

Peacebuilding in Crisis?

Experience and New Perspectives

International Symposium hosted by the German Foundation for Peace Research and
the Centre for Democracy and Peace Research, University of Osnabrueck

January, 23rd – 25th 2014, University of Osnabrueck

Abstracts of the Presentations

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Paternalism in Peacebuilding: A Reconsideration (Key Note)

International peacebuilding has all the characteristics of paternalism. The conventional wisdom is that paternalism is illegitimate; therefore, peacebuilding must be illegitimate. I want to suggest that while the conventional wisdom is not completely wrong, it misses the possible virtues of paternalism. Specifically, liberal democratic societies recognize that paternalism can be justified under some, highly restrictive, conditions. Indeed, most liberal societies operate with a fair bit of paternalistic practices. The logic and limits of paternalism in liberal societies also holds some instructive lessons for liberal peacebuilding.

Prof. Dr. Susanne Buckley-Zistel

Center for Conflict Studies, University of Marburg

Peacebuilding – A Gendered Concept? What Implications for Women?

Focusing on gender in the context of peacebuilding has assumed major importance in most interventions after violent conflicts. In particular, UN Resolutions such as 1325 and its successors make it a normative obligation to focus on women and to promote their inclusion at negotiating tables, in peacekeeping missions, as well as in reconstruction processes. Moreover, as central to this paper they demand the redress of sexual violence committed against women in the context of violent conflicts.

Efforts to gender peacebuilding, such as Resolution 1325, have been criticised for

pressing an image of women as being hapless and in need of protection, thus perpetuating their social position as inferior. The paper seeks to contribute to this critical debate by analysing the implications of labelling women who have experienced sexual violence in times of war as “victims” in discourses and practice. It is based on the assumption that women become targets of sexual violence primarily due to their gender roles in society and argues that as a consequence the prevention of future violence requires a significant modification of prevailing gender relations. Can this be achieved by redressing sexual violence? Can the focus on women in the context of crime tribunals, in particular, contribute to more gender justice in a post-conflict society?

In order to respond to these questions the paper first briefly outlines forms and dynamics of sexual violence during violent conflicts to then focus on the concept of masculinity to analyse the power dynamics at the heart of assaults by men against women. This shall lead to a discussion of how sexual crimes are being redressed in peacebuilding practice in order to then, lastly, draw some conclusions as to whether this might have a positive impact on prevailing gender relations in a society, contribute to more gender justice, and prevent similar crimes in the future.

Prof. Dr. David Chandler

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The Future of Peacebuilding (Key Note)

This closing keynote considers whether peacebuilding as a strategic policy framework can survive growing policy-maker and academic concern with the problems of unintended consequences (understood to stem from the underestimation of alterity and complexity). It will be argued that the last 10 years have seen a major shift in how alterity and complexity are understood. A good starting point is Roland Paris' 2004 monograph – *At War's End* – which argued that universal liberal assumptions – that peace, elections and markets could produce sustainable peace – underestimated alterity and complexity. In 2004 the solution was seen to be that of providing greater support to institutional strengthening: a top-down approach to peacebuilding. Since then we have seen the further rise of alterity and complexity – in the view that institutional strengthening is inadequate, producing hybrid and problematic outcomes, and that bottom-up approaches are necessary: building civil society, engaging and empowering local agency. Five years ago, even bottom-up peacebuilding was problematised for its lack of attention to alterity and complexity - Paris and Sisk famously argued that every intervention policy practice necessarily produced unintended outcomes, dilemmas and contradictions and that 'dilemma analysis training' and 'muddling through' were the only answer. More recently, Charles Call at the US State Department has suggested that external policy actors should reject acting on the basis of instrumental goals, merely 'finding the organic processes and plussing them up', effectively reducing peacebuilding to generic capacity-building and posing the question of the future of peacebuilding itself as a policy area.

Dr. Martina Fischer

Berghof Foundation, Berlin

Transitional Justice and Reconciliation – Achievements and Shortcomings in Research and Practice

Scholars and practitioners widely agree that societies that went through atrocities somehow need to come to terms with their past in order to avoid future relapse into violence. However the crucial question remains how to deal with the past in a way that avoids repeating the pain for those who suffered from war and human rights violations and contributes to healing, trust- and relationship building. Legal instruments for establishing accountability and mechanisms that contribute to truth recovery have been discussed as a precondition to pave the way to reconciliation. However, retributive approaches to dealing with the past need to be combined with restorative approaches and bridge-building initiatives, both on an interpersonal and collective level. Apart from serving justice and truth recovery, the transformation of war related identities and institutions is a must. This presentation discusses the state-of-the-art of the debate on “dealing with the past” against the background of conflict transformation. In fact, the academic discussion has overcome simplistic dichotomies (i.e. the dichotomies of “peace vs. justice”, or “justice vs. truth” that had prevailed the discourse in the 1990 and beyond) and has moved towards a more holistic perspective. However, more conceptual clarity is still required, both in research and practice. Furthermore, the presentation highlights research gaps and open questions: Is reconciliation a prerequisite for preventing relapse into violent conflict, or too an ambitious concept? Where do bottom-up and top-down initiatives meet? How can civil society be transformed to function as a realm or transmission belt, for political and cultural reconciliation to be connected? How can the diverse challenges related to war crimes prosecution and fact-finding, retributive and restorative approaches, institution-building and relationship-building be addressed in a way that synergies are guaranteed? Furthermore dilemmas are discussed that stem from the different approaches, based on practitioners’ experiences and empiric research that was conducted in post-war settings in the Western Balkans.

Prof. Dr. Roger Mac Ginty

Humanitarian and Conflict Response Institute, and department of Politics, The University of Manchester

What Do We Mean When We Use the Term ‘Local’?

This paper unpacks what we mean by 'local' in the context of peacebuilding and associated processes. It disputes the notion of 'local responses' that seeks to place 'the local' in the context of, and in reaction to, extra-local phenomenon. The paper suggests that in order to look afresh at 'the local' we need a fuller understanding of how we – in the global north – conceptualise and instrumentalise the term local. Having done this, the paper then examines the various ways in which 'the local' does and does not connect with international peace-support interventions. The pa-

per raises issues of epistemology and positionality that should assist our understanding of 'the local' in peacebuilding.

Prof. Dr. Vivienne Jabri
King's College London

Peacebuilding and the Challenge of the Postcolonial International

Peacebuilding has occupied a hegemonic space in defining responses to conflict globally. There is now a highly sophisticated institutional architecture that governs, determines, and accommodates discourses and practices that assume the primacy of peacebuilding over and above other responses to conflict, including conflict resolution and traditional diplomacy. Even in locations where conflicts end as a consequence of negotiation and mediation (largely the predominant form through which conflicts end), the subsequent interventionist practices are defined in terms of 'peacebuilding'. This presentation will argue that the discourses and practices of peacebuilding involve a matrix of intervention built on collaborations between public and private actors, where the rationality governing their practices is colonial through and through. Its primary function is the re-design of societies through institutional as well as pedagogic programmes the ultimate purpose of which is to transform spaces and relations of political conflict into governable spaces and relations. Peacebuilding is hence late-modernity's articulation of the 'civilising mission', and its efficacies might be judged against what I refer to as the postcolonial rationality, informed by the recognition of societies in conflict as participants (and agents) in the political sphere that is the international.

Prof. Dr. Keith Krause
Centre on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding (CCDP), The Graduate Institute Geneva

Peacebuilding, the Security Sector and the Rule of Law

Analyses of "liberal peacebuilding" generally examine the normative content of such practices as democracy promotion, security sector reform or transitional justice and rule of law, and focus on the top-down technocratic orientation of peacebuilding practices. They have highlighted the shortcomings of liberal peacebuilding, the ambiguities surrounding such concepts as "local ownership," and the complex nature of the "peacebuilder's contract. My presentation turns around the liberal peacebuilding paradigm, and examines the way in which local actors draw upon the financial, organizational, programmatic and rhetorical resources of the international peacebuilding community to advance state-building or rent-seeking agendas. These agendas sometimes coincide with those of the international peacebuilding community, but more often thwart its aims, bending and fusing specific programmes to the purposes of local power-holding actors. From this viewpoint, peacebuilding is often highly successful in achieving their aims. My empirical field focuses on post-conflict security institutions, broadly understood to include dis-

armament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programmes, longer-term projects for security sector reform (SSR), and efforts to reform the security and justice sector and promote rule of law (RoL). Each of these has been subjected to considerable investment by the international donor community, and has a dense network of practices and programmes surrounding it. I will concentrate on selected examples to highlight the main research (and conceptual) challenges.

Prof. Dr. Andreas Mehler

Institute for African Affairs, German Institute for Global and Area Studies, Hamburg

‘Local’ vs. ‘Imported’ Institutions in Peacebuilding Practices

Peace-building strategies display a growing trend toward isomorphism, with a now standard recipe prescribing national unity governments or some elements of territorial power-sharing taking the form of decentralization, federalism, or autonomy. Yet this approach is facing increasing challenges, as it fails to account for the constellation of local actors and conditions that can enable or constrain implementation. On the other hand, there is no reason to be naïve about benevolence, interests and capacities of local actors in peace-processes. Quickly siding with (maybe only apparently) locally adapted institutions or particular institutional legacies may replicate the setting that was conducive to violent conflict in the first place.

The idea of “importing institutions” also means that there are not only exporters eager to sell a certain model, but importers of such institutions who are not just passively taking on board what is tenaciously advertised.

This paper highlights potential sources of resistance to the homogenous global discourse contained in peace agreements as well as consequences of forms of adaptation that are fairly remote from initial intentions, contributing to the discussion on hybrid post-conflict orders. It illustrates the argument through a qualitative comparative approach of studying political power-sharing arrangements, emphasizing elements of resistance and adaption in response to the imposition of such prescriptions contained in peace agreements, proposing explanations for variance in experiences. The argument will be supported by examples taken from Africa, Middle East and Asia.

Dr. Thania Paffenholz

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Peacebuilding goes local or the 'local' goes Peacebuilding?

This input gives an overview of the local turn in peacebuilding as well as a critical assessment of the consequences for research and practice. The analysis provided will allow for reflections on future directions in peacebuilding research and its funding. Already in the early 1990s peacebuilding researchers like John Paul Lederach

have proclaimed and initiated a shift in focus from an international to a local understanding of peacebuilding. This shift tremendously influenced policy and practice of international peacebuilding, especially in support of local peacebuilding initiatives. However, only twenty years later has peacebuilding research paid more attention to this local turn as part of a critical assessment of the liberal interventionist approach to peacebuilding.

The debate has since developed from a romanticisation of the 'good local' in contrast to the 'bad international' to euphoric as well as critical analysis of hybrid governance structures.

Nevertheless, the categories 'local' and 'international' still suffer from enormous generalizations, lack contextualization and a critical analysis of local elites and their power relations that permeate both, the local and the international. In addition, the analysis of peace agreements and local governance systems also lack a critical assessment of the impact with regards to quality and sustainability. The argument made here is that peacebuilding research needs to start engaging more systematically with other stands of research such as transitology, political anthropology and area studies. This would allow for a better understanding of peacebuilding practices as a means to producing evidence and theory and avoiding becoming a self-referential system. Research funders therefore need to shift focus from funding small PhD or post-doc projects to large systematic multi-disciplinary and multi-year projects that tackle a relevant broader questions that will help both, international policy but more so local peacebuilding.

Prof. Dr. Michael Pugh

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Corporate Peace

The argument presented is that among studies of the political economy of peacebuilding insufficient attention has been paid to the place and role of corporate sectors. In so far as big business dynamics are involved – through banking, foreign direct investment, privatised public assets, general retailing and trade – they represents a foundation of economic and social reconfiguration to set alongside the activities of international and state donors and humanitarian actors. Thus, where state instruments functions badly or not at all corporate servicing of a population is regarded as justifiable, whether or not informed by an ideology of neoliberalism. The paper surveys the orientation of state practices in the context of crony capitalism, the impacts on social relations and the challenge to the politics of peacebuilding, including, crucially, democratisation and the liberal contract. Where corporate tendencies stimulate a hegemonic arrangement of the economy what is the significance and how is it transmitted into everyday concerns? The conceptualisation follows a critical materialist approach. It rejects a crude formulation of economic structures as determinants of political action and social relations; it is not possible to be precise about structures let alone about mass consciousness concerning them. But tendencies local and international are considered.

Prof. Dr. Oliver Richmond

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From Liberal to Post-Liberal Peace

After the end of the Cold War, the liberal peace framework, underpinned by the principles of human rights, democracy, free trade, and an active civil society, was to be embedded in the international and states-system, and its architectures, with the goal of achieving both order and emancipation. It was to be supported by law, the use of force, and various bureaucratic programming processes. It was led by what came to resemble international trusteeship, from Kosovo to Timor Leste. During this period, the notion of the peace process, as an elite led bargaining system, leading to mutual concession, compromise, and eventually a peace settlement and reconciliation embodied in a treaty and a new constitutional framework, was displaced by the idea that international programming and trusteeship, resting on liberal peace norms were sufficient. The return of the securitised state in the 2000s, as well as the steady infusion of peacebuilding and development with neoliberal approaches, has led to the rise of the 'neoliberal peace', based upon statebuilding, regional security architectures, and globalisation. This is seen by many of its recipients- from Afghanistan to Cambodia- as both an opportunity for the consolidation of elite power or as a step back from emancipatory goals or reconciliation, and so has rapidly come under pressure. Both the liberal and neoliberal peace have lost legitimacy for a range of reasons, ranging from ideological opposition, a lack of effectiveness, efficiency, or a failure to recognise cultural dynamics, material needs, and difference. A post-liberal peace might represent an attempt to expand the range of voices represented in any peace process in order to respond to this 'legitimacy gap', a debate about what contribution progressive politics might make to deal with conflict issues at state and international levels, and how they might be better connected to localised peace processes in specific, scalar, networked contexts. This would require a debate about how the 'interventionary' governance approach of the international community might be reframed in order to improve its local, state, and international legitimacy.

Dr. Jonas Wolff

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Democratization, Legitimacy and Peace: Lessons for Peacebuilding from the Practice of Democracy Promotion

International peacebuilding is usually practiced and discussed as liberal peacebuilding. Indeed, the promotion of liberal democracy and related norms and institutions constitutes a core element of mainstream peacebuilding strategies as practiced since 1990. Yet, international activities that aim at promoting democracy in the Global South go beyond the specific field of peacebuilding. Since 1990, they have become also standard elements in the foreign and development policies of established (North-Western) democracies and international organizations. This

presentation will draw on experiences with this kind of “normal” international democracy promotion in order to draw some lessons for liberal peacebuilding. More specifically, it will discuss recent scholarship that analyzes the (problematic) normative premises and conceptual underpinnings of democracy promotion – a scholarship that is of direct relevance for the current debate about the limitations and problems of liberal peacebuilding.