Law School) and a researcher in Justice Studies (PhD, Arizona State) but also to his deep concern for just peace as expressed in activist projects. This concern permeates Peace Ecology.

Amster presents several points of entry for understanding his titular term throughout the monograph. At its heart, his vision of peace ecology represents a coupling of the concepts of positive peace with ecological health. This coupling is necessary, Amster argues, because the problems represented by war and violence can no longer be separated legitimately from the problems represented by environmental degradation. He further indicates that this insight is not true on a planetary level because the Earth will survive without humans if we extinguish ourselves. However, it is true if the planet as it will exist in the near future is to be habitable for people. Hence, Amster’s vision of peace ecology becomes one of self-help on social and species scales. In simple terms, he argues we do not need to save the planet, we need to save ourselves. Therefore, what is needed is a collective effort to ensure that the planet can remain the home to creatively-functioning human communities.

Working against the realization of such sustainable outcomes are the segmented interests of war, violence and extractive industries. The military-industrial project and its tendency to destroy, divide and exploit the essential commons of human life are laid bare in Peace Ecology. The logic supporting this pathological orientation is called into question by Amster for the way it gives justification to exploitative, domineering, and unjust power relations managed by governments and corporations. These hierarchical actors then take control of resources and characterize others as being too selfish or ignorant to foster the health of commons. In contradiction to justifications for environmental elitism, Peace Ecology argues that the present social and ecological crises, scarcity of resources among them, represent opportunities that can be taken up by communities to craft collaborative solutions. As a poignant example in this regard, Amster cites the acequias water systems in the Southwestern USA, which manage irrigation infrastructure and deal creatively with the conflicts arising from water allocation to the benefit of the social and political health of local communities.

On the meta-level, Peace Ecology effectively counters two notions prevalent in debates about ecological issues today. Both the market-driven cornucopian position, which supports exploitation to grow human consumption levels, and the neo-Malthusian stance, which seeks to reduce human population through sometimes violent measures. In terms reminiscent of the work of the cultural historian, Thomas Berry, Amster argues for a more nourishing “new story” to drive our action and necessary work for a truly sustainable future marked by peace and a deep realization of human connectivity with the ecological world. This is a story that assigns intrinsic value to nature through its reenchantment. Consequently, the essentials of human
existence, such as air and water, whether they are assigned metaphysical value or not, can continue to provide the basis for human life on Earth. Under these conditions, people can exercise ‘power with’ (rather than ‘power over’) and participate in a transformative positive feedback loop between the personal and the global through which: “We can help restabilize the systems that support us, turning the current vicious cycle of degradation-conflict into one of sustainability-peace” (p. 192). As a result, claiming participatory spaces helps to remove the bases for a political economy of domination and militarism to the benefit of a political ecology of peace, nonviolence, and cooperation, which in turn fosters the necessary conditions for human life on this planet.

There are several tensions and inconsistencies in Amster’s argument as presented in Peace Ecology. These mostly lie in terms of his examples rather than in the main premises of his argument. As an example, after decrying the use of militaristic rhetoric by environmentalists in explicating the urgency of the sustainability crises, Amster employs the language ‘pulling the trigger’ to make one his salient points about peace ecology. That slip can, however, be taken to prove his cogent argument about the prevalence of militaristic language in US society. He also upholds the Kingdom of Bhutan’s pursuit of Gross National Happiness over Gross National Product as challenging dominant paradigms, without noting that country’s problematic human rights record. Furthermore, one extended thread of his argument in the monograph asserts that securitization of ecological problems is damaging to peace ecology, while later on Amster affirms the value of an environmental security paradigm as part of one his arguments. He is also guilty of some occasional leaps of logic. For example, his treatment of the flourishing biodiversity in the demilitarized zone (DMZ) between the two Koreas rather inappropriately calls upon the DMZ as an example in support of peace ecology’s potential. However, it should be taken into account that there is very little cooperation between the North and South Koreans on biodiversity management. More substantively, in contrast to the value Amster places on humans as subjects, the ecological flourishing in the DMZ can largely be accounted for by the fact that its former human inhabitants have been displaced. The DMZ is now largely devoid of any human presence, except along its heavily fortified boundaries. Crucially, however, such tensions can be reconciled and addressed with principles and examples presented elsewhere in the monograph.

Indeed, taken as a whole, Peace Ecology represents an important contribution at this juncture in human history. It is a well-written monograph, cites a number of significant examples, and addresses its important subject matter in an accessible manner. Undergraduates, graduates, instructors and activists will all benefit and be given much food for thought from reading through its pages. As such, Amster latest monograph will be an excellent resource for any university or college library. Moreover, institutions with programs in Peace, Justice or Conflict studies should most definitely have Peace Ecology available to their students and faculty members.

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Sports, Peacebuilding and Ethics features a distinguished group of scholar/practitioners examining questions and challenges of sport within the peacebuilding framework as well as several ethical dimensions of athletics. The editor and coordinator of the work Linda M. Johnston – executive director of the Siegel Institute for Leadership, Ethics, and Character and a professor at Kennesaw State University, and president of the International Peace Research Association Foundation – described the approach as a polygon, employing several divergent approaches. Thus the reader will experience a wide-ranging variety of articles.

The strongest feature of the book addresses sport as a component of a peacebuilding process in a post-war or conflict arena. The use of sport as an ingredient in peace-restoration is not new – the ancient Olympic games were developed in part to interrupt the wars among the Peloponnesian city-states. Recognition of sports within peacebuilding operations has grown substantially in the last twenty years as a result of the United Nations formally incorporating sport in many of its restorative operations. Sport in various forms has contributed to bringing together combatants to begin rebuilding trust and community.

The opening article by Johnston and Claudia Stura, “The Role of Sports in Peacebuilding,” posits sport not as a panacea but as a possible vibrant component of an overall peace program. They interviewed fourteen sport project managers running active programs in countries such as Northern Ireland, Jordan, Sri Lanka, Turkey, Lebanon, Iraq, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Palestine, Israel, and several others. Common elements of success included: team sport programs aimed at children emphasizing the educational aspects of participation, while not overtly promoting peacebuilding; locally run, long-range sport programs integrated into larger peacebuilding efforts; establishing political-free atmospheres; mixing and pairing individuals and teams to breakdown polarization; lessening the competitive elements of sport; and the careful selection and continuous training of coaches overseeing the activities. The programs succeeded in building trust, mutual respect, open mindedness and listening skills along with other benefits in participants.

In “Sports in the Psychological and Social Demobilization of Child Soldiers” Kim Fletcher and Peter St. Pierre build a theoretical social and psychological framework for child-specific disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programs. Sport has evolved in the reintegration of child soldiers from an unofficial activity to fill free time to being a formal component of rehabilitation requiring careful administration to be successful.

Adults also benefit from peacebuilding programs utilizing sports; two examples were related. Susan Hillyer wrote a personal account in “Coaching Women’s Softball in Iran: The Tale of One American’s Journey toward Peace and Understanding through Sports.” Invited to Iran to help develop women’s sports, she visited the country ten times between 2000 and 2007 introducing softball. Her article centers on the 2007 Iran-USA Friendship Games. Hillyer noted: “Through softball, we came into genuine relationship with one another. Through sharing this experience, we grew in our understanding of respect, fairness, cooperation, dignity, and vulnerability. (pg. 66)”
At a remedial level for adults, Niina Toroi researched how the horrors of genocide as well as the effects of rampant rape and the spread of AIDS were addressed in “‘Yoga Is Like Medicine’: Yoga as a Form of Trauma Relief in Rwanda.” Integrating men and women as well as Tutsi and Hutu peoples, yoga was an integral part of a total therapeutic program including trauma counseling and group discussions. She conducted in-depth interviews as well as group discussions with participants and found “….many benefits on an individual level such as: better sleep, feeling mentally more stable and calm, one can focus better, one is able to plan ahead, makes one laugh, allows one to relax, and helps one to forget problems (page 76).” Toroi also found benefits for both men and women in how they responded to each other socially outside of the holistic program.

Other articles focused on diverse, yet important, ethical aspects of sport ranging from immigrant assimilation to coaching leadership implications. In an interesting piece, Ji-Ho Kim researched how Korean immigrants to the US found Major League Baseball (MLB) as both a conduit and source of conflict towards integration. Overall, MLB was viewed as an opportunity to create social interactions between immigrants and Americans, which Kim noted has marketing implications. On an individual team basis, Stura through her research of a Division I women’s college volleyball squad detailed the building of team cohesion through trust, accountability, the role of the coaches and team rituals. The unfortunate circumstances around the Penn State football program brought to light in 2011 were analyzed in one piece using a three-level culture framework. M. Lee Brooks and Michael Shapiro looked at the marketing practices of professional sports and how they are aimed at protecting their product – resulting by implication in more ethical practices. As a role-model to move forward, Marion Keim described South Africa’s University of Western Cape’s establishing the first Interdisciplinary Centre of Excellence in Sports Science and Development. The thought-provoking concluding piece by H.E. Holliday builds a functional approach to sports in serving society if properly held in perspective.

The book is a reprint of the 2013 volume 18 edition of the journal Peace and Policy; credit is noted on its cover. Peace and Policy routinely re-issues its themed journals as books, while a laudatory practice to increase exposure, an opportunity was lost in not updating some of the articles. Several were outdated, clearly completed prior to 2012, two years before the book’s publication, which weakened some pieces.

While the differing research approaches, writing styles and article topics vary widely in Sports, Peacebuilding and Ethics, it nonetheless achieves its goal of stimulating thought regarding possible positive and ethical utilization of sports. The book will be welcomed by those familiar with sports as peacebuilding as well as those new to the topic – and could be used in college courses addressing ethics in sports.

Terrence J. Rynne, founder of Marquette University’s Center for Peacemaking, provides an insightful examination of the Christian peacemaking tradition. The book is divided into three major movements. The first three chapters offer his hermeneutic for properly interpreting Jesus and the early church as promoters of nonviolence. The next two chapters examine how violent practices became sanctioned under the influence of Constantine and Augustine. The final two chapters focus on the renewed commitment to peacemaking among Christians since the time of Vatican II.

Rynne believes that Jesus Christ and the early church can only be properly understood through a nonviolent lens. Jesus’s life, death, and resurrection should be seen as the offer of God’s forgiveness, not a bloody sacrifice to appease an angry god. The apocalyptic language of Jesus should not be understood as foretelling the end of the world, but rather the ushering in of a new nonviolent age. Jesus presented a foretaste of this reality with his continuous dialogue with opponents and his radically inclusive community. The author forcefully notes that Jesus did not allow his disciples to violently defend him when he is arrested. This injunction against violence to defend others will become the cornerstone of Rynne’s argument against the just war theory.

Rynne offers three teachings for adequately understanding Jesus’s nonviolence. The first is to know that Jesus did not propose submissive behavior in the face of injustice, but nonviolent resistance. Antistenai, which in the Sermon on the Mount is usually translated as “do not resist” is better translated as “nonviolent resistance” (pp. 67-68). In essence, Jesus is counseling his disciples to nonviolently resist one who does evil to you. The second teaching is love of enemies, which is grounded in a lived understanding of the Kingdom of God that permeates a disciple’s life. Love in this case is not a simple feeling, but a proactive “inclusion of enemies” (p. 80). The third is forgiveness: showing unconditional love to the evil that you know and confront. All three of these teachings require constant striving by one’s whole being to be a loving disciple of Jesus.

Rynne concludes that the early church, up until the time of Constantine, clearly understood Christian discipleship as possessing a mandate against violence. In addition to viewing Jesus as nonviolent, they emphasized nonviolent passages from the Old Testament such as Isaiah’s Suffering Servant and the decree in both Isaiah and Micah that an age was coming in which nations would no longer train for war. Violent Old Testament passages were interpreted as describing spiritual warfare, not violence against others. Many early Christian writers, utilizing the cited Old Testament passages, believed that the spread of Christianity was creating a less violent world. There were instances of Christians in the military, but this way of discipleship was not normative and was initially abhorred.

Constantine is given a chapter in the book, but the author uses Constantine as a transition chapter from the nonviolence of the early church to the sanctioned violence that become normative with Augustine. Though Constantine legalized the practice of Christianity, he did not compel its practice. He did, however, empower Christian bishops and his favoritism toward Christianity led to an increasing number of converts. For Rynne, Augustine is the
centerpiece for the introduction the natural law grounded just war theory into the Christian tradition. Augustine developed and popularized Ambrose’s premise that one should use violence to defend one’s friend, though violent self defense was still prohibited. Unlike Christian thinkers before him, Augustine possessed a cynical anthropology and viewed war as inevitable. For Augustine, the Sermon on the Mount no longer offered a rule for living, but became a set of “interior dispositions” and “hard sayings” that no one could hope to embody (pp. 152-54). Augustine would go a step further and even state that impelling, sometimes violently, your neighbor to perform the right action or believe the correct faith was desirable.

Practically speaking, Rynne skips everything between Augustine and the 1960s. Though the just war theory develops during this time period, the essentials go back to Augustine and further reflection is not necessary for his argument. Gaudium et spes, a 1965 Vatican II document, was the first Catholic document to endorse nonviolence as a laudable disposition. The same document condemned the use of nuclear weapons.

The author finishes the book strongly by stressing peacemaking over pacifism and scripture over the Roman natural law that inspired the just war theory. Rynne suggests four general areas in which a Christian peacemaker should engage: (1) relief of suffering, (2) change in the “structures of evil and oppression,” (3) “turn enemies into friends,” and (4) work to create a “culture of peace” (pp. 192-93). Most importantly, Rynne does not recommend a set of rules for nonviolence, but advocates creative discipleship. He proposes three concrete directions for creating a more peaceful world: (1) building unarmed civilian peacemaking forces, (2) creating peace circles in which personal truths are shared to resolve conflict, and (3) creating just structures in the aftermath of conflict and war.

Rynne’s academic rigor and clear language offer a versatile book that could be utilized in undergraduate or graduate courses. Anyone with a basic knowledge of Christianity would find this book a welcome resource in exploring the notion of Christian peacemaking. Though one need not be a Catholic to appreciate Rynne’s arguments, the book is clearly written for a Catholic audience. In addition, to refer to the book as “a new theology of peace,” is overstating the scope of the work. The book wonderfully brings together the best scholarship in the field and the bibliography reads like a Who’s Who in the Christian peacemaking field. Without a doubt, this book is a welcome addition in the area of Christian peacemaking. Its theological depth and impeccable research furnish a powerful challenge to anyone offering a portrait of a violent Christ.

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