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The Era of Private Peacemakers

A New Dialogic Approach to Mediation

Marko Lehti

Rethinking Peace and Conflict Studies

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Marko Lehti
Tampere Peace Research Institute
University of Tampere
Tampere, Finland

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In loving memory of a tomcat called Wilma

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Littoinen
April (vapunaatto) 2018

Contents

Abbreviation

ACCORD	The African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes
AE	Analytic Eclecticism
AU	African Union
CAR	Central African Republic
CARIM	Culture and Religion in Mediation program
CMI	Crisis Management Initiative
CSI	Common Space Initiative
CSS	Center for Security Studies
EBO	Euro-Burma Office
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EIP	European Institute of Peace
EU	European Union
FARC	Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia
FBA	Folke Bernadotte Academy
FBO	Faith Based Organizations
FCA	Finn Church Aid
FDFA	Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs
FELM	Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission
FRELIMO	The Mozambique Liberation Front (Frente de Libertação de Moçambique)
GAM	Free Aceh Movement
HD	Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue
ICG	International Crisis Group
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IGAD	Inter-Governmental Authority on Development
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria

ISS	Institute for Security Studies
LIAS	Libya Institute for Advanced Studies
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
MENA	Middle East and North Africa region
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSU	Mediation Support Unit
MSN	Mediation Support Network
ND	National Dialogue
Network	Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NOREF	Norwegian Centre for Conflict Resolution
OIC	Organization of Islamic Cooperation
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organization
RENAMO	The Mozambican National Resístanse (Resistência Nacional Moçambicana)
RfP	Religions for Peace
SFCG	Search for Common Ground
SI	Syria Initiative
SPLM	Sudan People's Liberation Movement
TOs	Transnational Organizations
UCDP	Uppsala Conflict Data Program
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNPOS	United Nations Political Office for Somalia
USIP	United States Institute of Peace
WAB	Women's Advisory Board
WWG	Women's Working Group

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

With wars having changed from inter-state to intra-state, and with an increasing number of refugees brought about by the many ongoing wars, there is an urgent need to work towards a better understanding of conflicts and, in particular, their possible transformation. During the past two decades, the majority of conflicts have ended in a negotiated agreement, in contrast to the Cold War years when most wars ended by military victory. However, at present an increasing number of violent conflicts escape the efforts of the international community to find a peace agreement. Even where agreement has been negotiated, peace is often fragile, and the negotiated agreement does not necessarily guarantee sustainable peace, since the threat of re-escalation of violence is often omnipresent.

During past two decades, peace mediation has widely been regarded as the most essential, effective and also cheapest tool for preventing, managing and resolving armed conflicts. In 1997, Jacob Bercovitch regarded it to be "the closest thing we have to an effective technique for dealing with conflicts in the twenty-first century" and he added a couple of years later that mediation offers "a good practical method of managing conflicts and helping to establish some sort of regional or international order."[1] In comparison to recently highly criticized (liberal) peace-building, as well as to development and humanitarian aid sectors,

[1] Bercovitch (1997, p. 131; 2002, p. 4).

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peace mediation has enjoyed and preserved a particularly good reputation during the past two decades.

The term 'mediation' was launched into the sphere of peace diplomacy in 1948 when the United Nations appointed Swedish Folke Bernadotte as the 'United Nations Mediator in Palestine' and, since then, peace mediation has belonged to the toolbox of international peace diplomacy. In the mid-1990s, the world witnessed a peace mediation boom, as the number of mediation cases skyrocketed in comparison to the last decades of the Cold War. As a consequence of this new mediation-friendly environment, since the mid-1990s conflicts have increasingly ended in a negotiated agreement.[2] Among all civil wars, which are declining in their numbers (i.e., there has been a drop of 40% from 1991 to 2003), an impact of the growing peace mediation activity has been observed.[3] Despite drastic quantitative change, there was then no equivalent qualitative change, even in the face of attempts to adjust mediation practices and guidelines in order to resolve a new kind of asymmetric conflict as pure inter-state conflicts became rare. Actual approaches to peace mediation have remained rather state-centric and are premised on rationalistic, interest-based and materially oriented approaches.

The development during the past decade holds a paradox since the amount of peace mediation actors have been steadily increasing among several new official actors, such as small states and international organizations, but although an increasing amount of nongovernmental actors have adopted peace mediation into their agenda, there has been less agreement achieved in track one peace negotiations. For example, in 2015, altogether 35 armed conflicts were reported: 13 in Africa, 12 in Asia, 6 in the Middle East, 3 in Europe and 1 in the Americas. Only four peace negotiations were concluded by signing a peace agreement: those in Central African Republic, Sudan (Darfur), Mali, and South Sudan, where violence broke out again in 2016.[4] In the following year, negotiations in Colombia were successfully concluded with peace agreement, but Columbia has remained as one of few success stories of track one mediation during the past few years. Furthermore, while the number of armed conflicts has been on the decline since the end of the Cold War

[2] Eriksson and Kostić (2013b, p. 162).

[3] Coleman (2012, p. 65).

[4] *Alert 2016! Report on conflicts, human rights and peacebuilding.*

according to the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP), 2014 saw the highest death toll of the post-Cold War period.[5]

This change has not yet received thorough scientific explanation but particular reasons can be found from the change in the nature of violent conflicts. In the era of new world disorder, the internationalization of armed conflicts is on the rise, and intrastate conflicts are more often entangled in great power rivalry and power–political interests, which further hinders the resolution of conflicts. Therefore in recent years, the space of international peace mediation has become more limited, as the power–political rationale has become dominant. It seems that liberal internationalism has been contested from several angles, and states are less willing to invest in soft forms of peace diplomacy. Syria is a good example of an intrastate conflict that has become entangled in great power struggles with the USA, Turkey, Russia, Iran and Saudi-Arabia in a complex way, with alliances and power interests in a state of dynamic change. Moreover, even if struggle over identities were characteristic to intrastate wars in the 1990s and the 2000s, for example, Swedish diplomat Jan Eliasson agues that the main reason that conflicts resist a peaceful solution is that the many of the current conflicts are entangled more deeply with religious identities compared with earlier conflicts.[6] As, for example, Syrian conflict shows, it may also be that various forms of identification are entangled with each other in a complex manner. In addition, the influencing, destabilizing and strengthening of identities have increasingly become part of the struggle and identities appear simultaneously to be very localized as well as universal, fragmented and resilient. It is evident that modern peace mediation practice has remained rather unable to tackle identity-related issues.

"Is mediation becoming ineffective" in an increasingly complex conflict landscape and "is mediation still the most effective tool with which to solve the pressing conflicts of our time" were serious questions asked among peace mediation practitioners at the Oslo Forum (2016). The recent poor track record of mediation was recognized and also partly challenged by highlighting the fact that even there "where mediation fails to settle a conflict, mediators can still secure important, lifesaving wins." Still, a broad consensus prevailed that "conflicts have become

[5] Pettersson and Wallensteen (2015).

[6] Jan Eliasson's lecture 22 September 2017: Human Rights in a Time of Global Insecurity, Uppsala University.

increasingly complex, with proliferation of actors, motives and interests at multiple levels: local, regional and international." Simultaneously, mediation practice has preserved its focus primarily on "conflict as a struggle between armed groups"; even in current messy wars "armed groups generally comprise marginalized actors who could never achieve their ambitions in a peaceful context" and who often benefit economically from fighting. Indeed, it was crudely noted that focusing on armed groups mediation "does little to address the problems of the suffering population" but since mediation still represents the best option for third party intervention, a new, more inclusive and holistic approach to mediation is called for.[7]

Executive director of the secretariat and Convener of the Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers, Antti Pentikäinen, highlights also how peace mediation practice has resist change while simultaneously the nature of conflicts have changed:

> Peace mediation and national dialogue efforts have entered a new and complex era. The situation is particularly challenging in fragile states, where aid and development tools are not enabling rapid enough progress in legitimate governance for newly developed and weak institutions. The challenge from radical groups is particularly strong in fragile states, which reflects the broader challenges in peace mediation and national dialogue. In this era, *the mediation and dialogue tools that were created for traditional inter- and intra-state conflicts have become ineffective.*[8]

Thus, according to many observers and peace practitioners, mediation practices have remained too much in the past. The so-far failed efforts to achieve comprehensive peace agreements in Syria and Ukraine reflect the current challenges well. In the latter case, a ceasefire agreement (Minsk 2) has been agreed upon, but it has not ended violence in Eastern Ukraine or brought a promise of sustainable peace. In the case of Syria, the Geneva- or Astana-based official negotiations have not gone anywhere and have, most of the time, been interrupted. In addition to the challenge of radicalization in fragile states pointed out by Pentikäinen, both of the above-mentioned cases include the return of an element of

[7] Adapting to a new conflict landscape, Oslo Forum (2016).

[8] Pentikäinen (2015, p. 67).

proxy war, which sets further challenges for peacemakers—both official and private.

As traditional peace mediation has turned out to be ineffective and powerless to bring about sustainable peace, there is a need for new practices and innovative thinking. Executive Director of the European Institute of Peace (EIP) Martin Griffiths notes that "we need to make mediation, diplomacy and conflict prevention fit for the 21st century."[9] Wars are more complex than ever before, and classical state-centric forms of peace mediation have proven to be inefficient in resolving current complex conflicts. Since the old definition of mediation does not allow for a broader and more flexible view of peace mediation, there is obvious call for new definition. Indeed, this has been in construction through change of practice.

According to Emery Brusset, Cedric de Coning and Bryn Hughes, the problem with the prevailing practices of peace mediation and peacebuilding in general is that the international community's approach to conflicts has been dominated by the myth of rational management of a peace process and the possibility of linear thinking in influences of action. According to the authors, conflicts are not complicated systems like automobiles for which "linear causal logic is well suited," but should be regarded as "highly dynamic and *complex* social systems" in which linear causality is inadequate.[10] Thus, conflicts escape options for comprehensive resolution; instead, what is needed is an understanding that "the role of mediators in the peace process is to plant the seeds for sustainable peace" but not to define what peace should look like in each particular case.[11] Therefore, as de Coning writes, there is a need to envision a new kind of adaptive peacebuilding or, if applied to the frame of this study, adaptive mediation as well as a need to rethink what this would require from the third party.[12]

Beyond the rather traditional setting of peace mediation and peacebuilding dominated by states and the United Nations (UN), the signs of a revolutionary change in practices of peace are taking shape among private peacemaking actors. The past two decades have witnessed the

[9] Martin Griffiths, Foreword to *Alert 2016!*, p. 9.

[10] Brusset et al. (2016, p. 2).

[11] Griffiths, *Alert 2016!*, p. 10.

[12] de Coning (2018).

emergence of a growing field of informal peace diplomacy executed by nongovernmental organizations. These private peacemakers, however, are often entangled with official actors, since their funding is mostly dependent on states and international organizations. They are often regarded as supporting or assisting actors to the official peace process but, the same time, their involvement in peace processes are widely agreed to be indispensable. The role of private peacemakers, however, is changing, and it seems that they have become the advocates and innovators of the paradigmatic shift in peace mediation that has taken place.

Arguably, we are currently witnessing the largest change in peace mediation practice and approach since the establishment of modern peace mediation practice in the post-Second World War years. What is seemingly happening in the field, initiated by private actors, is the development of new kind of adaptive approach to mediation that is not replacing classical mediation but merely offering a complementary approach, locating peace mediation in the interface of mediation and peacebuilding as well as in reconciliation. This turn has mostly taken place as a bottom-up revolution of the peace mediation field. This move, which has been called in this study a *dialogic turn*, contests the methods in and, in particular, the approaches to classical mediation, and sets new challenges and questions. With dialogic turn, the primacy of mediation as an apt concept is often replaced by emphasizing dialogue since this is seen as better enabling a transformative approach and allowing for greater inclusivity of the peace process. However, from a practical perspective, the distinction between mediation and dialogue is blurred. Indeed, there are different types of dialogues available and the type of dialogue may refer to actual process or to a form of interaction between conflict parties and a third party. At the same time, a more traditional state-centric approach prevails in state-level of diplomacy that will obviously will have an important role in the future since an increasing number of local conflicts are entangled in great power rivalry. Therefore, the question arises of how a new dialogic approach and adaptive mediation can accommodate the complex patterns of peace diplomacy with numerous actors and processes. How would this new dialogic approach then support peaceful change and transformation towards sustainable peace? What are the major obstacles and challenges that the new approach has met? The interesting and often significant roles and agendas of private peacemakers, and the new types of practices of peace(making) they have

initiated, have so far remained fairly unexplored in academic studies on peace mediation and peacebuilding.

Peace mediation as well as peacebuilding, in general, are the most fundamental practices of peace(making) or peaceful intervention of a third party. Peacemaking or peace diplomacy have primarily been based on practical knowledge of how to do it and what the appropriate ways of acting are. The focus is on the tactical issues. However, what is seen to be needed appears as self-evident and commonsensical and there is no need or possibility to continuously scrutinize the basis of normative or of ontological practice. This kind of practical knowledge is tacit, inarticulate and automatic but also reasonable as well as contextual and based on established conventions, rules, normative codes and principles. It is learned experimentally through practice and remains bound up in practice. However, practices are contingent by nature but their transformation may take place gradually by learning through practice, but they may be openly contested by making visible their normative and ontological basis. There are moments for conscious, verbalizable and intentional interference with the aim of contesting existing practices and the representational knowledge on which they are based. Regarding practices of peace(making), representational knowledge concerns fundamental questions relating to the nature of peace and conflict, and their mutual relationship. If we examine the current private peacemaking field and dialogic turn, both processes are evident. On the one hand, experiences of the practical challenges of complex conflicts have contributed to the transformation of practices, but, on the other hand, there are more profound debates on the nature of conflict and their transformation that are entangled with analytical debate, which contribute to conscious efforts pertaining to the drastic change of established practices.[13]

This study has adopted a pragmatic approach to the peace mediation paradox as well as to private peacemaking in that it emphasizes the primacy of practices and "orientation towards experience as the basic stuff out of which knowledge and action—and ultimately human society as a whole—are produced."[14] If the theory-centred mainstream "counts as fruitful knowledge [and] is in practice the product of persuading peers rather than self-evident objectivity," this kind of approach "leaves to the

[13] About study of practices of diplomacy Pouliot (2010, pp. 11–91).

[14] Jackson (2009), Hellman (2009).

side individual (authentic) experience and the pragmatist test of reality." The pragmatic approach does not then aim "to correct the ways that actors make sense of their situations" but instead focuses on experiences as authentic expressions of coping with the challenges of real world at hand and the (re)adjustment of beliefs into practices of action. Scholarly endeavor is then to settle into dialogic interaction with this experience-based knowledge of the real world.[15] The pragmatist research strategy is based on *abduction* that "makes questioning about reasoning possible from [a] practical point of view." Instead of predefining abstract theoretical frames for testing (deduction) or making conclusions on the basis of pure facts (induction), the abduction is the phenomenon-centric approach based on the hermeneutic circle in which collected empirical observations complement but also revisit the original conceptualization of a particular phenomenon, which in this particular case is peace mediation.[16] In this pragmatic approach, "theories can be combined as long they are compatible at some unspecified fundamental level and that data will help to identify the right combination of theories"; the result is a theoretical synthesis but not uniform theory that recognize universally applicable causal relationships. Within analytic eclecticism (AE) "the constituent elements of different research traditions are translated into mutually compatible vocabularies and then recombined in novel ways". AE "points to a problem-driven approach that puts the burden of the investigator to demonstrate how and why the choices and actions of agents reflect, reproduce, and transform emergent patterns of social norms and structures." AE is an inclusive method and it opens up "new spaces where more creative experimentation and open-ended deliberation can take place." The benefit of AE is that it copes with and recognizes the messiness of the "real world" in all its complexity.[17]

If we accept the primacy of practice as well as experience as a source of all knowledge, the question of how peace intervention practice could better support transformation towards sustainable peace cannot have a purely theoretical answer since it would lack experience-based knowledge. Critical research has omitted or not regarded the evolution of third party practices as a relevant study area, but combining the experiences

[15] Kornprobst (2009), Rytövuori-Apunen (2009).

[16] Freidrichs (2009), Rytövuori-Apunen (2009).

[17] Sil (2009).

of private peacemakers (practical knowledge) with the theoretical criticism of liberal peacemaking (analytic knowledge) offers more profound and justified conclusions as well as suggestions for what the practices of peacemaking could look like if diverse criticism towards the prevailing rational management approach were to be taken seriously. Applied to the peace mediation paradox, this pragmatic constellation opens up an inquiry regarding how practitioners (private actors) are experiencing the mediation paradox. How are they aiming to produce the revisited practice of peace mediation in order to attach that experience? Instead of testing theory in the objective laboratory (positivist approach) from the pragmatist perspective, new knowledge is gained by combining theory with experience. The result of this kind of approach is diverse and allows for a multi-dimensional interpretation of phenomena that may have practical significance but that resign from lessons to be learn approach.

The main task of the following chapters is to map out what a revisited version of peace mediation would look like. What can be regarded as (theoretically) justified requests for the revision of peace mediation practice? How has practitioners attached to these challenges they need to cope with in their everyday work? How have their experiences required revision and efforts introduce revisited approaches answers to practical challenge but meet core arguments of theoretical debate? In part I of this study, prevailing peace mediation dogma is critically examined and the peace mediation debate is reviewed along with a critical debate on liberal peace (e.g. critical peace building) as well as alternative approaches to comprehending peace and conflict (e.g., transformation theories, complexity theories). Then, in part II the experiences and evolution of peace mediation practice is examined through the role of nongovernmental organizations. How do private actors experience peace mediation paradox and how have they attached to it? The fundamental core question of this study is does and, in particular, how does their new approach support the transformation from violent conflict to sustainable peace in a way that is significantly different than the methods offered by conventional peace mediation? But this is not necessarily equivalent to the question regarding how this private peacemaking supports the track one process; instead, interest is focused on how previously legitimized practices are contested. Furthermore, the focus is on agency, participation and legitimization: how private peacemakers construct and legitimize their identity as peace mediator and how they build up partnerships and understand objectives, expectations and participation to peace process. Instead of looking at the

empirical evidence of the effectiveness of new approaches to solving conflicts—what is not possible to achieve and what is indeed contradictory to selected post-management approaches—this study focuses on the evolution of practitioners' conceptualizations and experiences and how these have contributed to the revision of peace mediation practices. Then, by combining theoretical debate and practical experience, this study sketches out what a revisited version of peace mediation look would like and how it is related to the recent critical research.

This study is based on empirical material about the strategies, approaches and operations of three Finnish NGO-based private organizations (also referred to as *private peacemakers*): Crisis Management Initiative (CMI), the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission (Felm) and Finn Church Aid (FCA), which also serves as the secretariat of the Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers (Network). It combines several in-depth interviews, reports, guidelines and strategies. Although the work of these three Finnish-based organizations may largely be invisible to the general public, all of these actors have been active in the international peacemaking field and have been involved in various conflicts around the world in, for example, Ukraine, South Sudan, and Iraq (CMI); Syria and Myanmar (Felm); and Libya, Somalia and the Central African Republic (CAR) (FCA and the Network). Their approaches are not uniform, but nevertheless include several similar kinds of new approaches to peace mediation practice, based on both the new practical requirements in the field as well as the new kind of philosophy of conflict transformation. It is obvious that their peace mediation is less about negotiations and individual mediators facilitating roundtable talks with two parties, and more about creating opportunities for locals to take the lead in peace processes.

The experiences of Finnish private actors and the lessons they have learned from the various peace processes they have participated in are used as an entry point to extending focus beyond these particular organizations to the role of NGO-based peacemakers in general, and the overall changes in peace mediation approaches. For a broader perspective, additional material (mainly practitioners' guidelines and debates, reports, additional interviews etc.) has been collected. All in all, this study focuses on both the official and unofficial, formal and informal settings in which peace diplomacy is executed, as well as the changing agency and tools in the field. Surprisingly, empirical research on the rise of private peacemaking in the 2000s and 2010s is so far almost completely lacking.

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PART I

Peace Mediation Beyond Mediation

CHAPTER 2

Resilient (Peace) Mediation Practice

"The use of mediation as a tool to manage conflicts is much older [than the] modern nation-state system itself"[1] but peace or conflict mediation developed as a specific and regulated practical tool of international diplomacy just in the post-Second World War era, even if the early roots of international peace diplomacy can be dated back to the era of the League of Nations. Peace mediation requires "a form of intervention by a third party in a conflict or some other kind of a matter of dispute" and intervention as well as the third party is presupposed to be "acceptable, impartial, and neutral."[2] Furthermore, it supposed that "mediators enter a conflict to help those involved achieve a better outcome than they would otherwise."[3] Peace mediation (or conflict or international mediation as it is also called) is defined by Wallensteen and Svensson briefly as a *process* that begins with the prospective mediator being invited to work for a peaceful (re)solution of an armed conflict.[4] Bercovitch has a somewhat longer but also more inclusive and flexible definition according to which peace mediation is "a process of conflict management, related to but distinct from the parties' own negotiations, where those in conflict seek the assistance of, or accept an offer of help from, an outsider

[1] Greig and Diehl (2012, p. 1).

[2] Svensson (2012, p. 178).

[3] Bercovitch (2002, pp. 6–7).

[4] Wallensteen and Svensson (2016, p. 12).

M. Lehti, *The Era of Private Peacemakers*,
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(whether an individual, an organization, a group, or a state) to change their perceptions or behavior, and do so without resorting to physical force or invoking the authority of law."[5] *The UN Guidance for Effective Mediation* offers a bit more practical orientated definition according which "mediation is a process whereby a third party assists two or more parties, with their consent, to prevent, manage or resolve a conflict by helping them to develop mutually acceptable agreements.[6] In comparison to the definitions of Bercovitch or Wallensteen and Svensson, this approach already limits mediation to activity that seeks to develop *agreements* and not just a *peaceful solution* as scholars emphasize.

Evolution of peace mediation practice can examined by focusing on four essential elements of the mediation situation: (a) parties in conflicts, (b) a mediator, (c) a process of mediation, and (d) the context within which mediation takes place.[7] Mediators in the classical mediation setting are often persons "who can transcend the conflict divides, such as individuals with religious roles, retired statesmen or even businessmen"—people like Finland's former President Martti Ahtisaari or Swedish diplomat Jan Eliasson.[8] Traditionally, individuals practicing mediation are known as official representatives of their government or the United Nations who aim to assist formal interaction between high-level representatives of the parties in conflict.[9] Mediators are presumed to be impartial in relation to the conflict parties and to the incompatibility, but there has also been debate in the peace mediation literature about the role and legitimacy of biased mediators and mediators with profound self-interest.[10] One branch of mediation literature has in particular focussed on mediators' personal styles as well as studying practical styles of mediation. Wallensteen and Svensson's studies on Swedish diplomat Eliasson, in particular, and on Nordic peace mediators from Bernadotte to Ahtisaari in general are the most recent contributions to this empirical tradition to focus on mediators' personal abilities.[11] However, the focus on chief mediators increasingly overshadows other third party actors

[5] Bercovitch (1997, p. 130).

[6] The UN Guidance for Effective Mediation.

[7] Bercovitch (2002, p. 8).

[8] Wallensteen (2007, p. 266).

[9] Bercovitch (2002, p. 10).

[10] Wallensteen and Möller (2008, pp. 58–59), Svensson (2014).

[11] Wallensteen and Svensson (2010), Fixdahl (2012b).

engaging in the peace mediation process but who cannot be regarded as mediators in a strict sense. The aim of this study is to target the empirical gaze onto these predominantly non-state actors in peace mediation.

"Peacemaking is not a uniform activity; unvarying and consistent over time. Rather, the nature of a conflict—the parties to it, what they fight about, and the way the war is being fought—will define the constraints within which a peacemaker operates, and tasks and challenges he or she faces," notes Mona Fixdal.[12] Therefore, the evolution of peace mediation practice needs to be examined by focusing on particular mediation situations in particular contexts with the aim of recognizing certain turning points and sketching out the wider trajectory of mediation practice. The criteria of participation and mediation practices have mainly transformed in response to drastic changes in the character of violent conflicts. Simultaneously, (official) peace diplomacy has often been held back from revision despite obvious challenges. From this perspective, how to attach to asymmetric wars has remained a major challenge for state-centric peace diplomacy for decades. In addition, even if asymmetric wars have transformed recently to become more complex, fragmented and, in many cases, transnational—evidenced, for example, by the Syrian conflict—official peace diplomacy has reacted sluggishly.

Despite East–West rivalry, in the Cold War era, the international community was reasonably successful in preventing conflicts between the European states but simultaneously there were serious intrastate conflicts in Southeast Asia, the Middle East (including Cyprus), Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa in which most of them, but not all, were intertwined with the ideological bipolarity of global order. A great majority of violent conflicts ended in the military victory of one party, but that does not mean that there were no efforts to mediate conflicts, and there were also a few negotiated solutions. The level of mediation efforts grew steadily from the 1940s and in the 1960s there were already approximately 20 mediation efforts per year; in the 1970s there were 30. During the first decades after the Second World War, the UN was the major provider of mediation, but major powers (USA, United Kingdom, France, Soviet Union and China) held also important roles.[13] International peace mediation situations were then quite exclusively limited to the sphere of state diplomacy and it was primarily great powers and international

[12] Fixdal (2012c, p. 2).

[13] Greig and Diehl (2012, pp. 62–70).

organizations, predominantly the United Nations, that took the role of the mediator or the mandating power. The UN could mandate individual mediators such as Ralph Bunche, Folke Bernadotte, Olof Palme and Jan Eliasson; in some cases, UN Secretary-Generals acted as mediators themselves (e.g., Dag Hammarskjöld).[14] The Camp David negotiations (1978) between Israel and Egypt, mediated by then-President of the USA Jimmy Carter and his team, are an excellent example of mediation executed by a great power during the Cold War period. Only leaders of states—those of Egypt and Israel—were allowed to participate and contribute to negotiations in isolated settings, even though it was the fate of the Palestinian people that was in the balance. The mediator, President Carter, used US power to persuade parties to achieve a conclusion that was favorable for the USA.[15]

The post-Cold War decades, the period from the mid-1990s to the early 2010s, can be regarded as a true golden age of peace mediation when the great majority of wars ended through negotiation supported in one way or another by the international community. The amount of mediation efforts sky-rocketed in the 1990s to roughly 170 cases per year in comparison with 30 efforts in the 1970s and 1980s.[16] A remarkable normative shift took place that led to third party intervention to mediate a negotiated solution for violent conflicts becoming widely comprehended as a responsibility of the international community. As a consequence of this mediation-friendly international norm between 1990 and 2007, altogether 646 documents were signed that can be classified as peace agreements. During in the 1990s, in 42 violent conflicts peace was achieved through negotiation in contrast to 23 cases ended by military victory and "from 1988 to 2003, more wars ended through negotiations than in the previous two centuries."[17]

The wars during the post-Cold War era were typically protracted intrastate conflicts characterized by asymmetric power relations, weak state authority and legitimacy, a collapse of state monopoly on violence, various competing private actors, and the targeting of civilians.[18] Since this time, the great majority of war-kind conflicts no longer

[14] Svensson and Wallensteen (2010), Wallensteen and Svensson (2016).

[15] Quandt (2016).

[16] Greig and Diehl (2012, p. 63).

[17] Fixdal (2012a, p. 7), Coleman (2012, p. 65).

[18] Aggestam and Björkdahl (2009, pp. 15–31), Kaldor (2006).

occur between states but rather have taken place within states and thus they can be defined as civil wars since most of the violent activity has been limited within the territory of a collapsing or weakening state. Nonetheless, states did just fade away but as they lost "the monopoly on the legitimate use of physical force in a given territory," they lost their Westphalian agency and sole legitimacy to make agreements.[19] Already during the Cold War years, the proportion of conflicts within states—not between them—increased steadily, but the international community was then incapable of systematically coping with these conflicts since "the principles and practices of international law and diplomacy with their emphasis on sovereignty and non-intervention" prevented the international community from justify a peace intervention in most of these conflicts. Thus, even if the international community were often engaged in looking for resolutions, their participation in, for example, the Nigerian Civil War (1967–1970), was strikingly limited. Despite organizing larger peace conferences and efforts for mediation, the rebel site was not allowed to participate in the official mediation process since it would have been understood as recognition of their agency. "Hence the realities of the Cold War restricted opportunities for peace diplomacy" entangled with intrastate conflicts.[20]

In the current era of asymmetric warfare, the classical Westphalian dichotomy and approach between internal–external, but also that of local–global, has appeared in blurred form.[21] In asymmetrical wars, warring parties are no longer only states but also involve parties other than established governments such as different rebel, paramilitary and terrorist groups. In addition, the distinction between a soldier and a civilian has blurred and intertwined with targets and motivation of violence. In the intrastate wars, the definition of the main parties involved in violent conflicts has become a highly complicated exercise in comparison with the simplicity of interstate wars since parties lack an official legitimate position. For example, in the Syrian war, the Carter Centre has recognized hundreds of armed groups with loose, fluid and rapidly changing relations with one other.[22] The confusion regarding who the parties of the

[19] Winter (2012). See also Aggestam and Björkdahl (2009, pp. 17–18).

[20] Helgesen (2007, pp. 6–7).

[21] Winter (2012).

[22] Challenges to Mediation Support in Hot Wars. MSN report no. 7.

war are and thus who should be allowed to participate in peace negotiations are characteristic to new wars. Indeed, in mediation guidelines, the challenge has remained partly untouched since all mediation processes are still presumed to involve primary conflict parties and primary parties of a conflict are the ones who are in disagreement, even if who these main parties are has become a highly contested and contingent question since there now fixed positions in current wars.

This constellation has set a profound challenge for Westphalian peace diplomacy since states want to preserve their monopoly for diplomacy but simultaneously the nature of asymmetric wars calls for more flexible approaches. The revision of the Westphalian norms and opening up participation in peace diplomacy to non-state actors took place step by step through individual cases, among which the Israel–Palestinian negotiation in 1993, the so-called Oslo process, was a ground-breaking event in terms of opening peace mediation towards asymmetrical conflicts and allowing rebel or even organizations like Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)—then labelled as a terrorist organization—to join in with the official peace mediation process. The Oslo process started in a very informal way and outside of the spotlight of international diplomacy. Two Israeli academics, the three Palestinian representatives of the PLO, and a Norwegian couple came together under the auspices of a research institute in January 1993. Negotiations in the early stage were "entirely informal and exploratory" and Norway's role was "modest and largely unplanned, developing as it went along." Norwegians did not regard themselves as mediators but as facilitators. Following Waage, the host "never interfered in the negotiations or even were present when they going on." However, the Norwegians established clear "'ground rules' that mandated total secrecy and the retractability of all positions put forward in the talks and prohibited 'dwelling on the past grievances.'" As negotiations continued and Israeli participation became official, the status of peace talks was upgraded. At this point, Norway's role also changed and "from May 1993, Norway was no longer a mere facilitator, but also an active mediator. Norway's new foreign minister, Johan Jörgen Holst, wanted to play an active, personal role. He wanted to be the key person, with complete responsibility." The setting of the negotiations was clearly asymmetrical and the host "did everything they could to ensure asymmetrical process. They strove to make all logistical arrangements just perfect" and to empower the weaker site, the Palestinians. But in its mediator's role Norway "did not involve being on equal terms with

each of the involved parties" in the end of the process. The Norwegians also kept the Americans informed on the process throughout the peace discussions, which culminated into the signing of the Oslo Agreement in Washington on 13 September 1993 and a snapshot of Yasser Arafat and Yitzhak Rabin shaking hands in front of President Bill Clinton.[23]

Despite the changing nature of violent conflicts, major powers have remained particularly suspicious when adopting a role of mediator in engaging non-state actors in peace negotiation and they have continued to resolve conflicts primarily among state-centric negotiations even then when there are several non-state warring parties. That was case in the Bosnia in the 1990s but also in the Ukraine in the 2010s. In 1995, the US mediator Richard Holbrooke was negotiating to bring an end to fighting in Bosnia. Negotiations took place in the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio. The participants in peace talks included Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, Croatian President Franjo Tudjman and Bosnia-Herzegovinian President Alija Izetbegovic. Thus, the actual fighting and conflicting parties—several paramilitaries, Bosnian ethnic-based political units and Bosnian people in general—were represented only indirectly and it was desired that negotiations took place at the official state level. Official negotiations were preceded by unofficial persuasion efforts in Zagreb, Sarajevo and Belgrade. The final peace agreement was only focused on preserving the integrity of the Bosnian state even if divided into Republic Srpska and the Muslim-Croat federation, which was further divided into several ethnic-based cantons.[24]

In Minsk, Belarus, in 2015, 20 years later, a ceasefire was negotiated and peace agreement was made for the war in eastern Ukraine. At this time, the host, Belarussian President Alexander Lukashenko, had a very passive role and negotiations took place among Russian President Vladimir Putin, Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko, French President François Hollande and German Chancellor Angela Merkel. There was no obvious mediator but also major conflicting parties such as representatives of Luhansk and Donetsk rebel areas were missing from the table.[25] These two cases indicate well how participation in official peace negotiations at the so-called track one level have remained predominantly

[23] Waage (2004, 2005), Aggestam (1999).

[24] Negotiating the Dayton Peace Accords, http://adst.org/2014/11/the-dayton-peace-accords/#.Wi-ZC2cUnIU.

[25] Challenges to Mediation Support in Hot Wars: MSN report no. 7.

state-centric exercises and non-official parties have not been welcome to participate in official negotiations, particularly if great powers are involved as a mediator. However, the exclusion of non-state primary parties from the mediation setting is often artificial and can have crucial consequences for content, legitimacy and the execution of the achieved agreement.

The situation looks a bit different if examined from the perspective of the small state- or the UN-led peace mediation processes. But, even if they had been more prepared to mediate between non-state and state actors, the plurality of primary parties has been regarded as highly challenging for the success of peace talks. Therefore, mediators have tried to resist plurality of parties, since a simple negotiation setting with a limited number of actors can better be managed, and it is easier achieve quick results in such a situation. In its classical setting, peace negotiation initiated by a mediator was seen to require a limited number of parties to be successful. Within complex asymmetric conflicts, classical mediators have aimed for simplicity by limiting the number of negotiating partners and looking for bilateral settings, thereby in a way consciously denying the challenges of agency often experienced in asymmetric, scattered and fragmented settings.[26]

Following that principle, Lakhdar Brahimi, the United Nations and Arab League Special Envoy to Syria until 14 May 2014, aimed to create a simplified negotiation setting between the opposition and the government in Syria. The Geneva-based negotiations under the leadership of Staffan de Mistura have also predominantly continued the same strategy even if in diversified ways. The diversity, fragmentation and heterogeneity of the rebel side is thus attempted to be explained away, and several other actors like the Kurds have been excluded. Interestingly, the diversity of militias has been noticed in the Russian–Iranian–Turkish-organized Astana peace process with the idea of the de-escalation zones; however, several other actors were simultaneously excluded.[27] Imposing a two-party format on a multi-sided conflict was also the dominating practice in the Darfur peace talks (2005–2006), which also "adopted a simplified government-rebel dichotomy, ignoring the Arab militia" and the mismatch was even greater five year later in the official negotiations

[26] Paffenholz and Ross (2015, pp. 28–29).

[27] UN Mediation in the Syrian Crisis, IPI (2016); Challenges to Mediation Support in Hot Wars: MSN report no. 7.

that led to the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur in 2011, which failed in the end to bring sustainable peace to the volatile region.[28] Examples of successful classical bilateral settings in recent years include those in Aceh (2005), mediated by Martti Ahtisaari, and in Colombia (2016), between the government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) However, even both of these cases omit inclusivity, and ownership of the peace process has become later a challenge in relation to the acceptance and legitimacy of the peace agreement.

The challenges of this kind of simplified mediation strategy was already observed in the Sri Lankan peace negotiations mediated by Norway in 2002–2003 between the Sri Lankan government and the Tamil Tigers (LTTE). The mediator aimed to follow the conventional mediation guidebook by trying to act as impartially as possible to cope with the asymmetry of negotiating partners. Despite managing the signing of a ceasefire, the peace process failed completely, and violence re-escalated in 2004 after the withdrawal of the LTTE. Finally, the civil war came to its end in May 2009 by the military victory of the government, associated with the massacre of thousands of civilians.[29] The 2002 peace mediation was later criticized for excluding "larger segments of Sri Lankan society. Important stakeholders, such as the Muslim minority, non-LTTE Tamili groups, and representatives of civil society, were left out." According to traditional mediation practice, negotiation took place among primary warring parties—that of the Sri Lankan government and the LTTE—and indeed only they could agree on ceasefire, but they were not representing the whole population affected by violent conflict. Thus, there appears to be a problem of representation since there was no legal or democratic procedure upon which this right of representation was based. As Höglund and Svensson note, due to the exclusive nature of peace negotiations, it was possible to achieve a ceasefire in a relatively short time; however, simultaneously, the two-party model "ultimately led to reduced legitimacy" of the peace process. Mandated by two primary parties, Norway lacked the power to open up negotiations to include other stakeholders. Therefore, in a situation where two primary parties "had the veto power over design of the process, with a mediator without authority," the Norwegian mediation goal of local ownership of

[28] Waal (2014).

[29] Höglund and Svensson (2009, pp. 175–191).

process proved to be awkward and deleterious towards the whole peace process.[30]

The mandate and mandating power are other significant elements framing the scope of a third party without whom there is no official peace mediation case. In the majority of cases, the mandate is still a required entry point and an essential frame in legitimizing the position of mediator; it determines the mediator's approach to the peace process. Svensson and Wallensteen note that "no mediator ends up by chance in a conflict" and also mediation has its history. "All mediators operate under a mandate" but who sets the mandate and what the mandate says are pivotal questions to pose in order to examine the whole mediation process. "While the mandating agency can be an asset to the mediator, it may also restrict what the mediator can do, because the mediator must navigate between the primary parties and the mandating agency." Furthermore, the mandating agency "shapes the way the primary parties view the third party." Mandates can be given by parties themselves or by an external actor. In the first case, the mandate is usually given "through an informal process" and formal invitation follows later. In this case, the work of the mediator is often confidential and secret and only when "results are achieved the world knows what has been going on." However, the parties retain a veto and thus the position of the mediator is weaker. Most of the cases have been mandated by the external actor that could be "a major power, an international or regional organization, or some other body or group to which the country in question formally belongs or whose authority it has to respect," but the UN has been widely regarded as most respectable and impartial organization.[31] However, since many current intra-states wars like that in Syria and Ukraine are again entangled with a clash of interests among the great powers, the UN Security Council's ability to make resolutions concerning conflicts has weakened remarkably. Mandating power as well as the donors of mediation and the general or particular groups of friendship of mediation[32] holds a significant normative power since they often take the role of gatekeeper to particular conflicts.

[30] Höglund and Svensson (2009, pp. 183–185), Destradi and Vüllers (2012).

[31] Svensson and Wallensteen (2010, pp. 11–15).

[32] https://peacemaker.un.org/friendsofmediation.

As the Sri Lankan case shows in an asymmetric context, the distinction between primary and secondary parties often appears to be blurred; simultaneously, the classical mediation practice holds onto that division. The so-called secondary parties in a conflict are not directly involved in a conflict, but do, in some ways, support either one or some of the primary parties involved.[33] Instead of defining just primary parties or more precisely 'warring parties,' it would be more appropriate in current violent conflicts to talk about 'parties involved to the conflict,' 'parties in conflict' or even 'parties affected by the conflict.' Depending on the peace talks, it has largely been only official parties who have been allowed to join in on official peace talks or, if non-official parties are allowed to participate, their plurality and contingency as well as the question of legitimate representativeness has omitted. It has been civic society actors that have most been sidelined from peace talks in their early phase. Some mediation cases in particular are accused of failing because of their incapability to also engage non-fighting parties that were regarded more as secondary and not as primary parties. It seems obvious that the applied criteria for participation in mediation process could have drastic influences throughout the whole peace process and may constitute major obstacles to achieving sustainable peace. Lack of a civic society voice shaping peace agreements may be difficult to compensate for in the latter phase, as Bosnian and Sri Lankan examples indicate. Indeed, mediating ceasefire among those controlling armies in struggle could only bring about negative peace but starting a true peace process would require more inclusive participation from the very beginning of the process.

The obvious challenge for official peace diplomacy is that in the asymmetric setting, the participation into official track one mediation process offers, as a by-product for a non-state actor, (international) recognition and grants a certain legitimacy to its position as the opponent instead of being just a terrorist, rebel and militia. Therefore, the peace mediation situation may in drastic terms shape the conflict dynamic and the international third party holds the power to influence the non-state actor's agency since an invitation to official mediation brings parties into the sphere of international diplomacy. Thus, gaining this kind of partial international recognition may be enough for the non-state parties of the conflict. In the Sri Lanka case, the LTTE used their participation in mediation to gain recognition as a sole representative of the Tamili

[33] Svensson (2012, p. 178).

area, which simultaneously marginalized other stakeholders. However, although the non-state actors lack a legal status they still have the burden of proving their acceptance to be included to peace process and "if such a group cannot claim popular support or if it has engaged in violation of the laws of war, its plea to be brought into the negotiations process is often ignored."[34] The mediation situation may offer also for a state actor an opportunity to preserve the status quo. Sri Lanka's case offers a good example of these contradicting interests participating in a peace process.

The question of participation or agency in the peace process is perhaps the most challenging but it is also a pivotal question in regard to the long-term peace process with which the mediator has to cope with the complexity of asymmetrical conflict. "The degree of participation and involvement in negotiations by the primary parties is clearly influenced by type and practices of the mediator" as Eriksson and Kostić note.[35] The primary question when setting mediation in the current asymmetric conflicts is "whether to include all parties or exclude some" but also how to define who the relevant parties are and how long the process will remain open for new parties, since in asymmetrical war there are no fixed positions and non-state actors may change along the conflict evolution. Participation in mediation can be already defined in the mandate while responsibility to define participation is given to mandating organization, as suggested by Svensson and Wallensteen.[36] Or, in contrast, as Fixdal emphasizes, it should be the mediator who, in the final state, decides who is invited to participate in negotiations. Even though the mediator decides to be as inclusive as possible, all parties do not necessarily want to participate and might altogether contest the legitimacy of the mediator.[37] By controlling and manipulating participation to peace talks, the mandating power or the third party holds significant power to shape conflict design.

In asymmetrical conflicts, "those who sign the accords do not control all of those engaged in the conflict," as was the case in state-centric diplomacy. Rebel and terrorist groups do not represent the whole population and they have not received their legitimacy through democratic procedures.[38]

[34] Fixdal (2012a, p. 17).

[35] Eriksson and Kostić (2013b, pp. 160–162).

[36] Svensson and Wallensteen (2010, p. 133).

[37] Fixdal (2012a, p. 17).

[38] Winter (2012, pp. 254–256).

The conflicting parties are not fixed and they often have internal discord concerning engagement with the peace process; a mediator may instead need to facilitate negotiations among primary parties concentrating on mediating relationships and attitudes within one primary party. Peace talks often generate spoilers who resist participation in the peace process and who can often be found within primary party. In particular, incidents of violence during peace negotiations are damaging for peace negotiations as incidents affect either inter-party mistrust among negotiating partners or intra-party opposition to peace talks.[39] Thus, to continue negotiations and strengthen legitimacy, it is important to heal mistrust and solve conflicting attitudes towards the peace process by intra-party negotiations.

In the post-9/11 era, "terrorism has become policy making's mental Berlin Wall." The effects of this change have been drastic for conflict resolution efforts since "in the era of global terrorism, asymmetrical conflicts at the national level have increasingly come to be seen through the prism of global campaign against terrorism."[40] Kristine Höglund pinpoints that even though the "need to stop violence" calls for negotiations with terrorists, these negotiations are a risky business for states as they are widely seen to be a sign of weakness and irresponsibility. Vice versa, violence for terrorist groups is a prime form of acting and, thus, seeking peaceful dialogue between states and other parties is difficult for them and participation in negotiations may unbalance the credibility of the terrorist group. Nonetheless, labelling rebels as terrorists is also a rhetorical tool used to deny the rebels' legitimacy and possibility to negotiate for peace.[41] If this narrative power was used first by the Western powers, it is increasingly now executed by illiberal powers involved in conflict for rejecting options for mediation. This is the case for Turkey excluding any official talks with the Kurds in Syria. At the same time, Western rhetoric has shifted to use terms such as radicalization and extremism, which offer a minor option for dialogue while the terrorism label is reserved for ISIS and similar kind of organizations that omit themselves from all possibilities for dialogue.

[39] Höglund (2008, pp. 5, 13, 154).

[40] Helgesen (2007, pp. 9–11, 14–16).

[41] Höglund (2011, pp. 222–224).

In principle, there are three kinds of international third-party actors engaged in peace mediation: international and regional organizations, states and non-state actors. The first group consists of well-known organizations like the United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the African Union (AU) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The UN was involved in more than half of all armed conflicts in the period from 1992 to 2009. In concrete terms, the Special Representatives and envoys of the Secretary-General and the UN resident coordinators have conducted mediation activities.[42] Mediation is still regarded as the most essential and effective tool for preventing, managing and resolving armed conflicts in the report of the UN Secretary General António Guterres concerning "United Nations Activities in Support of Mediation" published in June 2017.[43] Besides taking an active role as a mediator, the UN and in particular the UN Security Council or the Secretary-General has been the most important mandating power.

Besides the UN, other international organizations have gained more active roles as mandating powers, both in mediation support and as a mediator. Regional context has become an important frame in which to view solutions for all conflicts.[44] For example, in Africa, regional bodies like the AU or the ECOWAS have become important actors in the conflict mediation as they have consciously invested to their mediation capacity and they have been empowered by several Western organizations and states in this endeavor. Thus, "there is real resonance to the slogan of 'African solutions to African problem.'" Both organizations have intervened in several conflicts with a particular focus on election-related violence. However, since both are organizations of *states,* their impartiality to solve internal conflicts have been challenged from time to time.[45]

Many scholars as well diplomats of big states have cherished the idea of peace diplomacy and mediation as predominantly the activity of a great power, since they were considered to be able to mediate owing to the fact that their persuading power exceeded beyond the negotiation table.

[42] Interview with Joenpolvi, Dec 2017, Piiparinen (2012, pp. 34–36).

[43] Report of the Secretary-General, UN Activities in Support of Mediation, a/72/115, 27 June 2017.

[44] Wallensteen (2007, p. 267), Svensson and Wallensteen (2010, p. 115).

[45] Eriksson and Kostić (2013a, p. 12), Tuominen and Cristescu (2012), Marshall (2012).

For example, in Bosnia, Hollbrooke relied unashamedly on the US power in persuading conflicting parties to agree and he "explicitly threatened the Serbian side during the negotiation with coercive methods."[46] Wallensteen sees it important to make a fundamental distinction between mediators with great power, 'muscle,' and those with less or no physical power, or those with methods between forcing and fostering. In the strictest sense, the requirement of impartiality is highly problematic and it is difficult to delineate since, for example, the USA as a mediator can rarely be cited as impartial to a conflict because it often has its own interests in the outcome of the mediation effort.[47] Vice versa, from the perspective of global order, it is good to remember that the engagement of great powers in peaceful mediation can always be regarded, as Kriesberg notes, as a more constructive approach when compared with coercive methods such as military intervention.[48]

In a case when a mediator holds a greater amount of power, a permanent ceasefire or a constitution seems more likely to be achieved in a shorter period of time in comparison with mediation by a neutral mediator.[49] Even if "neutral mediation and negotiations are often more protracted, achieving peace takes longer, and in the meantime suffering and destruction continue," durability of an achieved peace agreement or the quality of peace solutions achieved in power mediation hold often weaker legitimacy and commitment by the primary parties than the agreement with greater local ownership.[50] According to Mikael Eriksson and Roland Kostić, it is necessary to make a distinction between those mediation cases that represent "force and persuasion in peacemaking" like Bosnia or Kosovo, and those belonging more to a pure third-party mediation situation in which peace agreement is more locally owned and thus defined by emphasizing "sensual participation, ownership of the agenda and process legitimacy." There are three types of peace negotiation processes: (a) domestically owned, (b) third-party mediation, and (c) pure third-party mediation.[51] In the latter kinds of cases, the role of

[46] Svesson and Wallesteen (2010, pp. 116–118, 123).

[47] Wallensteen (2007, pp. 268–269).

[48] Kriesberg (2015, p. 80).

[49] Wallensteen (2007, pp. 270–271).

[50] Eriksson and Kostić (2013a, p. 7).

[51] Eriksson and Kostić (2013b, pp. 158–159).

the third party is taken by small- and middle-sized states. Still, during the Cold War, small- and middle-sized states did not have an active role in peace diplomacy and only in particular cases could individual representatives of small (neutral) states be named as mediators of particular conflict. From the 1990s onwards, several small- and middle-sized countries adopted peace mediation in their foreign policy agenda and they have themselves taken different kind of agency in peace mediation including the role of mediator. The Norwegian government had already set peace diplomacy as its priority in the 1990s and Norway led the way to the new small state peace diplomacy. The Norwegian opening was followed by the Canadian, Swiss and Swedish governments who stepped up "their support of peace efforts" and a decade later Finland also followed their lead.[52]

According to Iver Neumann, adopting an active third-party role as a mediator or a facilitator can be regarded as part of the natural continuum in the Nordic diplomacy tradition, aiming to support a peaceful solution of all conflicts and institutions for their international management. Nordic countries "have consistently spent sizeable resources on systems maintenance in such diverse areas as institution-building—the League of Nations and the UN, for instance; peacekeeping; development and disaster aid; and the role of third parties" and a more active role as a peace mediator is merely a logical continuation of this approach. Still, even if the objective of activity may be the same, the investment of peace mediation differs in a fundamental way from the investment of international organizations for peace (e.g., the UN). By adopting the role of mediator, small states have in the beginning adopted "the weakest form of third party diplomatisation" and acted merely as a facilitator "that offers its services not as an active broker, but as a discreet presence with certain human and material resources to offer." This was the role and the practice previously executed by "a sizable community of organizations in Geneva and elsewhere that specialize in facilitation, centring around organizations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Centre for Human Development." During the early post-Cold War years, small states entered into this "networked,

[52]Helgesen (2007, p. 8). See also Neumann (2011, p. 573), Joenniemi (2013, pp. 53–59).

multi-stakeholder ball," which was previously dominated by international organizations.[53] Nonetheless, even if these transnational organizations in Geneva were engaged in issues related to peace and human rights, they were not engaged in peacemaking and mediation and this became the particular field upon which Nordic countries focussed. In particular, Norway have since adopted a more active and visible role as an international mediator but in a way that is reminiscent more of an activity of a transnational organization than of a major power. Others small states like Finland have remained more within the outer frames and have concentrated on facilitateing support and resources for international mediation.

Still, the most drastic change in the peace mediation field has taken place beyond the official surface dominated by governmental actors. During the past two decades, the amount of non-governmental third-party actors in peace processes has increased drastically and, simultaneously, these non-state, unofficial actors have gained more central and diverse role in the peace processes. The roles of a facilitator, mediator or an implementer of a peace process are rarely available for non-governmental actors and, in particular, in track one level negotiations these roles belongs exclusively to governmental actors; however, there have been a plenty of supporting roles available for non-governmental actors to take. Furthermore, as Kivimäki and Gorman note, "good ideas, analyses and innovations on solutions do not require a mandate and thus can be offered by anyone, also non-governmental entities."[54] While the amount non-governmental actors have increased, these organizations have become a more established part of peace mediation field. Their role has transformed from a purely supportive and rather passive actor to a complementary and active participator in the peace mediation field. Besides elite-centric track one mediation, a bottom-up focussed track two mediation has developed "with non-state actors increasingly engaging in diplomatic initiatives, including peace mediation."[55]

Mediation is no longer reserved for retired diplomats in particular mediation situations. Instead of emphasizing relevant transferable skills of diplomacy, peace mediation is increasingly understood to require particular skills. By increasing the number of nongovernmental peacemakers, the field of peace mediation has become professionalized and, for their

[53] Neumann (2011, pp. 571–574; 2012).

[54] Kivimäki and Gorman (2008, pp. 181, 183).

[55] Wigell (2012, pp. 16–17).

staff, mediation appears as a career choice. Furthermore, because of the professionalization of the field, there has been enormous investment in the training capacities and professional guidelines within which non-state actors have again had a pivotal role. All in all, during the past decade and a half, beyond the track one level and the top-level decision-makers, non-governmental actors have gained a stronger effect on expanding on track one peace mediation[56] but this change and the overall impact of non-governmental actors to the peace mediation field in general has remained so far mostly under studied.

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[56]Wallensteen (2012, p. 457).

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CHAPTER 3

Private Peacemaking

Even if the asymmetric warfare has prevailed as a dominant form of collective violence over two decades, the (official) peace mediation practice is still limited in its adaptation to the realities of asymmetric violent conflicts. The track one level, official peace diplomacy, has remained by its approach and criteria resilient against the challenges of the radically changing nature of warfare. In particular, the practices of mandating have preserved mediation in the stable control of states. The Westphalian thinking still prevails at the official level and resists radical rethinking of the participation in peace mediations. As long as the big and small states but also international organizations are reluctant to engage in talks with non-official and non-recognized actors, a rigid structure of track one peace mediation seemingly lacks the capacity to attach contingency and diversity to agencies. Despite often announced principles of inclusivity, civic society actors are often ignored and sidelined by track one mediators. Within the peace mediation field, this is merely a widely acknowledged situation, and indeed states and international organizations have widely recognized demands of asymmetric warfare and need to find acceptable practices with which to engage several non-state actors in the peace process, strengthen the role of civic society actors and deal with extremist groups.[1] As a consequence, it has widely been agreed that track one level

[1] See for example Global Challenges and Trends in International Peace Mediation and Diplomacy; A background note, EEAS.

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Rethinking Peace and Conflict Studies,
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requires supporting and complementing processes as well as actors that could compensate for the shortcomings of official peace diplomacy. The rise and development of this complementary field consisting mainly of nongovernmental actors is the main focus of this study. How have these new actors revisited peace mediation practice, participation and ideology? How would this nonofficial sector support or complement track one mediation processes and how much has it constituted a completely different peace track of its own?

Even if the track one mediation has been resilient to radical changes, the increase of actors and in particular, that of nongovernmental actors have created new spaces in peace mediation that can be illuminated by making distinction, on the one hand, between a mediator and other third parties in peace mediation and, on the other hand, between 'mediation' and 'peace mediation.' Indeed, in regard to the role of a third party, in current complex peace architecture, it would be helpful to make a distinction between a classical mediator (often a person or a team), that is particularly engaged with (official) peace negotiations and a third party in general that is involved with the peace mediation process in other terms even if the separation is not in all cases easy and the roles may be overlapping and contingent. The division becomes clearer only if reference to peace negotiations are limited to solely cover sofficially mandated peace talks. The difference between a mediator, in particular, and the third party, in general, has become more evident during the past decade and half when the peace mediation field has expanded and diversified. All mediators can be regarded as a third party to the conflict but all third parties involved to peace mediation are not necessary mediators. The mediator refers primarily to a person or a team engaging as an intermediary to the official negotiation process among conflict parties. The third party may refer to an organization or unit that the mediator(s) is representing, as well as to other organizations engaged in the peace mediation process but that are not taking particular role in official negotiation table. With multiple actors with multiple supporting roles, peace mediation has become a complicated field. Broadly, these supporting exercises beyond the actual negotiation table include, for example, capacity building, training support, dialogue facilitation and so on. If the objective of this mediation support is to change the attitudes towards violence of parties in conflict and to enable peaceful transformation, third party activity can still be regarded as peace mediation but the third party is then not necessary a mediator. This expanding field of supporting activities is executed mostly by international organizations, states as well as, increasingly, transnational NGOs.

As a follow up in this regard, it is appropriate to make a distinction between 'peace mediation' and 'mediation' in regard to differences in understanding the scope of mediation practice and goals. Practitioners often refer to mediation as a particular technique for supporting negotiations among conflicting parties This is evident, for example, in the UN Guidance that differentiates between facilitation, mediation, good governance and dialogue as the different tools available for a third party. The Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) defines good offices as part of the practice of a third party when they facilitate talks, for example, in the form of providing venue and facilities instead of actively engaging in talks as a go-between.[2] The difference between mediation and facilitation is a question of the form and style of mediation. Facilitation is more about supporting discussion among parties by offering a forum and acting as a messenger. A facilitator does not necessarily physically participate in peace negotiations. A mediator, by contrast, is more intensively engaged in discussion and actively participates in peace negotiations.[3] From this perspective 'mediation,' in general, refers to "a way of resolving disputes between two or more parties" by a mediator, who assists the parties in negotiating a settlement. Indeed, mediation is a commonplace practice "in a variety of domains, such as commercial, legal, diplomatic, workplace, community and family matters" and it can regarded as a *practical skill* used to solve disputes.[4] In relation to violent conflicts, this kind of a classical definition comprehends mediation solely as means of active assistance in (official) negotiation among parties pursuing an agreement or other kind of compromise.[5]

However, it is possible to sketch out a much broader perspective to peace mediation in which mediation is "improving efficacy and quality of transforming" conflicts by third party. This may but also may not require the achievement of agreements and it does not necessary require traditional negotiations but "a major service of mediation is helping adversaries communicate with each other, even when they are engaged in deadly conflict."[6] This kind of 'peace mediation'

[2] Wallensteen and Möller (2008, p. 64).

[3] Svensson (2008, p. 234).

[4] Kriesberg (2015, pp. 13–15).

[5] Piiparinen and Brummer (2012, p. 9), Wall et al. (2001, pp. 370–371).

[6] Kriesberg (2015, pp. 10, 13–14).

is associated only to a particular context: violent (or armed) conflicts. Its goal is to end or prevent violent (or armed) conflicts among states (inter-state war) or a civil war situation within which a state or states are one of warring sides (intra-state war), or even among non-governmental parties. Mediation's primary objective is to achieve an agreement or a resolution among parties but peace mediation is primarily to enhance peace, which may requires compromise or agreements among parties but may include also other particular tools and goals. If a distinction between mediation and peace mediation is not seen, the latter is then solely understood to be a resolution-seeking exercise and particular negotiation-supporting techniques are looked for, similar to non-violent situations in which a compromise between the incompatible interests of the conflicting parties is sought. Peace mediation, in contrast may, in more comprehensive terms, refer to third party activity to change the perceptions or behaviour of conflicting parties in relation to violent conflict.[7] It seems that from the perspective of official actors (states and IO), a narrower definition of mediation is the prevailing one but since non-official actors are rarely engaged in traditional peace negotiations between the main warring parties, as chief mediator, their practical focus is on broader peace mediation. This can be called peace mediation beyond mediation, and developing this kind of focus is the core target of this study.

The above-mentioned distinctions can be merged with a distinction between official (governmental) and non-official (non-governmental) actors and between *formal* and *informal* mediation activities. While the formal mediation activity is carried out by government officials or political incumbents, informal mediation practice may refer to either well-experienced mediators specialized in international mediation, or to other scholars who, with their professionalization, have the possibility to provide input to the negotiation process between the belligerents.[8] It is worthwhile to note that most often the cases of this so-called 'unofficial third-party intervention' are carried out by independent non-governmental institutions like the Carter Center or the CMI.[9]

[7] Bercovitch (1997, p. 130).

[8] Bercovitch (2002, p. 10).

[9] Eriksson and Kostić (2013, p. 12).

In her analysis on Norway's involvement in the Oslo Back Channel, Aggestam defines the mediation practiced as "quasi-informal" in kind. The term 'quasi-informal' refers to mediation, which is not strictly formal or informal, but more like a combination of the two. The Oslo Back Channel gives a good illustration of what kind of results the coordination of informal and formal processes of mediation might cause. The networking of officials at Norway's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and academics from the NGOs provided flexibility and made it possible to offer a suitable negotiation milieu for the belligerent parties according to their preferences at different stages of the negotiation process.[10] All mediation processes have preceding talks priming the official negotiation phase and this informal process can be carried by official or non-official actors.

Instead of the traditional method of focusing on a multitude of distinctions between formal and informal mediation activities, more interest should be given to the possible interplay between different actors practicing mediation. As "the international playing field of mediation is becoming increasingly crowded" and complex there is need to develop "the network model in mediation" and set rules for multi-track mediation. Operational structures are moving from monolithic, centralised, hierarchical and rigid … toward more delayered and flat organisations in virtually all sectors of life".[11] As the complexity of the peace mediation field has increased, the questions of cooperation and coordination have become crucial. Many recent mediation efforts include several kinds of third party actors—big and small states, international and regional organizations and "widespread presence of religious, humanitarian and development NGOs"—that have created the complex and contingent field of peacemaking. This complexity of actors obviously calls for design and management but it is not in all cases clear "how and why these multiparty interventions come about; whether and how they are coordinated; who provides leadership; what determines the level of commitment in terms of human and financial resources; and who is responsible for keeping an already mediated settlement on track and preventing the collapse of agreement lest is become orphaned". The term 'multiparty mediation' refers to this diversity of mediators and how their simultaneous actions

[10] Aggestam (2002, pp. 58, 72–74).

[11] Piiparinen and Brummer (2012, p. 13).

Table 3.1 Peace mediation actors and approaches

	Official actors (states, IO)	*Unofficial actors (NGOs, non-profit organizations)*
Formal/mandated mediations	Track one mediation	Supporting and complementing track one processes
Informal/non-mandated mediation	Enabling track one mediation	Peace mediation beyond mediation (e.g., dialogues, mediation support, capacity building)

or sequential actions are combined and coordinated.[12] However, it is again good to keep in my mind a distinction between actual mediators and other supporting third parties and ask how these different roles and functions of the peace mediation field are complementary and mutually supportive and how much they are separate. The multiparty mediation situation has remained a challenging and often imperfectly coordinated sector of peace diplomacy and its challenges are approached in this study from the perspective of NGO actors.

If combining a division between formal and informal mediation activities, on the one hand, and official and unofficial third party actors, on the other hand, we may draw a SWOT matrix (see Table 3.1). Furthermore, a division between formal and informal in most cases corresponds to a division between officially mandated cases and those without an official mandate. Within a SWOT, classical track one mediation represents a formal mandated mediation by an official third party. A great deal of a mediation literature concentrates on this particular field. Formal activity by unofficial actors or informal activity by official actors can be regarded primarily as processes targeted at supporting and enabling track one processes or formal mandated peace processes. Informal, mostly non-mandated activities by unofficial actors (predominantly track two mediation) have been steadily increasing but this has remained the least studied field in the peace mediation literature. This has been mostly a field with new third-party actors, criteria and scope of participations and new practices, and thus it has been become a powerhouse of revisiting peace mediation as well as of innovative thinking in this field.

[12] Crocker et al. (2002, pp. 228–230).

Critical peacebuilding literature has not given much attention to non-official actors. There can even be found some descriptions like that of Stephen Chan who narrates private mediators as mostly amateurish but eager individuals who represented liberal interventionism in its rudest form, since they often ignored, among others, issues such as local ownership and inclusion, just as most large-scale peacebuilding operations did at the same time.[13] This may fit with a group of *private peace entrepreneurs* in these early years of liberal peace, in the mid-1990s, but even if there are still a few so-called "peace-lords"[14] and still new conflict lures independent peacemaking organizations to compete for a slice of the peacemaking cake, then the whole picture is radically different. An initial phase of private peace mediators soon followed in the late 1990s and, in the early 2000s came the era of private non-profit organizations focusing on peace mediation. Since then, private peacemaking organizations have developed a high profile in mediation and consist of a diverse group of actors. They may characterize their work as mediation, peacebuilding, conflict resolution or transformation and each of them have their own emphases in the peace mediation arena.

During the past two decades, the NGO-based private peacemaking organizations have become an established sector of the international peace mediation field. In organizational terms, they have grown in size and status but have also managed to establish the basis of their funding. They appeared at first to be pondering and seeking their role and agenda within the state-dominating field but during the past two decades they have transformed themselves from a purely assisting role more towards a complementary actor. More recently, they have even been a source of revolution and renewal in mediation practice, with contributions to issues such as local ownership and inclusion that are being taken seriously and adapting to strategic thinking in new, radical ways. The *Economist* introduced a new trend of privatizing peace in a catchy way in an article published summer 2011.

> The United Nations, still widely seen as the go-to organisation for peacemaking, is hobbled in what it can do by competing political agendas, while America's appetite for elbow-twisting diplomacy has waned. Smaller

[13] Chan (2010).

[14] Interview with Abdile, Pentikäinen, Perukangas, Puoskari, and Tarvainen, Sept 2016.

> countries that have specialised in mediation, such as the Scandinavians and Switzerland, have become more risk-averse about engaging with armed groups. The result is that certain types of diplomacy are becoming privatised. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs), some with roots in aid-giving and disaster relief are playing an ever greater role in conflict resolution. In what has become a crowded field, the biggest players are: the Crisis Management Initiative (CMI) based in Helsinki and founded in 2000 by Martti Ahtisaari, a former president of Finland; the Carter Centre's Conflict Resolution Programme, which helped win Jimmy Carter the Nobel peace prize in 2002; the Congress-funded but independent United States Institute of Peace (USIP); and HD, which was established in 1999 by Martin Griffiths, a British diplomat and former UN assistant secretary-general.[15]

Which organizations should be regarded as the biggest and most remarkable private peacemakers is a tricky question that depends on selected criteria and focus, but in different listings the same organizations such as CMI or HD centre seem to appear each time. Organizations can be ranked according their financial resources and the amount of the staff but the main challenge concerns how to differentiate between targeted peace mediation and broader peacebuilding activities on the one hand, and between actual mediation and mediation support on the other hand. There is sometimes only a thin line between the two and many organizations have been involved in both peacemaking and peacebuilding.

The emergence and growth in the number and importance of the private peacemaking sector can be interpreted as part of the broader context of the changing world in the post-Cold War era, with diminished great power rivalries and, increasingly, global and transnational security issues. Furthermore, the blurring of the previously sharp line between peacemaking and development policies and the understanding of security and development as just different sides of the same coin have in significant terms contributed to the growth of the private sector of peace diplomacy. As a consequence of these developments, peacemaking is understood as going beyond ceasefire agreements and peace treaties, and emphasis is placed on long-term development. Furthermore, the emergence of non-governmental peacemakers is associated with a broader development of the growing sector of transnational NGO actors (TOs) and in particular

[15] Privatising Peace, *The Economist*, June 20, 2011.

so-called humanitarian organizations. TOs are "NGOs operating internationally and they may be multinational in their membership and leadership, as international NGOs (INGOs) are generally considered to be, or they may be based in one country and conduct their activities in other countries as well."[16] This study focuses solely on transnational NGOs that have adopted peacemaking or peace mediation as their niche. This kind of approach excludes the role of private persons or private peace entrepreneurs without an NGO affiliation. However, drawing a line is not always clear in practice, as shown below by historical examples of the Quakers and the Catholic mediators.

The history of TOs dates all the way back to the nineteenth century and in the beginning, the TOs were predominantly associated with humanitarian assistance without any commitment to any political or development goals and agendas. The International Committee of the Red Cross as a very first international humanitarian organization founded in 1863 is the best example of this kind of early transnational organization taking an active role in the war zone. In the late nineteenth century, the growing international peace movement represented an early example of transnational networking among civic associations. However, two sectors—humanitarian aid and peace movement—remained for decades separate, and peace movements appeared primarily as a pressure group striving to change international norms concerning wars but not to be involved in particular war as an intermediary. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the transnational NGOs gained a remarkable role in the growing sector of humanitarian aid, development and human rights. The development sector engaged several TOs in long-term economic development projects with clear development goals while human rights-based organizations like Human Rights Watch concentrated on reporting. Meanwhile, humanitarian aid organizations expanded their focus from relief work to also include long-term alleviation of global poverty. The Biafra War 1967–1970 was an epoch-making conflict as some of humanitarian TOs intervened without an official mandate and eventually their humanitarian assistance within the rebel site was crucial for prolonging fighting, indicating clearly that humanitarian aid also necessarily has political consequences and it cannot ever be completely neutral in regard to conflict.[17]

[16] Dunn and Kriesberg (2002, p. 194).

[17] Foley (2010). See also Casey (2016, pp. 167–208).

The early post-Cold War period witnessed a shift in international norms. Liberal peace ideology combining democracy promotion, respect of human rights and peace was widely shared, not just among transnational NGOs but increasingly it became a cornerstone of new international order, legitimizing and justifying interventions as regulating and peace drive practice. It was at this time that humanitarian and peace sectors fully merged. Since the 1990s, many former humanitarian and development-centric NGOs reoriented themselves towards peacebuilding or they targeted their activity to support liberal peace interventions in various civil crisis management and humanitarian aid projects.[18]

Besides the rise of humanitarianism and the emergence of the international non-profit sector, the changes in peace diplomacy are also entangled with the privatization of function previously regarded as a sole monopoly of sovereign state. Big powers have in recent years even allocated parts of warfare and security sector to private companies. Privatization of some parts of diplomacy is part of the same phenomena, but blurring a line between official and nonofficial is not just managed by states but emergence of a non-profit sector and growth of humanitarian policy have created new spaces of diplomacy that transnational organizations have filled. 'Humanitarian diplomacy' is an excellent example of this development. The term 'humanitarian diplomacy' has recently been introduced by large transnational organizations such as the Red Cross in their efforts to catch new essence of international fora they are acting. Intervention of various transnational nongovernmental actors in the internal diplomacy and their objectives beyond conventional political interests has created as a new kind of field of multitrack diplomacy. What humanitarian diplomacy means and includes still varies among different stakeholders. From the theoretical perspective, the question is interesting and also has relevance for 'peace diplomacy.' According to Phillippe Régnier, humanitarian diplomacy "refers to the policies and practices of national and international agencies active in humanitarian aid work" and policies "[focus] on maximising support for operations and programs and building the partnerships necessary if humanitarian objectives are to be achieved." The scope of humanitarian diplomacy is not only limited only to co-ordination of humanitarian aid but to mobilization of all

[18] Foley (2010), Chandler (2006).

possible actors and resources. Thus, besides official actors, humanitarian organizations need to conduct humanitarian diplomacy even if their staff are not necessary trained for that. Humanitarian diplomacy operates in various tracks: within official sphere, between nongovernmental actors and between official and private actors. By its nature, humanitarian is "often improvised, depending on the needs at any given moment," "has no political pretensions whatsoever" and it "frequently takes risks, acknowledges errors made in assessing a situation or action taken."[19] In many ways, humanitarian diplomacy is reminiscent of present-day peace diplomacy that currently is multitrack and multi-agent field. Peace diplomacy does not fit Régnier's definition of humanitarian diplomacy as such, but indeed if the scope is expanded beyond humanitarian aid to humanitarian ethos then the term could also include peacemaking and it could be relevant to achieve a broad understanding of humanitarian diplomacy since, seemingly, characterization of humanitarian diplomacy is also well described in the field of private peacemaking. Or, then we can include the separate notion of peace diplomacy but define it along humanitarian diplomacy lines, except that peace diplomacy works for maximizing support for peace processes and for mobilizing all relevant actors and resources for supporting transformation towards peace. In both cases, the new term helps to catch the new kind of post-Westphalian diplomacy that is, in essence, transnational and asymmetric with regard to agency and agenda. Rules, roles and definitions within these new multitrack fields of peace and humanitarian diplomacy are primarily shaped in everyday practices by participating organizations and even if the transnational organizations have a long history, this type of more complex field of humanitarian or peace diplomacy has been developed only during the past two decades in the era of liberal peace.

The following humanitarian ethos of liberal peace turn intensity, visibility and volume of international peace diplomacy grew enormously as well as confidence to its opportunities to solve violent conflict. This provides new momentum for nongovernmental actors to enter into peacemaking. Against this background, it was not a surprise that eventually some old organizations refocused themselves. In addition, a great number of new organizations were founded upon peacemaking and conflict resolution as their *raison d'etre*, particularly focusing on peace mediation

[19] Régnier (2011, pp. 1212–1222).

and dialogues. Even if there were many non-state peace mediators and peacemakers much before the late 1990s, the emergence of transnational organizations with a particular niche in peacemaking has been a novel phenomenon belonging predominantly to the 2000s and 2010s.

In 1996, over 20 years ago, the Carter Center listed "more than 80 NGOs focusing specifically in conflict resolution and prevention" but only nine of them were then involved in mediation and 34 were engaged primarily in organizing supportive gatherings and trainings. Over a decade later, the European Centre for Conflict Prevention was already calculating the existence of 100 African, 187 Asian and over 300 European NGOs engaged in peacemaking activities but like in the 1990s only a few them were actually engaged with peace mediation or even mediation support.[20] In 2008, in their survey for the EU's Initiative for Peacebuilding, Antje Herrberg and Heidi Kumpulainen mapped in their survey 14 high-profile private diplomacy actors[21] and the Mediation Support Network (MSN) founded in the same year had 18 member organizations,[22] but the list of members of MSN were not identical to that of Herrberg and Kumpulainen. Indeed, it is obvious that even if the amount of nongovernmental actors involved in peace mediation have increased, their numbers have still remained relatively small in comparison with NGOs in peace building, civil crisis management and conflict prevention in general. Furthermore, it is not possible to present unambiguous listings because most of the nongovernmental organizations are not engaged in mediation in the strict sense but rather in various forms of mediation support activities and then it is up to a particular definition as to what supportive activity qualifies an organization as working in peace mediation. Furthermore, the profile and agenda of organizations is continuously changing and, in particular in the case of smaller organizations, their focus depends on the few cases with which they are engaged. Nonetheless, it is a widely shared view that there are at present four big private peacemaking organizations in the field—the HD Centre, the CMI, the Berghof Foundation and the Carter Centre—but the situation may change quickly and list also depends upon the perspective in question.[23]

[20] Shea (2016, p. 182).

[21] Herrberg and Kumpulainen (2008).

[22] https://peacemaker.un.org/mediation-networks/MSN.

[23] Interview with Diaz-Prinz, Nov 2017.

The increasing role of private peacemaking can also be approached by examining the amount of mediation cases involving NGO actors. Unfortunately, in this matter, statistics end to the beginning of the millennium. When examining mediation as activity in which a third party "facilitates communication processes in the negotiation process and may offer proposals to the parties to help them move towards agreement," including conciliation, fact-finding, and good offices,[24] Bercovitch calculates 69 NGO mediation efforts in the 90s. This was nearly four times the number of efforts in the 1980s, and over five times that in the 1970s. Indeed, private peacemaking has been steadily increasing since the 1950s but just sky-rocketed in the post-Cold War era. While Bercovitch's definition of mediation is still narrower than the one adopted in this study, the data illustrates the spike in organizations involved in private mediation in the post-Cold War years. Unfortunately, there is not similar data available from recent decades—the 2000s and the 2010s—that have witnessed an increase in the number of private organizations engaged in peacemaking, mediation and conflict prevention but my guess is that the increase in cases has steadied but, simultaneously, several NGOs are involved in the very same conflict creating more complex multiparty but also multitrack peace processes. For example, there are over 100 TOs involved in the Syrian peace process(es) in one way or another.[25]

What would be a catchy and appropriate term to cover all these new TOs in peacemaking? In Westphalian thinking, the primacy of peace diplomacy has been reserved for state actors and thus other actors are defined as non-state, nongovernmental or unofficial actors. This kind of negative terminology is justified since other actors are still often understood as being supplementary to the official one. However, since in the past two decades the so-called track two mediation or, more precisely, informal mediation by nonofficial actors have expanded and has developed a field of its own that is at least partly separate from formal peace processes conducted by official actors, it would be good to search for alternative terms to better reflect their nature. The most obvious would be call them just NGO peace mediators or, like Dunn and Kriesberg, transnational organizations (TO) that have adopted peacemaking as

[24] Bercovitch (2004, p. 188); illustrated in Greig and Diehl (2012, p. 63).

[25] Interview with Rintakoski and Saarnivaara, Sept 2016.

their *raison d'etre*.[26] However, this kind of approach does not refer in any terms to their role as peacemakers or peace mediators. The available alternative terms are private and independent peacemakers. The first terminology refers to NGO actors' peace endeavors as a form of private diplomacy but private diplomacy does not cover all and not necessarily even the majority of contributions that NGO actors make in peace mediation. Furthermore, the notion of 'private' may give an incorrect connotation of comparing organizations to private companies, as well as a wrong impression of complete independence from official actors since most NGO actors but not all of them still are dependent on public funding. However, if juxtaposing private with public or official then it would be well justified to talk about *private peacemaking*. The notion of *independent peacemakers* could be more appropriate since by their agenda, NGO peacemakers are independent from official actors but nonetheless in some cases official actors may exploit them to drive their interests and goals and in the end it does not tell much about organization as peacemaker. Therefore, in this study, the following notions are preferred: *private peacemakers* to define transnational NGO actors; and *private peacemaking* to reflect the private nature of their activity here juxtaposed with public.

Regardless of what we should call these organizations and their activities, the relationship with these private peacemaking organizations with official actors and how their activities complement and supplement official peace diplomacy is the core interest of this study. A growing sector on the edge of official peace diplomacy has emerged that, on the one hand, supports official peace negotiations but that, on the other hand, has expanded the horizons of peace endeavors beyond what it used to be. This study examines the surface of official and unofficial, formal and informal, in which peace diplomacy is executed, as well as the changing agency and tools in the field. This study is interested in how private peacemakers comprehend their own role and added value, how they understand conflict and peace and, in particular, how this new approach is seen in the way they execute their projects in the field.

In peace mediation literature, private peacemaking and nongovernmental mediators have been omitted because of the prevailing objectives, definitions and ontological presuppositions of mediation study. The research on mediation has been particularly focused on how to

[26] Dunn and Kriesberg (2002).

develop a mediation strategy and practice more effectively and its focus has primarily been on track one or more precisely on the formal processed conducted by official actors. Mediation literature has been interested in mediation process "between the representatives of the *main conflicting parties*" and following Wallensteen and Svensson this has automatically excluded track two mediation at the grassroots level but also track one-and-a-half efforts or, in practice, all informal efforts by nongovernmental actors from interest of mediation research.[27] It is noteworthy that Bercovitch and Gartner do not even regard nongovernmental actors' agency but instead recited potential mediators to include individuals, states, regional and international organizations.[28] In line with this prevailing conflict management dogma, mediation is presumed as a "rational, political process, representing strategic engagement between parties and a mediator, which, under some conditions" may stop violence and facilitate a peace agreement. As such, the main focus of the study has been on how certain empirically observable variables and factors influence the outcome of the mediation process. These variables could be contained in selected strategies in mediation, in the behavior of a mediator or in the timing of the mediation intervention.[29]

Instead of the prevailing positivist approach, this study has chosen a constructivist and pragmatist approach and is primarily interested in how private actors in the peace mediation field comprehend their role in the peace process and how they have experienced the challenges of the current conflicts, as well as how conventional mediation practices are guarding official peace diplomacy and restraining change. The notions of conflict and peace are not taken for granted, rather the particular meanings attached to them by different actors are scrutinized. Furthermore, by adopting a post-rational approach to peace processes that contests the possibility of isolating any linear impacts of third-party intervention within the complexity of the conflict dynamic, this study is looking for alternative models of thinking as well as impacts and outcomes of third party intervention. What would peace mediation as a process and its agency look like if the whole peace process is seen as an uncontrolled, interdependent, complex and ever-changing mycelium without any clear evidence of what would constitute efficient form and strategy in third-party intervention.

[27] Wallensteen and Svensson (2014, pp. 317–318).

[28] Bercovitch and Gartner (2008a).

[29] Wallensteen and Svensson (2014), Bercovitch and Gartner (2008a, b).

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CHAPTER 4

Cold War Experiences of Nongovernmental Conciliation

Private peacemakers are certainly not newcomers in the peacemaking field and it is possible to recognize nongovernmental actors adopting intermediary roles and having involvement in peace processes dating back to 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. From these Cold War experiences of private peacemaking, three different kind of actors can be seen: the Quakers, Catholic Church-related actors and academic practitioners. Comparing their role with the private peacemaking organizations in the 2000s and 2010s is a useful exercise that helps us to recognize elements of the continuum, as well as similarities, but it also enables us to pinpoint how the role of private peacemakers and their approach to peace processes have transformed.

The Quakers' interest in acting as conciliator and intermediary in various conflicts has a solid foundation in their faith and religious-based pacifism. Some of the Quakers "believe that peace would come through the conversion of leaders or masses to true Christian life to pacifism" but others emphasize that "peace would come through reform of society and developing the institutions of peace." The earliest efforts of acting as intermediary to the conflict dated back to seventeenth century wars between Indians and colonists in North America, but the Quakers took a more institutionalized approach to peace diplomacy during the interwar years. In 1937, the Quakers' Society of Friends established the World Committee for Consultation that enabled an organized reaction to international conflicts. In the post-Second World War years, the Quakers actively sought the role of intermediary in several major conflicts such

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as that between the two Germanys, or India and Pakistan over Kashmir, or the Nigerian Civil War in 1967–1970. The Quakers acted quietly and off-record without official identity but simultaneously they understood their role to be "subordinate and ancillary to conciliation and negotiation by official mediators between official parties." They regard themselves as "an unofficial, nonpolitical, self-invited third party" in surprisingly the same way as current private peacemakers.[1] Regarding the role of non-official actors and private diplomacy in complicated maneuvers of peace diplomacy, the most well-known Quaker mediator Adam Curle wrote that "what is intrinsic to private diplomacy is its absolute separation from political interest and hence its potentiality to permit an open and relaxed relationship between human beings."[2] In several cases, the Quakers' involvement merely preceded and was often sought out in order to enable an initiation for official mediation. Their activity removed obstacles for negotiations by reducing suspicions, misperceptions, and fears among antagonist parties. Following Dunn and Kriesberg, the Quakers kind of unofficial mediation efforts are particularly appropriate there "where antagonists are willing to meet, though not yet negotiate" and then "help representatives of both sides to get to know each other."[3] Indeed, for the Quakers, the core intention to support peaceful solution was "to bring persons to a closer understanding and to make a more harmonious and constructive climate for human fulfillment" and thus they regard themselves more as conciliators than mediators. This placed emphasis on perceptions but the role of being an informal broker for the peace process hold tones recognizable among current private peacemakers; for example, similarities with CMI are striking even if there are also some differences concerning comprehension of objectives of peace intervention, which will be analyzed in the second part of this book.

The Nigerian Civil War known also as the Biafra war 1967–1970 is probably the most remarkable example of the Quakers' mediation activity and an excellent early example of the potential role of nongovernmental peacemaker in asymmetric warfare. The Quakers had a low presence in Nigeria before the war but already in December 1966, John

[1] Yarrow (1978, pp. xxii–xxiii, 9–10).

[2] Ibid., pp. 179–260.

[3] Dunn and Kriesberg (2002, p. 199).

Volkmar, the head of International Dialogues in West Africa, reported on the increasing violence and refugees and ended up suggesting some kind of dialogue among parties to lower tensions. Indeed, Volkmar with Curle organized a reporting visit to Nigeria and even if this did not prevent a war from breaking out, it offered for the Quakers' team—Volkmar, Curle and Walter Martin—a solid base from which to act during the next 30 months as private informal mediators without "yield to the pro-Biafra sentiments that swept the churches of Europe and North America." During the war, the Quakers team have talks with several political leaders in Lagos and in Biafran lands as well as in several African and European capitals but their shuttle diplomacy did not manage to bring conflicting parties to the same table as it would have included a kind of recognition of the Biafran side. They were primarily looking for possibilities for negotiated settlements and "official talks under official auspices were at all times the goal of the Quaker intermediaries." Their method of conciliation was based on "listening in order to understand each side, to communicating the reality and perceptions of the other side, the analyzing the situation and making proposals for solution." The Quaker team engaged in communication with both warring parties and the overall goal was "to persuade the parties to accept the proffer of mediation" of official parties like the Commonwealth secretariat and the Committee of the Organization of the African Unity. In this work, their goal was to change perceptions of the parties to be receptive to peace proposals. Furthermore, they aimed to assist the abovementioned organizations in their efforts to organize peace conferences. In 1970, the war ended with victory of the government and in the end an official peace negotiation between rebels and government never started. Yarrow still assumed that the Quakers' consultations may have a certain influence on restraining the use of large scale violence towards the population of the rebel area by the government after their military victory. The Quakers' involvement to the Biafra war indicates well how effectiveness or the impact of private diplomacy is difficult or even impossible to measure, as is its decisive importance for particular political decisions. Thus, in a way, the success of private diplomacy based on self-invitation can be examined primarily by their ability to be engaged to conversations and dialogues with warring parties but also in their ability to influence and change perceptions and interpretations of conflicting parties but also those of participating official third parties.

The way the Quakers' established their position as an unofficial mediator is very similar to the procedures of current transnational organizations faced with looking at entry points into the conflict. In the case of the Biafran war, Yarrow emphasized the personal qualities of representatives of the Quakers as a primary cause for their success at being widely recognized as a private mediator or conciliator.[4] However, even if personal qualifications and skills are obviously important for building legitimized agency, besides and beyond these personal issues the organizational legitimacy holds greater importance in building up agency in peace processes. Nongovernmental actors obviously lack any hegemonic legitimacy and leverage of power that great powers have but also their participation does not offer the recognition of that of official actors, such as states and international organizations. As the Quakers' example demonstrates well, their legitimacy was primarily based on their reputation and the trust in them as intermediary. The legitimacy of outside neutral mediator based only on its role of mediator as a professional and trustful actor.[5] This kind of legitimacy is necessarily shallow and vulnerable but also very context specific and open to contingent interpretations and contestations. The Biafran case in the late-1960s demonstrated well how the Quakers' general reputation but also their earlier contacts in the area and their experiences from another conflicts and the way they executed these learnings in the conciliation efforts in Nigeria all built up their legitimacy of informal conciliator in the conflict.

Several other early examples of private peacemaking were more ad hoc and without professional organizational support in peace mediation. Other faith-based mediators like the Mennonites and various Catholic actors were involved in various mediation efforts but, in comparison with the Quakers, they were in most cases inside-partials who had a long-term presence in the conflict area and who adopted an intermediary role because of their commitment to particular area. This was the case, for example, in several conflicts in Latin America where local Catholic priests or cardinals adopted the role of mediator, not because they actively sought it out but because they enjoyed the legitimacy of local community. In contrast to outside neutrals, inside-partials have a deep knowledge and commitment to a particular society. Outside neutral

[4] Yarrow (1978, pp. 255–256).

[5] Dunn and Kriesberg (2002, p. 199).

engagement is necessarily superficial and temporarily limit and their legitimacy as a mediator is grounded of their societal position and heritage. However, the success of Catholic mediators has been dependent not only on their local appreciation as representatives of the Catholic Church, but as a universal organization and for the fact that there is an instant link between local representative and the universal organization of the Church. This duality has given a strong credibility to Catholic mediators and organizations in adopting an intermediary role.[6]

The role of Catholic organization Sant' Egidio in mediating peace to end a 16-year long civil war in Mozambique can be regarded as one of the few of success story a faith-based non-official mediation. Sant' Egidio officially defines itself as a worldwide community of lay people, based on prayer, solidarity, ecumenism and dialogue that has its headquarter in Rome. The peace talks started in 1989 when Mozambique's President Chissano invited the President of Zimbabwe Robert Mugabe and the President of Kenya Daniel Arap Moi as mediators but also asked local Catholic and Protestant leaders to assist in the peace process. The effort failed and so did the follow-up efforts of the African summits. Meanwhile, the Catholic Church began to take a more active role in peacemaking. An epoch-making turn that enabled the Church's activity was the government's decision to remove the tight restriction against religion in 1984 in a still formally socialist country. After this, Sant' Egidio's activity and presence increased in Mozambique and the organizations managed to build trusting relationship with both conflicting parties and eventually these sent delegations to Sant' Edigio's headquarter in July 1990 after Mugabe's and Moi's role as mediators has failed. Andrea Riccardi and Mario Raffaeli from Sant' Egidio, Archibishop Jaime Goncalves and Mario Rafaelli representing the Italian government formed a new mediation team supported by ten governments and the UN. The mediation team opened a new negotiation to break deadlock between ruling FRELIMO party and the opposing RENAMO party. The first step toward successful bargaining was the signing of the Preamble in which both sides recognized each other's existence and legitimacy as a political actor. The following was the agreed upon: access of Zimbabwean forces as peacekeepers, the arrangement of new elections, joint military and security police. Before the signing of the final

[6] Ibid., pp. 202–203.

peace treaty, constitutional questions were also agreed upon. There were several factors behind the success of the peace process, like the drastic change of international and regional political landscape but also parties willingness to negotiate because impossibility to receive military solution. Still, the role of Sant' Egidio as a mediator was crucial for pushing negotiations and eventually to the durability of the peace agreement. The legitimacy of the organization was grounded in its local presence and the respected role of Archbishop Goncalves but also the simultaneous link to the Vatican conferred an official status on a nonofficial actor. The Christian heritage of local community was obviously relevant in this matter. From Sant' Egidio's perspective, faith was an essential basis of their mediator's role. Religious was not necessarily a pushy issue in negotiations; more important instead was a deep understanding of the local situation.[7]

Academic practitioners' problem-solving workshops represented a completely different kind of third party intervention by a non-official actor as it was based on a theoretical shift in international relations. Interests towards psychological and social-psychological theories among international relations scholars in 1960s and 1970s challenged dominating power political dogma but theorizing also contributed to the emergence of the more practice-orientated idea of a "problem-solving workshops as a form of international conflict resolution." Three different schools emerged spanning London, Yale and Harvard. "The London's school leader, John Burton, organized one-week-long problem-solving workshop in 1965 and 1966 which paved the way to other practical attempts." The first workshop focused on the violent Burma dispute and it brought together the nominees of governments of Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia. The next focused on Cyprus dispute among Greek President and Turkish Vice-president of Cyprus. "Both workshops were guided by a group of scholars facilitating face-to-face interaction between the parties." In 1970, a two week-long workshop was organized among academics and civil servants of Ethiopia, Somalia and Kenya. These London-organized workshops were followed by Harvard-organized pilots in 1971 and 1972 with the first one focused on the Palestinian and Israeli conflict and the second between India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. The participants in the Harvard model were

[7] Hegertun (2010). See also Mustonen (2017).

predominantly social scientists. The Yale school organized its own workshop in 1972 on North Ireland conflict and the so-called Stirling workshop "brought together fifty-six Catholic and Protestant citizens of Belfast."[8] Altogether, scholar practitioners organized more than 75 conflict-resolution workshops during three decades.[9]

Väyrynen highlights the fact that analysis of impacts of these workshops is mostly missing and it also would be challenging as "very few empirical data are available" and the principle of confidentiality was strictly followed but their goal setting is easier to compare. The workshops were regarded "parallel to official diplomacy" and referred to as track-two diplomacy but, on the other hand, they were seen "to support official diplomacy by offering a framework for the innovative search for solutions; solutions which lay stress on social-psychological factors of conflict." Ontological assumption was that conflicts were fundamentally about misunderstandings and misperceptions that "form substantial barriers for their resolution." While the Harvard school emphasized conflicting interests as a cause of conflict, according to the London school the conflicts arose "from the failure of domestic systems to provide for the needs of people." The problem-solving workshops would then be focused on "the manipulation of the psychological environment" by using psychological techniques and "the facilitative, non-judgemental and diagnostic third party is supposed to create an atmosphere where the discussion can be raised to a higher system level, from which it can flow back into constructive channels to the dispute in question." Achieving a psychological shift was regarded as a precondition for further third party intervention; however, the link was most obvious in the London school workshops organized among political leaders.[10]

All in all, the practice-orientated experiences of the Quakers and Saint' Egidio and theoretically sophisticated academic practitioners' workshops indicates a certain continuum of the non-official actors' approach and ability to engage in peace processes. In many ways, these experiences from 1960s to early 1990s are not so different from the more recent experiences of transnational peacemaking organizations, but besides obvious similarities remarkable transformations have occurred.

[8] Väyrynen (2001, pp. 15–27).

[9] Dunn and Kriesberg (2002, p. 198).

[10] Väyrynen (2001, pp. 15–27).

If compared with the Cold War years, the amount of nongovernmental actors and the cases with which they have engaged have increased in remarkable terms. Private peacemakers are now predominantly transnational organizations and the whole field of peace mediation including non-official actors became more established and professionalized in the 2000s and 2010s. Still, the core question relates to how initiatives and interventions of private actors are understood by different actors to be related to the official process, as well as the ways in which activities of non-official actors are attached to the broader peace process in practice and how their role as a mediator is legitimized. Thus, quantitative change is obvious. The nature of qualitative change is scrutinized in the next part of this book, but in general terms adaptation of the conflict transformation approach and complexity thinking have revisit understanding of what peace and conflict are but also the ability of the third party to manage the peace process.

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CHAPTER 5

Mediation Success in the Frame of Liberal Peace Critique

In main-stream peace mediation literature, mediation is usually presented in a very positive light and studies have concentrated on looking at improving the efficiency of peace mediation by relying on negotiation theories, game theories, focusing on more practical terms to mediation styles and forms of behavior, or other approaches emphasizing the rationality of peace mediation.[1] From positivist research angle, a normative basis of mediation, a definition of mediation success and the unintended (negative) impacts of mediation have not been regarded to be interesting targets of research. There are only a few studies about the negative consequences of mediation or of mediation failure in general. Still, for example, in some cases like in Rwanda and Angola "more people died after peace agreement were ratified by the parties and then failed."[2] That is why peace mediation literature has had a tendency to examine the peace mediation situation separately from the whole peacebuilding process and to focus on mediation as a particular, completely separate and autonomous form of intervention.

The question of how peace mediation would support peace processes preceding and following an actual mediation situation has been omitted, as mediation is seen as a particular and targeted form of intervention appropriate solely to a particular stage of the conflict cycle. According to

[1] Wallensteen and Svensson (2014), Bercovitch (1997, 2002, 2008a, b).

[2] Coleman (2012, p. 66).

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so-called ripeness theory of mediation developed by William Zartman, the timing of mediation efforts are crucial and the best moment is when "the parties are most inclined (perhaps out of exhaustion) to make a settlement and when, therefore, it is best to start a negotiation" and that "substantive proposals are fruitless until the moment is ripe for parties."[3] This kind of approach, however, denies the potentiality of peace mediation throughout all stages of conflict cycles. Indeed, Zartman's ripeness theory is grounded on the traditional approach of mediation as negotiation assistance, but if we adopt a broader focus to peace mediation it becomes relevant to suggest, like Ole Wæver, that mediation is not just needed for ending armed conflict but, in the best case, it can be used to prevent conflict throughout the post-conflict peacebuilding process. For example, it can be used to reconcile conflicting identities and collective memories[4] but also to prevent escalation of tensions into violent conflict. Moreover, the ripeness theory is based on the classical but simplified understanding of conflict cycles in which the mediator just needs to wait for the right moment to intervene, while other forms of peace diplomacy may enable development in this direction. These kinds of simplified models of conflict cycles follow each other and the particular forms of third party intervention that are appropriate in each phase have been replaced by a more chaotic and complex pattern in which there are multiple overlapping and interrelated but imbalanced conflict trends. The Syrian war is in this regard an excellent example of localized and dispersed but globally connected cycles without the no comprehensive direction of (de)escalation.

Conflicts that have endured over 20 years consist represent roughly 5% of all conflicts but they are the most complex and resistant for all mediation efforts. As Peter T. Coleman writes, "these systems are too complicated and unpredictable, and direct attempts at peacemaking often do nothing more than inspire spoilers."[5] Even if there are a few apparent success stories like that in Northern Ireland or Columbia, from other perspectives even these cases indicate serious flaws in peace mediation success. Within this kind of context, the ripeness theory lost its relevance and the question of when the right timing is to intervene is replaced

[3] Cantekin (2016, pp. 80–81).

[4] Ole Wæver's keynote lecture at 'Approaches to Peace Mediation: Is There Space For a Nordic Approach' seminar held at Tampere 14.8.2013.

[5] Coleman (2012, pp. 68–69).

with how is it possible for the third party to find entry points that would enable peace mediation. The responsibility of the international third party is then "to try to identify and seize upon any possible window of opportunity for mediation in order to prevent or manage violent conflict and, eventually, build and sustain peace," as stated in the UN Secretary General report on mediation published in June 2017.[6]

Mediation goal-setting and mediation success are still often evaluated from the perspective of the peace agreement and as Eriksson and Kostić argue "conventional studies in this regard usually do not take account of the long-term processes that shape the outcome of peace." They emphasize the "link between the form of a mediation process, the peace agreement and the character and success of the post-conflict peace" and argue that this relationship has been hitherto under-studied. Their overarching claim is "that peace processes and peace agreements, in terms of how they treat the primary parties, their participation and their concerns, can either lay the foundations for successful conflict resolution or engender social tensions that complicate and undermine the long-term prospects for domestic ownership and a sustainable peace."[7] Indeed, if peace mediation success is evaluated from a long-term perspective emphasizing sustainability of peace, its track records do not appear to be as superior and trouble-free as they are usually presented. If we want to study why some peace agreements fail and some last or, more generally, mediation success, it is important to concentrate on analyzing the position and implication of mediation in the whole peacebuilding process. Besides the current crisis of the track one mediation, the more profound challenge of mediation efforts in the longer perspective can be recognized: an increasing number of peace processes have failed to build sustainable peace. The success of a peace mediation is traditionally measured by counting those that concluded to a peace treaty but that approach omits the question of the durability of a peace agreement and examines success solely through the frame of 'negative peace.' The alternative option is examine the five-year period after the signing of a peace treaty and to list the cases in which peace has been preserved and which have fallen into a new armed conflict. There is a great tendency for peace agreements negotiated by a third party not to last; for example, one third of the 69 peace

[6] UN (2017): Report of the Secretary-General.

[7] Eriksson and Kostić (2013a, pp. 9, 17), Aggestam and Björkdhal (2009).

agreements during the period of 1989–2000 were followed by a civil war within five years of their signing.[8] The fate of the peace agreement in South Sudan (2015) is an excellent example in this matter. However, this is still a rather categorical approach and is based on the emphasis of 'negative peace' and this kind of approach does not discuss what makes certain agreements more sustainable than others and why certain agreements offer a basis for a long-term peace process while others do not. New approaches to the durability of peace have concentrated on focusing how a mediated solution sets premises and enables or—in the worst case—prevents the building of sustainable peace for years onwards. The focus would then not be solely on the durability of the peace *agreement* but merely on the *sustainability* of peace.

Even if open violence did not break out, society may have often stagnated in a reality that is not war nor peace, and in which immediate fear of violence remains. Bosnia after the Dayton agreement is a classic example of this. Even though a peace agreement was signed and a large international peace-building operation organized, Bosnia has remained for over two decades a very unstable country; the Dayton treaty has failed to bring truly sustainable peace. The persistence of antagonistic relations for over 20 years after the signing of the peace agreement has shown that the transformation of violent intrastate war into sustainable peace would require a lot more than great power diplomacy can achieve. Indeed, it is the Dayton agreement itself, and, in particular, the fixed ethnic categorizing it held that has been seen by many as the main obstacle to transformation towards sustainable peace.[9] These failures have demonstrated the need for rethinking the whole model and rethinking participation in peace diplomacy and mediation and how mediation contributing to the whole peace process.

For the mediators, choosing between narrow (negative) or wide (positive) peace is a fundamental normative but also pragmatic question concerning whether the focus on peace negotiations is on "the immediate war-related issues or on broader dimensions, including justice." How much and in what way the issues that are regarded as reasons for the war should be noticed in the peace mediation situation? Should the negotiated peace agreement "[correspond] to principles of legality and justice"?

[8] Eriksson and Kostić (2013a, p. 5), Helgesen (2007, p. 15).

[9] Kostić (2013).

"Peace may contradict justice in a number of ways" and from a particular mediator's perspective, it is challenging to relate justice with peace since the mediator has limited opportunities to "pursue a justice-based approach." Still, the mediators are expected to act from a moral high ground and are usually mandated by and represent "an organization based on international law and humanitarian rules." Therefore, balancing between broader and narrower understanding of peace is always difficult and omnipresent in all mediation situations. For example Lakhdar Brahimini, the well-known mediator in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Syria, argues that it is "not [the] mediator's role to focus on human rights" and that "peacemaking implied talking to people with blood on their hands." Swedish diplomat and mediator Jan Eliasson, in his term, has taken a more humanitarian ethos and, in particular in Darfur, his goal was to end the human suffering of the population. Concentrating primarily on humanitarian questions may lead to quick and successful results, as in Burma and Sudan.[10]

There is, indeed, a difference between mediation processes that aimed merely to find a quick end to war and those who worked "for a particular kind of solution, one that is better than others from a moral point of view." From the perspective of the durability of a peace agreement, this choice is essential as "injustices [give] rise to grievances, which in turn can lead to renewed conflict and violence," the mediator should not regard justice in too simple a form, and it is essential that the mediator considers what could the role of a third party be in building just peace.[11] "Peace can be justified without being just," as Fixdal quotes Avishai Margalit's point and continues by arguing that the value of even a negative peace should not be underestimated as even just war is accompanied by deep suffering and pain.[12] The question of 'just peace' has been regarded as one of the most important issues in achieving a truly sustainable and durable peace. Cecilia Albin and Daniel Druckman have observed a positive relationship between justice and a durable peace agreement[13] and Fixdal has emphasized the importance of mediating practices and the requirement of unproblematic terms for the "joint

[10] Svensson and Wallensteen (2010, pp. 120–122, 126).

[11] Fixdal (2012a, pp. 17–18).

[12] Ibid., pp. 158–159.

[13] Albin and Druckman (2010, pp. 109–119; 2012, pp. 155–173). See also Fixdal (2012a, p. 44).

agreement reached by adversaries" while looking for conditions for just peace.[14] Moreover, Eriksson and Kostić argue that traditional literature on peace mediation has approached the question from too narrow a perspective while concentrating only on issues like agreements and the amount of violence, which are easily observed and measurable. The core question concerning just peace and thus durability is, according to them, fairness of peace, which is a very subjective issue and is fundamentally associated with the identities and collective memories of communities affected by the conflict.[15] If the goal is seen to be just peace and justice is not defined in objective terms but in subjective terms, a core question from the peace mediation perspective is then how is it possible to support a change of perceptions among parties affected by the conflict.

Because of the above-explained reasons, the peace mediation debate has remained so-far only loosely connected to various critical approaches to liberal peace (building). Even in scholarly literature, "the critique of the liberal peace" has been the prevailing dogma for a long time.[16] The impact of this critique of peace mediation needs to be discussed in depth. In traditional international relations, intervention is treated as an exception and non-intervention as the prevailing normality but MacMillan takes "intervention as an ordering practice through which states have coercively mediated the tensions that arouse between bounded territoriality and transnational social forces in the modern world." Traditionally modern states have claimed intervention rights in various issues but, during the past decades, building, supporting and strengthening liberal peace "states and international organizations have intervened, for example, to relieve humanitarian suffering, to defend and promote democracy, to degrade hostile transnational movements, to determine the outcomes of civil wars, and to build (and transform) the institutions and capacities of 'fragile' or 'failing' states."[17] As the liberal peace ideal is comprehended simultaneously as an universal principle working for and guaranteeing global peace and as a normative guideline to settle one particular conflict, it legitimizes peace interventions as an ordering and

[14] Eriksson and Kostić (2013a, p. 33; 2013b, p. 160).

[15] Fixdahl (2012b, p. 17).

[16] Richmond and MacGinty (2015, p. 171).

[17] MacMillan (2013, pp. 1039–1047).

regulating practice of spreading and maintaining norms and values of the liberal West.

Several studies on (liberal) peacebuilding have concentrated on its illiberal effects, and have argued that missions cannot be neutral since they always reflect the ideological values of peacebuilders and serve certain interests.[18] Despite ambitious and well-meaning goals, many forms of (liberal) peacebuilding interventions have constituted highly invasive forms of external regulation and have implemented internationally endorsed blueprints of liberal peace rather than focusing on 'the local politics of building peace'.[19] The record of liberal interventions is at best seen as mixed and it is widely acknowledged in many instances that "the intervening party's hopes for a swift and decisive action were soon disappointed."[20] Many such interventions are impregnated with renewed notions of the Western *mission civilisatrice* for the reason that they are premised on ideas of liberal peace as a universal truth.[21]

During the past decade and half, democracy promotion and liberal peacebuilding have been contested from various directions. As such, typical peace-building missions generally prioritize mechanisms of liberal state-building through implementing internationally endorsed blueprints of liberal peace rather than focusing on "the local politics of building peace."[22] During the past few years, liberal peacebuilding and democracy promotion are presented more often from the critical perspective and "contestation, thereby, becomes itself a normative concept." In critical literature, "the debate has turned from a focus on norm diffusion to an interest in norm contestation and related discussion about norm localization, appropriation, and subsidiarity."[23]

In critical peacebuilding literature, terms like 'popular' or 'hybrid peace' have been introduced in order to gain an alternative to modernizing peacebuilding and to explore alternatives to dominating liberal peace without being anti-liberal or illiberal.[24] The recent debate

[18] Chandler (2010), Richmond (2013).

[19] Cubitt (2013, p. 94).

[20] MacMillan (2013, pp. 1039–1040).

[21] Paris (2002).

[22] Cubitt (2013, p. 94).

[23] Wolff and Zimmermann (2016, pp. 513–514).

[24] Cubitt (2013), Richmond (2013), Roberts (2011), Mitchell (2011). This is so-called 4th generation peace-building debate.

on hybrid peace has concentrated on the question of what Oliver Richmond calls local, subaltern agency, giving rise to calls for localized practices of "peace formation."[25] According to Richmond, "international- and national-level peace agreements, peace processes and progressive reforms have little meaning" if they are not also adapted to the local context, enabling a localized process of "peace formation."[26] Following Richmond, "peace formation" requires the contextualization of the peace process, and peacebuilding should be "reconstructed though local and international agency, and their mediation, to include institutions, rights, needs, culture and custom, from security, political, economic, social and justice perspectives."[27] It is local agency that is essential for any viable, sustainable form of peace. This local authority needs to have legitimacy within the sociopolitical and historical frame of its subjects in a specific networked context. Along similar lines.

Roberts notes that local ownership does not emerge without the recognition that there might be alternative forms for a liberal peace, but that at the same time, peace cannot be post-liberal "as long as neoliberal hegemony endures." However, there is the possibility to enhance what Roberts calls "popular peace" that "binds the everyday to legitimacy, ownership and degrees of emancipation." According to him, "[p]opular peace is the outcome of hearing, centering and responding to everyday needs enunciated locally as part of the peacebuilding process, which is then enabled by global actors with congruent interests in stable peace." Popular peace is contingent, as everyday needs can change and are "particular to context and messy in make-up, rather than formulaic, reactive rather than rigid, and better suited to spontaneous contingency, circumstance and complexity than the rehearsed rhetoric and ready rubric of neoliberal universalism."[28]

Critical peacebuilding literature lacks scrutiny on the consequences of this post-liberal shift to third party practice. "Locally arranged peacemaking processes" may be "always the better alternative" but initiating and enabling them or "from humanitarian perspective the international

[25] Richmond (2011).

[26] Richmond (2014).

[27] Richmond (2013, p. 70).

[28] Roberts (2011, pp. 2542–2543, 2556).

community cannot just wait for the emergence of homegrown negotiations" but a third-party intervention may be needed to kick off the work.[29] How then would a third-party intervention best be able to support local ownership and enhance inclusivity of peace process? The follow-up question, then, is how the practices of (international) third party peacemakers should be revisited, such that they are targeted to empower local ownership and locally defined peace and recognize "the presence of traditional institutions and actors" which could help "overcome societal divides"?[30]

As liberal peace has been the hegemonic norm for regulating and justifying international (peace) interventions, it is obvious that peace mediation cannot remain outside of this normative basis. The question of how peace mediation is entangled with norms of liberal peace has not been scrutinized so far, even if it seems to be a key to re-evaluating mediation as a practice of intervention. Even if peace mediation has remained less intrusive or more restricted in a norm diffusion, but still formal mediation by official actors "is often manifested in exclusive negotiations, featuring only the leaderships of the belligerent parties"[31] and primarily focuses on issues relevant to the governance of the state. In different recent agendas given by the UN, the EU, the AU and other international organizations, peace mediation has been comprehended more and more as an integral part of the whole peace process and, in particular, within the EU frame it is attached to a broader liberal peace frame with emphasis on human rights and democracy promotion.[32] Furthermore, in particular, more recently practitioners have been seeking a wider normative basis for peace mediation and thus have entangled mediation with democracy promotion and human rights as part of the liberal peace ideal. In the Oslo Forum 2015, it was highlighted that the "mediator's role is to promote and defend democracy and human rights, not just end violence" but it also provided a reminder that mediators are not a "values crusader."[33] Mediators seemingly take on a more skeptical position to norm promotion than peacebuilders and are inclined to adopt a

[29] Eriksson and Kostić (2013b, pp. 159–162).

[30] Ibid., p. 162.

[31] Paffenholz Ross (2015, p. 29).

[32] Tamminen (2012), Piiparinen (2012); African Union In Mediation.

[33] Peacemaking in the new world disorder, Oslo Forum (2015).

pragmatic approach to norms. They do not promote certain norms so much from ideological reasons (liberal peace) or from personal conviction but because it may increase legitimacy of peace processes among the local population.[34]

Peace mediation literature has predominantly taken an unproblematized or engineering approach to (peace) intervention that shares a lot of common elements with the classical liberal peace-building approach. One remarkable exception has been Roland Bleiker and Morgan Brigg's postcolonial criticism to universalist approach of conflict resolution practice and theory and according to them "local traditions of conflict resolution have been neglected because prevailing ways of dealing with conflict are typically focused through Western approached to conflict resolution." They call for a post-colonial approach and focus on non-Western forms of mediating across difference.[35] Unfortunately, in this study it is not possible to follow this interesting path but the focus would instead be in critic and revision on rational approach to mediation strategy that is indeed grounded on particular rational Western thinking.

Liberal peace intervention is based on "a 'deterministic-design' model, that is, a causal model where the outcome is more or less guaranteed if the design is followed" and failure of achieving peace is interpreted as "shortcomings in the implementation of the design."[36] Critique towards this belief of rational management and of the depoliticized nature of the peace process has been a core target of a new pragmatic turn in peacebuilding and, indeed, for peace mediation practice too. According to Audra Mitchell," [a]s peace interventions become more closely aligned with the creation and implementation of good governance, an administrative logic, and the meta-narratives of international actors tend to depoliticise the project of peace and reduce it to a problem of management." This emphasis on management tends to transform the peacebuilding approach into one of managing modernization, and because in the prevailing emergency situation it is only the

[34] Hellmülle et al. (2015).

[35] Brigg and Bleiker (2010).

[36] de Coning (2018, p. 302).

(international) third party that is deemed capable of undertaking such management, liberal peacebuilding tends to construct peacebuilding as an unending process.[37] In very similar terms, Jasmine-Kim Westendorf looks for an explanation for the failure of the third party-organized peace processes to establish durable peace. According to her, in the peace process:

> security building, governance building, and transitional justice initiatives [are] primarily technocratic exercises that [attempt] to 'fix' infrastructure and systems of states emerging from civil war. The tendency toward technocratic peace processes is underpinned by the assumption that intrastate violence is an irrational phenomenon that occurs in the context of the breakdown of state institutions and that reestablishing, or in some cases simply establishing, those institutions through a number of mechanisms across the security, governance, and transitional justice sphere will help build peace.[38]

But this kind of depoliticized peace process does not respond to how "individuals and communities [engage] with peace consolidation, or [work] against it."[39] Thus, peace often remains an elite-driven process that does not contribute to the security of the community. Westendorf calls for an anti-technocratic approach that is custom-designed for the needs of the local population and allows for the genuine engagement of local society.

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[37] Mitchell (2011, p. 1633).

[38] Westendorf (2015, p. 4).

[39] Ibid.

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CHAPTER 6

From Management of Incompatibles to the Transformation of Antagonism

Peace mediation literature is dominated by positivist theories and has focused on mediation as a phenomenon of rational management. The questions of normative bases of peace mediation has not been regarded as relevant research question, even if, as Eriksson and Kostić highlight, in a peace process there are always "a number of unmeasurable aspects, such as norms and influences."[1] The scope of understanding of peace mediation is very much dependent on how 'peace' and 'conflict' are understood and furthermore how it is seen to be possible to manage, solve or transform conflicts. These two are mutually complementary. In particular, what is understood as peace may be regarded as a philosophical question but it is also normative by its essence and indeed also pragmatic, since how peace is comprehended defines objectives and modes of third party intervention. In this regard, a differentiation between conflict transformation, conflict resolution, and the more traditional conflict management have fundamental implications for how peace mediation practice is comprehended and how the role of the third party is seen. These theoretical frames offer remarkably different understandings of the possibilities of the third party to make peace as they differ in regard to comprehension of the essence of peace and conflict.

Peace mediation, in its classical terms, is firmly based on the conflict management or settlement approach and, in practical terms, it

[1] Eriksson and Kostić (2013, p. 9), Aggestam and Björkdhal (2009).

M. Lehti, *The Era of Private Peacemakers*,
Rethinking Peace and Conflict Studies,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-91201-1_6

emphasizes real political goal setting, and aims to look for a win–win situation among the conflict parties. Conflict settlement is based on the classical definition of conflict as a source of *incompatible interests*, and presumes that these interests are negotiable. Furthermore, peace is, in simplified terms, the end of open violence or fighting.[2] Furthermore, as conflicts are about incompatible interests among parties, classical (peace) mediation assumes that incompatiblity is a function of a tragic misunderstanding that can be solved in rational terms through negotiations. Negotiations are presented as a core instrument of conflict settlement (or management) and it is the interests of parties, not their positions, that are on the agenda of these negotiations. The mediation process may be a challenging one and it can fail but a nodal point of peace mediation dogma is a firm trust in the *rational* management of conflict. Thus, "the traditional approaches to third party intermediary intervention discuss third-party roles, functions, qualities and resources" and "it pays attention [to] negotiations as bargaining situations and [emphasizes the] mediator's personal skill."[3]

Constraints of the conflict management approach with its emphasis on rational negotiations are easily recognizable from a practical perspective. The asymmetric situation of wars does not offer an ideal basis for negotiations. Asymmetric negotiation situation holds a paradox since "best negotiation situations are among equals and thus efficient negotiations is not possible in [an] asymmetric situation." Some minimal equality between the negotiating parties is required because if the negotiating parties are very unequal "the party with more power [has] an undue advantage" and, in that situation, peace negotiations are merely able to continue with the unilateral actions of the stronger party.[4] Even though asymmetric negotiation is in theory a paradox, the acceptance of an asymmetric situation is also reality if a third party intervenes to end an asymmetric conflict. Still, as Fixdal emphasizes, the principal requirement for a successful negotiation situation among asymmetric parties is that negotiating parties have a basic respect for the people they are negotiating with and on behalf of.[5] In current asymmetric conflicts, this is not

[2] Miall (2004), Buckley-Zistelv (2008, p. 16).

[3] Väyrynen (2001, p. 17).

[4] Fixdal (2012, pp. 35–38).

[5] Ibid., p. 27.

necessarily the case and the mediation situation contains a discrepancy in terms of the expectations held by parties and often "the bargaining situation is inevitably unfair.'" In this context, mediation may be used by parties who are not committed to negotiations and compromises a cover for more "devious objectives," such as enhancing international legitimacy or gaining time. The parties in conflict must have a certain degree of recognition towards each other in order for official negotiations to take place.[6]

The ontological basis of conflict management approach to mediation is contested by Deiniol Lloyd Jones, who points out that instead of misunderstandings, conflict is about "fundamental political disagreements which are coupled with radical imbalances of power."[7] Along similar lines, Oliver Ramsbotham emphasizes radical disagreement as the essence of violent conflict. For Ramsbotham, radical disagreement is about a conflict of belief in its broadest sense, and thus, in his view, it is not a question of the "coexistence of rival discourses, but a fight to the death to impose the one discourse."[8] Antagonistic situation characteristic to violent conflict does not offer, according to Ramsbotham and Lloyd Jones, opportunity for rational problem-solving negotiation.

The *conflict resolution* approach has been a dominant theoretical background of liberal peace interventionism and, even if it has had less influence on peace mediation in more general terms, it has had influences on the definition of mediation goals and it has also contributed to methods in problem-solving workshops. The *conflict resolution* approach agrees that incompatible interests are negotiable, but also considers there to be non-negotiable human needs that must be satisfied. In addition to incompatible interest, conflict resolution emphasizes a need to address the underlying structural root causes of violent conflicts. The focus is then given to issues like safety and human security, and distributive justice, among others. Reaching an agreement is important in order to know what the 'real' problem and the root cause of the conflict is, and to recognize each other's needs; it is then possible to explore creative solutions.[9] The normative aim of resolution—peace—is seen in Galtungian terms as positive peace, as the need to resolve the structural conditions

[6] Svensson (2012, pp. 177–178).

[7] Lloyd Jones (2000, p. 655).

[8] Ramsbotham (2010, p. 123).

[9] Buckley-Zistel (2008, p. 17).

that created a violent conflict is emphasized. While conflict resolution theories brought with them the idea of complicated root causes, they retained the trust in rational communication and linear planning as well as the importance of problem-solving workshops. Therefore, the conflict resolution approach shares an indisputable trust in "intervention by skilled but powerless third-parties"[10] and identifies peacemakers in pragmatic terms, like doctors whose role is to recognize diseases and then find suitable medicine.[11]

Conflict resolution theories preceded the era of liberal peacebuilding but along liberal peace interventionism it became hegemonic dogma that have given rationale and justification for various large internationally led peacebuilding operations launched since the mid-90s. In the case of peace mediation, influences of conflict resolution theories are recognizable; for example, in the definitions from Bercovitch and Wallensteen and Svensson that were introduced earlier, but in dominating peace mediation practice, less attention was given to the question of how to address to root causes. A new kind of approach to third party intermediary activities can be found in problem-solving workshops based, for example, in Burton's theories that "deal with the root causes of conflict, not about negotiating on interest." The idea of problem-solving workshops were based on the objectified definition of conflict, according to which root causes are recognizable and manageable but also detached from subjective elements like identities, perceptions, attitudes and images. Furthermore, it also represents a belief on human rationality par excellence and the third party activity is presented as a kind of social engineering.[12] Theoretical models of problem-solving workshops were implemented in the purest forms only in certain academic-led pilot workshops (introduced in the previous chapter) but its ontological assumptions of objectified root causes and rational management have had a wider resonance in the development of the third party practice in general.

During the past decade or two, the previously dominating rationalistic beliefs of conflict management have been challenged by various *conflict transformation* approaches. The centrality of resolution

[10] Miall (2004, p. 70).

[11] Praeger (2008, p. 407).

[12] Väyrynen (2001, pp. 15–21).

as an omnipresent dogma has been contested by conflict transformation approach. One of the world's leading conflict resolution theorists, Ramsbotham, has written: "The normative aim of conflict resolution is not to overcome conflict. Conflict cannot be overcome – it is an unavoidable feature of social development. And conflict should not be overcome, in combating an unjust situation. The aim, rather, is to transform actually or potentially violent conflict into non-violent forms of social struggle and social change."[13] This statement captures the core approach of what is called conflict transformation. During the past two decades, a distinct body of academic literature has emerged; these studies outline various approaches that can be labelled under 'conflict transformation,' although they are still far from a uniform theoretical framework. The term 'conflict transformation' has already been used earlier by scholars such as Johan Galtung; he, however, referred to transformational processes rather than "a long-term transformation of a war system into a peace system," as conflict transformation is defined by John Paul Lederach.[14]

The theoretical foundation of *conflict transformation* has been influenced by John Burton's ideas on conflict resolution, Edward Azar's theorizing on protracted social conflicts and Morton Deutsch's work on transforming conflicts from destructive to constructive.[15] Later on, these ideas have been developed further by Diana Francis and Lederach, for example. Scholars such as Kumar Rupesinghe, Louis Kriesberg and Raimo Väyrynen have also made significant contributions to the study of conflict transformation. Instead of intrusive third-party intervention and mediation, conflict transformation emphasizes empowerment for groups within society. Lederach's practically oriented conflict transformation approach, in particular, has had a great influence among NGO actors. As Miall points out: "Following Lederach, NGO practitioners advocate a sustained level of engagement over a longer time-period … They seek to open a space for dialogue, sustain local or national conferences and workshops on paths towards peace, identify opportunities

[13] Ramsbotham (2010, p. 53).

[14] Miall (2004, p. 73).

[15] Ramsbotham (2010, p. 53).

for development and engage in peacebuilding, relationship-building and institution-building over the longer term."[16]

The conflict transformation approach understands conflict as a socially constructed relationship between parties in which "each side declares which issues are in dispute and who the adversaries are. Members of opposing sides tend to quarrel about the correctness and reality of each other's social construction," as Kriesberg writes.[17] Kriesberg, as many other conflict transformation theorists, sees the main task of conflict transformation in changing the conflict from destructive to constructive. As transformation approaches regard conflict as a natural and important part of social and political life, the aim is not to eliminate it, but rather to turn destructive, violent forms of conflict into non-violent ones. In order to do this, conflict transformation prioritizes transforming relationships, discourses, attitudes and interests. It seeks to alter the underlying systems, cultures and institutions that lead to the expression of conflict in violent terms. Rather than try to adjust the positions of the parties and compromise between their differing interests, conflict transformation attempts to change the nature and functions of violence.[18]

In addition to the work of Lederach and Kriesberg, a few scholars have focused more on antagonistic relationships and identities. For Suzanne Buckley-Zistel "Conflict transformation refers to approaches that seek to encourage wider social change through transforming the antagonistic relationship between the parties to the conflict."[19] This approach understands antagonism, or antagonistic identities, as a major aspect of the conflict. Vivienne Jabri argues that moving from war to peace is a discursive process that requires transformation of identities. According to her, "the legitimation of war is situated in discursive practices based on exclusionist identities," and therefore she stresses the importance of discursive processes that incorporate difference rather than reify exclusion.[20]

Their approach allows attention to be directed towards the relationship between identity and (in)security. Conflicts are certainly not only products

[16] Miall (2004, p. 82).

[17] Kriesberg (2015, p. 52).

[18] Väyrynen (1991, pp. 1–25).

[19] Buckley-Zistel (2008, p. 21).

[20] Jabri (1996, p. 157).

of competition for material gain and incompatible power interests. They also arise, as evidenced by many current tensions, as part of a larger (re) production of identities and group boundaries through mutually exclusive myths, interpretations of history, and collective memorialization.[21] Identity conflicts are fueled by discourses of historical enmity, hatred and polarization, which intensify the basic existential fears for group survival. When a group experiences a threat to its very existence, escaping into conflict narratives and practices adds to the feeling of ontological security as these justify antagonism and confirm existing identities.[22] Issues pertaining to ontological insecurity may therefore constitute a more essential obstacle for achieving sustainable peace than threats to physical security. It has been noted in this context that engagement in wars and conflicts may, paradoxically, provide a sense of certainty, predictability and ontological security by enabling consistent definitions of self and other to be maintained. Thus, conflicts can function as sources of identities that provide feelings of safety, whereas partaking in efforts of settlement can undermine identity-related safety; that is, bring about ontological insecurity. To open up collective memories to dialogue during the peace process, therefore, can be extremely difficult as resolution or transformation would therefore, with the conduct of violence furnishing the parties with firm identities, require an opening up of existing identities and identity transformation. From the perspective of conflict transformation, it is then essential that third party intervention addresses this identity paradox. Despite the crucial role of identity-related politics in the dynamics of conflict, the question of how identities and narratives concerning the past can be mediated, and how—first and foremost—conflicts pertaining to identities can be settled, has remained understudied and undertheorized in conflict resolution and peace mediation literature since according to the prevailing understanding of conflict resolution, identity-related issues have not been recognized as negotiable phenomena.[23] Antagonism not only sustains violent conflict but even after formal peace agreement and armistice, contradicting narratives on how to remember (and forget) the past revive and sustain antagonism and thus violent conflict. The maintenance of an antagonist relationship keeps society vulnerable to future violence. The core questions of conflict resolution therefore appear to be less about the interest-based causes of violence, and more

[21] Buckley-Zistel (2006, p. 6).

[22] Rumelili (2015b, pp. 58–59).

[23] Lehti (2016a, pp. 29–30); Lehti (2016b, pp. 234–238).

about *how identities preserve antagonism* and—more particularly—*how collective imaginations and memories may constitute the main obstacle for achieving a genuine transformation and therefore a sustainable peace.*

If recent studies on ontological (in)security are attached to the peacemaking frame, there appears a paradox since it is conflict (narrative) that offers ontological security and transformation towards peace, and reconciliation may easily generate ontological insecurity. Following Anthony Giddens preserving ontological security requires keeping a strong narrative going that must incorporate a story about the self and past experiences; this identification narrative builds up self-esteem.[24] Self-esteem, however, is not simply dependent upon the establishment of a sense of self, but it is also linked to the need to secure recognition from others for the actions, positions and values adopted by the self.[25] Furthermore, for Jennifer Mitzen, a prerequisite for being an ontologically secure agent is acting through routinized practices in a stable cognitive environment; vice versa, upsetting these routinized practices generates ontological insecurity.[26] Brent Steele adds that there needs to be a certain coherence between identity, narrative and the actions undertaken by the agent. Actions that are not in accordance with values and principles of the agent would result in shame, which could lead to revisions of identity.[27] In all these definitions, ontological security is intertwined with existence of strong identity narrative and they do not offer a tool to promote conflict transformation. Ontological security can also be seen as an identification process that is, in essence, a reflective project of continuously seeking to maintain a sense of 'self' through 'being' and 'doing' in a constantly changing environment. Trine Flockhart highlights "how reflexivity towards identity within a constantly changing world requires continuous processes of identification and narrating the influence of 'dislocating events' that often compel agents to undertake action or to change their practice and to reflect on how events and actions impact established identification and narrative processes."[28] Flockhart thus departs from the presupposition that life is not only about routinized activities but that the ability to make and cope with inevitable

[24] Giddens (1991, p. 47). See also Flockhart (2016, pp. 802–803).

[25] Lebow (2008, pp. 61–63).

[26] Mitze (2005).

[27] Steele (2008).

[28] Flockhart (2016, pp. 799–820).

change is necessary. Thus, it is this ability or inability to cope with dislocating events that constitutes a source for ontological (in)security. From this perspective, investment in increasing society's ability to cope with uncertainties introduces a valid but not easy path for coping with antagonist identities.

The prevailing practices of facilitation tend to aspire to dissolve antagonism before the dialogue can start, while identities are not seen as an issue for the dialogue itself. In searching for a way out, and in order to improve the record of mediation and conflict resolution, questions pertaining to identities, collective memories and ontological security must be granted a far more central role than heretofore. In order to achieve sustainable peace, it is not only possible but also crucial to support the transformation of identities and collective memories. These issues cannot just be left to be dealt with in some possible later reconciliation or national dialogue process in the last phase of conflict transformation, but indeed need to be recognized from the outset of the early phase of peace mediation and onwards. It hence becomes necessary to point out the specific role of a mediating actor to encourage such a process, and to rethink how to make the impossible possible.

Antagonistic ways of addressing historical injustices underline the perceived causes of a conflict and impose emotionally loaded and fixed roles by classifying entire groups as victims or perpetrators.[29] Narratives about the past are often attached to a broader historical perspective that routinely include explanations of 'ancient' animosities, ownership of a certain geographic area, or the origins of a particular ethnicity; they thus become instrumental in the composition of what has been called 'narrative identities.' These narratives constitute social ontologies through which the process of identification operates. In order to transform a conflict, it is thus necessary to find, as an integral part of the peace process, tools to transform antagonistic identities and narratives.[30]

Collective memories and narratives of the past are entangled with a group's sense of security—or, to be more precise, they are often securitized as part of an ongoing conflict. As a result, a "fixed public remembrance" and "legal frames for how 'our story' can be remembered" are settled, and arguments are urged as to how our narrative of the past is continuously "misunderstood and mispresented by other(s), whose

[29] Buckley-Zistel (2006, pp. 3–4).

[30] Lehti (2016a, pp. 29–30).

vision of the past is thus regarded as existentially endangering our existence as 'us.'" Thus the narrative of the past and its collective memorialization avoid the possibility of being opened up for dialogue.[31] However, as Aggestam notes, the recognition and acknowledgement of the historical narratives of the sufferings and trauma of the other side can support—through apology, symbolic gestures and concessions—a just and durable peace. In practice, however, this is nearly impossible to achieve, since the parties involved have fortified themselves within their respective roles of *victim and perpetrator*, roles that often resist compromise in simplified settings. As the politics of reconciliation concerns antagonistic processes that relate to the existential concerns of the particular group, making peace can be seen as a threat to its societal being—and thus peace can generate ontological insecurity.[32] In addition, it is the fear of ontological insecurity that "may set in motion political and social processes that reproduce and reactivate conflicts."[33] As peacemaking and reconciliation require an opening up and recognition of the other—which, as Rumelili notes, is almost impossible to achieve when radical disagreement prevails, the anxiety of meaninglessness and the anxiety of guilt/condemnation being major functions of ontological security—conflict resolution is difficult, but possible, since "anxiety opens up space for breaking the conflict habits and [for] the intersubjective negotiation and redefinition of identities."[34]

When seeking an answer as to how antagonistic identities can be transformed, we need in the beginning to rethink the ultimate goal of the peace process, and then ask what potential new approaches and tools there might be to help move in that direction. In this context, the recent debate on *agonistic peace* firmly grounded on French philosopher Chantall Mouffe's ideas on agonistic pluralism is helpful. Mouffe offers a reminder that conflicts as such are essential for social being and are the driving force for change, but in a peaceful society conflicts are managed in a non-violent manner. For democratic society more generally, as well as for conflict transformation, the most essential thing is the existence or creation of an "ensemble of practices, discourses and institutions which

[31] Mälksoo (2015, pp. 223–229).

[32] Aggestam (2013, p. 44).

[33] Rumelili (2015a, p. 1).

[34] Ibid., p. 19.

seek to establish a certain order and organize human coexistence in conditions that are always potentially conflictual." Furthermore, Mouffe writes that *antagonism as such is human and cannot simply be solved away*, but rather what is essential for achieving peace is the transformation of an enemy that one wants to destroy into an adversary "whose ideas we combat but whose right to defend those ideas we do not put into question." There cannot, therefore, be a "rational resolution of the conflict, hence its antagonistic dimension." The aim of democratic politics is therefore to transform antagonism into agonism, i.e. to bring about "a conflictual consensus."[35] Importantly, it appears that this kind of thinking opens up a new perspective relevant to mediation and dialogue, in which conflict transformation seeks a transition from violent to nonviolent confrontation that is also a transformation of antagonism into agonism—the core question being what is required for this kind of transformation.

As argued above, the core problem in identity conflict is not antagonism, but rather how it is possible to support the transformation from enemy to adversary. What distinguishes adversaries from enemies is the relational aspect of *respect*.[36] For Buckley-Zistel, the core issue separating antagonism from agonism is mutual *acceptance* that thus a goal of transformation.[37] Therefore, "the transition from conflict to peace" would imply "that a process of conflict transformation entails changes in identities of the parties to the conflict" but also changes in the way that "communities remember their past (and hence re-member the community) as well as how they anticipate their future." The processes of "conflict transformation are always susceptible to power hierarchies which determine the outcome."[38]

In terms of granting and withholding of recognition and respect, narratives of the past have a core role in transformation, since sustained exclusive roles of enmity and victimhood are rooted in conflicting narratives about the past. Therefore, conflict transformation calls attention to how a complicated history, inequitable economic conditions,

[35] Mouffe (1999, pp. 754–756).

[36] Shinko (2008, p. 478).

[37] Buckley-Zistel (2008, p. 22).

[38] Ibid., pp. 7–8.

and political dynamics are all entangled in identity struggles.[39] All this is very difficult to achieve in practice as long as each party has fortified its self-representation as victim and depicted the other(s) as the perpetrator(s). The narratives of the past should not, however, be regarded as fixed and predetermined: there is room for a dialogic transformation of memories and identities by renegotiating the narratives of the past. Mediating the narratives of the past, however, cannot be based on an interest-based negotiation model looking for a solution—rather, it is merely the opening up of a dialogic process that seeks a fusion of horizons.

It seems obvious that the huge changes in identification cannot happen overnight as hate does not transform into forgiveness in one night after violent conflict, and traumatic experiences are not wiped out within a day. By contrast, the creation of antagonistic identities during the escalation of conflict may happen surprising quickly; for example, in Ukraine since 2014. Thus, it is relevant to ask if an early phase mediation process can support transformation and if a third party can have some role in that, since the transformation of past narratives is a precondition for sustainable peace. Buckley-Zistel highlights the importance of the moment in between war and peace as the time when dialogic transformation could be possible, before identities are firmly institutionalized, since at this time old traditions are broken and new ones not yet institutionalized.[40] However, several current practices entangled with peace negotiation seemingly offer confirmation of antagonistic interpretations of the past rather than try to support acceptance of existence of alternative truths. It is thus highly important to rethink the role of past narratives in the conflict transformation process and to scrutinize opportunities to support transformation. The nodal point for transforming antagonistic identities seems to be in an opening up of the narratives of the past, which requires *transforming the forms, practices and rituals that affect how the memorialization of the past determines the politics of the present.* In the end, it is not a question of the change of the past but how antagonism, the roles of victim and perpetrator, are narrated through interpretation of history. As Praeger writes “traumatic memory floods the

[39] Shinko (2008).

[40] Buckley-Zistel (2008, p. 51).

present as if it were the past; it is a reliving of past experiences rather than a remembering of them." According to him, post-conflict societies are locked in melancholic remembrance of past wrong doing and thus narratives about past wrong doings sustain the role of oneself as a victim and exclude the ability to re-narrate the past conflict. Pursuing the psychological analogy, Prager is looking for tools for the undoing of trauma that would require a travelling inward rather than a travelling backward. This would mean deconstructing how the past narratives determine every experiences emotions and politics. According to Praeger, the ultimate goal "is the creation of space for speaking and listening, a community constituted neither by victim and perpetrator per se but rather by those willing, for the time being, to shorn themselves of their particular pre-existing positions."[41] Sustainable peace can prevail when there is the possibility of narrating alternative and even contradicting interpretations without fear of re-escalating the conflict—this in fact is a prerequisite for sustainable peace. In this situation, dislocating events do not appear as a source of existential threat (ontological insecurity) but adaptive resilience to cope with uncertainties and the messiness of the world prevails.

Susanne Buckley-Zistel proposes a hermeneutic approach to peacebuilding. According to her, Hans-Georg Gadamer's hermeneutic opens up an alternative understanding of the peace process. The nodal point in Gadamer's idea is that he does not understand past–present–future in linear terms, but rather in his view the past is interpreted in the light of today, while the future reflects back on how we interpret the present and the past. According to Gadamer, there cannot be a true interpretation of one's past. Therefore, envisioning a common future could be a key that would make it possible to also interpret the past differently. Hence, remembering differently could allow for a fusion of horizons and for imagining of a "collective identity which is not based on antagonism against a (former) enemy. It might allow for an exclusive boundary between self and other to become more permeable and open up possibilities for a more peaceful co-existence."[42] In this perspective, the role of political actors and institutions is also pivotal, as these may either support or prevent the opening of conflicting narratives about the past, and can open up space for alternative and more positive articulations.

[41] Praeger (2008, pp. 416–418).

[42] Buckley-Zistel (2006, p. 20).

In aiming to transform antagonism to agonism (as with the roles of enemy/adversary or victim/perpetuator) the goal cannot be the construction of a "unifying grand story to reconcile the divisions,"[43] and a "conflict transformation process should not introduce a new sense of closure to the detriment of diversity since this can potentially lead to a new conflict,"[44] but rather it should merely be "a socio-cultural process of reconciliation, where 'a majority of a society's members change their beliefs about the former adversary, about their own society, and about the relationship between the two groups.'"[45] The peace process should not aim to explain differences away (which is impossible) or to look for closure, as there can be no final solutions, and compromises are always only a temporary pause in the confrontation. Conflicts remain unavoidably a part of societal relations.[46] The goal of the peace process is to build mutual respect that would require the acceptance of the other side's narratives of the past, or at least opening up one's own interpretation. The road is certainly not easy or straightforward, and it begins in small, almost unconnected paths, but it is important to avoid unintentionally closing the process and thus excluding the possibility of dialogue, as has happened in the past. From the point of view of the third party, it is crucial to ask how this long-term reconciliation process can possibly be enabled and supported by mediating and negotiating processes that look primarily for short-term goals and engage with only selected participants. Thus, it seems that from the perspective of the third party, recognizing the power of the narratives is crucial but furthermore new tools are required that would support the fusions of horizons and opening up narratives.

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[43] Ahonen (2012, p. 149).

[44] Buckley-Zistel (2008, p. 8).

[45] Rumelili (2015a, p. 20).

[46] Shinko (2008, pp. 478, 480).

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CHAPTER 7

Dialogic Transformation

Given the particular focus on third party practices, it seems that critical literature lacks interests in the third-party perspective beyond criticism. Still a more pragmatic demand for a revisited approach and practice resonates well with several theoretical debates and as both emphasize the significance of dialogues, transformation, narratives and identities. Nevertheless, even if theoretical debates do not offer a straightforward answer to develop practice, theoretical pieces are available to sketch out what is called here *dialogic transformation*. According to Amanda Feller and Kelly Ryan, a dialogic transformation has already become an important instrument of peacemaking, but to become a truly useful and successful tool, it still requires theorists, practitioners, and local and international leaders to form a better and clearer understanding of what is understood as dialogic transformation.[1] Thus, there is a need for new studies—empirical and theoretical—that capture the turn in peacemaking practices but simultaneously also theorize dialogic transformation in relation to the older forms of peace support. This is a task to which this study aims to contribute.

Whereas mediation in its more traditional configuration tends to rest on the assumption that settling wars and violent conflicts calls for fair solutions in terms of the interests or material gains at stake, new dialogic approaches do not necessarily share these assumptions. Instead of regarding conflict as a static condition that must be removed, conflict

[1] Feller and Ryan (2012, pp. 351–380).

M. Lehti, *The Era of Private Peacemakers*,
Rethinking Peace and Conflict Studies,
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transformation approaches view conflict as a fluid, dynamic process. It evolves and fluctuates constantly in unpredictable ways and patterns, and is often part of a complex web of multiple, intertwined conflicts. This kind of understanding of conflict dynamics is closely related to the very recent debate about complexity thinking that has offered another perspective to critique on rational management of conflicts. Peter Coleman has contributed to this debate from social psychological perspective as have Brusset, de Coning and Hughes in their book *Complexity Thinking for Peacebuilding: Practice and Evaluation (2016)*. Along with de Coning's article on "Adaptive Peacebuilding", these works contribute to a more recent pragmatic turn in peacebuilding literature to address to the shortcoming of the prevailing liberal peace approach and look for alternatives from the pragmatic perspective. Nonetheless, this pragmatic discussion on complexity has so far remained separate from the critical peacebuilding debate, even if the two are related and in many ways complementary but instead it has gained interests of many practitioners.

Complexity as a specific approach is interested in how the elements interact, and how this interaction translates to the system in which a whole is able to gain new capacities that did not exist within the individual elements. Complex systems are open, non-linear and self-organizing. They are open systems, as interactions take place across their boundaries, and the boundary between the inside and the outside is not definite. Non-linearity refers to the argument that the outputs generated by the inputs are asymmetrical and not proportional. Action always has indirect and unintended consequences; thus, complex systems are not predetermined and predictable. The self-organization aspect stems from the ability of complex systems—determined by the cumulative effects of the actions and interactions of the various agents comprising them—to organize, regulate and maintain themselves without a sole controlling agent. Following de Coning, a complex system (like a society) is created and "maintained, as a result of the dynamic and non-linear interactions of its elements, based on the information available to them locally, and as a result of their interaction with their environment, as well as from the modulated feedback they receive from the other elements in the system."[2] Violent conflict damaged the ability of complex systems to self-organize. From this

[2] de Coning (2016, pp. 20, 24–27).

perspective, peacebuilders should aim to consolidate the resilience of the society, and to stimulate and support its capacity to self-organize. The goal is then a *self-sustainable peace*.[3] According to Peter Coleman, "systemic complexity is quite consonant with long-term stability, since once a complex system has settled into a pattern no single stimulus or even collection of stimuli may be sufficient to overcome its constantly reinforced inertia" and thus recovering systemic complexity defines the goal of conflict transformation.[4] Coleman also focuses on conflicts as a "complex, dynamic, nonlinear system" and describes, in particular, intractable conflicts as "a complex, dynamic, nonlinear system with a core set of interrelated and mutually influential variables." However, within this complex context, it is still possible to specify the central variables although there is great danger for oversimplification and essentializing variables "that are often not dichotomous and/or are highly malleable and reactive in nature."[5] He introduced the term 'systemic conflict transformation' in which the "complex must be affected as a whole, or the system must be displaced to another environment which is more benign"; the latter is seemingly more appropriate to violent conflicts. The process of transition is unstable, turbulent and even dangerous and thus patience is required from peacemakers as setbacks and regression are expected as well as "informed in their selection and sequencing of entry points."[6]

Brusset, de Coning, and Hughes argue that complex conflicts cannot be approached from a mechanistic perspective. They are not complicated systems like motors of automobiles in which it is possible to recognize causesof errors, and in which it is possible to identify the consequences of the repairing action, but rather they are *complex* systems. This means that there are "usually a very large number of programmatic interventions being undertaken simultaneously at different levels, by different professional communities, and with widely ranging timelines," and it is impossible to isolate the causal effects of one particular intervention. The self-sustainable peace is related to Roberts' notion "popular peace" (p. 70); as Brusset, de

[3] Brusset et al. (2016, p. 4).

[4] Coleman citated by Ramsbotham et al. (2011, p. 119).

[5] Coleman (2003, p. 7).

[6] Ramsbotham et al. (2011, p. 119). See also Coleman (2003).

Coning and Hughes point out, "peace emerges from messy political processes embedded deep within the cultural belief systems of the societies in question."[7] Therefore, approaches that worked in one context can rarely be guaranteed to yield results in another. This underscores the need to understand peacebuilding as a local process, which external third parties can support by helping to restore stability and facilitate social reconstruction.[8]

The complexity approach has drastic consequences for peacebuilding but also for peace mediation practice and contest ideas previously seen as self-evident, while also generating new possibilities. Ideas and techniques such as the traditional problem-solving approach and rationalistic conflict analysis, need to be rethought, since the outcomes of intervention in a complex system are not simple and predictable; rather, the system tends to respond to interventions in multiple, often unanticipated ways. Conflicts are not manageable in rationalistic terms, and it is not possible to indicate what the consequences of a particular action might be. Furthermore, it is not even possible to know which actions will have a significant influence in the long term. Some small-scale and almost invisible interventions may be crucial in the long term, while at the same time, large-scale, carefully planned international operations may have very little influence.[9] The term adaptive refers, in De Coning's theory, to societies as whole—resilient, self-organizing societies are adaptive—but also to the position and approach of peacemakers. Peacemakers are required to adapt their activity to the uncertainty of the complexity of conflict and to recognize that all analytical tools are provisional, based on inadequate knowledge and "continuously iterative processes." They should be aware that "it is not possible to find a single correct solution to a complex problem" and, furthermore, even thinking of peace process in terms of failure and success is nonsensical. Despite solving conflict, conflicts should be seen "a normal and necessary element of change" and peacemakers then support "the ability of communities to cope with and manage this process of change in such a way that they can avoid violent conflict."[10]

[7] Brusset et al. (2016, p. 4).

[8] de Coning (2016, p. 30).

[9] Ibid., p. 26.

[10] de Coning (2018, pp. 309–315).

This kind of thinking opens up a new perspective that is also relevant to mediation and dialogue. However, adopting adaptive peacebuilding in the peace mediation context and developing something that can be called 'adaptive mediation' requires empirical study of the changing peace mediation field. At a conceptual level, we can ask what would be the role and possible pragmatic tools of the third party and a mediator in a context in which a transition from a violent to a nonviolent confrontation, from antagonism into agonism, is primarily sought. Merging the conflict transformation approach and complexity thinking in peace mediation gives a new significance to what Bercovitch calls to change perceptions and behavior of parties as a core essence of peace mediation.[11] Peace mediation can be then defined primarily as *a peace-seeking exercise that includes different forms of third-party intervention to support the peaceful transformation of violent conflict by sustaining dialogic interaction among parties to conflict.* This kind of definition would shift the interest of mediation research towards how mediation practices and agency can be constructed in complex, contingent and particular peace processes. One obvious consequence has been replacing problem-solving workshops with various dialogue processes. The core argument of this study is that the major obstacle to conflict transformation is not antagonism as such, but *antagonism without dialogue.*

According to Francis and Ropers, peace mediation should be seen to be representing a broader spectrum of dialogues and peace support than just (diplomatic) negotiations among selected political and military leaders—mostly men in suits—at the roundtable; they argue it should be seen as an inclusive process that places a strong emphasis on civic society processes. From this perspective, peace mediation becomes a needed and valid element at all stages of a conflict cycle to support conflict transformation: before, during and after the violence. Indeed, promoting peace and changing structures that sustain direct and indirect violence tends to be much easier prior to the escalation and intensification of violence.[12] Dialogue as a core tool applied by mediators and peacebuilders calls for some rethinking. Traditional conflict resolution is based on a process according which the parties in a conflict disregard their perceived incompatibility and in rational terms find a common solution, but this does not

[11] Bercovitch (2002, pp. 6–7).

[12] Francis (2002 pp. 10–11), Ropers (1995, p. 22).

work in the context of antagonistic identities. This prevailing approach to mediation is grounded in a Habermasian understanding of dialogue and its problem-solving method. This approach may be important to achieving ceasefires and similar milestones, but it does not support a transformation from antagonism into agonism. Consequently, there is a need for alternative models for the conducting of dialogue.

Feller and Ryan present dialogue as a new essential component of reconciliation and conflict resolution processes because, according to them, dialogue differs from mediation as well as from other conflict resolution practices in general since "dialogue is movement aimed at generating coexistence and does so through encountering the 'other' to share experiences, to think together in creative and flexible ways, and to explore assumptions together." In principle, dialogue is for them an instrument that focus on antagonist relationship. As dialogue is understood as an act of sharing, its aim is to transform the images of the other as the enemy, the perpetrator or the oppressor. Therefore, the ultimate aim is rehumanization of the enemy and to build "enduring structures that allow people to coexist in good and bad times."[13] With this in mind, the core question is what kind of dialogue would support the transformation of identities and the creation of mutual respect, and furthermore what role can a third party play in this kind of process? It is suggested in this study that the Bakhtinian dialogic theory may in fact be a more relevant and suitable view of conflict transformation than the Habermasian model of dialogue. According to Richard Sennett, Bakhtinian "dialogic" refers to "a discussion which does not resolve itself through finding a common ground. Though no shared agreement may be reached, through the process of exchange people may become more aware of their own views and expand their understanding of one another." Therefore, Bakhtinian dialogic contrasts with Habermasian dialogue and its dialectical approach. Sennett distinguishes Habermasian problem solving—resolution seeking—from the Bakhtinian problem-finding dialogue that emphasizes listening (indeed, one of the principal skills of a mediator). While the first emphasizes closure, the latter avoids it and drives the conversation forward.[14] Following Coleman, in the dialogic relation as defined by Bakhtin, 'thesis' and 'antithesis' can never be merged into a higher synthesis

[13] Feller and Ryan (2012).

[14] Sennett (2012, pp. 19–30).

but they constituted "the permanent poles of a noneliminable tension" and then "constructive change results from the capacity to accept the permanence of the tension and to find way to proceed that respect this permanence."[15] Arguably, a Bakhtinian dialogue would help to ensure a transformation of the politics of identity. Indeed, instead of preventing the expression of the conflicting identities, with all the risks of suppression and hegemony that entails, Bakhtinian dialogue supports the imagining of divergent interpretations. In doing so, it favors the possible renegotiation of identities and, in particular, the narratives of the past.

The Bakhtinian approach also fits better in situations where a dialogue for mutual understanding is not possible. According to Ramsbotham, even when radical disagreement prevails among conflicting parties, it can be recognized that there is an agonistic dialogue taking place—a dialogue between enemies that includes symbolic shouting, mocking, underrating, profaning, and so on. This is still a form of dialogue and can be used as seed for dialogic transformation. The third party's role should be to uncover moments of radical disagreement by asking the conflict parties to explain what they are saying. This can be a gateway, and can start to undo the antagonistic nature of the dialogue. The next step would be to build upon a dialogue of strategic engagement among the conflicting parties, which could open up the long road towards dialogic transformation, which in the end may result in the emergence of mutual respect and an acceptance of the diversity of identity narratives. This kind of approach to conflict transformation, and to dialogue in particular, implies that peacemakers as third parties are an integral part of the conflict setting. They are neither neutral nor impartial, but political actors who "find that they, too, are part of the struggle, seeking to transform the agonistic dialogue by substituting a third discourse of their own."[16]

The main pitfall of the prevailing peacebuilding practice is that it deals with identities as being fixed and rigid, while in fact (violent) conflict itself transforms and reshapes identities in drastic ways and creates antagonism. Because of this rigidification of identities, the peacebuilding literature, along with peace practitioners, largely fails to recognize the conflictual and political nature of the dominant mediation practices,

[15] Coleman (2003, p. 18).

[16] Ramsbotham (2010, pp. 165–169).

and the fact that peacemakers indeed hold the power to shape identities. In order to avoid the rigidification of identity claims, it is suggested in this study that instead of focusing on identities as such, research, as well as the practice of peace mediation and dialogue, should concentrate on the processes of *identification*—on how people perceive and categorize themselves and others—and recognize how powerful and authoritative institutions (like international peacebuilders themselves) use a formalized, codified and objectified power of categorization that tends to represent identities in uniform terms.[17] Instead of focusing on identities, the attention shifts toward agency, to the way in which memory and history are being cultivated as political acts, and to who is using and can use the power of shaping identities. If we accept this shift from identities to identification, the core target of conflict transformation is not identities as such, since they are always diverse and layered, but rather in the narratives that build societal unity and exclusion and in particular in performative practices, symbols and rituals how this identification is executed in public sphere. Thus, peacemakers should recognize these identification narratives and their expression but also the agents who actively produce and promote them.

Dialogic transformation is by nature narrative and it focuses on the constitutive properties of conflict stories and, instead of classifying stories as true or false, dialogic transformation is focused on influencing narratives that constitutes the parties to the conflict as enemy. According to Feller and Ryan, dialogic practices of transformation could be based on "sharing stories of victim experience, sharing culture, sharing in commemoration" that aim to look at things radially differently. Mediators seek to open up a space among the tightly woven stories of the opponents in order to allow for different, less totalizing, descriptions of events.[18] Buckley-Zistel used also the term "narrative mediation" that according to her is "a poetic process of creating something new out of what has been." In this sense, mediation happens always and everywhere.[19]

Understanding conflict transformation as a process without closure does not exclude the fact that throughout the transformation, particular

[17] About difference between identity and identification see Brubaker and Cooper (2000).

[18] Feller and Ryan (2012, p. 362).

[19] Buckley-Zistel (2008, p. 75).

agreements and treaties are needed. Instead, it emphasizes the importance of seeing these agreements not as final solutions but only as temporary compromises in a long process. It is very important to keep open the possibility of continuing the peace process, and to avoid arrangements in which parties adopt positions that are not possible to open up. Therefore, room should be left for future dialogue, but simultaneously there is the need to protect the ontological security of the negotiating parties by recognizing their positions. Identities and memories cannot be contested in drastic terms without endangering the whole peace process, but neither should they be accepted as rigid and fixed: there must be a viable plan as to how to engage the parties in intra-group dialogue. It is good to keep in mind that, apart from legal issues, a 'just peace' is about the dignity and self-esteem of the community. Guaranteeing ontological security is a prerequisite for just peace, but this kind of security cannot be offered at any price, since opening up one's own narratives and memorialization is essential to conflict transformation. Thus, what is understood as just peace is contingent and context based. Ultimately, the relational aspect of respect towards the other side is what is needed for successful conflict transformation and thus without dialogic transformation no peace arrangement can endure for long. The dialogic approach emphasizes direct attention to the various actors who are using their power to shape identities and calls for recognition of these actors as well as for their engagement in the dialogue for peace. Simultaneously, the third party should be particularly aware of its own power to shape identities and recognize the limits of its impartiality since its intervention always shapes agency and the conflict dynamic.

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PART II

The Crowded Field of Private Peacemaking

CHAPTER 8

Professionalization of the Private Peacemaking Sector

There were already some nongovernmental actors involved in the peace processes during the Cold War years (see in details Chapter 4), but it is justified to argue that the field of private peacemaking actually started to emerge in 1990s and become an established field of peace diplomacy within the new millennium. First, several new transnational organizations have been founded with a particular niche in peacemaking or mediation and many previously founded organizations have shifted their focus from humanitarian, development and research focus to peace mediation. The established and widely recognized field of private peacemaking organizations has emerged on the surface of official and nonofficial peace diplomacy. Second, this sector has not only grown in number but in recent years has shown the professionalization of private peacemaking in regard private peacemakers' own self-identification, as well as how they have developed their own practice of intervention.

An essential part of the development and professionalization of private peacemaking has been increasing the brainstorming energy invested in the revision of organizations' strategical thinking including in-depth analysis of the essence and objectives of peace processes, as well as rethinking appropriate means and approaches of peace mediation and reassessments of the role of private peacemakers themselves. From the perspective of private peacemaking organizations, this kind of broad rethinking meets several interconnected needs: they are genuinely interested in responding to current challenges of peacemaking but simultaneously rethinking

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processes may help to legitimize and justify their agency in the complex multiparty settings of current peace processes since it could enable them to find new entry points to processes as well as donors. Moreover, this rethinking of the fundamental basis of peace processes and recognition of the complexity and unpredictability of current conflicts has contributed to the emergence of new practices of peace that are more flexible and adaptive than the previous mandate-centric practices were able to be. Despites motivations, this more profound rethinking of the meanings of conflict, peace and peace processes, and revision of practices have indeed, in its own terms, contested hegemonic liberal peace norms, even if private peacemakers still need to work predominantly within the frame of liberal peace cherished by major international organizations and states.

Private peacemaking organizations can be roughly divided into two groups along their self-identification: private diplomacy organizations and faith-based organizations (FBO). Two groups are, however, overlapping—as is membership in two umbrella organizations: Mediation Support Network (MSN) founded in 2008 and the Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers (Network) founded in 2013. Even if their approach to peace mediation practice is in many ways rather similar, these labels—private diplomacy and faith-based organization—are good indicators of certain differences in their self-identification as well as in their normative basis, which also reflects their comprehension regarding their contribution and position in the peace process.

Private diplomacy as a term in way a contests traditional diplomacy as a monopoly of states or as being official by its nature. The distinction between foreign policy and diplomacy should be kept in mind here: foreign policy is about setting political objectives and diplomacy is one of and often the most important practice for carrying out these objectives. Diplomacy is a tool to maintain relationships but is also about mediating relationships between states or other entities that diplomats are representing. Official diplomacy is a regulated domain which guarantees the immunity of diplomats but private diplomacy settles beyond this legal basis of diplomatic positions. The field of diplomacy has been becoming increasingly fragmented in the globalized world. Multilateral but also multi-institutional and multi-track forms of diplomacy have become commonplace. Furthermore, official actors engaged more in informal discussions with civil society actors, which is called track two diplomacy. Particular in conflict resolution contexts, the term ‘track 1.5 diplomacy’ has been used in situations in which official and non-official actors work

together to resolve conflicts.[1] Simultaneously, states and international organizations have privatized many dimensions of their international work from humanitarian aid to private security services to NGOs and private companies. Thus, a grey zone has emerged beyond official foreign policy and diplomacy to which private diplomacy belonged and in many ways private diplomacy is better term to catch the new phenomena expressed also by a more clumsy and technocratic notion of track 1.5 diplomacy. Thus, by referring to themselves as actors in private diplomacy, NGOs are legitimizing their existence and work by attaching themselves as an elementary part of the extended field of peace diplomacy; this also highlights how diplomacy is best described as a niche of their activity. Since there is no established agreement on what private diplomacy is, these private actors in peacemaking are themselves in practical terms defining what private diplomacy would mean.

Instead of referring to a certain skill or relationship, the term 'faith-based organization' firmly anchors organizations to a certain normative basis that legitimizes their approach to peace, in general, and peace work, in particular. Faith-based organizations have long heritage in peacemaking, as examples of the Quakers, the Mennonites and Catholic Sant' Egidio indicate well. Indeed, all these examples have continued to be active in peacemaking. However, several new organizations like Finn Church Aid and Felm have now entered the field. In the earlier examples, the religious aspect often explains the dedication of FBOs to peace in general but their mediation and dialogue approach do not necessary have a particular religious dimension. However, as religious and indeed religious-based extremism have become more important dimension of current transnational conflicts, FBOs have been more ready to deal with religious actors and questions entangled with religion and faith. Private diplomacy actors primarily gain their legitimacy as mediators through their established and recognized status within the international peace diplomacy field. Traditionally, legitimacy of FBOs like that of many Catholic actors as a mediator have been dependent on the legitimacy they gained from the local community but, currently, FBOs often lack this local legitimacy attached to their role as a religious actor. Still, local partnerships appear to be an important source of legitimacy but it is obvious that they cannot work without an established and recognized position within the international nonprofit world and often close

[1] Mapendere; Régnier (2011).

partnership with the UN-led international sphere but not necessary within official peace diplomacy. Obviously, private diplomacy actors also require local support and acceptance. At the operational level, FBOs have often but not exclusively been engaged with civil society actors. Private diplomacy actors are more often involved in enabling track one mediation by engaging with members of the political elite but the division far is from clear at the operational level.

Private Diplomacy Organizations

The MSN was founded in 2008 as a "small, global network of primarily non-governmental organisations that support mediation in peace negotiations" and its objective is "to promote and improve mediation practice, processes and standards to address political tensions and armed conflict." The initiative for creating a joint network for private diplomacy organizations came originally from Swisspeace and the idea was strongly supported by the United Nations Mediation Support Unit (MSU) as it was seen to promote their agenda on professionalization of peace mediation practice.[2] MSU has actively engaged also with the so-called "'third UN' that covers non-governmental and regional organisations which work on UN affairs."

The MSU was itself founded just two years earlier than the MSN, in 2006, after Secretary General Kofi Annan called a year earlier in his report "In Larger Freedom" for the development of skills and knowledge in peace mediation. MSU was initially a small unit in the political department that focused on evolving, storing and analyzing practical know-how on mediation. The UN had a long history in peace mediation dating back to the role of Folke Bernadotte, but before the foundation of MSU structures supporting practical lessons within the institution were lacking. MSU was not founded as a unit that actually engaged in peace mediation situations but merely a unit offering mediation support services and capacity building for the UN and also, for example, to regional organizations like the AU. In the beginning, MSU did not cooperate with private peacemaking organizations but soon their importance in the peace mediation field was recognized and the foundation of MSN was seen, from the MSU perspective, as a welcome opportunity to

[2] MSN website: Interview with Joenpolvi, Dec 2017.

support the professionalization of the field but also as a needed platform to enhance cooperation in the crowded field of private peacemaking.[3]

MSN is a loose network that was created as a platform to exchange experiences and discuss trends in peace mediation. As underlined in its name, the particular focus of the network is in the *mediation support*, defined "as activities that assist and improve mediation practices, e.g. training activities, developing guidance, carrying out research, working on policy issues, offering consultation, backstopping ongoing mediation processes, networking and engaging with parties."[4] As suggested in chapter 3, instead of making strict division between mediation and mediation support as such, it would be better to label all of the activities contributing to the transformation of a particular conflict and the engagement with parties in the conflict as peace mediation, but exclude from the label more general capacity building, developing, training and various support activities without focus on a particular conflict but that merely take place among various kinds of third party actors themselves.

MSN has no operational capacity or function and it is faraway from becoming a truly significant platform for professional networking and an innovative think-thank of peace mediation practice. It organizes only once a year a meeting to discuss and share experiences of a particular mediation-related topic. These workshops have been small in comparison with two regular professional congresses: the Oslo Forum organized yearly since 2003 and the Helsinki-based National Dialogues Conference, so far organized three times in 2014, 2015 and 2017. However, even if in principle these forums have been open for all, this has not been the case in practice. The Oslo Forums have been predominantly funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Geneva-based but partly Norwegian-funded HD Centre has taken organizational responsibility. The National Dialogues conferences have instead been funded by the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and three Finnish peacemaking organizations, CMI, FCA and Felm, have jointly taking care of the programme and practical arrangements. Participation in two forums has divided private peacemakers into two groups but a division has not so much emerged because of a division among private peacemakers themselves, but because of a competitive

[3] Ibid.

[4] MSN website.

field among Norway and Finland as mediation support states.[5] The crowded field of peace mediation is highly competitive domain and, besides competition among private peacemakers, there is also a lot jealously among small states branding themselves in peace mediation.

Networking, professional workshops and joint disassembling of experiences of peace mediation have indeed become part of the private peacemaking business. Nonetheless, in discussions with the CMI staff, they emphasized that instead of MSN or Oslo and Helsinki forums, a bit more informal and less institutionalized meetings have started to bring together the same faces. This kind of informal professional networking can be seen as a sign of maturing and professionalization of the private peacemaking indicating a certain readiness to share knowledge about operations and to bring together brainstorming to aid in the most difficult cases—this was not the case a few years back in this highly competitive field. Another sign of professionalization is that the organizations are nowadays more interested in the review of practices and agendas whereas in the early years of their activity they were more concerned with the identification of needs, ideation of the agenda and the development of practice. After establishing these, the field has entered a new era in which it is time to look backwards, to critically evaluate and renew practices in the current turbulent era and, seemingly, that process is regarded as needing cross-organizational discussion and joint think-thank platforms.[6]

Membership of MSN is still one way to map who significant private diplomacy actors are but, on the other hand, many MSN member organizations concentrated more on research, training, capacity building and reporting instead of mediation. In particular, Clingendael Netherlands Institute of International Relations has been famous in organizing "analyses, training and public debate… to inspire and equip governments, businesses, and civil society."[7] There are only few organizations that have adopted an intermediary role in violent conflicts around the world. These are the Berghof Foundation, the Carter Center, the Crisis Management Initiative (CMI) , Conciliation Resources, HD Centre, and Swisspeace. The field is constantly in turbulent change. Some

[5] Oslo Forum site; National Dialogues website; Interview with Eronen and Patokallio, Jan 2018.

[6] Interview with Eronen et al., Jan 2017; Interview with Eronen and Patokallio, Jan 2018.

[7] https://www.clingendael.org/.

MSN members that previously focused primarily on peacebuilding have activated themselves in peace mediation too. Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA) is the best example of this kind of institutional transformation. Furthermore, among non-MSN members, European Institute of Peace (EIP), launched in 2014, has also recently looked to expand its activity in the operational direction.[8]

If compared by size of their budget and staff, Geneva-based HD Centre funded by Norwegian and Swiss Ministries of Foreign Affair is the biggest private peacemaker followed by the CMI, the Berghof Foundation and Swisspeace. From these four, the HD Centre and the CMI are primarily focused on operational activities as Berghof and Swisspeace also invest on research, analysis and training. Conciliation Resources has similar resources to the above-mentioned organizations but the focus of its activity is broader. The resources of the Carter Centre are enormous in comparison with others, but only a minor part of its activity is focused on mediation. Another US-based organization, US Institute of Peace (USIP,) should be mentioned in this regard too.[9]

It is noteworthy that despite the Carter Centre and the USIP, all major actors in private peace diplomacy are European based and most of them are funded by foreign ministries of European countries, mainly that of Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and Finland. Only the Berghof Foundation has not been dependent on public funding but also they are actively seeking external funding opportunities. Euro-centricity has been noticed and regarded as a challenge and thus the MSN has been particularly looking for South-American, Asian and African members but so-far member organizations from these areas are more experienced in reconciliation, dialogues and peacebuilding than in peace mediation in particular, and some of them lack a broader transnational character and are focused only on a particular country.[10] There is certainly not one particular explanatory factor for the Euro-centricity of the private peacemaking field but strong public support for private peacemakers has been, in most cases, crucial for the expansion and establishment of the transnational focus of organizations. The growing interests of several small and middle-sized states in peace mediation and the strengthening of the

[8] Interview with Patokallio and Eronen, Jan 2018; Interview with Joenpolvi, Dec 2017.

[9] CMI: Peer & Trends Analysis (internal use only).

[10] MSN website; CMI: Peer & Trends Analysis; Interview with Joenpolvi, Nov 2018.

private peacemaking sector have been mutually entangled—development in which both parties have benefitted and in which success and visibility of official or private actors have been utilized by both.

All abovementioned international high-profile private diplomacy organizations were established in the late 1990s or early 2000s—including CMI, founded in 2000—or they have refocused their agenda on peace mediation since then.[11] Some pioneering transnational organizations in peacemaking, such as International Alert, the Carter Center, and Search for Common Ground (SFCG), were already established in the 80s, but grew and expanded their work to the sphere of mediation just in the 1990s. Some private organizations such as ACCORD, International Crisis Group (ICG) and Conciliation Resources, among various others, were founded in the early to mid-1990s. Still, most of these earlier organizations like ACCORD, Alert and ICG mainly focus on research, analysis and advocacy. The SFCG has particular expertise in the use of media in dialogue and conflict transformation, while International Alert has been especially active in preventive diplomacy and the development of early warning systems.[12] The latter has also been a central part of the work of ICG and the Institute for Security Studies (ISS), a non-profit organization founded in 1991.

From the four top private diplomacy organizations, the Berghof Foundation is the oldest. It was originally established in 1971 to analyze the arms race and shifted its focus to ethno-political conflicts in the mid-1990s. Today, the Berghof Foundation unifies three previously independent institutions: the former Berghof Foundation for Conflict Studies with its operational arm, Berghof Conflict Research; Berghof Peace Support; and the former Institute for Peace Education Tübingen. The foundation began its sustained programme of local work with the conflict parties in Sri Lanka in 2001 and just three years later, in 2004, Berghof Peace Support was established to provide globally oriented support for peace processes. Thematically, it has been a pioneer in the advancement of conflict transformation approaches and national dialogues.[13]

[11] Herrberg and Kumpulainen (2008).

[12] Fischer (2011).

[13] Berghof website https://www.berghof-foundation.org/.

Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD) was established in 1999 and its mission has been "to prevent, mitigate and resolve armed conflicts, through dialogue and mediation" and currently it is "involved in more than 40 dialogue and mediation initiatives in over 25 countries." Beside mediation and dialogue, the HD Centre has launched the notion of "humanitarian mediation" that would, according to them, enable the parties "to improve commitment to humanitarian protection principles" and "the protection of civilians through increased humanitarian access" there "where political dialogue may be difficult or impossible." Humanitarian mediation is also regarded as a path "to begin dialogue when other methods are impeded and it can engage non-State actors, who may otherwise be excluded" and thus it may provide "a valuable confidence-building process for subsequent peace negotiators."[14] Indeed, the idea of humanitarian mediation combines humanitarian diplomacy with peace diplomacy but even if there are obvious overlaps and interconnections, the two forms of diplomacy have for the most part remained separate.

HD has engaged in an intermediary role in various conflicts. In Tunisia, they "facilitated an informal and discreet dialogue process between the main political parties"; in Libya, they "facilitated a Humanitarian Appeal for Benghazi between more than 70 key political, tribal and social leaders from the city"; in Central African Republic, HD was mandated by the President to advise the country's national reconciliation process" and in organizing National Dialogue platform; in Nigeria, HD has been "facilitating inter-communal dialogue … in order to help communities address endemic conflicts"; in Philippines, "HD has been working with local communities on violence reduction"; in Sahel, HD "has built up networks of leaders among pastoralist and sedentary communities across the Sahel region (in Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso)"; and in Kenya, HD has "supported a peace process between local communities in Kenya's Rift Valley." The listing representation example of private peacemakers' current approach, within which the notion of dialogue is often replacing mediation in their approach to peace mediation and in which, instead of engaging with major fighting parties, the third party is involved as a conciliator with various other actors holding, in one way or another, influential positions in their society. Furthermore, in several

[14] HD website https://www.hdcentre.org/.

cases, they have been engaged in supporting local peace but having simultaneously preserved interest in supporting national or transnational peace.

CMI was originally established in 2000 to assist the former president of Finland Martti Ahtisaari in his various international assignments, to take part in policy discussions and to advocate for capacity building in civilian crisis management. CMI soon began undertaking its own projects.[15] In the first half of the 2000s, it also worked as the secretariat of the Helsinki Process on Globalisation and Democracy. While its support to Ahtisaari led to CMI beginning its work more as a think tank, it has since shifted its focus to operational work in conflict areas.[16] Similarly, thematically, CMI began in crisis management, later expanding to peace mediation and conflict resolution. Ahtisaari acted as the Chairman of the Board until 2017. Currently, CMI builds up a brand of private peace brokers, and the role of a mediator is a core part of their self-identification as well as of the public brand. This is demonstrated in their famous marketing videos in which Martti Ahtisaari is seen negotiating among Angry Birds and Santa Clauses.[17]

CMI's toolbox includes informal dialogue and mediation but also capacity building and mediation support at different stages of the conflict and peace processes. It cooperates with local, regional and international actors, providing direct support to international organizations such as the EU, the AU and the OSCE, and operational support to the UN. It focuses on working between the official and unofficial levels, often drawing from its access to higher levels of decision-makers and political elite. According the Programme Report from 2014–2016, in the post-Soviet space the CMI has been involved in supporting various informal dialogues, often confidential and discrete in nature, among selected representatives of political structures from different sites of internal conflict pursuing the build up of mutual trust and opening up new perspectives for peaceful coexistence within a particular country. That has been in

[15] "About Us," CMI 2017, accessed January 7, 2017, http://cmi.fi/.

[16] Interview with Eronen et al., Jan 2017.

[17] CMI, "Peace on Piggy Island! Martti Ahtisaari Negotiates Truce Between Birds and Pigs," Youtube video, 3:01, posted by "Angry Birds," November 9, 2014, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-9T4GrQV_Vs; CMI, "Santa Summit," Youtube video, 2:19, posted by "CMIFinland," October 17, 2016, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TrNEi7ASLGI.

particular the case in "creation of trusted channels between different actors around the Donbass conflict" in Ukraine and in "enhancing trust and relations between official actors in the Transdniestrian settlement process" as well as in support for "creation of channels to peacefully resolve issues between Moldovan-Gagauzian authorities" over the status of autonomous area in Moldova. In sub-Saharan Africa, South Sudan has been the most important target country and there CMI has supported intra-SPLM dialogue aiming to generate a "common understanding on the root causes and joint responsibility of conflict" and "[link] women's voices to national decision-making forums." In the MENA area, for example, in Libya, CMI has organized meetings and platforms to increase trust and to create dialogues channels between different partners, while in Iraq CMI has been involved in drafting a National Reconciliation Strategy and in mediating different stakeholders' views as part of it.[18]

Interestingly, the beginning of the HD Centre's and the CMI's career as a mediator began with the intervention to the very same conflict—that of Aceh, Indonesia—in a different context and with different track-records. The HD Centre became involved in mediation to bring the end to the 30-year conflict in late 1999 by invitation of the newly elected president of Indonesia, Abdurrahman Wahid. A private non-governmental organization was selected because Free Aceh Movement (GAM) would not participate unless negotiation was "under the auspices of an international actor" but, from the Indonesian perspective, it was important that the HD Centre should lack any official status. Thus, the HD Centre was "sufficiently international," without official power to legitimize or pressure parties. The parties met for the first time in Geneva in January 2000 and parties agreed on a humanitarian ceasefire until May. This 'humanitarian pause' did not yet "grapple with the political questions" but it lead to "the establishment of a local security committee" consisting of representatives of the GAM, the Indonesian Army and the HD Centre to monitor a ceasefire. However, a ceasefire was not renewed in the beginning of 2001 leading to a series of new negotiations under the HD Centre from 2001 to 2002. In 2002, the mediation situation changed from face-to-face meetings to shuttle diplomacy between Jakarta, Banda Aceh and Stockholm and was concluded

[18] CMI Programme Report (2014–2016), CMI Annual Report 2017.

at the end of the year in signing a new ceasefire, but that did not hold and the situation ended in the arrest of the GAM negotiating team, declaration of martial law in Aceh and calls for unilateral surrender by Indonesian government.[19]

After a one and a half year break, negotiations restarted in January under the auspices of the then-still-small NGO that CMI had founded just a couple of years previously, which was not yet even primarily focused on peace mediation. It was owing to successful involvement in the Aceh peace process that CMI's agenda was transformed; this also marked the beginning of its growth in size and volume. Ahtisaari managed to bring the Indonesian government and GAM to the same table under the principle "nothing is agreed until everything is agreed." As a mediator, Ahtisaari was firmly present and his background as a President of Finland, as well as strong support by the Finnish government and the EU, gave to him a more official kind of status than the HD Centre had previously. Furthermore, this impression was strengthened while several other countries expressed "their strong desire for a resolution, and warning of consequences of the process' failure, to the both GAM and Indonesian government." The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) granting the province of Aceh an autonomous status was reached after five rounds of mediation in Helsinki August 2005. The agreement also included a political arrangement and it established a monitoring mission in which CMI did not want to participate as it saw itself solely as a mediator. The mediation process has been widely regarded as a success and Ahtisaari was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2008. Still, from the perspective of a decade after the signing of the agreement, there remain issues to criticize. In particular, Aceh's democratic transition and justice and reconciliation have not proceeded as expected or, indeed, have recessed, but it is obvious that the peace agreement cannot be a thorough, all-inclusive roadmap but merely the beginning of long transformation process. Still, as Nathan Shea highlights, participation in mediation was exclusively limited only to the Indonesian government and the exile leadership of GAM while "little effort was made by the mediator to engage civil society groups and other interested parties." How this kind of classical bi-party setting may have consequences to following transition process is a many-sided issue without a clear answer.

[19] Shea (2016, pp. 186–194).

From the private peacemakers' perspective, Aceh appears for both HD Centre and CMI to be a site of learning but also of building up the reputation as professionals of mediation.[20]

For CMI, international visibility of Aceh success and Ahtisaari's Nobel Peace Prize meant recognition of CMI's work and thus was a crucial push for organizational development towards becoming one of world-leading private peacemakers but was also the beginning of a close relationship with the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.[21] Although the Aceh peace process, one of CMI's first and best-known activities, significantly relied on more traditional mediation approaches, with Ahtisaari facilitating negotiations between representatives of the government and GAM in Finland, from the perspective of CMI's mediation in its current form, it was an exception rather than a rule. The organization has since moved from more traditional approaches to new, diverse approaches that look for alternative mediation strategies—although its work is still actively informed by and benefits from Ahtisaari's legacy.[22] Indeed, Aceh have been the sole case in which CMI or HD has managed to adopt the role of chief mediator at the track one level.

Faith-Based Peacemakers

In addition to private diplomacy organizations, there is a growing field of faith-based organizations (FBOs) assuming increasingly active roles in the peacemaking field. The work of many FBOs in the field is rooted in a faith-based tradition of humanitarian assistance, which can be traced even back to the 19th century missionary work[23] but religiously oriented NGOs became more broadly involved in development and humanitarian aid in the mid-20th century. The prominent private peacemakers in the Cold War years were faith-based actors, as indicated earlier. Sant'Egidio and also the Quakers who were involved in several conflicts in the Cold War era are still active in the field but since the late 1990s, peace efforts have become an integral and visible part of many FBOs' identity.[24] The increased cooperation not only between FBOs from different faith

[20] Shea (2016, pp. 186–194).

[21] Interview with Joenpolvi, Dec 2017.

[22] Mikko Patokallio, personal communication, March 13, 2017.

[23] Barnett and Stein (2012, pp. 3–36).

[24] Bercovitch and Kadayifci-Orellana (2009, pp. 175–204).

traditions but also between FBOs and secular private organizations has, along with the changing field of international diplomacy, led to FBOs becoming involved in new types of activities. FBOs previously focused on development and emergency relief and have increasingly taken on mediation and conflict transformation efforts, with many focusing on interreligious peacemaking.[25] The proliferation of religion-related disputes and worry about religious extremism have obviously had particular importance in FBOs' interest in peacemaking.

If MSN can be regarded as a kind of umbrella organization of private diplomacy actors, the Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers (Network) founded in 2013 holds equal role with its current 50 member organizations but the Network differs in many terms from MSN and, indeed, it also has some operational activity. The Network was formed by Finn Church Aid (FCA) initiative in cooperation with the UN MSU, the UN Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC), the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), and Religions for Peace (RfP). The increased global interest in the role of religious actors in peacemaking made for effective momentum for the founding of the Network. This was supported by Finland's official promotion of mediation at the UN through the Group of Friends of Mediation, leading to the adoption of three General Assembly (UNGA) resolutions and the writing of the Secretary-General's report A/66/811, which calls for better inclusion of religious and traditional leaders in peacemaking. The Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and FCA are also the two main sources of funding for the Network.[26] Furthermore, the executive director of FCA Antti Pentikäinen had a particularly active role in initiating the Network. Beside FCA, Pentikäinen had worked earlier in CMI and in RfP—that is, "the multi-religious coalition advancing common action for peace" founded already in 1970 "working to advance multi-religious consensus on positive aspects of peace as well as concrete actions to stop war, help eliminate extreme poverty and protect the earth." In a way, the niche of the Network combines the objective of RfP with the private peacemaking approach of CMI. FCA has served from a beginning as the secretariat and the legal entity of the Network and FCA is actively

[25] Smock (2001), Tsjeard Bouta et al. (2005), Sampson (2007).

[26] "Finance and Accountability," Network, accessed February 22, 2017, https://www.peacemakersnetwork.org/about-us/finance-accountability/.

implementing several projects in cooperation with the Network and other partners.[27]

The Network is comprised of nearly 50 actors, including inter- and intra-governmental agencies, academic institutions, civil society organizations, and religious and traditional peacemakers. There are some overlaps in membership with MSN; for example, Berghof and HD Centre are members of both but in general the membership criteria of the Network are very different from that of MSN. The members of the Network include TOs like FCA but also local actors as well as research-based organizations. Thus, it is not an umbrella organization for faith-based peacemakers as such but merely a platform of various actors regarding religion as significant element of current conflicts.[28] The Network has its headquarters in New York and it has developed close relationships with different UN units. From the MSU perspective, the Network appears to be comparable to MSN, a gathering of a particular kind of actors, and thus supports their aim of professionalization of the field. From that perspective, the Network represents a particular approach to mediation that emphasizes the importance of participation of religious and traditional peacemakers. Despite certain reservations towards the Network's niche, it has managed to establishe close relationships with various the UN sections. Indeed, in particular, the current Secretary-General António Guterres has recognized the importance of religious actors and their potential to contribute to more sustainable and inclusive peace processes beyond the closed door of political elite. The Network and its partners are also cooperating in the field with other UN organizations and in particular with UN Women.[29]

The Network has, in principle, the option to have its own projects although so far it has not had any and there have been two alternatives to how it has operationalized its objectives. The first is that the Network has constituted a meeting place for its members and the majority of the projects have initiated as a result of this kind of cooperation without the active role of the Network secretariat. Then there are operations

[27] Interview with Abdile et al. (Network), Sept 2016; Interview with Jooenpolvi 2017, Interview with Abdile, Jan 2018.

[28] "Finance and Accountability," Network, accessed February 22, 2017, https://www.peacemakersnetwork.org/about-us/finance-accountability/.

[29] Interview with Joenpolvi, Dec 2017; Interview with Abdile, Jan 2018; UN: Activities in Support of Mediation. Report of the Secretary-General.

to which the Network secretariat offers active technical support but in which a major role of implementing the project is carried out by partner institution. The Network is engaged in peace intervention mainly by cooperating with local members of the Network as well as beside local partners; for example, in East Africa, the FCA operates as a major executive organization.[30] The Network's core idea is to support the positive engagement of local religious actors in peace processes and to connect them with states, intergovernmental organizations, civil society organizations, and regional and sub-regional bodies.[31] By doing this, it aims to promote sustainable and inclusive peace.[32] The Network operates through its partners in the Middle East and North Africa (e.g., Libya), Sub-Saharan Africa (e.g., CAR, Somalia and Kenya), and South and Southeast Asia (e.g., Myanmar and Southern Thailand).[33]

The Finn Church Aid (FCA)—a host of the Network secretariat and an active partner in executing the Network's projects—is the largest non-governmental development co-operation organization and the second largest provider of humanitarian assistance in Finland. According to its strategy, FCA work is guided by the rights-based approach and divided into three thematic areas: the right to livelihood, the right to education, and the right to peace. Founded in 1947 to administer emergency aid allocated to Finland, which was struggling after the Second World War, it has since evolved into a globally prominent development actor.[34] During the past 10–15 years, the FCA has set up offices in other countries, not necessarily for mediation purposes, but to be closer to the local population and partner organizations.[35] Since the organization's guiding principle has traditionally been to conduct humanitarian and development work in difficult and fragile areas and to help the most marginalized groups, development efforts have quite naturally

[30] Interview with Abdile, Jan 2018.

[31] Network, *Memorandum of Understanding of the Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers*, unpublished manuscript, August 20, 2015.

[32] "Our Work," the Network, accessed February 22, 2017, https://www.peacemakers-network.org/our-work/.

[33] Network, *Progress Status of the Network projects* (Helsinki: The Secretariat of the Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers 2016).

[34] "History," FCA, accessed January 10, 2017, https://www.kirkonulkomaanapu.fi/en/us/history/.

[35] Interview with Abdile and Rytkönen, Nov 2016.

become intertwined with security issues and needs for peace on the ground. This has brought peace work to top of the FBO's agenda. During the past decade in particular, there has been a shift in FCA's work, as the organization previously focused on development and humanitarian work has begun to engage more in peacebuilding and peacemaking. Peace work is currently carried out in the Right to Peace sector in countries and regions such as South Sudan, Kenya, Somaliland, Puntland, and CAR.[36]

All FBOs doing peacemaking are not members of the Network as not all private diplomacy organizations are members of MSN—in particular, those organizations that have more recently entered into peacemaking are working beyond these networks. One of these is the Finnish-based Felm (or, more precisely, Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission) that succeeded rather well in securing its funding as well as establishing its role within the scene of nongovernmental peacemakers. Felm is a mission organization belonging to the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church. It was founded in 1859, making it one of Finland's first civil society organizations. It is also one of the largest Finnish civil society organizations working in global development; it is engaged in development co-operation, emergency relief, church work, and advocacy. Felm's work is also guided by its identity as a Christian organization and is based on the acknowledged potential role of churches and religious actors in both conflicts and peace, which grants faith-based organizations a particular niche in advancing peace and dialogue through local church connections and networks. While its work is based on Christian values and many of its partners are churches and FBOs, it also works with secular organizations and emphasizes the holistic nature of its work, based on the needs of local communities.[37] All in all, Felm currently operates in 30 countries in Africa, South America, Asia and Europe. In South Africa, it has engaged in supporting dialogue in local conflicts in cooperation with the South African Council of Churches, in Ethiopia it is active in dialogue among religious actors in the Dessie region, and in Pakistan Felm has supported

[36]FCA, Annual Report 2016, FCA Global Strategy from 2017 onwards; Intrerview with Abdile, Jan 2018, FCA, Draft version: Sections on the Right to Peace theme in the forthcoming FCA Global Programme 2018–2023; See also Lepomäki (2017).

[37]Laisi and Rintakoski (2014, p. 108), Rintakoski, pers. comm., March 19, 2017, Felm, Annual Report 2015, accessed 3 August 2016, http://www.suomenlahetysseura.fi/ls_en/www/lahetysseura/home/about_felm/. Ibid.

local religious leaders in Peshawar. In these dialogue and reconciliation projects, faith-based networks play a larger role; these include projects involving interreligious dialogue but also initiatives aimed at promoting social justice, trust between communities and the protection of religious minorities.[38]

Mediation and peacebuilding have entered gradually into the agenda of Felm like that of FCA, as the peace sector has grown more and more inseparable from the development sector. Simultaneously, certain former CMI workers (mainly Kristiina Rintakoski in the case of Felm and Antti Pentikäinen of FCA, who were already involved with CMI at the time of its establishment) have brought with them experience from their CMI career. Therefore, Felm and FCA's mediator role is more blurred and vague than that of CMI. Felm mainly uses the term peacebuilding instead of mediation in its official language, but on the other hand, it sees its role as part of a broader peacebuilding architecture, and it certainly looks for dialogic tools to support transformation towards peace. Instead of mediation, Felm talks about supporting the local peace process and ownership of the peace process and it is more keen on dialogues than on mediation.[39] In this way, Felm is presented as an enabler of local mediation rather than a mediator itself, which stresses the importance of strengthening local capacity to promote peace and reconciliation.[40] FCA and the Network share with Felm similar emphasis on supporting local actors, but FCA is more comfortable using the term mediation to describe their work.[41] Nonetheless, Felm's work in Myanmar, where they supports the Euro-Burma Office, and in Syria with a joint project with Lebanese Common Space Initiative (CSI) can easily be labelled under peace mediation. The Syrian Initiative (SI) project is indeed the biggest single investment of the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs to peace mediation. The SI project began with seed funding from Felm, followed by funding from the Finnish MFA and the Norwegian Foreign Ministry. In contrast to other projects, in Myanmar and Syria, working through religious actors or engaging in interreligious dialogue do not have any

[38] Interview with Rintakoski and Saarnivaara, Sept 2016.

[39] Rintakoski, pers. comm., March 19, 2017.

[40] Interview with Rintakoski and Saarnivaara, Sept 2016; CSI and Felm, *The Syria Initiative* (Helsinki: Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission 2015).

[41] Interview with Abdile et al., Sept 2016; Network, *Progress Status of the Network Projects*.

role and in these peace mediation projects Felm has solely cooperated with secular actors and omitted religious issues.[42]

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[42] Interview with Rintakoski and Saarnivaara, Sept 2016.

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CHAPTER 9

Smart Actors Within the Complexity of Multitrack Peace Diplomacy

The role of private diplomacy has become increasingly crucial while the shortcomings of official diplomacy in responding to the complex crises have become evident. Although private diplomacy faces its own challenges related to economic resources and political leverage, its advantages in operating in contemporary conflicts have been widely recognized, but simultaneously, even if private peacemakers have been an established part of the international peace architecture since the beginning of 2000s, they are still in many ways subdued to the state-centric peace diplomacy and viewed with a certain suspicion from official perspective. Track one diplomacy still belongs almost solely to states and international organizations like the UN. This is often the visible scene of mediation in the media. The dominating image of a mediation situation is still one of high-level summits or official roundtable negotiations among a few men, even though the broader perspective of peace diplomacy is much more diverse, and roundtable negotiations have in fact become rare.

The role and agenda of private peacemakers and new types of practices of peace have so far remained fairly unexplored in academic study on peace mediation and peacebuilding. The benefits of cooperation between official and private diplomacy, together with the private sector's ability to access situations and parties that official actors cannot reach, are recognized, but the field of unofficial actors and in particular informal peace diplomacy is too often presented only as reinforcing and complementing state-centric official peace diplomacy rather than examined according to

M. Lehti, *The Era of Private Peacemakers*,
Rethinking Peace and Conflict Studies,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-91201-1_9

its potential role of influencing peace processes on its own terms. Thus, official diplomacy is in practice still often considered the primary track, and official processes are seen as essential for bringing about peace. The private sector is then seen as subordinate to official mediation, with its main role to offer supportive services. However, Andrea Strimling argues that official and private sectors should be seen as complementary, since "resolving complex conflicts and building sustainable peace require, in addition to negotiated agreements, profound changes of attitude, relationship, and behavior among individuals and groups."[1] There are, however, fundamental challenges in cooperation between official and private actors, even if the official site recognizes the complementarity of private actors' work, "efforts to cooperate are often frustrated by differences in interests, assumptions, professional culture and identity, lexicon, and perceptions of relative power."[2] Steadily increasing criticism towards state-centric peace diplomacy, and the recognition of its limits and pitfalls, have contributed to the beginning of the re-mapping of the more independent roles and activities of private actors.

Private actors need to continuously justify their significance by highlighting the added value they bring to (and beyond) official diplomacy is a core of self-identification and defining of their agenda. Their work is then justified by their ability to act in places and in times in which the official operatives cannot function. These efforts require the "unofficial nature" of their peace work, since it is possible for private actors to work with groups that are marginalized or even excluded from the official process. In addition to mediating *among parties official actors cannot mediate among*, private peacemakers emphasize that they are able to *mediate when it is not possible to mediate*. Thus, they can act where official mediation is not possible and gain the parties' acceptance to introduce some mediating elements to the process. Private actors are often "better placed to open discreet channels of communication and serve as 'incubators' for creating a climate of dialogue."[3] They can also act where stakeholders do not want mediation and dialogue processes, at least not those that are internationally supervised. These are cases where there is a clear need for support, but conflict parties or main stakeholders do not, often for

[1] Strimling (2006, p. 96). See also Miall (2004).

[2] Strimling (2006, p. 92).

[3] Oslo Forum (2015).

political reasons, want to officially acknowledge the need for a dialogue process. The involvement of private actors is also invisible in comparison to a UN-mandated process, and the main stakeholder—usually the hosting state—may then still cherish the idea of ownership of the process.[4] The unofficial nature of private actors' work is particularly relevant in the early stages of a process and in breaking deadlocks but they "can also reinvigorate a stuttering process by bringing in new thinking and actors."[5]

Sensitiveness and flexibility with terminology is characteristic to private peacemakers and they are not fixed with particular roles and when mediation as a term is too politically loaded for one of parties, they can enter into other roles and, in that way, allow the hosting state to retain the appearance of control and ownership. How terms are used on an operational level is thus a part of private peacemakers' professional skills, and they feel more comfortable with the fluid use of concepts like mediation or dialogue than official actors. Even more importantly, the same activity is often seen from various angles, and it is not possible to fix the perceptions of the parties involved. Therefore, naming something mediation is a political act that has an influence on the peace process, and private peacemakers are well aware of this.[6] Concepts are always politically loaded and context specific. Calling a certain activity mediation can even be extremely serious, as it is in the Syrian case, where the local partners of Felm cannot call themselves mediators. In the context of violent civil war, insider mediators may be easily interpreted as traitors; thus, it is safer to talk about support for the local community.[7] Furthermore, states may want to emphasize their own ownership of a peace process, and third-party mediation may be seen as a form of international intervention, preventing private organizations from entering the process as mediators. In many cases, it is easier to find an entry point into a conflict situation by offering a service other than mediation, even if the actual service is one of mediation or facilitation. Vice versa, by offering only mediation services, private organizations would exclude themselves from several potential cases. This has very much been the case in Myanmar and Nepal,

[4] Interview with Brummer, Eronen, and Patokallio, Sept 2016.

[5] Oslo Forum (2015).

[6] Interview with Brummer, Eronen, and Patokallio, Sept 2016.

[7] Interview with Rintakoski and Saarnivaara, Sept 2016.

where the process is seen as National Dialogue rather than mediation. In Iraq, it is National Dialogue that is the problematic term since in this type of sensitive process, talk about a National Dialogue, a concept that has a set meaning, is politically too loaded and can be counterproductive as it can lead to the conflict parties shutting down and refusing to engage. Therefore, in Iraq, CMI has supported the Iraqi government in drafting a National Reconciliation Strategy, which is not operational yet and, indeed, in the currently fragile and sensitive climate, a third party needs to avoid setting and naming any precise long-term goals.[8]

When examined from this more flexible angle, by understanding private peacemakers as multifaceted mediators, the question about the definition of mediation loses its meaning, or indeed turns into a question of whether it is necessary, or to what point it is relevant, to make clear distinctions between mediation, peacebuilding, conflict resolution, and dialogue. Conceptual fluidity and flexibility are seemingly characteristic to the new NGO approach. Therefore, the answer should not be looked at from the point of view of theory or distinct conceptual definitions; rather, we should turn the focus to practices of peace executed by private peacemaking organizations in their operations. It seems that private peacemakers may have at least three different roles in peace processes: offering advisory services, the facilitation of various kind of formal and informal dialogue processes and actual mediation. The private actor's role may vary from that of an advisor to a secretariat to a trainer to a mediator. They offer their advisory services to various kind of actors: international organizations, states and local actors. Organizing different types of training and capacity-building activities is an essential part of private actor's work and as a target group is often some international organization this instrument is also a recognizable part of almost every operation, but they may also serve as an entry point to other roles in a peace process. Private actors can more freely choose the people with whom they work, and what kind of dialogue they facilitate, while the actors who are part of the officially recognized process have their hands tied. Their mediation efforts may support the larger, internationally coordinated process (CMI in South Sudan, Felm in Syria, Network in Libya etc.), or they may have separate private platforms for mediation (CMI in Moldova).

[8] Interview with Brummer, Eronen, and Patokallio, Sept 6, 2016.

The great majority of their work can be described as mediation support but within these various support activities they are engaging with transforming local actors' perspectives and perceptions of a particular conflict. The parties with which they are engaged with are not necessarily major conflicting parties but are still, in one or other way, actors attached to conflict setting. Thus from a broader perspective, their activity can be regarded as peace mediation. Even if they rarely act as a mediator or a facilitator in the strict sense, these still appear to be key parts of their identity. There are only a few examples in which private actors have taken the role of main mediator for an internationally recognized conflict, as these duties are often reserved for state or international organizations. The role of CMI and HD in Aceh or Sant' Egidio in Mozambique as a chief mediator are merely exceptions in the practice rather than an example of a trend. These various roles overlap in actual operations, as the same organization can enter the same peace process in several roles and offer different services. Furthermore, the same role may be interpreted in different ways by different actors.

The emergence of the private peacemaker sector came with a set of new challenges. Suddenly, there were tens of new organizations and private actors wanting to be involved in peace mediation, and ready to offer their services wherever conflict broke out and the UN-led peace caravan arrived. There were suddenly too many players in the field, which led to the emergence of competition among private peacemakers. Furthermore, instead of a classical meditation situation with one chief mediator and two parties both representing the upper hierarchy of political power, new peace processes have become more complex not only because there are now numerous parties involved but also because there are other mediators, often private actors, involved in addition to the chief mediator. The result is so-called multi-party mediation, which allows for a more active role for private actors but also makes peace processes and their management more challenging and complicated.[9] The current peace architecture is becoming extremely complex, but it simultaneously lacks efficient and well-designed channels to coordinate the different levels and tracks of peace processes. Indeed, there is, in a way, a double complexity that concerns not only the conflict setting

[9] Crocker et al. (2015, pp. 363–388).

itself but also the whole peace architecture with tens of international and local, official and private actors, and various donors with their interests. Overlapping mandates have become a problem, while regional and sub-regional organizations have strengthened their role.[10] Coordination and management of that complexity has become difficult, but simultaneously, creating and enhancing vertical and horizontal communication channels among various actors is considered essential. In particular, it is seen that the state- and IO-centric official level has stagnated with its old practices; bottom-up communication is difficult, and too often there is a gap between the official-level process and other local peace processes. Furthermore, the complexity of the peacemaking setting is not always understood by donors, which are often states, and thus, private actors have to balance between traditional perceptions, and more daring and unconventional approaches to peace processes.

Mandates are the single most important practice through which official state-based diplomacy has controlled participation in peace processes and preserved the hegemony of official diplomacy over private diplomacy. Mandates have simultaneously been legal regulations of the agency and goals of a particular process, but can also be regarded as straitjackets that aim to control all initiatives and actors. As part of their effort to find new ways to secure their own survival and justify their significance, private actors have contested the omnipresence of mandates. This has had significant practical consequences for private actors' efforts to contribute to the renewal of practices of peacemaking, and these new practices in many ways challenge the guidelines of classical peace mediation.

The practical monopoly of the UN as a mandating power in peace processes has been one reason for the emergence of competitive markets among private peace actors. When the number of peace mediation cases started to grow in the mid-1990s, mandates for whole operations were mainly given by the UN, or, in some cases by certain regional organizations like the AU. The chief mediator with the UN mandate, then, may have recruited and thus sub-mandated several private peace actors. Besides the UN-mandated cases, there were also mediation cases mandated by warring parties themselves (e.g., in Sri Lanka, Aceh and Mozambique), but in these cases, the operation has often been more limited, and the position of the mediator has been weaker. According

[10] Lanz and Gasser (2013).

to classical guidelines, the mandate sets the goals and agenda, and it is not possible to participate in a peace process without the mandate.[11] The tough competition among NGO actors not only stems from too many actors being involved in the field, but also from the limited availability of mandates. The dominance of mandates has acted like a monopoly in a market situation—it has limited the available cases and actors in peace processes remarkably. Thus, competition has naturally become tough among private peacemakers, as the survival and success of a particular organization depends on the gained mandates guaranteeing the role in a peace process.[12] It can be argued that in normal UN-led peace operations, the mandate acts as an obstacle for efficient horizontal as well as vertical cooperation. Since the power to mandate lies with the official side in a mandate-centric peace pattern, private actors can only compete over mandates. This setting not only restricts the availability of peace processes, but also significantly limits the possible actors by predetermining the participants and goals of peace processes. Thus, mandates have acted as a stagnating and limiting force for innovation and rethinking.

Private peacemaking organizations "share similar values and visions, and [are] orientated towards, no profit" but they are also "competitors in a field with limited resources" in which they need to promote their 'product' "to donors to be able to survive as institution."[13] Therefore, they often meet other organizations more as competitors than potential partners. The difference is remarkable; potential partners share information and engage in open dialogue, while competitors hide information from each other, as this information may be crucial for strengthening the position of one's own institution. This means that successes lead to organizations guarding their achieved positions rather than looking for partnerships.[14] One result of this tendency to monopolize access "to insiders and special information, in order to gain short-term strategic advantages."[15] "Competing multiple third parties can undercut each other" in a way that is harmful for the overall peace process, which certainly does not benefit from organizations hiding information

[11] Svensson and Wallensteen (2010, pp. 11–24).

[12] Interview with Abdile, Pentikäinen, Perukangas, Puoskari, and Tarvainen, Sept 2016.

[13] Challenges to Mediation Support in Hot Wars. MSN report no. 7, 2015.

[14] Interview with Abdile, Pentikäinen, Perukangas, Puoskari, and Tarvainen, Sept 2016; Interview with Rintakoski and Saarnivaara, Sept 2016.

[15] Challenges to Mediation Support in Hot Wars. MSN report no. 7, 2015.

and avoiding communication.[16] The existence of mutual competition restrains coordination and the share of information among international private actors. In addition, for official and private actors in a complex, fluid and contingent context where there is only limited time for coordination and where a sensitive context would require "a high rate [of] responsiveness." During recent years, the private actors have recognized this paradox and, for example, MSN annual meeting at Atlanta 2015 aimed to address to challenge but the paradox is not yet fully dispersed.[17]

The existence of competition is also experienced by the three Finnish organizations, and is regarded as a challenge for the overall peace architecture in multiparty mediation settings. In some areas, competition has been characteristic of the whole process, whereas in some others it has been milder. In Myanmar, in particular, the situation has been highly chaotic. Finnish Special Envoy in Peace Mediation Kimmo Kiljunen recalls that as he entered the process, he found himself first having to mediate among these private peace actors.[18] There were far too many international actors and an absence of coordination. The hard competition among private peacemakers largely stemmed from the fact that the financing of a particular organization's project was based on how they could indicate the specific results of their action. Thus, the lack of coordination combined with pressure from donors created a situation in which hiding information and tripping others became normal.

Clashing interests in securing their reputation and completion over entry points to peace process are also evident among small states profiling themselves as peace mediators. This competition has obvious influences on the private sector since the very same countries are their main donors. This trend is also recognizable within the Nordic group, since Norway, in particular, has not always looked favorably upon Finnish efforts to gain more visibility in the international peace mediation field. In Myanmar, for example, Norway tried for some time to block Finnish membership in the coordination group. In the end, Finnish actors entering as coordinators and mediators among international third parties

[16] Crocker et al. (2015, p. 364).

[17] Challenges to Mediation Support in Hot Wars. MSN report no. 7, 2015.

[18] Interview with Rintakoski and Saarnivaara, Sept 2016; Kimmo Kiljunen, presentation at the *Rethinking Dialogue in Conflict Resolution* seminar organized by the Centre for Resolution of International Conflicts and TAPRI, Copenhagen, Jan 20, 2015.

created a rather peculiar entry point to the Myanmar peace process, yet very much needed.[19]

The Ukrainian conflict represents a very recent example of hard competition and lack of coordination among private peacemakers. The many organizations interested in Ukrainian crisis looked for opportunities to intervene. Quickly, international funding was available for projects, and donors used their power to dictate objectives. Simultaneously, the track one process remained exclusive to civic society actors as well as to private peacemakers. The result was "duplication of efforts" and the "breakdown of funding in the middle of ongoing dialogue processes" that led among other "dialogue fatigue" of local partners. The Ukrainian conflict serves as an example of the negative consequences of short-term funding and, indeed, MSN calls for sustainability, cooperation and transparency from donors and engages them in discussing the ethics and evaluation of funded projects.[20]

In recent years, competition in multiparty settings has, at least in some cases, become less harsh; for example, in the case of Syria, private peacemakers have managed to cooperate more smoothly than previously, even if there are over a hundred actors involved in the various processes. The continuing violent conflict and the enormous challenges have prevented the emergence of a similar kind of situation to that in Myanmar. Even powerful states and international organizations have reluctantly accepted that a single mediator bearing responsibility for the whole process has worked in the Syrian context that acceptance of "multiparty mediation and collective conflict management will be features of most future peace processes." Even if multiparty mediation increases complexity in peacemaking, "it can help build the momentum required to help push peace negotiations to settlement and provide leverage and other key assets to a peace process."[21]

Accepting multiparty mediation sets new challenges for planning, operational engagement, and communication. There is need for hierarchical coordination, including a clear division of labor, and for

[19] Interview with Rintakoski and Saarnivaara, Sept 2016.

[20] Challenges to Mediation Support in Hot Wars. MSN report no. 7, 2015. See also Osterrieder (2015). Mali peace process is another kind of example competition and lack of coordination mainly in situation where mediating state holds its own interest and need for internationalization (and privtization) of mediation to guarantee better conditions.

[21] Crocker et al. (2015, pp. 382–383).

network-based cooperation for working together.[22] Nonetheless, in the end, it is impossible to avoid competition altogether by organizational arrangement because competitive attitude springs from the necessary efforts to gain recognition and to secure a role as a mediator, but guaranteeing mutual trust within the operational level is essential. Felm's experience in Syria indicates one way for how newcomers in the peacemaking field could avoid competition within multiparty situations. The Syria Initiative (SI), a collaborative project with Felm and its Lebanese partner CSI, has progressively managed to gain a well-recognized position within the multiparty setting. Despite their strengthening role, they have not struggled with competitive attitudes in the Syrian context, and have managed to successfully cooperate with various respected international private actors. The explanation for the ease of cooperation among the different actors is seemingly that Felm has taken a rather invisible role in the Syria process, and adopted a low profile that does not challenge the positions of other actors.[23] Competition appears also in Syria to be mainly about roles in the mediation process, and neither Felm nor its local partner CSI have aimed to take the role of the chief mediator, or, in practice, the role of mediator at all, even if their work has elements of mediation. Instead, they have acted behind the scenes. The SI has been very active in several sectors, and has actively sought both local and international partners. Its strategy has been based on working with and through partners, and this kind of network model requires complete openness and transparency. Instead of emphasizing ownership of ideas and knowledge, its work is based on open use of all ideas, since loaning ideas supports peace and is a tool to avoid competition and to be successful in networking. Furthermore, according to Felm, a transparent architecture of a peace process prevents competition among private peacemakers.[24] Therefore, it has been very successful in the construction of cooperative networks with several major private organizations as well as with the EIP. Indeed, as in any market, the ability to cooperate smoothly in multiparty mediation is based on the adopted roles. The conflictual situation among organizations takes place more easily if a particular organization aspires to a more visible role in the process, and

[22] Lanz and Gasser (2013).

[23] Felm, *The Syria Initiative: 2nd Quarterly Report 2016*; The Syria Initiative: *1st Quarterly Report* 2016; Interview with Rintakoski and Saarnivaara, Sept 2016.

[24] Interview with Rintakoski and Saarnivaara, Sept 2016.

others feel that their position is challenged. Furthermore, at the operational level, when relationships and the division of labor between different organizations have been managed in coordination, cooperation has worked well and effectively. When it comes to cooperation during actual operations, respondents argue that, in most cases, there is no longer competition, since the roles of each participating organization are set, making it easier to concentrate on the actual work.

Well-recognized demand for coordination among different actors was also the premise on which the MSN and the Network were established. In the case of MSN, it has not responded in best way to these coordination expectations that, for example, MSU has cherished. The Network's approach in turn has been broader and its general objective is collaborative action that benefits the expertise of different civil society organizations. It offers a new kind of meeting platform for transnational organizations and local organizations that have worked in their areas for a long time and often have in-depth knowledge and experience about the local context, as well as unique access and connections to the local population.[25]

The competition over mandates among private peacemakers has forced private actors to look for alternative approaches, and the competitive setting has also generated innovative thinking in order to overcome challenges. In order to break out of this dilemma, private peacemakers have increasingly started to ignore official mandates or, in other words, for private peacemakers, the mandate is no longer as dominant and determining a prerequisite as it used to be, and attitudes towards mandates have become more practical and flexible. In some cases, a mandate is needed, and in other cases it is not. Or, a mandate can be achieved after entering into the process, if one's own role and the conflict dynamic is changing. Instead of a mandate, private peacemakers now search for alternative *entry points* to a particular peace process or conflict situation.[26] As mandates from an international organization or some official actors are not necessarily required before entering into a process, mandates have ceased to be seen as a document setting the whole agenda and goals of a project. Furthermore, an entry point can no longer be seen as internationally given, but it always has to be based on an *invitation*

[25] Interview with Abdile and Rytkönen, Nov 2016.

[26] Interview with Brummer, Eronen, and Patokallio, Sept 2016; Interview with Abdile and Rytkönen, Nov 2016.

from a local actor. The inviting party can be a local NGO or other local actor instead of a state or other official authoritative agent.[27] A classical mandate given by an international organization or the conflict parties themselves is always a binding legal document that sets strict and non-negotiable frames for a mediator. An invitation, on the other hand, gives the third party more freedom and the flexibility to define the goals and agenda of the process, and to update and refocus them throughout the process when changing conflict dynamics require it. As respondents argue, current conflicts are complex and unpredictable, and thus practices of peace have to be more flexible and adaptive than the previous mandate-centric system could be.[28]

The dominance of official over private may already have been contested, but it is still a major challenge for private peacemakers. The rules and practices of peacebuilding and mediation have been set at this official level. As outsider and sometimes marginalized actor in the spheres of official peace diplomacy, private actors need continuously to search for justification for the significance of their contribution.[29] Private peace actors are in many ways entangled with states and international organizations and, notably, a major part of their financing comes from states and international organizations. The roles of the donor as a subscriber and the private actor as a service provider are in many ways crucial for the implementation of operations. This relationship may set considerable limits for planning and design. In principle, the organizations could decide what they want to do and where, but before initiating a project, the organization needs to apply for funding, which requires a clear project plan indicating the achieved outcomes and results that convinces the donor.[30] The realities of funding systems provide obstacles for the application of new approaches since external funding is primarily bound to the evaluation of impacts of particular projects along Result-Based Management. Private peacemakers have to work within a management frame; however, what they can do is try to influence donors' practices. This all sets a clear framework for their freedom of action.

[27] Interview with Abdile and Rytkönen, Nov 2016.

[28] Interview with Brummer, Eronen, and Patokallio, Sept 2016.

[29] Interview with Eronen, Patokallio, and Rytkönen, Jan 2017.

[30] Interview with Abdile and Rytkönen, Nov 2016.

Private peacemakers find themselves operating in the middle of pressures from various directions; they have to demonstrate their contribution to UN-led processes, justify their efficiency for and impact on donors, and find their place among other private actors and coordinate action with them without giving the impression of stepping on their toes. The relationship between official and private sectors is continuously dynamic, challenging, and, in particular, asymmetric. Thus, in order to be innovative, private actors need to cope within the limits of official peace diplomacy and simultaneously be able to maneuver on its edges, while softly aiming to influence official practices and perceptions. In other words, private organizations may be small in terms of their resources when compared with official actors, but they can employ soft power to influence the complex international peace architecture if they are smart enough.

Despite criticism towards official UN-led peace processes as inefficient and stagnated, all private actors need to position themselves in official processes in one way or another. It is often mentioned how the UN's involvement in peace processes makes them messier and rarely leads to true transformation or solutions. The UN is seen more as a bull in a china shop. This frustration towards UN-led peace operations is the overwhelming push towards seeking new approaches and practices, but private peacemakers are simultaneously aware that they cannot completely turn their back on the UN and state-based peace diplomacy, as they depend on and are attached to it in many ways. Private peacemakers then need to work within the framework of the UN-led peace process if they want to be involved and contribute to peace efforts in major conflicts. Operating completely outside of the official system is not an option. Rather than distance and exclude themselves from official actors, organizations must engage in dialogue with these actors, and try to influence their views and cooperate with them if possible.[31] This is particularly important if the actors are powerful states or organizations such as the UN, whose involvement in and influence on peace processes cannot be ignored. The ability to maneuver being on the edge of official peace diplomacy—being part of it and simultaneously acting somewhere beyond it, perhaps in between the official and the informal—requires smart, multifaceted actors that are flexible with policies and approaches.

[31] Interview with Eronen, Patokallio, and Rytkönen, Jan 2016.

Private actors may not have power based on their official position, but by acting in a smart way they may be able to reshape the perceptions and practices of official peace diplomacy. In this regard, the three Finnish private actors have chosen different approaches and have positioned their agency in slightly different ways in relation to the complex international peace architecture. As for international organizations—primarily the UN—each of the private organizations has to evaluate their relationship to them while remaining critical of their shortcomings. The Network's activities, in particular, are strongly linked to the UN's approach to mediation; this stems from the Network's origin and is maintained by its New York office. It recognizes its own role in developing tools for mediation, with a strong focus on raising awareness about the role of religious and traditional actors in the UN framework.[32] From the perspective of liberal peace and Western modernity, the inclusion of religious and traditional actors has been seen as irrelevant and even counterproductive to achieving development goals and liberal forms of peace. However, the core principle of FCA and the Network is that peace processes "need to build legitimacy before entering into dialogue about how to establish or reform institutions."[33] In many weak and collapsed states, only traditional tribal or religious structures may have legitimation from the local perspective, while state structures have ceased to exist. Thus, engaging and working through these structures is essential for building inclusive peace processes; this is especially so if the goal is to prevent radicalization by engaging radicalized elements back into society, since building up official institutions for this purpose takes too long.[34] FCA's attempts to promote the inclusion of tribal elders in Somalia's peace process since 2007 finally led to the UN Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS) accepting the principle in 2012.[35] Even after that, however, the UN Security Council—mainly at the initiative of the USA—aimed to "take a shortcut." Eventually, because of local resistance, a major breakthrough was achieved by alliances of Somali elders. "The Somalia case inspired the UN Mediation Support Unit (MSU) to consider

[32] Network, *Project Status of the Network Projects.*

[33] Pentikäinen (2015).

[34] Interview with Abdile, Pentikäinen, Perukangas, Puoskari, and Tarvainen, Sept 2016.

[35] Lepistö et al. (2015), Lepistö (2013).

enlarging the UN's toolbox to include working with traditional and religious actors," commented Pentikäinen in evaluating the notable influence of FCA's Somalia work.[36] Indeed, in particular, the current Secretary-General António Guterres has recognized the importance of religious actors and their potential to contribute to more sustainable and inclusive peace processes beyond the closed door of the political elite. Currently, the Network is also participating in organizing an annual Religion and Mediation Course for UN civil servants with the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA), the Center for Security Studies (CSS) at ETH Zurich and Culture and Religion in Mediation program (CARIM), which is a joint initiative of CSS and the FDFA. The Network and its partners are also cooperating in the field with other UN organizations and in particular with UN Women.[37] Still, a certain reservation and suspicion in dealing with religious questions and religious actors has remained and it has not been regarded as a trouble-free, omnipresent approach relevant in all situations. As Joenpolvi from MSU reminds the engaging religious and traditional actors in peace process are always delicate, context specific and contingent questions and their role may be also counterproductive if the legitimate position of religious actors is transforming. For example, in Somalia, religious actors have recently been losing their legitimacy among the younger urban generation.[38] Still, in Somalia, religious extremists like the militant group of Al-Shabaab are key actors in internal conflict and the Network is engaging in a research project particularly dealing with its position and offering Al-Shabaab entry point to official talks.[39] Thus, in each case, besides those who are conflict or warring parties and their motives, it is important to recognize other actors who have the potential to produce peace or, in contrary, to be detrimental for it.

Felm also operates mainly in multiparty mediation settings. Felm regards itself as a support actor whose role—particularly in the SI—is to feed track two and three dialogue processes into the track one level, or to link the bottom-up process to the UN-led Geneva talks, which have

[36] Pentikäinen (2015).

[37] Network website; Interview with Abdile, Jan 2018; Interview with Joenpolvi, Dec 2017.

[38] Interview with Joenpolvi, Dec 2017.

[39] Interview with Abdile, Jan 2018.

remained very much internationally led with little Syrian ownership. Thus, on the one hand, Felm identifies and acts within the strict frames of UN-led multiparty mediation complexity, but on the other hand, it is worried about its inefficiency and criticizes the poor coordination and the inability of the track one level to listen local voices.[40] According to Felm's representatives, coordination between different tracks and actors is rarely straightforward; there is no institutionalized channel for linking civil society dialogue processes to the official process, and it takes a great deal of time and effort to find individuals, connections and channels through which processes at different tracks can be connected. Therefore, it is all the more challenging for private organizations to link their work to the official peace process if UN representatives do not take into account their contributions, and design processes to make better coordination possible—or if they do not even want private actors to become involved. For increasing efficiency in the multiparty mediation setting, the existing complex architecture of peace processes should become more visible according to Felm's viewpoint. This visibility and awareness of the links between actors would make communication easier and would in particular allow bottom-up communication. On the other hand, every connection cannot be visible, as the trust and credibility of a private actor on the local level may be based on it not being seen as a representative of the official UN-led process. From this perspective, the question of a visible architectural plan is not so much about joint goal and agenda setting, but about a communicative network that would make it possible to link the various scales of the peace process and indeed guarantee that NGO-based projects in more localized contexts are meaningful from the perspective of the whole process.[41] All in all, this approach is not radically new and resonates well with, for example, Strimling's vision of increased cooperation between official diplomacy and private peace diplomacy.[42] Yet, these issues demonstrate the extent to which communication among official and private actors, as well as those at the local level, is still a notable challenge.

Among the three Finnish private peace actors, CMI's approach is different and it acts more often as an independent actor beyond the large

[40] Crocker et al. (2015, pp. 382–383). According to the authors, a major challenge of multiparty mediation is the lack of administrative support, resources, and political back-up.

[41] Interview with Rintakoski and Saarnivaara, Sept 2016.

[42] Strimling, "Stepping Out of the Tracks," p. 103.

UN-led peace processes. However, it is also in many cases entangled with UN-led processes. After all, it is noted that the organizations do not choose where they act based on whether there is a UN process in place.[43] In some cases, they are active in areas with no official processes or actors. CMI sees itself as working in and between tracks, acting in a complementary role, feeding substance to the peace process, sometimes from outside of the formal sphere. This position can also be used in cases of deadlock in the official process, when the unofficial sphere can offer new alternatives.[44] This kind of approach is clearly seen in the case of Iraq, which CMI has entered by invitation of the Iraqi government to give support in the drafting of the National Reconciliation Strategy. In Ukraine, CMI acts from the broadly acknowledged observation that the official process is less than perfect and thus it requires complementary supporting intervention. It is active in building channels of communication that can complement the work of the official Minsk process. Furthermore, CMI supports more effective Ukrainian engagement in the Minsk process through capacity building and by supporting the Ukrainian internal dialogue process.[45]

The private peacemaking scene has recently faced new challenges, indicated well by the Syrian War. As non-liberal powers have increasingly adopted the role as a mediator, as the Astana process exemplifies, the space for peace mediation and private peacemaking in particular have become narrower as the war is increasingly entangled in rivalries among great and regional powers.[46] In Syria, it looked for a while that there was a danger of splitting of whole process between the Russian–Turkish—Iranian-led Astana negotiations concentrating on a ceasefire and other hard security issues and the EU- and the UN-led official peace process focusing more on human rights and other soft issues including women's participation cherishing liberal peace norms. The latest turn also demonstrates how great powers are taking a more visible role in negotiating solely on military issue while leaving political and human rights issues to the UN. Since then, the model of de-escalation zones that was the cornerstone of Astana process has failed. From the private peacemakers'

[43] Patokallio, pers. comm., March 13, 2017.

[44] CMI, *Annual Programme Report* 2014, p. 10.

[45] Ville Brummer and Mikko Patokallio, pers. comm. Mar 23, 2017.

[46] Lanz and Gasser (2013).

perspective, space for their engagement and for multitrack diplomacy in general appears to be more limited than before as private peacemaking belonged characteristically to the liberal world order.[47] What private peacemakers can do is act as bridge builder, like The Berghof Foundation, which currently supports "a group of independent experts" that aim to "bridge international, regional and local discussions on Syria" including that in Astana and Geneva.[48] It is obvious that for private peacemakers, it is challenging to enter mediation processes that are led by nonliberal powers and even more challenging to gain a similar freedom of action they currently have.

The prevailing geopolitical trends and the strengthening power-political rationale narrow down momentum for peace diplomacy. It seems that liberal internationalism has been contested from several angles, and states are less willing to invest in soft forms of peace diplomacy. Non-liberal powers like Russia and Iran also have interests in becoming involved in local-level negotiations, and thus partly rule out international private actors. In this kind of setting, it is more demanding for NGO actors to find entry points, their own space of action, and indeed funding. One option could be turning more towards private funding; however, working with private multinational companies also raises new kinds of ethical questions.[49] All in all, the question of how to organize and cope with the asymmetric relationship between the official and the private cannot be avoided but the relationship between official track one diplomacy and tens of private peacemakers is also dynamic and dependent on other political trends.

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CHAPTER 10

The Finnish Way: Cooperative Interaction Between Official and Private Actors

The role and the position of the private peacemakers in relation to official diplomacy are usually examined within the frame of particular peace operations. The focus has been on how the contribution of private actors complements official peace diplomacy, and to what extent their actions are integrated.[1] The interaction among official and private actors, however, is also significant when the official side does not take the role of the main mediator, but rather that of the donor—as is the case in Finland. The existence of strong NGO actors that focus on peace mediation and peacemaking is a Finnish particularity in the peace sector. In Finland, peacemaking witnesses an intensive interaction between the official state sector and the NGO sector; the existence of a symbiotic relationship between the official and the NGO sector in the peace mediation field provides an interesting example that may also have wide applicability and significance. A close relationship with the state and NGOs is also characteristic to Norway and Switzerland but in a different form. Norway lacks strong NGO actors who would actively contribute to peace mediation practice and NGOs give their support to the state's mediation activity. Switzerland has two well-known NGOs (Swisspeace and Interpeace) but in Switzerland both the state and NGOs are active in peace operations. In Finland, the state has so-far limited its activity primarily to mediation

[1] Strimling (2006).

M. Lehti, *The Era of Private Peacemakers*,
Rethinking Peace and Conflict Studies,
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support (good offices, networking, coordinating, promoting, funding etc.) and NGOs have taken active role in various conflicts.

Finland's self-adopted role as intermediator and neutral bridge-builder between the East and the West, but not particularly mediator, was arguably already a central element of the Finnish identity during the Cold War. Piiparinen and Aaltola suggest that its geopolitical position offered Finland three opportunities: to conciliate between the East and West, to sustain the UN's security architecture that benefited small states, and to signal its neutrality to other states.[2] Finland has also been known to actively support UN peacekeeping as a means of increasing its international profile while maintaining a stance of neutrality between the East and the West.[3] Furthermore, Finland's role as a small state has been a central theme throughout its UN membership, and gaining recognition for its neutrality was a priority for the country during the Cold War; it assumed the role of a physician rather than a judge, as former president Urho Kekkonen stated in his first statement to the General Assembly.[4] However, the official prioritization of promoting mediation in Finnish foreign policy is a more recent development. In 2010, the then-Minister for Foreign Affairs Alexander Stubb stated that Finland aimed to become a great power in mediation, following the example of countries such as Norway and Switzerland.[5] This new emphasis on mediation can be seen as stemming from Finnish recent experiences of mediation: the role of Harri Holkeri at Northern Ireland peace process, the involvement in mediation of Georgia as a chair of the OSCE and as Antti Turunen as the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General, the role of Pekka Haavisto the Special Representative of the EU in Darfur, and above all success and visibility of Martti Ahtisaari in the Aceh.[6] Official interest in mediation was further increased by the work of the Country Brand Delegation, led by the former CEO of Nokia Jorma Ollila, which envisioned a more active and visible mediation role for Finland, as well as

[2] Piiparinen and Aaltola (2012, pp. 92–93).

[3] Jakobsen (2012), Palosaari (2013).

[4] Vesa (2012).

[5] MFA, *Peace Mediation—Finland's Guidelines* (Helsinki: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2014), accessed March 1, 2017, http://formin.fi/public/download.aspx?ID=59769&GUID={8CA2CDB5-BA89-4928-A7C4-E8094C3B757B}.

[6] Joenniemi (2014), Rantanen (2014).

Finland's campaign for non-permanent UN Security Council membership for the period 2013–2014.[7]

Since the MFA adopted (peace) mediation as one of its foreign policy priorities, it has seemingly recognized its own financial as well as professional limits as an acting peacemaker. Finland still has a long way to go to reach a similar position to that of Norway or Switzerland, and in terms of financial investment in particular, Finland could not have reached a similar level. It has had special envoys for mediation (Kimmo Kiljunen, Pekka Haavisto and Jutta Urpilainen) that have taken active roles in certain areas, such as the Horn of Africa. Instead of taking a role as a mediator, Finland has so far mainly focused on the normative promotion of mediation in international organizations including active lobbying and networking. In this, the UN has arguably taken center stage, with initiatives in the EU and the OSCE following suit. Finland's work through the UN Group of Friends of Mediation, formed together with Turkey in 2010, has led to the adoption of three General Assembly resolutions and the writing of the Secretary-General's report A/66/811.[8]

A major part of the MFA's investment in mediation and peacemaking in the field has primarily taken place through the three NGO actors (FCA, Felm, and CMI). Supporting Finnish-based NGO-based peacemakers is an integral aspect of Finland's mediation activities, and part of a long history of involving civil society actors in the government's efforts.[9] In recent years, Finland has also promoted collaboration and information sharing with civil society actors through channels such as the Mediation Coordination Group.[10] Currently, Finland's flagship projects in mediation are supporting dialogue in Syria and Myanmar (largely carried out by Felm with its partners), strengthening the mediation capacity of the African Union (AU), the Nordic Women Mediators' Network and the Gender and Inclusive Mediation training involving CMI, PRIO and the UNDPA, as well as supporting the Network, and FCA as its

[7] Pertti Joenniemi and Marko Lehti, "Rauhanvälitys pohjoismaisen yhteistyön haasteena," in *Rauhanvälitys—suomalaisia näkökulmia*, ed. Petteri Nissinen and Anisa Doty (Helsinki: Kansalaisjärjestöjen konfliktinehkäisyverkosto), pp. 40–48.

[8] https://peacemaker.un.org/friendsofmediation.

[9] Kanerva (2012, pp. 108–113), Lehti (2014).

[10] MFA, *Action Plan for Mediation* (Helsinki: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2011), accessed February 8, 2017, http://www.formin.finland.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=236431&nodeid=49540&contentlan=1&culture=fi-FI.

secretariat.[11] The idea has been that the work of private organizations can increase the MFA's international mediation profile, while the MFA can support the organizations' visibility in intergovernmental and international platforms.[12] The private organizations can act out the MFA's mediation policies in practice, providing a highly efficient and cost-effective method of operation. Their expertise and access to the grassroots population and a variety of different actors is valuable to the MFA, while the MFA can in turn help link them to official processes and provide up-to-date information on such processes.

The context in which the work of the three Finnish-based private organizations analyzed here takes place is fairly unique in the sense that a great deal of their funding comes from the Finnish government. In 2015, CMI received 65% of its funding from the state, with the rest coming from Finnish and international foundations (16%), other governments (11%), other partners, including corporate partners and private individuals (5%), and the EU (3%).[13] Felm received approximately 27% of its funding from the MFA in 2015, with parishes being its largest funders (30%), and the rest coming from other sources, such Christian organizations and private individuals.[14] During the same year, the FCA received the majority of its funding (approximately 33%) from the Finnish government, with 27% coming from private donations, 22% from international funding, and 18% from parishes and the Ecclesiastical Board.[15] The financial cuts made by the government in 2015 have affected all three organizations, even though some of their mediation work prioritized by the MFA was spared from great damage. Nevertheless, this illustrates the extent to which the private organizations are vulnerable to the policies of the government in this type of partnership.

[11] "Mediation," MFA, accessed February 6, 2017, http://www.formin.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=323874&contentlan=2&culture=en-US.

[12] Interview with Abdile and Rytkönen, November 2016.

[13] "Funding", CMI 2017, accessed February 7, 2017, http://cmi.fi/.

[14] Felm, *Annual Report* 2015, accessed August 3, 2016, http://www.suomenlahetysseura.fi/ls_en/www/lahetysseura/home/about_felm/.

[15] FCA, *Annual Report* 2015, accessed February 7, 2017, https://www.kirkonulkomaanapu.fi/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/KUA_ar_English_final.pdf?x80383.

The relationship between private organizations and states, and between donors and private peacemakers, may hold tensions and challenges, as argued above. However, the relationship can also be collaborative and dialogic, as the Finnish case proves, with both the MFA and private organizations as beneficiaries. In Finland, the relationship between the three organizations and the state extends beyond that of a funder and recipient. It is mutually beneficial and built on a relatively long tradition of state–civil society cooperation characteristic to Nordic societies. In addition to the private organizations lobbying the MFA and the MFA financing their activities, the parties engage in a variety of collaborative activities, which may include exchange of information, ideas and contacts, thematic or country-specific briefings and discussions, as well as a range of fairly informal interaction. The extent and depth of collaboration, however, often boils down to the views and actions of individual professionals, and the relations between them. Therefore, it is also affected by factors such as the fast rotation of professionals in the MFA. Nevertheless, it can be argued that the cooperation between the MFA and the private peacemakers constitutes a sustained partnership, which is supported by the existing structures and practices of collaborations that have developed during the past couple of decades.

The interests and priorities of the MFA and the three organizations often go hand in hand with both influencing the other—or at least they are rarely in outright conflict. This does not mean that they always share the same ideals about mediation—indeed, the MFA's understanding is more traditional than that of private peacemakers. Still, it is clear that private actors have managed to bring parts of their way of understanding conflicts to the MFA, since the MFA has, for example, adopted support for religious and traditional peacemakers to its agenda, and as the largest peace operation funded by the MFA is Felm's SI project, whose main focus is to support local transformation and to strengthen bottom-up communication. All in all, the MFA has been willing to fund mediation projects with an emphasis on transformation and local inclusion instead of traditional mediation projects. Furthermore, the MFA has also supported the broader development of national and informal dialogue as a tool for peacemaking. A close relationship may appear problematic and raise questions about the independence of non-governmental actors in other contexts, but in the Finnish context this is seemingly not the case. All of the private actors emphasize that they do not represent the Finnish state, even if they consciously regard themselves as Finnish actors.

Indeed, the fact that they are Finnish may open doors due to the lack of colonial burdens, and due to other qualities perceived as positive in the international arena.[16]

A close relationship with private actors is the cornerstone of Finnish mediation and has significant similarities to the Norwegian model. Despite these similarities, there are also major differences between the Norwegian and the Finnish models—this is also true in financial terms, as Norway invests significantly greater amounts in mediation. Finland has been neither willing nor able to assume a role similar to the mediator role that Norway has played in several conflicts. It can be argued that Finland still lacks the social and financial capacity to take on such a role, making it more sensible to focus on creating alternative mediation strategies.[17] Because of circumstances, collaboration with private actors then has had a central role in Finland's "key project [which] concerns the development of a normative and institutional basis for mediation in international organizations."[18]

In the Norwegian model that was taking its shape already after the Oslo process in the 1990s, the state, private, mainly NGO actors, and the research field were engaged in a close relationship, which granted a small country like Norway capacity and expertise in various areas around the globe, but also flexibility in planning and action. This close contact between the actors and the wide range of specific expertise for planning and implementation that it offered enabled the Norwegian Foreign Ministry's smooth engagement in various operations. While such civil society collaboration is considered to be a key pillar of both Finnish and Norwegian diplomacy, there are certain differences in how this has been executed in the two countries. Norway's primary NGO partners in its peace efforts have been the five major organizations: Norwegian Church Aid, Norwegian People's Aid, the Norwegian Red Cross, the Norwegian Refugee Council, and Save the Children Norway. The private organizations' local experience and expertise, and the personal relationships between NGO and government representatives have provided access and entry points for Norway to engage in conflicts as a state mediator

[16] Interview with Eronen and Patokallio, Jan 2018.

[17] Piiparinen and Aaltola (2012).

[18] "Mediation," MFA, accessed February 20, 2017, http://formin.finland.fi/public/default.aspx?nodeid=49301&contentlan=2&culture=fi-FI.

in countries such as Sri Lanka.[19] In this way, Norwegian private organizations largely focus on development and humanitarian assistance; and the interlinkage of development, peace, and security is closely present in their cooperation with the Norwegian state in mediation. In this way, Norwegian private organizations share similarities with FCA and Felm, and have less in common with CMI.

It appears, however, that the Norwegian private organizations have not adopted mediation as a central part of their own work in the way that is particularly characteristic to the Finnish private organizations. Their role seems to revolve more around supporting the mediation efforts of state rather than prioritizing it in their own work. It can be speculated as to whether this stems from the traditionally prominent state mediator role of the Norwegian state, the cooperation between the government and the private sector favoring different types of private initiatives, a different conceptualization of mediation among the Norwegian private organizations, or some other factors. In any case, the strategies and fields that private actors in Norway focus on are different from those of their Finnish counterparts. It was also noted by the interviewees that despite Norway's high mediation profile and the features of the Norwegian model, it does not have a similar set of private peacemakers.[20] However, the Norwegian government has recently asked Norwegian Centre for Conflict Resolution (NOREF) for a more active role as peacemaker and emphasis on informal diplomacy and mediation support is observable in NOREF's new outreach.[21]

If compared with the many non-Nordic cases, it was argued by some practitioners that there is one notable difference in approach. Several states, including great powers, fund private actors and cooperate with them. For example, the Carter Center closely cooperates with the US government but the limits of cooperation are very much set by US foreign political goals. Private actors are then used to support these political goals and their funding is thus entangled with the political objectives of the donating state. In Finland, according to the private actors, the MFA does not impose political objectives, and it seems that the overall objective is to enhance peace mediation in general, with particular

[19] Kelleher and Taulbee (2006, pp. 479–505). See also Lehti and Saarinen (2014).

[20] Interview with Eronen, Patokallio, and Rytkönen, Jan 2016.

[21] Interview with Eronen and Parokallio, Jan 2018; NOREF website.

goals linked in most cases to specific principles such as the promotion of women's participation in peace processes. It is NGOs that hold the freedom to design and choose their targets and the objectives of their peace intervention.[22]

The 'Finnish model' is in certain ways a unique model and an example of cooperative interaction between the official and the private. Although the MFA has not attempted to brand this cooperation as a specific Finnish model, certain particular features can be detected in the way the partnership between the MFA and the private actors is constructed. Private actors certainly benefit from it, as it gives them considerable freedom to be innovative. At the same time, the MFA also benefits, as investing in new types of peace projects can be regarded as risk investment with a low risk, and with remarkably lower costs than acting through official diplomatic channels. Through funded projects, the MFA is well informed about, for example, Syrian and Ukrainian developments. Furthermore, with several strong state actors in the field, it is easier to find a role through the private sector. In the best case, the innovative projects of private peacemakers can contribute to a major breakthrough and improve the Finnish reputation. In the worst case, the risk of failure is faced by the private actor rather than the MFA.

The 'Finnish model' offers an interesting example that may have wider significance. In the Finnish context, the official and the private sector form a symbiotic relationship that benefits both. There is a lot of interaction and various mutual learning processes, but it is still obvious that the official and private sectors can never fully merge, as their practices, agendas and identities are fundamentally different. In the Finnish model, it is a question of balancing with different cultures and approaches and, above all, the ability to tolerate these differences. From a broader perspective, this may—much better than well institutionalized hierarchical systems—enable innovative thinking and new kind of approaches. The relationship is like those in the business sector, as donors look for targets for risk investments that in the best-case scenario bring large profits also to donors—yet, there is always a high risk of losing everything. In the field of peacemaking, the profit would be peace or at least change towards peace, and this would also enhance the reputation of the donor. However, in comparison with business investments,

[22] Brummer and Patokallio, pers. comm., March 23, 2017.

private peacemaking initiatives contain a low risk in regard to finances, as projects are still rather small and limited. This model enables investment in better official sites to increase the inclusivity of mediation as well developing something that can be called "preventive mediation" (discussed in details in Chapter 13).

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CHAPTER 11

Towards a Locally Owned Inclusive Peace Process

The normative principles of local ownership and inclusivity of peace processes have been part of the peacebuilding rhetoric from the very beginning but it has only been after the harsh criticism of the intrusive and elite-based forms of liberal peacebuilding of the 1990s that these principles were revisited and taken as a true normative basis for peace processes—at least by an increasing proportion of peacebuilders as well peace mediators. These principles that were first only adopted within the peacebuilding and development context have recently been attached to mediation in particular by private peacemakers but cherished by official actors as well. It is noteworthy that although calls for inclusive and locally owned peace processes are intertwined in a complex way, they do not necessarily mean the same thing. Inclusivity primarily refers to participation, whereas ownership points more to agency in the peace process. The answers to what the possibilities and requirements are for the third party in building up and supporting an inclusive and locally owned process are obviously different if considered from the perspective of formal mediation by official actors or from the perspective of informal peace mediation by non-official actors.

Operationalizing the messiness of the post-liberal understanding of the peace process and attaching it to everyday and local practices of peace has given overwhelming emphasis to the *inclusivity* of the process. Inclusivity is considered essential for the transformation towards

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sustainable peace as a whole, as it is noted that "more inclusive societies are generally more stable, harmonious and developed."[1] Therefore, increasing inclusion in societal processes supports the creation and strengthening of self-sustaining peace or the goal of an "inclusive state," as Pentikäinen writes.[2] Following this logic, all efforts and inputs to increase social inclusion in sociopolitical processes support transformation towards self-sustaining peace.

Inclusivity can refer to two different issues: "the extent and manner in which actors are included in a process, and the extent and manner which issues are included." Inclusivity can also be approached by focusing on exclusion and by looking for a way to avoid active but also often overlooked passive exclusion. Inclusivity of peace process has become "an essential part of long-term conflict transformation" but a more pragmatic question concerns whether there are more "exclusionary phases" during the mediation process but simultaneously (peace) mediation according to the prevailing normative guide should be "as inclusive as possible."[3] Inclusion may refer to broadening up from elite-based exclusive negotiations among main conflicting parties to include civil society actors. It can also mean turning the focus from the national and elite level to local communities. Furthermore, it can refer to engaging large sociopolitical groups that are otherwise excluded or marginalized. This can refer to large and heterogeneous social groups like women and youth, to slightly more limited groups like traditional and religious actors, or also to radicalized elements of society. "More and different types of actors are taking part at national and international levels to resolve conflicts and seek agreement," and the inclusion of civil society organizations as active actors has become a new norm.[4]

From the peace mediation perspective, a classic track one mediation has been seen as exclusive action per se, since the mediation situation is often secret, engaging only a few representatives of the political elite. Inclusion is seen to bring about intricacy, uncertainty and polarization—all of which work against agreements and compromises. Conventional mediation has put out to pasture questions of inclusivity and local

[1] Paffenholz and Ross (2015, p. 28).

[2] Pentikäinen (2015, p. 67).

[3] Inclusivity in Mediation Process: Lessons from Chiapas. MSN report no. 6, 2014.

[4] Spector (2015).

ownership, but the very recent normative shift has generated a strong normative pressure for the engagement of previously sidelined or marginalized groups in peace process and, therefore, in particular, the participation of women at all levels of peace process has become a widely shared and omnipresent goal. This shift is bringing civic society actors from the field of reconciliation to the field of mediation as well, and local ownership and emphasis on everyday needs are not necessarily seen only as questions of peacebuilding but something that should be recognized in peace mediation too.

Furthermore, inclusivity and legitimacy are closely attached since it is widely agreed that even if "legitimacy has multiple formal and informal sources," it "will be greater where there are high levels of political inclusion, participation, representation and achievement." In conflict situations, peacemakers should be aware of local, "customary source of legitimacy" that "are based on norms of trust, and reciprocity" as they need to engage actors and groups holding grounded legitimacy in their society and often the informal legitimacy of traditional institutions like kin or tribe may be more significant than the legitimacy of more formal officials and institutions that often are non-existing or corrupted. Thus, "trust built on personal relationships might be more important than bureaucratic accountability procedures."[5] Still, there is also a risk of the "all-too-common idealization of the quest for local legitimacy as a peacemaking strategy."[6] For conventional mediation involving deal-making over power-sharing within the frame of state institutions, this is obviously a drastic statement. Still, the conclusion is that through simplified and exclusive negotiations, it is not possible to accommodate the increased complexity of conflict situations; therefore, more inclusive negotiations are also more effective. Therefore, it is important to ask what is needed from the third party in order to achieve inclusive outcomes to make political settlements more sustainable.

Balancing the inclusion of political and societal actors in addition to primary conflict parties and keeping negotiations manageable without sacrificing effectiveness is seen to be a primarily pragmatic question even if it is also obviously a normative question and indeed process in which peace mediators hold significant power to shape the conflict dynamic.

[5] Clements (2014).

[6] Arnault (2014).

Since the value of broad participation is now taken for granted, it is a question of the appropriate forms of practice to adjust this into well-designed peace process.[7] If it is agreed that "the inclusion of additional actors or groups next to the main conflict parties (such as civil society or political partners) in negotiation processes is crucial in making war-to-peace and political transitions more sustainable," how the third party can support an inclusive peace process and manage complexity, uncertainty, and polarization may contribute to the peace mediation situation. Emphasizing inclusivity thus raises complex challenges and questions that are well identified by Paffenholz and Ross: "Given the opportunities and challenges presented by inclusion in peace processes, it is best approached not as a yes or no binary, but as a question of how to accommodate the increased complexity through effective process design. This involves questions of who should be involved in a process, when is the right moment to include additional actors, and how they should be included (or what form their participation should take)."[8] Indeed, "broad legitimacy is so critical to the success of peace process," peace mediators need to focus on construction legitimacy and, beyond the question of participation, it may require other practices in order to build confidence and trust among parties and to the peace process in general.[9]

The main arguments of debates on popular peace, locally driven peace, or peace formation have been that the basis for sustainable and durable peace is constructed at the local level by supporting local transformation and allows for local definitions of peace, and that responding to local everyday needs is possible only by engaging local actors. This kind of philosophy does not deny the significance of state institutions, but it argues that concentrating primarily on supporting the rebuilding of state institutions may be an inefficient and even counterproductive exercise for achieving sustainable peace.[10] Jerry McCann captures well the new niche of locally owned peace processes and the new ideal for how the international third party—a private peacemaker in particular—should accommodate its approach to enhance locally driven process. Previously, practitioners' literature primarily concentrated on how to

[7] Paffenholz (2014).

[8] Paffenholz and Ross (2015, pp. 28–30).

[9] Arnault (2014).

[10] Roberts (2011, pp. 2544–2545).

make peacebuilding more efficient and focused on the required criteria for successful execution of the general design of liberal peace intervention, whereas McCann notes that "external actors must reconsider how their support can be more effectively integrated into locally owned efforts towards building peace." His approach to existing peacebuilding is critical:

> From the ownership of the marginalised at the grassroots level, to the ownership of the state at the national level, organisations claiming to have designs for building peace consider it routine to identify those that they target as owners of the initiative. The unfortunate reality of 'peacebuilding' as a professional practice is that provided the intervention suggests local ownership, and provided the target groups are of interest to the donors, one can sustain oneself as a peacebuilder without significantly affecting peace.[11]

According to McCann, determining whom to support, and how, poses one of the trickiest challenges facing practitioners. Yet, the starting point of the process for peacebuilders should be to understand the needs of the local people as they understand themselves. In order to recognize the true capacities and limitations of target groups, the intervening third party has to understand the population, their ideas and identities, and the unique context of the conflict—this, however, requires sufficient time and resources. Ensuring local ownership requires mutual trust between the local actors and the third party, as well as the trust of the local actors in the process itself. Yet, this type of relationship building takes time. Flexibility is essential for the third party, as "it is impossible to predict the precise route that a society will take on its way to becoming more peaceful."[12] Flexibility, in turn, requires the ability to respond to unexpected signs and developments, rather than to make accurate predictions. The goal would then be *locally driven* and *locally owned* peacebuilding interventions.

McCann introduces four more practical conclusions for a third party to avoid the mistakes of classical liberal peacebuilders of 1990s. First, the new sensitive peacebuilders should, instead of an international mandate, have a *local invitation* to engage. Second, they should, instead of

[11] McCann (2015, pp. 16–17).

[12] Ibid., p. 19.

internationally led projects, search for *local partnerships*. Third, to create a truly inclusive process, the agenda and goals should be *locally developed* and action-oriented. This local turn became in the 2000s a new peacebuilding dogma, replacing the older top-down model but critical literature has asked what 'local' actually means and whether it is again another form of justifying the need for Western liberal intervention. Even if this critique has its own value, from the perspective of peace mediation, it is interesting how this local shift redefines the practice of peace(making). For McCann, a peace process should be a *trust-enabling process*, but "before there can be trust there must be dialogue, and once trust has been activated, even if it is a guarded, limited trust, there must be evidence of the trust to suggest it has begun." Therefore, "interventions need to go beyond analysis and dialogue and lead to actions that spark a population's confidence that locally owned, inclusive processes can lead to changes between themselves and the state."[13] For a third party actor, it appears that *dialogue* constitutes the focal point of a new kind of peace process, and thus the boundary between mediation and peacebuilding appears to be blurred.

Furthermore, increasing emphasis has been placed on local agency and the need to transform conflict dynamics "from the inside," calling for local mediators. Shifting attention from inclusivity to local agency set other challenges for peace practitioners as it casted doubt on the effectiveness of the traditional unbiased outside mediators and contested traditional ideals such as neutrality and impartiality.[14] As the ability of outside impartial mediators has been questioned, a fair number of studies have been written on the role of insider mediators. Many of these draw from Wehr and Lederach's *confianza* model, outlining the characteristics of an insider-partial mediator.[15] The model, which is based on the authors' work in Central America, regards the entry of an insider-partial mediator to a conflict as rooted in the trust and respect they enjoy in their community. Similarly, various other similar studies view the power and leverage of insider mediators as stemming from the credibility, legitimacy, trust and respect they enjoy in their communities.[16]

[13] Ibid., pp. 22–23. About critique of local turn Chandler (2010).

[14] See for example Zartman and Touval (1996), Francis (2002), Svensson (2014).

[15] Wehr and Lederach (1996, pp. 55–74).

[16] See for example Appleby (2000), Bercovitch and Kadayifci-Orellana (2009, pp. 11–30).

As the issues mediated at the local level are different from, even though often tied to, state-level processes, they also require the involvement of different actors. Mediators in the local context should have knowledge of the everyday needs and practices of the local community, and they should hold certain credibility and legitimacy within their community.[17] Insider mediators include a range of insider-partial and insider-neutral mediators. The 'insiderness' of local peacemakers is not a straightforward and unambiguous issue; according to Mubashir and Vimalarajah, it requires a subjective interest and involvement in the conflict, yet not to such am extent that the insider is incapable of any objective perceptions or of seeing the conflict system in a holistic way. Indeed, the insider position tends to be a matter of perspective and may change with shifting conflict dynamics. Furthermore, Mubashir and Vimalarajah categorize insider mediators into authoritative mediators and social network mediators. Social network mediators focus on people and relationships and tend to take a dialogic approach, and are often considered to be more flexible and more active than authoritative mediators.[18] The task for the third party in these types of situations is to support local capacities by offering financial, technical and other support. The third party's role is then to recruit potential local peace mediators, to empower them and to act as a linkage between the local and the national and international levels. Nonetheless, the ideal is that it should be the local actors who recognize the issues to be mediated and define the agenda of action, which is not necessarily unproblematic since selection, training and empowerment could still include patronizing elements common in liberal peace approaches.

All in all, with this latest normative shift of attitudes of peacemakers in both academia and practice, local ownership, inclusivity, and context-specificity have become the cornerstones of the work of the majority of private organizations in the field—at least on the level of rhetoric—and few would argue against this logic. There are obviously different challenges and practices to adapting these principles into different tracks. How these issues are approached in pragmatic terms varies, and private peacemakers have adopted different strategies in engaging local actors in peacemaking and may focus on different parts of the society.

[17] Kadayifci-Orellana (2008, pp. 264–284).

[18] Mubashir and Vimalarajah (2016).

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CHAPTER 12

Inclusivity in Track One Mediation and National Dialogues

According to the classical definition, peace mediation is primarily understood as a form of peace diplomacy in which a third party facilitates negotiations among major conflicting parties to resolve their incompatible interests by achieving a mutual agreement during the phase of open violent conflict or war or when a threat of war is immediate but it could be used also during the implementation of peace agreement. As long as the outcome of mediation is seen solely to achieve a ceasefire or a peace agreement that brings an end to fighting and violence, the questions of inclusivity in regard to participation and issues on the table have not seen demands to belong to track one mediation. In the same way, if official actors are involved in negotiation on local ceasefire that has happened, for example, in Syria, inclusivity is not an issue. In regard to the inclusivity of issues, in the official spheres of peacemaking, a very reactionary divide seemingly still prevails between hard security questions to be mediated in track one negotiations and soft societal issues belonging to long-term peace-building processes. Following this logic, for example, the increase in women participation is seen merely as belonging to the sphere of soft civic society themes but, during recent years, this kind of dichotomy is openly contested and as normative pressure has become louder, inclusivity of issues as well participation is gradually introduced also into track one process, but it has still obvious flaws.

Taking into account the experiences of several private peacemakers, official peace talks should deal with issues relevant for societal transformation and reconciliation in the longer perspective and there is no

M. Lehti, *The Era of Private Peacemakers*,
Rethinking Peace and Conflict Studies,
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reason to exclude security-related issues from civic society dialogues even if these forums do not include political and military leaders and leverage to influence on these questions. When violent conflict is in its most acute phase, it is obvious that hard security questions dominate peace talks at all level of society and are also primary needs at the grass-roots level. For third party peacemakers, it is important to keep in mind that they cannot force grass-roots society to talk about issues they do not want talk about and do not regard as important, but simultaneously they should enable (local) women to have their voice heard during the open conflict phase. Guaranteeing physical security is then an omnipresent theme and, as a result, frustration regarding the ability of the international community to guarantee physical security often prevails. In that situation when people are constantly wondering whether their family is alive and safe, it is not necessarily fruitful for a third party to initiate too much talk about constitution and power sharing or women participation since locals will want to focus of everyday security issues. And, for example, when during prolonged violent conflict, women organizations are gathered together to focus on future-orientated issues, security issues constantly return to the debate—if not elsewhere, then during coffee breaks if they are not part of the agenda of the meeting. Talking about acute security issues can be therapeutic, even if civic society actors may not have a straightforward ability to influence on these issues. In addition, women often want to discuss these questions, but the expectations and needs of militias and civic society, as well as members of the elite and local population, concerning security may differ drastically, as noted by organizations like FCA. In concrete terms, ceasefire agreements among militias may create an interval in physical fighting but simultaneously prevent the civic population from access to medicine, health care and food, which is the case at the time of writing this book in several sieged areas in Syria, resulting in humanitarian catastrophe. In inclusive peace processes, security issues need to be expanded beyond military issues to incorporate human security.[1]

The classical mediation setting that takes place during open violent conflict is still predominantly elite- and male-centric negotiations. The reasons are obviously manifold but depend often on the prevailing political culture and norms as well as context. If a ceasefire is a central goal

[1] Interview with Tarnaala et al., May 2017. See also Senarathna (2015).

for negotiations, mediators need to engage and negotiate primarily with those holding power and influence over several militias and more often these leaders are men. For example, in Syria and Myanmar, soldiers hold a central position in negations and they quite openly express that women are not needed and not welcome at negotiating tables. Open international support for increasing the participation of women in peace processes is indeed highly context specific and sensitive. There are contexts where the view of international inference in ensuring entry points for local women leads to women being downplayed due to claims that it is a Western agenda; for example. Afghanistan, where it was perceived as the international community or, more precisely, the liberal West pushing their agendas. So it does not always work effectively and may end up undermining women's roles when they're not perceived as legitimate power brokers. If there has been resistance against the international agenda for women's participation in Afghanistan, Nepal or southern Thailand is completely the opposite case, where international support has not been perceived as a bad thing, but widely as a supportive thing.[2]

Among all peacemakers, official and private, there exists a great amity that an increase in inclusivity and women's participation in particular in peace processes contributes to the sustainability of peace but there are also doubts regarding the oversimplified causal relationship between the peace agreement negotiated by women mediators and the durability of peace. Instead, the gender of mediators or even the gender balance of representatives of the main conflicting parties of the many private actors emphasize the importance of women's participation to the peace process as a whole and the achievement of a long-term transformation towards a more inclusive society. It is recognized that international peacemakers cannot and should not aim for the break down as such of existing roles but merely by creating opportunities for gradual change they achieve more a permanent impact on mindset and political culture in general. Even if peace processes manage to provide certain roles for women, it is more challenging to preserve these roles in the long term. However, while shifting focus from international mediators to local mediators, gender suddenly appears to be more significant for the whole process and indeed for breaking deadlocks. For example, in southern Thailand, in the Network-supported process it was demonstrated that

[2] Interview with Tarnaala et al., May 2017, Interview with Miller 2017.

local women actors hold the ability to mediate cross religious and ethnic borders and they also allowed to take that role easier than men.[3]

Increasing women's participation has become such an essential part of liberal (peace) norms that it is not possible to build a completely exclusive track one peace process and thus in most track one mediation cases, some alternative tracks for linking civic society actors and, in particular, bringing women to official peace process have been initiated and executed. Methods and successes have been very context specific and private peacemakers have often taken or they have been subcontracted to design and execute smart and delicate additions to the official process that carefully pushed for and persuaded inclusive participation without openly challenging the texture of official negotiations. Intrusive pressure for inclusivity would probably just cause strong normative resistance against international intervention.

In Syria, where open violent conflict has continued since 2011 and where several efforts to negotiate nationwide ceasefire and frames for peace agreement have failed, the inadequacies of the traditional bi-party negotiation setting is widely agreed. The classical strategy of bringing simplicity to a complex setting by creating bi-party negotiation setting was indeed the early aim of Lakhdar Brahimi who served as UN peace mediator from 2012 to 2014. Brahimi represents a classical mediator who is striving towards a ceasefire by a sole focus on security issues and complete ignorance of human rights and even human security. This tactic did not bring any concrete results. During Staffan de Mistura's period as mediator (2014–), there have been more diverse voices from civic society and de Mistura has also recognized the challenges of civic society representation in the Geneva talks, but, since it was not seen as feasible to enlarge representation within the fare of the official talks, the alternative method was to create an unofficial extension for official round in the form of the Women's Advisory Board (WAB) to the Office of the Special Envoy to Syria in February 2016. WAB was established in cooperation with the UN Women but private organizations have also engaged in its formation and running and, for example, Felm has been engaged as a facilitator. A one of local partners has been involded into WAB. The aim of the board is to allow women's voices

[3] Interview with Miller, May 2017, Interview with Tarnaala et al., May 2017. Compare with Nordic Women Mediators network emphasis http://formin.finland.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=369061&contentlan=2&culture=en-US; See also Väyrynen et al. (2018).

to be heard but as it just has an advisory role, its influences on negotiations are limited and up to official participants' decision. The setting is somehow artificial and has been criticized because the only link between official negotiations and WAB is the UN envoy de Mistura who listens, interprets and transmits opinions and discussion of WAB to official circles and then, in the best case, themes and angles introduced in these discussions may have an influence on what questions and themes and from what angle and what are omitted for de Mistura to introduce to the official negotiation table. Furthermore, it is recognized that this group could not represent all Syrian women and the diversity of women's organizations, and thus the question of representation remains.[4] The social, political, cultural, religious and other structures in which local women operate are different in each situation and set particular opportunities and challenges for women's participation. Treating women as one united, homogeneous front whose only goal is to increase gender equality would thus only undermine processes that aim to build inclusive peace. Women's organizations are highly diverse and heterogeneous groups with varying different views, goals and interests that may clash with each other. Furthermore, there are often internal divisions in women's NGOs. Women are not apolitical actors and even if in the beginning goals of participation are general, it may be that during the peace process, individual women—like men engaged in the peace process—start to use dialogue processes merely for satisfying their own political ambitions.

In Myanmar, before the more recent incidents between the Rohingyas and the government, the peace process entered into the early post-conflict phase. The process with the government and 19 ethnic armed groups was internally initiated in 2010 and international private peacemakers then arrived to organize, support and facilitate different dialogue processes. The first call concerned the coordination of individual ceasefire negotiations concluded in December 2015 in a "nationwide" ceasefire, but the peace process also transformed into a more inclusive National Dialogue process and the more permanent Working Group for Ethnic Coordination was established in 2012. In August 2016, Union

[4]Interview Tarnaala et al., May 2017, Hinnebusch and Zartman (2016). See also The Controversy over the Syrian Women's Advisory Board, The Syria Justice and Accountability Centre (SJAC), 7.4.2016, https://syriaaccountability.org/updates/2016/04/07/the-controversy-over-the-syrian-womens-advisory-board/.

Peace Conference gathered together government and ethnic groups. Euro-Burma Office (EBO), together with Felm, has been concentrating on efforts to increase women's share in Union Peace Conference. In the beginning, only 7% of participants were women and the goal was set to increase this to a 30% share; at the moment, it has increased to 13%. In Myanmar, there are also big differences among ethnic groups regarding women's role in politics; it is rather normal that women hold political power in some cultures and in other cultures it is not. Overall, in Myanmar, it is recognizable that women's role has been changed and during the peace process, the role of women's organizations as experts in societal questions has been more broadly agreed upon.[5]

All in all, it was emphasised by the interviewees that building inclusivity into the peace process and into societal structures should be regarded a long, often slow process. Sometimes gains in inclusivity, demonstrated, for example, by high-level political positions for women, disappear with changes in government and domestic politics.[6] Genuine transformation of exclusive and oppressive structures is a complex, unpredictable and non-linear process that requires persistence and innovative projects. Sometimes initiatives aiming to promote inclusivity move in their own separate track, while the peace negotiations that are perceived as more important and pressing move in another. The success of inclusivity tracks feeding into the peace process as a whole varies, but the integration of women into the mainstream process as effectively and as early as possible often becomes vital for genuinely advancing women's involvement; however, the short-term impact tends to be difficult to measure. Women's participation is too often measured through quantitative measures, such as numbers and percentages of women participating in negotiations and meetings. While this is seen as a crucial way of monitoring and ensuring women's inclusion, it is not without flaws. Sometimes quotas are filled with women to make processes seem inclusive at the expense of involving the key women experts in an effective way. Yet, in the absence of more comprehensive and reliable ways of measuring the quality of inclusion, such measurements may provide the only method of evaluating inclusivity in the short term, but the result should not interpreted uncritically.

[5] Interview with Tarnaala et al., May 2017. See also Country case study: Burma/Myanmar, *Development Dialogue*, no. 63, 2015, Yawnghwe (2014).

[6] Interview with Tarnaala et al., May 2017.

Because of the obvious incapability of track one mediation to attach inclusivity of peace negotiations and engagement of civic society actors, the so-called National Dialogues has been developed as a complementary and parallel instrument for track one mediation that would be better attached to a call for inclusivity and local ownership while also preserving its focus on national-level processes and supporting the re-creation of state institutions. The general term 'dialogue' should be separated from the notion of National Dialogue (ND), which has gained a rather specific meaning. NDs are officially mandated processes focusing on issues of power sharing at the national level and how the legal basis of the post-conflict state is organized. Besides NDs, there is an increasing amount of informal dialogues that may act at both the national and the local level, or between them. Siebert, Kumar and Tasala define NDs as formal processes that are "mandated to develop constitutional frameworks as the basis for a new constitution to be adopted by their countries' parliaments."[7] The National Dialogue Handbook published by the Berghof Foundation with Swisspeace gives following definition:

> National Dialogues are nationally owned political processes aimed at generating consensus among broad range of national stakeholders in times of deep political crisis, in post-war situations or during far-reaching political transitions … The main process takes place at the Track 1 level, but includes participants from all tracks. Usually nationally organized and chaired. External actors focus on support functions.[8]

National Dialogues thus primarily respond to the shortcomings of state-level official peace processes by introducing a new instrument. In the Handbook, the NDs are presented to have a primary focus on legal and political structures but their perspective can be narrower and more specific, including security arrangements, constitutional amendments or truth commission or a broad base focus on "(re)building a (new) political system and developing a (new) social contract."[9] "ND has a specific role in rebuilding the social contract between society and government

[7] Siebert et al. (2014, p. 35).

[8] National Dialogue Handbook, p. 26.

[9] Ibid., p. 21.

following times of extreme crisis,"[10] and, according to Rintakoski from Felm, ND always focuses on transition and agreement, and can thus also be understood as an alternative to a mediated peace process. NDs are thus seen as separate from mediation that can be parallel, preceding and following processes; however, carrying out NDs may often require inside mediators.

NDs are attaching demands to inclusivity by engaging amount societal actors and of local ownership by emphasizing how NDs are designed for protecting national sovereignty. National ownership is seen as essential for NDs, and processes should be "designed by national stakeholders themselves to collectively address their conflict and broken constitutional instruments."[11] ND processes can also be initiated only domestically, as was the case in South Africa. The South African case has often been used a model and as an exemplary case in practitioners' discussions. The mandating power is usually domestic but instead of a formal institution like the President it can be various kinds of gatherings of national stakeholders or also mandated in peace process. In some cases, the mandating power has been regional or international actor, like in Yemen (2013–2014) when it was the Gulf Cooperation Council with support from the UN, the five permanent members of the Security Council and the EU. The role of the external actor is to attempt to minimize to one that is supporting in arrangement and design but also to one of donor since organizing dialogues costs more than, for example, mediation efforts.[12] Ideally, process design is planned so that it supports the local design of process, and the role of international NGOs is to act in a more supportive and consultative way.

During the past few years, ND processes or the ones labelled as ND have taken place at least in Nepal, Myanmar, Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, Lebanon, Morocco, Jordan and CAR. Among these, ND in Yemen has been the broadest with 565 participants, and judging by its problem-solving design, it has been the closest to the ideal model presented in the National Dialogue Handbook. Many NDs have been narrower by participation and agenda. For example, in Lebanon, ND took place among the political elite and it engaged only 14–19 participants. Besides

[10] Otto Turtonen, and Joel Linnainmäki, *Second Conference on Non-Formal Dialogue Processes: Experiences from Countries in Transition*, Conference Report (2015).

[11] Siebert (2014a, p. 44).

[12] National Dialogue Handbook.

formally mandated NDs, Siebert is talking about informal national dialogues when referring, for example, to the process in Basque Country or to the potentially emerging processes in Libya and Syria.[13] In this regard, ND appears primarily as practitioners' efforts to erase contextual diversity and catch similar kinds of processes under one label and introduce a new instrument to the peace process with well-structured general guidelines applied by international peacemakers. Indeed, two major private peacemaking organization—the Berghof Foundation and Swisspeace—have been responsible for coding and promoting the idea of ND. They have been involved in organizing NDs in Yemen, Lebanon and Sudan but their impact is also great in the establishment of a new practice. During recent decades, different kinds of national gatherings aiming to settle power sharing, constitution and some other issues dividing society have been organized in various countries. By labelling all of these rather different processes under the ND label, publishing exhaustive guidebooks for practitioners and investing in training and technical support on ND, the Berghof and Swisspeace have managed to establish a new code of acting and, indeed, ND has recently become regarded by many as an essential and self-evident part of the peace process.[14]

In addition to the importance of representation and the participation of key elite representatives, acknowledging and engaging regional players is crucial for the establishment of favorable conditions for ND. Following guidelines, this kind of approach requires a nuanced and deep understanding of context but ND guides seemingly do not problematize the situation in which all stakeholders are not really able to engage in a process, even if they are participating in it. This has been seen as the main cause for the failure of the ND process in Yemen (2013–2014) to which several Finnish private organizations also contributed, and which is in many ways a particularly contradictory example: on the one hand, as a process, it was seen as a success, but soon after, the whole of Yemen sank into violent chaos because of a re-escalated civil war and the military intervention of the Saudi Arabia-led coalition. Following Pentikäinen, "the process remained too elite-centric and did not facilitate enough grassroots reconciliation. More importantly, it failed to address some of the crucial underlying causes of conflict, which raises questions as to

[13] Siebert (2014a, b), National Dialogue Handbook.

[14] National Dialogue Handbook.

whether the standard approach to dialogue gives sufficient consideration to the need to build legitimacy before entering into dialogue about how to establish or reform institutions."[15] Along similar lines, the representatives of CMI also emphasize that a larger dialogue process cannot work if all participants are not fully committed to the rules and goals of dialogue.[16] ND in Yemen had extraordinary large civic society participation but Paffenholz highlights that "there is no correlation between more actors, more peace. What counts is the quality of engagement."[17]

Even if the actual focus of NDs is to provide a new constitutional framework, they also, according to Siebert, address root causes, and thus "they have also served a much broader function than their intended purpose."[18] In his opinion, ND is supposed to have spillover effects to reconciliation, but he does not specify how this takes place and it is hard recognize how rather legalist NDs could contribute to the transformation of collective memory and perceptions, healing collective traumas or deconstruction of antagonism. The Yemen experience expresses well that the weakness of the sole focus on legal and political issues without investment in reconciling the deep antagonistic relations within society, and the spillover effects of NDs, were highly exaggerated, at least in this case.

There are significant differences in the Finnish organizations' approaches to NDs, but they all have been engaged in planning and debate on NDs. During the past couple of years, NDs have also been included in the Finnish brand of mediation, and the MFA has sponsored the organization of three conferences on National Dialogues: the first one was titled the Conference on National Dialogue and Mediation Processes (March/April 2014); the second, Non-Formal Dialogue Processes and National Dialogues (November 2015); and the third, simply, National Dialogues (April 2017). While there are considerable differences in the views on NDs among the three Finnish private actors, it is noteworthy that they have managed to cooperate smoothly in organizing these conferences, and the contradictory and contested nature of the concept has been avoided. At the same time, the change in emphasis

[15] Pentikäinen (2015, p. 68). See also Hassan (2014), Hassan and Ashaq (2014).

[16] Interview with Brummer et al. (2016).

[17] Paffenholtz. Spoken remarks quoted in Turtonen and Linnainmäki, "Second Conference on Non-Formal Dialogue Processes: Experiences from Countries in Transition," p. 6.

[18] Siebert (2014a, p. 42).

of the conferences reflects the change from a strict and exclusive definition towards a more flexible and nuanced understanding of dialogue processes. How each organization understands the relevance of NDs and how they implement it in their strategies is, however, another issue.

Felm has been closely engaged in debates on NDs with its Lebanese partner, the Common Space Initiative (CSI) with whom they share the Syrian Initiative project. Indeed, CSI was founded in 2010 to offer "institutional capacity-building and technical assistance to the Presidency for the National Dialogue [in Lebanon] in the start-up phase" and its niche is to support formal NDs but also to facilitate informal dialogues. The foundation of CSI was supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Berghof Foundation and initial funding came from the Federal Foreign Office of Germany.[19] Thus, it is no surprise that NDs still have an essential role in their strategic thinking. As Syria is still deeply engaged in violent conflict, an ND cannot be a short-term goal. Still, in Felm's and CSI's thinking, an ND is waiting somewhere in the distant future and is seen as an essential endpoint or a final transformative push from a culture of violence to a culture of peace. In practice, the SI supports the organization of rather limited dialogue forums that are not "restricted to formal dialogue and negotiations tracks" among various civil society actors within their own design of the peace process.[20] The particular dialogue forums are then seen as small steps towards the ultimate goal of an ND. These various dialogue platforms are seen as constructing a nationwide network or a national dialogue platform that would create momentum for peace but also enable the organization of an ND in the future by supporting the acceptance of dialogue, building capacities for participation in dialogues, and connecting local and civil society actors to each other and to national-level actors.[21]

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[20] CSI and Felm, *The Syria Initiative*.

[21] Ibid.; Interview with Rintakoski and Saarnivaara, Sept 2016.

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CHAPTER 13

‘Hitting Moving Targets’: Transformative Dialogues

From Resolution to Transformative Approach

Transformation is an apt concept that increasingly describes private peacemakers’ view of the whole peace process. There are various interesting efforts to adjust the transformative approach to new practices of peace intervention. The transformative approach to (peace) mediation practice contests the conventional frame of conflict management and thus has substantial consequences for the framing of (peace) mediation goals and practices. Nonetheless, the private peacemakers are far from a uniform group in this regard and their understanding of what the relationship is between mediation and transformation, and how drastic terms old premises of mediation should be revisited diverge between organizations as well as between individual staff members. There are certain differences among private diplomacy actors and faith-based organizations regarding practical adjustment: the first has more focus on targeted transformation, enabling deadlocks of official processes to be opened up while the latter focuses more on processes and practices to better support the transformation towards a more inclusive peace process and, eventually, society.

The MSN meeting in Durban in 2014 brought together representatives from most of the top private diplomacy organizations to talk about the relationship between mediation and transformation but, a bit surprisingly, a discussion paper written after the meeting reflects a rather conservative perspective to the question. Sara Hellmüller and John Ahere

M. Lehti, *The Era of Private Peacemakers*,
Rethinking Peace and Conflict Studies,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-91201-1_13

recognize that mediation of violent conflict without investment in transformation of the relationship between the parties and, more broadly, in society carries a risk of a return to violence in the long term. That is why conflicts "not only need to be resolved, but also transformed" and therefore mediation and transformation should be seen "as mutually entangled processes"; however, according to Hellmüller and Ahere, these two should be seen as different "in terms [of] the means employed, the timeframe, the parties and the third parties involved." Their definition of mediation is rather conventional as it is seen as a process assisting decision-makers who have the power to decide "to an agreement that ends violence" and according to them this agreement "may also come about without a fundamental transformation of relationships." In contrast to short-term mediation, conflict transformation has a longer time perspective and it involves "a wide variety of actors since it aims to transform [the] relationship between parties and in society." Thus, transformation requires third parties that are able to have a long-term presence and are capable of "confidence-building measures, development and peacebuilding programs, economic empowerment, constitutional reform, justice and reconciliation processes, [and] accountability for violent crimes." They observed mediation and conflict transformation merely as processes temporarily following each other and, according to them, mediation is preparing "the ground for longer-term conflict transformation." Therefore, the mediators should ensure that their work does not negatively affect longer-term transformation. In this regard, their thinking still reflects a trust in rational management and, indeed, conflict transformation is also seen from the managing perspective as, at its best, a cluster of "coordinated, coherent, effective and sustainable interventions on different level." Moreover, for Hellmüller and Ahere, conflict transformation represents a particular process in peacemaking sometimes executed by mediators but mostly by peacebuilders and development workers; for Hellmüller and Ahere, conflict transformation is like a new definition for peacebuilding.[1]

If examined, the three Finnish organizations (CMI, FCA, and Felm), instead of comprehending mediation and transformation as temporarily separate processes that move neatly from conflict resolution and mediation to an official peace agreement to post-conflict peace- and state-building and reconciliation, they emphasize transformation as an approach applicable to describe the whole peace process. Transformation towards peace

[1] Hellmüller and Ahere (2014).

is comprehended as moving in the form of multiple overlapping and intertwining processes. In practical terms, their conclusion of the significance of the transformative approach to (mediation) practice differs among each other.

For CMI, the transformation appears as a cross-cutting theme for all their activities. Transformation appears as an approach to understand the whole peace process and thus it necessarily has consequences for peace mediation too. Transformation is understood as taking place in several overlapping ways and layers. When entering particular conflict settings, the mediator must pay close attention to what kind of a societal transformation is taking place in each particular situation, and how it is possible to support it. However, there is no more (if there ever was) illusion about a linear process of striving straightforwardly towards resolution but only ambivalent and contingent transformation processes. In CMI's strategic thinking, peace processes are no longer comprehended as linear processes; rather, it is acknowledged that peace processes experience pauses, advances and ruptures that reflect the complexity and unpredictability of conflict itself. Transformation process cannot be (externally) designed and transformation does not have any generalized pattern nor any necessary pre-given phases and its end goal should be as open-ended as possible. In the post-conflict society, transformation towards sustainable peace often takes years or even decades, and it is not possible to define exactly when the ultimate goal—self-sustainable peace—is actually achieved; in fact, the third party should not give much thought to this question. Because of this dynamic setting, there cannot be fixed positions or grand plans of management.[2] At this strategic planning level, CMI cuts loose from the dominant conflict management tradition; however, applying principle into practice is far from an easy exercise since several principal conventions and practices of peace diplomacy are so firmly and so deeply grounded on conventions of rational management.

FCA and Felm lack similar kinds of analytical investment in overall strategic development and thus rethinking is entangled with revision of practices according to their experiences. Felm as well as FCA approach transformation more from the point of view of their organizational backing in the development and peacebuilding sectors, and not from narrower field of peace diplomacy. Their background in development

[2] Interview with Brummer, Eronen, and Patokallio, Sept 2016; CMI strategy.

cooperation is seen as an asset for their engagement in mediation and their experiences in development cooperation provides perspective and understanding on long-term socioeconomic development and its relation to transformation.[3] Within FCA, a sharp distinction between development-orientated objectives and peace building has been blurred by "resilience" as a cross-cutting theme that is referring to "the ability of individuals, communities, countries or regions to anticipate and manage risks, as well as to respond to, cope with, and recover and transform from shocks." Within this broader framework, *resilience-building* has become the fundamental goal of both development and peace work and in a way they both then transformed to become preventive action. In the new Global Programme for the years 2018–2023, development goals and peace work are entangled as a vision of "a world comprised of resilient and just societies" emphasizes "everyone's right to peace, quality education and sustainable livelihood."[4] With this switch in strategic thinking, prevention has become a more central element of development, humanitarian and peace interventions of FCA. As the development sector is even more firmly grounded on result-based management ideals than mediation, a practical challenge in merging development and the peace sector is to comprehend a long-term transformation as open-ended and without a particular direction of progress and still have a more particular goals in the short-term operationalisation.

Peace agreements are the most visible symbolic sign of conventional resolution seeking mediation practice and the transformation-focused approach contests their symbolic centrality. As Waal highlights, peace agreements, the undisputed goal of the mediation process, also cherish the conflict management tradition and Realpolitical understanding of conflicts:

> Formal peace agreements are almost invariably designed for Schmittian conflicts. Even though multi-party agreements are becoming more common, the documents follow a standard tripartite format of (a) power sharing and constitutional reform, (b) wealth sharing, including provisions for development assistance, and (c) security arrangements, beginning with a ceasefire and concluding with disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, and security sector reform … If a formal agreement is imposed on a complicated conflict in a poorly institutionalised system, what may

[3] Interview with Rintakoski and Saarnivaara, Sept 2016.

[4] FCA Global Programme for years 2018–2023.

> happen is that the agreement is only good as long as the political conditions remains as they were when the deal was signed.[5]

In particular in current complex conflicts, signing peace agreement may have controversial consequences and generate stagnation instead of supporting long-term transformation towards sustainable peace. This explains why, for example, for CMI, peace agreements are no longer the undisputed goal of (peace) mediation efforts. As Arnault notes, performing in the public eye led to protracted negotiations; a long wait for a conclusion is commonplace for many civil wars but the focus on agreement is a double-edged issue since it may be critical for achieving public support but "inevitable setbacks, delays and impasses" of negotiations may also delegitimize the process and result in alienation from the process.[6] Brummer, Eronen and Patokallio agree and note how agreements are too often regarded as the endpoint of a process, even if they should instead be seen as one milestone towards the final goal. Furthermore, as they are public and fixed documents, they are easy targets for spoilers. Pushing for agreements alone without considering other requirements for lasting peace is seen as counterproductive.[7] In some occasions, agreements can be even counterproductive for sustainable peace if they are formulated in ambiguous or counterproductive ways. The Minsk agreement, for example, allows for the retaining of local militias in Donetsk and Luhansk. On the other hand, it is also obvious that agreements and accords are needed for carrying out peace processes, but they should be comprehended as milestones in the long-term transformation from a culture of violence towards a culture of peace rather than as end goals in themselves. In prevalently asymmetrical conditions, calling something a result can be contested.[8] Or, it is an illusion that there could be "a single solution to a complex problem such as a conflict between two or more communities."[9]

[5] Waal (2014), p. 19.

[6] Arnault (2014).

[7] Interview with Brummer, Eronen, and Patokallio, Sept 2016.

[8] Ibid.

[9] de Coning (2018, p. 313).

Following Waal, there are alternative or complementary approaches to a necessarily exclusive agreement seeking negotiations; however, they are often ignored by official peace process. For example, the AU High-Level Panel for Darfur (2009) organize inclusive 40 days "consultations with a wide range of Darfurians—political parties, traditional leaders, civil society, business people, women, youths, nomads and refugees" by discussing ideas of peace, justice and reconciliation. The overall view that instead of an elite-based process, a peace is holistic and so need to be peace process too.[10] This kind of broader, holistic approach is, indeed, recognizable in private peacemakers' peace endeavors but there is a great variety of emphasis and pragmatic effort placed in building inclusive dialogue processes.

In comparison to CMI, other Finnish private organizations' way to think about peace agreements reflects well the difficulties in balancing the new transformative approach with more traditional rational management ideals. Felm's strategical thinking places great value in the agreements since, according to them, all dialogue has to have a clear goal, and that agreement appears to be a rather natural one. However, since they do not see themselves as experts in deal making where there are already enough experts in the field, their added value is in understanding the linkage of a particular agreement to long-term development.[11] They do comprehend transformation as the broader, long-term goal, with resolution related to more short-term, practical issues. In similar terms, from FCA's perspective, peace agreements can be important, but do not mean much in themselves if other necessary transformations do not take place. Agreements can be regarded as social contracts that lay out principles or goals that the society commits to and that form the basis for state-building efforts; however, instead of looking to liberal ideals, the policy for these types of agreements should be based on the cultural and historical characteristics and logic of each particular context. In the FCA's thinking, it emphasized the importance of the trust and acceptance of the grassroots community in gaining agreement in elite-level peace processes and in how local peacemakers are needed for enabling this kind of broad support. Even if agreements are signed, they will not take root in practice, nor yield long-term results if the local population

[10] Waal (2014, p. 20).

[11] Interview with Rintakoski and Saarnivaara, Sept 2016.

does not perceive them as legitimate and assume ownership of the process. It is also crucial that the individuals who sign the contract are able to implement it; this is often not the case when the individuals signing the agreement do not actually have the power to see to its execution in practice.[12] In similar terms, CMI is stressing that instead of a formal power position and legitimacy, it is more important to give attention to the informal legitimacy that negotiating parties have, since the ability to sell agreement and transformation to the public at large is dependent on that. This shift from formal to informal legitimacy contests the primacy of mostly elite-driven peace processes since long-term change would not take place if the process and agreements do not have the support of the population at large. The ultimate goal of peace intervention is then to achieve the long-term transformation of relations and perceptions between groups and individuals, rather than to resolve particular issues through structured processes.[13]

Operationalization of this kind of goal setting is challenging, particularly since the time perspective of private peacemakers' peace intervention is necessarily limited by their overall resources to build up comprehensive projects. Indeed, the very idea of a comprehensive project contrasts with transformative approach and emphasis on complexity of conflict. The question is how to intertwine a long-term perspective of various dialogue processes with short-term expectations that are often engaged in hard security-related issues. Therefore, the pivotal challenge is how to address practices of peace intervention in order to comply with the logic of the complexity thinking and the transformative approach. When it comes to the impact of transformative approaches, private peacemakers are aware of the limits of their own ability to influence the whole peace process.[14] Still, even according to CMI, when entering into a conflict, private peace actors should have an overall picture of the long-term transformation in their mind. This overall picture can be understood merely as a backbone of their planning and their actual projects are often short-term contributions to a long-term process, since they or any outsider power lacks the final power to influence

[12] Interview with Abdile, Pentikäinen, Perukangas, Puoskari, and Tarvainen, Sept 2016.

[13] Ibid.; Interview with Brummer, Eronen, and Patokallio, Sept 2016.

[14] Interview with Brummer, Eronen, and Patokallio, Sept 2016; Interview with Eronen and Patokallio, Jan 2018.

the process as a whole. With this in mind, the goal setting and chosen methods become more challenging. One obvious challenge in the transformative approach is that the people undergoing the process would not describe themselves as parts of any transformative process. Therefore, transformation cannot be used as an operational concept; instead, the concepts that are used are determined by the entry point through which the mediator enters the sphere of transformation.

If it is agreed that it is not possible to verify clear causal and linear relationships between particular actions of peacebuilders and their output to the conflict dynamic, the whole strategic thinking process from planning to goal setting, and from design to evaluation, has been revisited. Furthermore, instead of overall, all-encompassing planning, what is now called for is humility, a multi-narrative understanding, and an obviously flexible and protean approach. The various overlapping conflicts and peace processes require private actors to fit their strategic planning to this highly contingent and erratic setting. To meet these challenges is, according Brummer and Eronen from CMI, to try to hit a moving target.[15] Even if the ultimate goal is long-term transformation, in day-to-day operations the time perspective has to be of a shorter term. Then, following CMI thinking, peacemakers should concentrate on looking at how particular intervention can contribute to the transformation process and move the peace process forward as a 'precision strike,' particularly when there is a glitch, a halt or a setback in the peace process. The task of the mediator is therefore to set the ball rolling by supporting the process and by increasing the capabilities of the conflict parties to carry on the transformative process. The ideal is for an initial core dialogue forum to contribute to the emergence of other sub-forums, perhaps sharing some of the same participants while also involving new ones. The intervention is successful if it creates a snowball effect and local participants continue and spread communication channels.[16]

In very same way, in Felm and FCA's work, it is stressed that the overall goal is to construct the *self-sustaining* dialogue that can be continued after the end of each specific operation, ideally even after the end of the NGO's involvement but in this regard their thinking holds still

[15] Brummer and Eronen, "Hitting Moving Targets."

[16] Interview with Brummer, Eronen, and Patokallio, Sept 2016.

hints of the classical development ideology too.[17] Indeed, the goal of locals carrying out activities initiated by an outside third party can be found behind capacity building or even development projects, but in the ideal level 'precision strike' intervention has a particular focus on pushing ball running but it omits defining how ball is played and to where ball eventually runs. The goal is movement itself that hopefully enables transformation towards sustainable peace, not certain contest and forms of dialogue. The challenge is that the efficiency and the actual long-term effects of dialogic mediation are more difficult to verify than those of mediation efforts, which are evaluated according to signed agreements.

In Felm's way of thinking, the grand design of the whole peace process is more concretely present; for example in Syria the several informal dialogue platforms they have supported are regarded as enabling the construction of an ND in the distant future. Felm's strategic thinking has preserved the desire for grand planning along the lines of the management tradition even if it also includes more open-ended transformative elements. NDs are comprehended as the ultimate goal of the all peace processes. Therefore, organizing informal dialogue forums often takes the shape of a miniature rehearsal ND. Along with the grand plan, these local dialogues gradually engage the whole society into an understanding of the importance of dialogues. In addition to that faraway goal, however, informal dialogues have more open-ended goals since they play an essential role of their own in building sustainable peace and long-term transformation, because they are seen "both to give a political horizon to resolve the crisis and more importantly to help to develop inclusive normative frameworks for overcoming the dramatic fragmentation of the country."[18]

The realities of funding systems set clear obstacles for the full application of the transformative approach since the external funding is primarily bound to the rational evaluation of observable impacts of a particular project and, thus, the transformative approach contests the results-based management that the donors often require in order to verify that their contribution has had recognizable impacts.[19] The time span of project evaluation is obviously challenging if, with the transformative approach,

[17] CSI and Felm, *The Syria Initiative*; Network, *Progress Status of the Network Projects.*

[18] CSI and Felm, *The Syria Initiative*, 5; Interview with Rintakoski and Saarnivaara, Sept 2016.

[19] CMI: RSB; CMI Peer & Trends Analysis.

it is possible to recognize certain impacts only in the long-term—even then it would be impossible to turn source of change to one particular project. Still, it is possible to consider from the Colombian example, for example, how rather invisible support for civic society dialogues may in the end have more profound influences on conflict transformation than investment in the hard security sector that is often prioritized by big powers during the open war phase. During the Colombian civil war, the USA invested and supported the Colombian government's security-centric operation to eliminate FARC leaders while the EU was investing simultaneously to rather invisible civic society projects that seemed to have no influence. Low funding was given to civic societies, NGOs promoting peace and women participation in comparison with the USA's massive investment in the security sector; however, even this limited funding was crucial for enabling civic society actors to continue their work. From the current post-peace agreement perspective, it looks as though security investment has been wasted while the civic society projects funded by the EU suddenly appear to have become an important push for the development of inclusive civic society sector.[20]

What private actors can do is try to influence donors' practices and CMI in particular has invested in this kind lobbying of donors' perceptions. CMI does not want to measure the significance of its work exclusively through metrics, such as signed agreements, but rather to broaden its focus to the qualitative attributes of peace, where the evaluation of the impact of their input can be less precisely measured and is more open to interpretation. Indeed, the way CMI sets up its new evaluation criteria mildly challenges its donors' power to define the rules of the game, and it is obvious that any private actor cannot make this kind of move without a hint from its major donors that they agree with these new criteria.[21]

The fundamental question is how it is possible to measure the efficiency of its activity in a peace process if it is not tied to ideals of rational management. Still, even the theoretical conclusion would be the acceptance of complete randomness that cannot be pragmatic conclusion but rather private peacemakers need to re-evaluate how their work contributes to the wider peace process, how they still could have an impact on

[20] Interview with Rinne-Koistinen, Kärkkäinen, Saarnivaara, Tarnaala and Vierula, May 2017.

[21] "Measuring Results," CMI 2017, accessed April 1, 2017, http://cmi.fi/; CMI Peer & Trends Analysis.

it, and *where, when and how* they should become involved. Therefore, the new approach requires new principles for the effectiveness and efficiency of peace work, and these criteria also have to be understandable and acceptable to donors. CMI declares that the results or outcome of their activity are *trust, channels of communication, capacities, inclusion* and *solutions.*[22] In the other words, all of these elements are needed for *building* up sustainable peace, but even if conceptually they are not comparable, they all have relevance from the perspective of practice. For example, creating communication channels may support trust building and enable solutions. Still, it seems clear that the old resolution-based thinking is not easy to replace and remains recognizable in evaluation methods even after they have been reassessed. Following the logic of complexity thinking and transformation theory, any rational evaluation of the output of a third party intervention would be very difficult to evaluate, and it would perhaps only be possible to recognize such an output after a significant period of time had elapsed. Thus, CMI, like other private actors, in practice needs to achieve a balance between resolution and transformation, between expectations of rational evaluation and the asymmetric non-linearity of complexity thinking.

Informal Dialogues

By transformative shift, the organization of *dialogue processes*, including both NDs and informal dialogues, has gained increasing significance in the private organizations' niche since dialogue allows for better addressing of new transformative approach into practices of peace as well as attaching to demands of inclusivity and local ownership. In addition to NDs in capital letters, there has simultaneously been debate about informal national dialogue "that has evolved from technical thematic dialogues, civil society dialogues, international dialogues and ongoing confidential negotiations,"[23] or, more recently, also about non-formal dialogue processes. The mediation literature has mainly concentrated on NDs, while that on (the in many senses more interesting and promising) non-formal dialogue has mainly only been examined in relation to more official processes. In that context, informal dialogues are far too often treated as a prelude for ND, rather than as a separate tool with its

[22] "Measuring Results," CMI 2017, accessed April 1, 2017, http://cmi.fi/; Brummer and Eronen, "Hitting Moving Targets."

[23] Siebert (2014, p. 42).

own characteristics and designs. In comparison to the NDs that focus on power-sharing and political structures at the national level, the informal dialogues are more civic society centric in regard to the issues as well as to participation. Informal dialogues may have a link to the official peace process and a facilitating private peacemaker may have their own view how a particular dialogue would support and enable the whole peace process but a link rarely appears as officially mandated or even visible. While international practitioners have designed sophisticated and complex action plans for NDs, informal and non-formal dialogues tend to be on a more flexible and less legalistic as they lack the power to shape future legal structures. While they are often organized on an ad hoc basis, they may still be carefully planned from a third party perspective; however, the approaches of each organization vary as designing is very pragmatic and practice orientated.

What is common for NDs and informal dialogues is prioritization on inclusivity and local ownership in designing as well as in operationalizing dialogue, but there diverse forms of practices are available to attach in order to fulfill these normative goals in informal dialogues. Instead of just creating "space for diverse interests to influence the transitional negotiations," as was indicated in the Second National Dialogue conference concept paper,[24] informal dialogues in practice have much more diverse and open-ended goals. This can be examined by looking at participation, agenda and forms of dialogues at various informal dialogues organized and facilitated by CMI, Felm and FCA. Different contexts pose different challenges to inclusive dialogue.

Dialogue platforms and workshops are not only organized to gain bottom-up legitimacy the peace process, but they have been used increasingly as a tactical tool for breaking deadlocks, engaging new actors in the peace process, and facilitating the envisioning of a more peaceful future, in particular when the official negotiation forum is stalled. In the CMI case, these dialogues may often, but not necessarily always, be discrete in order to avoid overexposure or politicization—this makes participation easier, particularly in a tense and vulnerable situation. These types of informal dialogues organized with selected key individuals are in many ways reminiscent of mediation, although they also differ from mediation in significant ways. As mediation is

[24]Turtonen and Linnainmäki, "Second Conference on Non-Formal Dialogue Processes," p. 2.

primarily resolution-seeking, informal dialogues appear as a looser, more open-ended processes opening new spaces for peacemaking but also enabling local agency to design dialogues and their contents. The follow-up question is: how private actors in practice are organizing this kind dialogues and what kind roles and practices they have adopted.

The SI project, a joint project by Felm and Lebanese Common Space Initiative, starts from the presupposition that a huge challenge of the Syrian fragmented peace process is how to link the civic society process to track one diplomacy and how information is transmitted between tracks. Felm is seeing contributing to this as their main task within complex peace architecture. The idea is that Syrian stakeholders would build their political leadership through engagement in consensus building and dialogues. By the end of 2016, the SI had supported 15 dialogue forums among Syrians either within or outside of Syria that offered direct opportunities to talk to other stakeholders. These include the "Is Dialogue between Syrians Still Possible?" forums organized in Beirut and Istanbul, and one titled "Approaches for a Political Solution in Syria," organized in Damascus. A transitional constitution workshop organized together with the Carter Center was similar in its agenda. More recently, Felm and the EIP have participated in organizing with SFCG platforms that continue the same agenda.[25] Beside what can described as the miniature ND forums, the SI has been arranging a variety of more targeted dialogue sessions and workshops for political and civil society activists, with some including security officers, judges and lawyers, to discuss a variety of topics such as national reconciliation, the release of detainees and the fate of the kidnapped, state institution reform, transitional government, and local governance. The SI has also been involved in the organization of a global week to promote peace through music and arts, the building of partnerships for advocacy with non-traditional political advocacy groups (for example faith-based groups, peace movements, and academic centers) and media actors, and activities to promote knowledge sharing among parties involved in the SI. Felm has also brought together various Syrian women actors.[26] The focus of all these dialogue forums has been more particular and specialized and these forums better support trust building and changes of perceptions, and may open up new future horizons.

[25] Felm, *The Syria Initiative: 1st Quarterly Report 2016* (Helsinki: Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission, 2016).

[26] CSI and Felm, *The Syria Initiative*; Interview with Rintakoski and Saarnivaara, 2016.

Some of these dialogue platforms and workshops are also part of the SI's main aim to build up a network of local peace assets in Syria, which includes both networks of local nongovernmental organizations, and individuals trained to be local mediators or facilitators.[27] Whilst CMI has a focus on a few key individuals with the potential to influence the political landscape, Felm's SI is engaging truly local actors with a local focus. Developing partnerships, disseminating knowledge, and enabling better normative models is how they comprehend their contribution that by "linking different constitutes to the dialogue process and to communal peace building activities aimed at creating a higher moral ground for peace and not directly in negotiating cease fires or access to services and humanitarian needs." This is mainly done by offering different local networks the possibility to engage with each other and to break down the dividing walls. This activity takes place mainly through focused training and particular dialogue forums. In this way, these local actors are also attached to broader networks of peace processes. SI is measuring their impact by the amount of initiatives carried out by their peace assets. SI counts 150 initiatives in their report as well underline how peace assets have become more proactive, which is verified somewhat controversially by their active participation in SI platforms, their desire to work with other networks, and the new projects and ideas that they are constantly submitting to the SI.[28]

A more challenging element of the SI's plan for local peace assets is the idea of individual insider mediators or national facilitators. The SI has had trouble finding volunteers willing to engage, but, in the end, a couple of dozen individuals around the whole of Syria across the borders of the warring parties have adopted the role. Felm's representatives emphasize that these peace assets are not peace mediation experts per se; they may be local professional and/or activists, people with all types of professions and backgrounds. The common denominator is that they are experts of the local people and contexts; they know the history of the place, the economic structure of the area, or its different ethnic or religious groups. In this way, they become the key link to the local community, and are crucial for the implementation of the achieved developments on the ground. The background of these individuals

[27] CSI and Felm, *1st Quarterly Report 2016*; CSI and Felm, *2nd Quarterly Report 2016*.

[28] CSI and Felm, The Syria Initiative: Annual Report 2015, pp. 10, 28.

varies, but a certain trusted position within the society and the ability to cross boundaries between some conflicting groups are required. It is reported that they have engaged in mediating and facilitating several locally based conflicts or disputes but have not been involved in local ceasefire negotiations that have taken place around Syria with the government and rebels.[29]

According to the plan, each peace asset directly contributes to improving the prospects for local peace deals and to reinforcing existing ones, as well as to building the potential for a more peaceful future. It is expected that Syrian peace assets will take charge of the bottom-up processes, build consensus towards a political process to end the conflict, and influence local and international public opinion and decision-making processes. They are envisioned as representatives of new potential, locally evolved political leadership that can engage in local governance and NDs when open violence finally comes to an end. Thus, in the end, everything returns to NDs and the strengthening of horizontal knowledge production in the peace process.[30]

For FCA and the Network, non-formal dialogues are regarded as an important tool in preparing for and supporting more comprehensive, national mediation or reconciliation efforts, but the regulated ND model does not appear as to be an end goal in itself. In FCA and the Network's thinking, dialogue is not so much a technical, distinct methodological tool, but rather a fairly broadly defined activity, and an aspect that is central to all mediation, peacebuilding, and transformation efforts. Dialogue is understood more broadly as the communication between groups and may be interwoven into other activities. For FCA, because of their background as FBOs they—and the Network in particular—have had a special focus on the role of religious actors that have for various reasons been marginalized and excluded from the official peace processes. This makes inter- and intrareligious dialogue—or dialogue between and inside traditional actors and communities—the natural focus of their work. The dialogue promoted by the FCA and the Network focuses more on building a mutual understanding, finding common denominators, and promoting peaceful coexistence. The complicated dynamics of

[29] Interview with Rintakoski and Saarnivaara, Sept 2016.

[30] CSI and Felm, *The Syria Initiative*, p. 12.

protracted conflicts means that in contexts in which religious or traditional structures play a significant role in social organization and political life, religious and traditional actors can rarely be seen as their own entity, separate from the conflict. Rather, they tend to be intertwined with the conflict dynamics, and associated with various different parties in a way that may further complicate mediation and dialogue efforts. But since they have certain unique capabilities to promote peaceful change due to their position in society and their ability to draw from religious and traditional values in advancing peace, promoting dialogue, and deconstructing antagonistic images and narratives, their unique support may promote peace in their communities. In particular, religious and traditional actors, particularly those involved in peacemaking, often face pressure from various parties, including extremist groups, other armed or political groups involved in the conflict, government actors, or their own community.[31]

The Network is also involved in a variety of projects that are not country-specific, but rather adopt a regional, thematic focus. These include, for example, promoting an interfaith dialogue between Muslims and Buddhists in South and Southeast Asia. This work is comprised of various actions, the first of which is the establishment and development of the Asia Working Group, which is focused on monitoring and analyzing intercommunal tensions and trends in the region, finding innovative means to prevent and counter their rise, and exploring ways to engage different parties, including more extreme ones. The second action is supporting the development of a Peace Education Manual based on Theravada Buddhist teachings; the manual, written by Buddhist clergy, aims to promote peace education in the face of rising extreme Buddhist nationalism and anti-Muslim sentiment through curriculum development for courses and certification programs, and university-level degrees in the longer term. The third action is the Interfaith Peacemakers' Fellowship Program, which engages Buddhist, Christian, Hindu and Muslis peacemakers in interfaith dialogue and knowledge sharing by providing a safe space for interfaith networking, and which arranges workshops aimed at offering tools in areas such as religious literacy, conflict analysis, conflict transformation, early warning systems, and dialogue training.

[31] Pentikäinen (2015); Mubashir and Vimalarajah (2016); Interview with Abdile, Pentikäinen, Perukangas, Puoskari, and Tarvainen, Sept 2016; Interview with Abdile and Rytkönen, Nov 2016; Interview with Rintakoski and Saarnivaara, Sept 2016.

The fourth action is the creation of a peace support mechanism to provide technical support to religious and traditional peacemakers in the region; this would include a standby, rapid response team, as well as long-term assistance.[32]

Examples of joint activities of FCA and the Network include intra-Muslim dialogue in CAR, where dialogue is promoted through a longer process first involving two phases of intra-Muslim dialogue, then proceeding to a Muslim–Christian dialogue that is to offer a push for the overall peace process and national reconciliation. In Somalia and Libya, FCA and the Network have been closely associated with processes that aim to build a new constitution or shared agreement on the fundamental rules of state. In both cases, the traditional framework is regarded to have local legitimacy and thus constituting a justfied constellation of gathering dialogue but, simultaneously. In other words, rather than attempt to create national processes that include all actors, these processes aimed to engage the part of the society that was largely excluded before, and contribute to more inclusive dialogue through these activities. These efforts were based on the idea that since traditional—tribal or other—structures constitute a central way of social organization in certain contexts, particularly in rural areas, they cannot be left out of the inclusive national debate and decision making.[33]

In Somalia, FCA cooperated with local clan leaders, Elders, to support their engagement in the political process. One result of the process was that the Elders participated in nominating Members of Parliament. Women peacemakers were also linked to the process, with (partially successful) attempts to secure women's representation in the parliament. The case of Somalia is an example of a case in which FCA functioned as an integral link between grassroots communities and the official track process by liaising between tribal leaders and UNPOS.[34] Experiences from Somalia inspired the Network's involvement in Libya, where through collaboration with its local partner, the Network and FCA approached the conflict from the angle of tribal relations, by promoting peace through intertribal peace efforts aimed at the

[32] Network, *Progress Status of the Network Projects.*

[33] Ibid.; Interview with Abdile and Rytkönen, Nov 2016.

[34] Lepistö (2013). Interview with Abdile, 2018; Country Case Study: Somalia, Development Dialogue, no. 63, 2015.

transformation of hostile attitudes and relations, and the deconstruction of enemy images stemming from grievances aggravated by political affiliations during the Gaddafi era. Even if it supports the mediation capacity of tribal leaders, it simultaneously tries to enable women and youth peacemakers' participation and entry into the dialogue process. Conventional approaches have been ineffective in the face of the complex landscape of the conflict in Libya, and the intertwined relations between political groups, armed groups—both political and, mainly, criminal and opportunistic—and tribal groups.[35] CMI has also been involved in operation in Libya since 2014, focusing on the support of women participation. In January 2017, local women formed a dialogue platform called Women's Working Group (WWG) with support from CMI and "the WWG coordinators have led a national-level consultation process in Libya to gain knowledge on how women understand their roles and their political participation during and after the 2011 events."[36]

In CMI's strategic thinking, ND is only one form of dialogue and they have only engaged in formal ND in Yemen. CMI has recently supported the drafting of the National Reconciliation Strategy in Iraq and the organization of dialogue processes within Ukraine. CMI's work in Iraq can be regarded as an effort to offer support to enable a long-term reconciliation process. Through informal dialogue and support, CMI has facilitated the drafting of the Strategy for Reconciliation in Iraq, which is a 50-page long paper for reform in areas covering legislature, governance and other fields. The Iraq process was mandated by the Iraqi government, but in contrast to an ND during this preparatory phase, one of the core targets for the third party has been the engagement of potential participants. Thus, the process has been confidential and has concentrated on trust-building in a situation where strict dichotomies and juxtapositions are evident. At this stage, there has not yet been time for an inclusive joint gathering of all groups. Instead, dialogue is organized step by

[35] Network, *Progress Status of the Network Projects*; Pentikäinen (2015); Interview with Martine Miller, 2017.

[36] CMI: Supporting Women's Participation in Libyan Transition, Oct 2017.

step through focused discrete dialogues that aim to enhance the legitimacy of the state and open up perspectives for sustainable peace.[37]

An inclusive society and an inclusive political system are seen as preconditions for self-sustaining peace, but instead of straightforwardly engaging large social groups in broad dialogue, CMI focuses more on particular dialogue platforms with limited participation and agenda. The aim is to engage groups of the society that often cannot engage in official processes, but this is done through hand-picked representatives of these groups. These individuals have to be capable of representing the group and able to promote positive change within the group. Furthermore, from the perspective of the whole process, the engagement needs to be targeted to marginalized groups whose inclusion would potentially push the whole process forward. Thus, it could be an opposition group within the ruling party (i.e. South Sudan) or powerful oligarchs and societal and economic actors (i.e. Ukraine, Moldova)—this all depends on the context. As conflicts are dynamic, there is always a danger that the position of a group and its role in transformation may drastically change—this may then change its role from an advocate to a spoiler. The process needs to be seen as agile and productive from the perspective of positive transformation, separate from the official political sphere while simultaneously connected to wider events.

The South Sudan case shows another kind of example of a private actor's effort to build informal dialogues and it indicates well the un-predictableness and messiness of conflict situation. CMI has been involved in South Sudan in two separate operations—to support the official track one peace process and to give support for women parliamentarians. From the conflict cycle perspective, South Sudan case is a messy case where open violence and post-conflict peace building as well as escalation, de-escalation and re-escalation of conflict overlap and follow each other in an unpredictable manner. CMI intervention took place during the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD)-led peace process that concluded to peace agreement in August 2015 but was partly independent from official process. Primary track of CMI's intervention was to build up unofficial intra-party negotiation within

[37]Interview with Brummer, Eronen, and Patokallio, Sept 2016; Sami Sillanpää, "Suomalainen Hussein al-Taee hieroo vallan kulisseissa rauhaa Irakiin – ja unelmoi maasta, johon voisi viedä perheensä turvallisesti," Helsingin Sanomat December 17, 2017, accessed April 6, 2017, http://www.hs.fi/ulkomaat/art-2000005010483.html.

the leading SPLM party that would then have a positive push to official negotiations. The objective of the so-called Arusha negotiations was to engage with the conflict parties within the leading SPLM party, as, according to CMI's analysis, the conflict within the party was one of the key reasons for the crisis. Thus, intra-party dialogue was considered an important way to resolve the overall crisis. The intra-SPLM dialogue organized by CMI caused a misunderstanding because it was interpreted by the chief mediator (IGAD) as setting up a peace process in competition to theirs, even though the goal of CMI was indeed to support that process. This case shows how important the perceptions of the other actors in the field can be, and how strategically important it is to communicate with the other actors involved in operations so that these kind of misinterpretations between private endeavors and officially mandated processes are avoided.[38] Vice versa, the Arusha process is an excellent example of the relevance of private peacemakers' contribution in these types of cases, because intra-party mediation would be highly problematic for official actors. If CMI's intervention upset the main mediator, official involvement in intra-party relations would have easily be seen as promoting the power of one political group. Indeed, South Sudan has remained an example of lack of coordination and communication among third parties where there are still eight mostly parallel and loose peace and dialogue processes.

Simultaneously, the CMI was engaged in South Sudan with work with women's parliamentarians that is now carried out by UN Women. From the perspective of inclusion and conflict cycles, it is interesting how these two interventions encounter each other as one is more focused male-dominated negotiations within the political elite and thus for supporting official peace negotiations and the other is more focused on civic society inclusion—even if engaging only women parliamentarians, which is rather an exclusive group—and empowerment. In this case, these two parallel CMI's South Sudanese projects—one with a strong emphasis on the inclusion and empowerment of women and the other with an emphasis on confident and exclusive mediation within the ruling party—remained separate and there was no clear effort to link them. In this case, the project working close to track one and the project empowering women's participation were not just met each other within the field

[38] Eronen presentation at TAPRI, April 28, 2016; Patokallio, pers. comm., March 13, 2017.

but they also remained also separate within CMI organization.[39] FCA has been also engaged in South Sudan but has focused more on the facilitation of local negotiations and agreements by supporting and empowering some local actors, such as a parish priest.

The cases of Gagauzia in Moldova and Ukraine shed light on the idea of contributing to long-term transformation through carefully constructed and targeted actions. In both cases, even though the self-defined role of CMI is to help navigate the caveats of the peace process, the organization does also maintain its focus in relation to the more long-term transformative process. In Ukraine, CMI's activity is not tied to an official mandate, but still aims to support the transformation of the political system so that it would enable a new national agenda setting for a peace process. The core tool in Ukraine is the informal dialogue platforms, or communication channels, that bring together different components of the conflict. Yet again, this is not so much about bringing about a clearly defined resolution. Overall, the key task in Ukraine is identifying the groups that are most willing to engage in discussion. This flexible process means holding workshops and other forms of informal and resolution-shy mediation, which aim to create channels and keep them open. In all of the cases of CMI, one can see the perception of the organization that mediation and dialogue are about looking for a place, either metaphorical or concrete, in which discussion can freely take place. Private actors can foster dialogue at different levels of society, not just on the high level. Private actors can also reach actors that the official channels cannot, broadening the process.[40] The idea of the transformative power of the process is based on the hope that these communication channels turn out to be self-sustaining, and expand and have spillover effects.

In a similar manner as in Ukraine, in Gagauzia, CMI acts mainly in informal settings beyond the public gaze. Indeed, publicity is seen to be harmful for the overall aim of building trust. In Gagauzia, the main questions was what the definition of the Gagauzian autonomy is and how that autonomy is implemented. As there is not yet violent conflict, CMI's operation can be regarded as an example of *preventive mediation* supported by a private actor. In this sense, and on the surface level, the immediate challenge in the process seems to be legal; how to harmonize

[39]Interview with Tarnaala, Rinne-Koistinen, Saarnivaara, Kärkkäinen & Vierula, May 2017.

[40]CMI, A*nnual Programme Report* 2014, p. 6.

legislation in a situation where there is constitution, other laws, and the law for autonomy, without there being any kind of hierarchy between all of these. But even though on the surface the conflict seems to be about legal issues, the difficulty in the transformation process is that the situation is very politicized. CMI, which has an official mandate from both the Chisinau government and the autonomous government in Comrat, has sought to bring about political transformation through unofficial dialogues between participants by organizing study trips to familiarize the parties with the various models of minority autonomy in Europe. It would be expected that this would enable mutual brainstorming sessions about available solutions, and in the end a return to legal questions.[41] In the end, CMI has regarded their mediation intervention as success because it "helps [in] maintaining a permanent dialogue between the two parties" that indeed enabled agreement regarding frames of Gagauzian autonomy.[42]

The Gagauzian case indicates well how private actors could work in contexts where the label of mediation is not wanted, since referring to offered services as mediation may easily underline the existence of conflict and thus be harmful for soft preventive diplomacy. As Zartman points out, "[t]he mediator is seen as a meddler, especially in internal conflict. It works to weaken the government, by implying that it cannot handle its own problems, and to strengthen the rebellion, by giving it recognition and equal standing before the mediator."[43] When states or international organizations become involved, the particular conflict has to already be recognized, and their involvement always has a significant influence on the conflict dynamics. Because of their bureaucratic and intrusive nature, officially mandated, UN-led processes are not very suitable for conflict prevention or mediation efforts before violent conflict breaks out. A UN intervention underlines that a serious conflict is in place; therefore, instead of prevention it may even contribute to escalation, as the parties see violence as the best option to receive recognition.[44] Recently the UN has emphasized the interconnectedness of mediation and prevention while the UN "is committed to moving from

[41] Interview with Brummer, Eronen and Patokallio, Sept 2016.

[42] www.cmi.fi/2017/06/05/parliamentary-dialogue-gagauzia-autonomy-resumed/.

[43] Zartman (2006, p. 265).

[44] Interview with Brummer, Eronen and Patokallio, Sept 2016.

Table 13.1 Transfromative Dialogues

	Participatory dialogues	*Targeted dialogues*
Inclusivity	Participatory	Targeted
Third-party role	Facilitative	Enabling
Agenda	Externally or locally set	Locally set
Objective	Societal change	Perception change
Connection to track 1	Complementary or parallel (to National Dialogue)	Complementary (to mediation)
Participation	Open, emphasis on local invitation	Confidential, actively hand-picked by third party
Particular goal	Legitimacy of peace process	Transformation of perceptions/ Breaking deadlocks
Particular tool	Entry points	Alternative or supportive path

culture of 'reaction' to one of 'prevention.'" However, even if mediation, or, as it called in the UN agenda paper "conflict mediation," is seen to be a key part of the toolbox of "preventive diplomacy" and it is in the UN declaration linked with peace-building, capacity building, democratization, human rights support and even poverty-eradication, the link and particular importance of mediation in this broad spectrum of prevention measures has remained somewhat open and undefined.[45]

Private peacemakers could bring elements of conflict prevention to mediation in situations that official mediation cannot enter because private actors' involvement does not legitimize and delegitimize power structures in the same way that official processes do, and thus they can act more quietly and invisibly, and cross boundaries that official actors cannot. Therefore, private actors have the potential to work more efficiently to prevent escalation and become involved in potential conflict situations before the conflicts have been internationally recognized. It seems that this preventive mediation is still for them a new and partly unused but fully recognized dimension of their work. Indeed, "[preventing] violent conflict from erupting" is the best way of building peace but that requires the existence of early-warning systems that allowed recognition of the early signs. That often requires in-depth knowledge and long-term presence in a particular area. For a transnational organization, this

[45] https://www.un.org/sg/en/priorities/prevention.shtml; https://www.un.org/press/en/2017/sc12673.doc.htm.

is possible mainly through development projects, but as FCA and Felm's experiences indicate, a distinction between development- and peace-orientated projects is maintained through separate institutional traditions and cultures and by distinct funding instruments. Still, Felm have a few experiences of successful preventive interventions and the benefits of linking development projects to preventive mediation efforts. For example in Tanzania, they had a situation where, through the development project, information was received that at the local level, the relationship between farmers and nomads was escalating; it was then possible to invite a local partner to mediate the conflict. In South Africa, in similar way, their local partner mediates among the local and migrant population to prevent the escalation of tensions.[46] Despite these experiences, development work and peace support are comprehended mostly as separate activities or a link is not make visible and concrete in the design phase.

All in all, informal dialogues can be roughly divide into two kind of dialogues according their approach to inclusivity: participatory and targeted (see Table 13.1). The distinction is a bit artifical because many dialogues may have elements from both but, in general, the division highlights quite fundamental differences in design, objectives and practice. The division represents two ideal forms and, at the operational level, elements of these two appear to be blurred. The inclusivity of the peace process constitutes an omnipresent and uncontested normative basis of all private peacemakers' aims but what inclusivity requires and how it can be operationalized differs among organizations and, indeed, divides the processes of dialogues to participatory and targeted. Participatory dialogues refer to public dialogues with broad participation and targeted at confidential processes with carefully targeted participation. Participatory dialogues focus on increasing the legitimacy of the peace processes primarily by broadly increasing societal participation in dialogue processes, since the targeted dialogues focus on engaging certain targeted groups that are presumed to have a crucial role for transformation. Participatory dialogues are invested in gaining broad legitimacy for the peace process; they target the opening up of new spaces and new horizons for the peace process. As confidential processes, targeted dialogues are more reminiscent of the mediation process but instead of a problem-solving emphasis targeted dialogues recognize problems to open up new horizons for the future.

[46] Interview with Tarnaala, Rinne-Koistinen, Saarnivaara, Kärkkäinen, and Vierula, 2017.

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CHAPTER 14

Towards Post-management: Dialogic Practice

Post-management Practice

Dialogic is an apt concept that CMI respondents would like to call their new approach to, or method of, mediation. *Dialogic* refers to the practitioners' conceptualization and way of acting, and the dialogic approach is a cross-cutting method that concerns all of CMI's activity, not just the dialogue processes. Thus, the terms *dialogic* and *dialogue* should not be confused with each other, even if they overlap in many particular contexts. The dialogic approach may require organizing a dialogue, but not necessarily.[1] The dialogic approach as it appears in CMI's strategic thinking is primarily their pragmatic conclusion to the demands of the transformative shift and complexity thinking in mediation practice. The term is not theoretically justified and the question arises as to how this pragmatic understanding of dialogic is comparable to theoretical debate resting on the Bakhtinian concept of dialogic (discussed in details in Chapter 7). Furthermore, to what extent is the dialogic approach as it is defined by CMI (or the one introduced in theoretical debate) an apt concept to describe other organizations' practice, even if they do not use the term itself?

The way that the dialogic approach is understood within the CMI is based on the acceptance of unpredictable conclusions of transformation, the recognition that third party is part of conflict setting and the emphasis on the change of perceptions as a primary goal for transformation.

[1] Interview with Brummer et al., Sept 2016.

M. Lehti, *The Era of Private Peacemakers*,
Rethinking Peace and Conflict Studies,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-91201-1_14

Peace mediators' work is understood as continuous balancing between different kinds of understandings and perceptions of various local and international parties, and within that frame, peacemakers' own perceptions of success and measuring results need to be flexible and open-ended. "This ecosystem sees constant interaction between contested 'process narratives,' within which mediation must navigate. Perceptions entail also mediation itself. In light of complex social systems thinking, it is evident that mediators become part of the very same system the moment they enter the scene, making absolute neutrality impossible," as explained by CMI's Brummer and Eronen. The third party is an outsider that intervenes in a conflict and becomes involved in the process through this intervention become a "part of the complex political, social and economic system around the conflict and its resolution." Therefore, peacemakers cannot, and should not, define the end goal, but instead aim to support transformation from violence to peace. They should be aware that transformation may have unpredictable conclusions. The end results of political transformation should not be strictly predetermined, and one should not define too tightly what the end result should look like and what type of institutions and forms of governance are required.[2] Seen in this way, it seems that the strategic ideal behind goal setting is inspired by the idea of self-sustaining peace instead of the liberal peace idea since issues like power-sharing, good governance or democracy promotion are omitted. However, if the peace mediation sector as a whole is examined, CMI's approach contrasts the more dominant trend of engaging mediation goalsetting in an increasing manner with liberal norms like democracy promotion and human rights.[3] Stepping away from the narrow security focus and emphasis on the bipartite setting has generated mediators' awareness on normative questions and among many this has led to emphasis on liberal ideals as an ultimate but not necessarily a practical goal. What CMI's approach represents is the next step further, attaching normatively sensitive mediation to ideals of peace formation and popular locally made peace.

Another integral part of CMI's pragmatic approach is the notion of "artisanship for peace" that builds a new professional identity and new

[2] Brummer and Eronen, "Hitting Moving Targets," p. 9; Interview with Brummer et al., Sept 2016.

[3] For example Oslo Forum. The Search for Peace: Perspectives on Mediation 2010–2015. A Compendium of Oslo Forum Interviews; Hellmüller et al. (2015).

understanding of professional pride. The core idea is to transmit responsibility from the organizational level to individual peacemakers' level or to not allow individual peacemakers to hide behind mandates and organizational declarations but instead understand the mediator's role as proactive actor. Instead of seeing peacemaking as an engineering science, peacemaking should be compared to artisanship. With this well-selected notion, Eronen refers to how, in addition to craftsmanship based on practices learned through experience, this kind of mediation also requires artistic features that are associated with a kind of artfulness of work, including the ability to be innovative, visionary and reflective. Artisans for peace are presented as nimble and are often invisible actors who carry the responsibility of their footprint on the local society. They are presented to be capable of maneuvering within the complexity of conflict, and within its continuously changing positions. As Eronen notes, "[a]rtisans for peace accept that the skills and the process cannot be fully codified or known explicitly" and thus there cannot be pre-given, codified practices that are applicable to all situations. Tolerance towards the limited possibility to design peace projects as well as the ability to cope with unpredictable change and uncertainties are seen as virtues of the new kind of peacemakers. Paying attention to the unplanned and the unexpected, or, in other words, expressing creativity, is now seen as a virtue of artisans for peace, since in complex settings it is not possible to execute rational linear planning and solution-centric methods. Thus, there are no predictable causalities between peacemakers' contribution and transformation of conflict. Even if it is well designed and planned in detail, a plan does not automatically lead to peace, and will not automatically have a more significant an output of conflict transformation than a contribution that is more difficult to measure and invisible in the beginning. Core skills have the ability to pick, recognize and engage local partners that could carry the process.[4]

It is not possible to find equally radical self-reflection of a mediator's identity and receding from regulated practices of mediation as management. In contrary, reading mediators' interviews that the Oslo Forum has collected between 2010–2015 gives rather the opposite view. The mediator's dilemma is seen to be in balancing between managing versus solving conflict, but not in transforming it. In various interviews, learning

[4] Eronen (2016), "Organising Artisans for Peace," pp. 145–146.

through practical experiences in the field is underlined and, indeed, personal narratives are more about experiences of learning through mediation processes than about self-reflection and criticism towards existing practice. Requirements for change are expressed and noticed in soft ways by hinting primarily to the need to increase the inclusivity of the mediation process. Listening as a core skill of a mediator is emphasized in a very conventional manner without attaching it to culture sensitiveness and the creativity of artisans. Indeed, the "ultimate goal of mediation" is seen to be "to go for sustainable and just peace agreement that leads to development of democratic institutions."[5] This citation highlights well how receding from the narrow focus of mediation has brought with it an emphasis on liberal norms as the ultimate goal among mainstream mediators. Many respondents mentioned that hostility among parties is a fundamental obstacle for a sustainable solution and perceptions of the parties need to take seriously, but no-one is suggesting that mediators' primary goal should be to change this perceptions and to deconstruct hostile identities.[6] From this perspective, CMI's self-reflection and seeking out of a new professional identity appears truly unique and is a radical step away from conventions. Indeed, it is not comparable to other Finnish organizations either. However, this kind of self-reflection is highly interesting as it seems to open up a space beyond the cramped frame of liberal peacemaking, taking a step towards "peace formation" within the mediation framework.

The dialogic mediation differs from that of negotiation in fundamental terms. Negotiation situations are based on announced positions, and there are various solutions available to address incompatibilities. At a certain point, negotiations reach a point where no-one can move without someone else benefiting from that move. Negotiations are changing power positions. By contrast, *dialogic processes* is about transforming perceptions and antagonist identities. The conflict environment contains starkly polarized perceptions, rivalling interpretations of facts, and strong group affiliations. Proximity to conflict narrows one's perception of how peace can be reached, and therefore CMI's strategic thinking is that the main target of conflict transformation is a change in perceptions. The core question is then how it is possible to recognize the unique context

[5] Oslo Forum. The Search for Peace: Perspectives on Mediation 2010–2015. A Compendium of Oslo Forum Interviews.

[6] Oslo Forum: The Search for Peace; Oslo Forum (2015).

of particular conflict and how it is possible to support transformation of the parties' perceptions. In a dialogic process, the emphasis is not so much on the resolution to start with, and even when dialogue is proceeding towards a resolution, this resolution is not something that can be derived from fixed parameters, but rather is something that may creatively surprise all the partners of the conflict, and the mediators. In previous resolution-centered peace processes, the resolution was the ultimate goal and was often already fixed, thereby producing a rigid and easily collapsible mediation architecture. In a dialogic approach, the premises are not set, but may shift. The aim is to create opportunities and chances, whereas with negotiation, the field, its parameters and therefore also its solution are already set. While the expectation horizon is limited in negotiations, it is open in dialogues. In dialogues, what is discussed does not necessarily have to deal with possible solutions or problematic issues at all, but activities such as for example, playing football may support attempts to see and explore new alternatives. Thus, the opening up of new alternatives is not sought by rational negotiations; instead what is sought is a change inthe participants' perceptions of each other and of the conflict in general. From this perspective, "winning war is change of value function," as Ville Brummer argues, but changing perceptions or, more precisely, transforming antagonist identities cannot be a straightforward or linear process.[7]

In contrast to classical mediation, the flexibility of the dialogic approach is highly significant. The mediators' position in relation to the conflict parties is regarded also as dialogic but this relationship and the mediation process cannot be hermetically sealed and the parties in the dialogue, and the dialogue itself, are not immune to the outside world and the changes that take place in it. It is important that the mediator is aware of this challenge, and can anticipate it and react accordingly. That is why the mediator must also have access to up-to-date and state-of-the art information of the broader conflict context, including not only the direct conflict parties and their in-groups, but also other agents in the conflict architecture and possibly beyond that, including the international community as representatives of Felm stressed.[8] Or, as Joenpolvi from MSU notes, conflict analysis and process design need to be adjusted

[7] Brummer and Eronen, "Hitting Moving Targets," p. 9; Interview with Brummer et al., Sept 2016, Patokallio, pers. comm., Mar 13, 2017.

[8] Interview Rintakoski and Saarnivaara, Sept 2016.

to the era of fragmented and contingent agency and it have to focus on recognizing the broad perspective—not just concentrating on the motivations of militias but recognizing all potential actors that can support the transformation towards peace.[9] DeConing notes that in adaptive peace peacebuilding (or mediation), conflict analysis needs to "be approached not as predefined steps in a determined-design programme cycle, but rather as continuously iterative process."[10] The dialogic nature of the process design shelters the transformation and supports its flexibility, since a dialogue does not collapse as easily and as totally as a process, which is more rigidly defined. From the perspective of a third party actor, the dialogic approach brings flexibility within the complexity of conflict. If the conflict situation changes dramatically, the dialogic approach allows the actor to stay involved, and to continue facilitation efforts in the changed context.[11] This is a significant change from the negotiation constellation in more traditional, mandated peace mediation, which is fixed and thus more vulnerable to unpredictable changes.

From CMI's perspective, with the dialogic approach, the enabling and facilitation of *channels of communication* is seen as a particular practical tool in supporting long-term transformation and perception change excecuted by targeted informal dialogue forums (see Table 13.1).[12] The assumption is that increasing communication channels creates preconditions for the change of perceptions, and thus an increase of trust, which enables new possibilities for advancing peace.[13] At times, when formal channels cannot for whatever reason enable the needed dialogue, it can be supported through other informal components depending on the context.[14] With dialogic mediation, the request for a verified influence becomes partly absurd as the opportunity to launch and engage in dialogic interaction is the actual goal, and the long-term effects are unpredictable and dependent on local actors. Dialogic mediation aims to open up new space and create new horizons for peace but some unexpected overall changes may easily negate the original intention of frail dialogue

[9] Interview with Joenpolvi, Dec 2017.

[10] de Coning (2018, p. 309).

[11] Interview with Brummer et al., Sept 2016.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Brummer and Eronen, "Hitting Moving Targets."

[14] Patokallio, pers. comm., Mar 13, 2017.

as was case in the CMI in their effort to build unofficial, confidential dialogue platforms in Ukraine engaging, for example, oligarchs willing and able to cross the border to the rebel's side.

Dialogic mediation is ideally carried out by local actors, who should define the agenda, priorities and possible solutions, and the active input of the CMI is seen to be in hand-picking participants for these informal dialogue platforms. This requires in-depth preparation, local contacts, and craftsmanship in finding and engaging these individuals. This is a key part of Eronen's concept of artisanship, which emphasizes the reflective stance in peacemakers' work and the notion that the "outcomes of artisanship will be unique because the context from which they start is always unique."[15] Recognizing the right local actors and engaging with them in agenda setting is a key moment of planning. However, as the form and agenda of partnership is not fixed, even in a radically changing situation like Yemen, local partnerships can be utilized for other purposes. Nonetheless, not all local partnerships last, and distrust among local actors and third parties can sometimes end cooperation. The challenge in the dialogic approach from the perspective of the mediator is to identify the agents, to open up their perceptions, and to ultimately bring forward new, changed conceptions. The risk is that even when participants agree on the steps leading towards positive transformation, they may not have the leverage to carry those changed perceptions back to their in-groups. The representatives of CMI refer to this as the difficulty of selling change and they therefore aim to find individual representatives of selected groups who have the ability to promote broader change.[16] This contrasts with the conventional mediation approach that stresses engaging parties with formal decision-making power.

It is possible to recognize a broader shift emphasizing trust-building and perception change as a core objective of private peacemaking; however, there are significant differences in the degree of commitment between CMI and, for example, Felm and FCA, whose approach is less articulated and more practice orientated. Their primarily aim in long-term transformation is to build bridges between civil society actors and to enable their more effective participation in peace efforts. This would promote change towards the broader acceptance of the legitimacy of the

[15] Oskari Eronen, "Organising Artisans for Peace," p. 146.

[16] Interview with Brummer et al., Sept 2016.

peace process (see differences between participatory and targeted dialogues in Table 13.1). What all three share is the general agreement that it is not sufficient to inflict change only among the closed group that is participating in the mediation or dialogue, but that mediators must always keep in mind that the change must be something in which eventually the general public can engage.

The representatives of Felm note how the huge challenge for achieving transformation is then when the war has omnipresent influences on how people think and what they discuss. In order achieve true change, peacemakers need to influence this by recreating trust among people and supporting relationship building, the transformation of antagonistic perceptions, myths, and narratives, and eventually according to them even bringing about forgiveness. This way, transformation of perceptions also relates to reconciliation. Trust comes only through meeting others, and, in the end, it enables change and resolution. From this perspective, conflict resolution and transformation are again not mutually exclusive but complementary. There are practical and technical issues and questions that require resolutions, but these then support the broader transformation of relations among people, the latter of which requires trust and forgiveness. Thus, the question is about a kind of hermeneutic circle in Felm's thinking. At the practical level, they stress how it is often necessary to steer the dialogue into a more goal-oriented direction, to find tools for resolution and to move the focus from intransigent positions to technical questions since certain political questions can be endlessly debated but continuation of that debate does not support transformation as such. The facilitator is needed here not in setting the agenda or suggesting solutions, but in designing the process as a whole and in transforming it into a goal-directed process.[17]

For Felm, perception change or the deconstruction of antagonism, which are essential in CMI's approach, appear to be an overall result of the transformation process but not a particular operationalized goal of their intervention, even if they do aim for trust-building. Building trust and creating platforms for meetings are a part of organizing dialogues, but their goal-directed agenda is attached to knowledge sharing not to the creation of communication channels. According to Felm's experience, it is knowledge that facilitates dialogue, which differs from the communication-centric views of dialogue cherished by CMI. In Felm's

[17] Interview with Rintakoski and Saarnivaara, Sept 2016.

model, it is highly important to design how knowledge is input from the local to the national level and vice versa, as well as within tracks among different dialogue forums. This provides the opportunity to manage the whole peace process and to make it possible to transform technical issues at the local level into a goal-oriented process.[18] In their Syrian Initiative project, the importance of transforming narratives that provoke and maintain violence is recognized, but in this respect the media has been seen to have a prominent role to play in changing perceptions, and in spreading uncorrupted knowledge about the conflict and peace efforts.[19] Thus, their approach is more grounded on the presumption that there are certain misunderstandings than can be corrected by getting the facts right, while the CMI approach is closer to the assumption that instead of misunderstanding, antagonism among parties can be characterized as radical disagreement if translated into Ramsbotham's terms (see in details in Chapter 6).

In the case of FCA and the Network, the organizations have a particular focus on radical parties, with which official actors cannot talk and which often are labeled as terrorists. Engaging some of them into the outer spheres of the official process would require a remarkable change of perceptions among all parties. FCA and the Network stress that excluding extreme groups from dialogue poses significant obstacles to peace, increases the risk of further radicalization, and drives them closer to terrorist organizations such as ISIS.[20] Addressing extremist groups is also considered crucial because of the particular vulnerability that religious and traditional leaders have in the face of the recruitment processes of such movements, especially when these leaders and their communities are neglected by the local government and the international community. The often desperate situations in local communities in the middle of conflict then make them fertile ground for the radicalization strategies of militias.[21] This is where the role of private peacemakers becomes particularly relevant, since they are able to explore the possibility of informal dialogue and engagement with extremist groups and individuals, and to maintain informal channels of communication with them in order to prevent extremist movements and complex inter-linkages between

[18] Ibid.

[19] Felm, *The Syria Initiative: 2nd Quarterly Report 2016.*

[20] Pentikäinen, "Reforming UN Mediation"; interview with Abdile et al., Sept 2016.

[21] Pentikäinen (2015).

political, traditional and criminal groups from spiraling out of control.[22] For example, the Network and FCA's work includes facilitating interfaith dialogue between certain more extreme groups in South- and Southeast Asia, as well as research on the drivers of radicalization and the possibilities for dialogue with radical actors in other regions.[23] These types of engagements are highly challenging and often require extensive research, trust- and relationship-building, and broad connections. This is where the Network's nature and structure as well as FCA's own connections become crucial; the expertise of different civil society partners offers significant support, and local partnerships help gain access to extreme elements on the ground. At the same time, Pentikäinen points out that extremist groups often do not view international NGOs as impartial actors, which makes it crucial to empower and support local peacemakers.[24] Local religious and traditional actors can then engage in mediation, prevent radicalization in their communities, and counter the use of religious values in the incitement of violence. The goal is then to gradually build peace structures from the inside. The work of local networks and individuals is supported by facilitating meetings, offering training modules, and conducting mapping and analyses of the conflict. These local efforts are then supported by advocacy and lobbying to engage and inform international stakeholders, and to link them with local contacts.[25] The ultimate goal is that peacebuilding and mediation work will in this way be carried out by local actors even after the end of individual projects and third party-organized dialogues.

All in all, a new dialogic mediation includes several phenomena related to the Bakhtinian dialogue even if there is not a purposeful link, but, as always in the complex world, the pragmatic approach involves more compromise with the previously dominant Habermasian and Bakhtinian forms of dialogue. There is more emphasis given to the problem-finding dialogue, but, simultaneously, it is not possible to reject the problem-solving approach altogether. The latter is often seen to be required for carrying out short-term transformations while long-term

[22] Interview with Abdile et al., Sept 2016, Pentikäinen (2015).

[23] Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers, *Progress Status of the Network Projects*.

[24] Pentikäinen (2015, p. 71).

[25] CSI and Felm, *The Syria Initiative;* Network, *Progress Status of the Network Projects*; CMI, *Annual Programme Report* (2014).

processes require continuous locally driven problem-finding dialogues. Shifting from solving incompatible interests to the transformation of perceptions or, more precisely, to identities as a core target of dialogic mediation expresses another element of the paradigmatic change. However, in this regard, process design models are still much in development and actual experiences from the field are tentative, even if encouraging.

Dialogic Agency

Besides new modes of transformative dialogue, informal dialogues also have, in other terms, transformed the design of peace intervention. In the case of NDs, the third party has refrained from its role to support the designing of process but in practice this designing of dialogue structures contains unintended power of influence as it enabling exclusion of local understanding of process design and objectives. Because of the dominant problem-solving and power-sharing seeking structures, ND can be regarded as a liberal peace-cherishing practice beside their emphasis on local agency. In contrast to ND, dialogic mediation and informal forms of dialogues offer promise to distant private peacemakers from normative and practical frameworks of liberal peace. In dialogic mediation, the third party has adapted a more active role in regard to designing how to initiate dialogue and pick up participants but in regard to continuation, design and participation as well as content of process have been left open for local contribution. In an ideal world dialogic mediation would enable more locally designed processes but in practice there are still obvious pitfalls inexecution as norms and practices of liberal peace are so deep-rooted. With dialogic mediation, private peacemakers have met ethical questions from a new angle. With whom should they cooperate and how should they engage with local partners? Does inclusion of particular partners exclude others? How does this act of selection contribute to the whole peace process? Within international official peace diplomacy, mandates have preserved their legitimating power set roles and decide participation but the shift of emphasis from a mandate to a local invitation has turned the focus to finding entry points. Beyond official mandates, the question of participation and the legitimization of the mediator's role has become a more complicated and contingent process.

Private peacemakers need to have the required social capacity to gain access to peace processes or, in contrast, they have to earn legitimacy for their agency through local and international partnerships. Within the

mandated system, from the private actors' perspective, integrating closely within the UN system and with other official actors would offer the best guaranteed access to the peace process and legitimate their agency within peace mediation. Still, the attachment to UN system offers a legitimate position and that is why the Network has closely associated itself with the UN organizations. Felm, as recent newcomer in peace mediation field, is primarily building up its agency as a peacemaker within the framework of large internationally coordinated processes in Syria and Myanmar. With the new emphasis on invitation by local actors, private actors also need to build up a broad and diverse network of local and international partners to enable invitation as well as access to context-specific knowledge concerning the target area to be able to recognize and be in touch with well-selected local actors. Working outside of official mandates once own agency as a peacemaker need to be legitimized through local partnerships and networks. The symbiotic relationship with FCA and the Networks offers a good example of the benefits of networking. The Network partnerships has enabled the FCA to intervene in several conflicts and to adopt a stronger role as mediator. Because of its diverse membership, the Network has simultaneously enables connections with local actors in the conflict zone as well as also coordination and networking among transnational peacemakers themselves. Simultaneously, the loose and unofficial attachment to the UN offers at least partial further confirmation for organizations working under the Network label.

In similar terms, the CMI has invested in networking within selected geographical regions and gained context-specific knowledge and contacts. Regionally, CMI focusses on the Middle East and North Africa (e.g., Yemen, Libya and Iraq), sub-Saharan Africa (e.g., South Sudan, Burundi and CAR), and Eurasia or the so-called post-Soviet space (e.g., Southern Caucasus, Moldova and Ukraine). Indeed, all private peacemaking organizations currently have a particular geographical emphasis where they are strong.[26] Simultaneously, there is also a need for networking among other private peace mediation actors because the position of legitimate peacemaker is also achieved through mutual unofficial recognition. For example, for Felm, cooperation with UN organizations is not enough to establish their position; they also need close partnership with organizations like CSI and a somewhat looser cooperation with EIP and Berghof. Gaining legitimacy as peacemakers has changed to a multifaceted and

[26] CMI Programme Report (2014–2016).

continuous process in which agency is established, confirmed and renewed in interaction with private and official actors, within the community of private peacemakers and through partnership with local actors.

From the perspective of private peacemakers, their process designing has changed to be more active, endeavoring to recognize possible entry points to particular conflicts and to recognize and evaluate potential local partners with whom they could engage in a work capacity. If within the mandated system, the roles of themandating power and mediator were clearly separated; this is not the case in the new invitation-based model. Invitation by local partner is seen to give legitimacy for intervention but the local partner cannot give a mandate for the private peacemaker and the situation is thus not equivalent to mediation cases officially mandated by conflicting parties. Furthermore, an inviting local partner cannot be described as a subscriber of peace intervention but instead, in a somewhat twisted way, private mediation actors appear to be both a subscriber and a producer of mediation services, and a local partner is merely a required intermediator that legitimizes intervention but who does not necessarily have the power to design its objectives. From this perspective, participation has become a highly delicate and complicated issue and, indeed, the identification of and engagement with local partners has changed to become a context-sensitive politicized endeavour as intervening actors use their power to select which partners may increase inclusivity and could hold an important role in transforming the peace process. Thus, besides recognizing the main parties, it has become more important to recognize parties and individuals who are able to promote change and indeed hold power to influence people's way of thinking about conflict, peace and mutual relationships among communities. This has revolutionized required conflict analysis from static to dynamic and iterated exercise.[27]

From the perspective of private peacemakers, engaging with appropriate partnerships is intertwined with the overall objectives of their peace intervention as well as their understanding of peace processes in general. The latter refers to emphasis on the transformative process and how it can be supported by particular intervention. The former could refer to general normative goals such as the increase of inclusivity and, in particular, women's engagement in peace processes as a tool for building sustainable peace; however, it could have reference to the engagement of

[27] Interview with Brummer, Eronen and Patokallio, Sept 2016; Interview with Joenpolvi, Dec 2017.

a particular group marginalized from the peace process but whose participation according to private actors would support the transformation away from violence. Local partners can be established NGOs but sometimes more loose gatherings. By cooperating with local NGOs, the private actors can benefit from existing networks and the broad grass-root support of local NGOs and, in that way, international actors can build on something that has a solid grounding at the grass-root level. Vice versa, well-established NGOs probably have more articulated expressions of their needs and they may already have designed and engaged in various reconciling process. Cooperation with local NGOs also enables work in areas that are otherwise difficult to reach and include themes that otherwise would not be possible. However, sometimes it is more appropriate to engage with targeted individual actors as these may better support the overall goal of peace intervention.[28]

There is a prevailing consesnus regarding the significance of the increase in women's role in peace processes, and engaging with various women organizations as well as individual women actors has been essential for all three organizations but it is not possible to verify how often women organizations appear to be a local inviting partner. The organizations work with a broad range of different types of women actors from politicians and parliamentarians (e.g., CMI in South Sudan)[29] to lawyers (e.g., FCA in the Democratic Republic of the Congo). As noted by Felm, the local partners can also be teachers, doctors or representatives of any other profession—and sometimes it is easier to advance dialogue through such professional groups that may include women from opposing parties.[30] In Libya, the partner for the Network is Libya Institute for Advanced Studies (LIAS) because of its close relationship with tribal actors. LIAS is not a women actor and the Network merely uses LIAS as a gateway to engage local women peace mediators in the broader peace process.[31] CMI has also engaged with Libya and has found that cooperation with local NGOs gives more added value to their concrete peace work; even if in this way it has not achieved participation in top class meetings, it is still in this way that they believe in best to contribute to the official peace process. Their local partners include Women's Union in Tripoli; in the south of Libya,

[28] Interview with Tarnaala et al., May 2017.

[29] CMI, A*nnual Programme Report* (2014) (Helsinki: Crisis Management Initiative, 2014).

[30] Interview with Tarnaala et al., May & Rinne-Koistinen June (2017).

[31] Interview with Miller, May 2017.

they work with bigger local women organizations and in the east, they work with women actors in a local university.[32] In Libya, at this current stage, the peace process prioritizes reconciliation among different areas in Libya, allowing them to settle some of the conflicts and then the overall goal is look at forming a national charter on identity what is Libya, of which there is no coherent idea at the moment. Tribal leaders' movement have a central position in this nonformal national dialogue process. However, because of that, the national-level peace process has not been very representative and inclusive and many civil society actors have been working on almost a parallel track and thus private peacemakers have tried to increase inclusivity of the tribal-led dialogues.[33]

Private actors as well as the official actors like the UN need to balance engagement with local, subnational, national and transnational actors. How can local processes enable nationwide work and how can they facilitate dialogue between different tracks? The question is very case specific and, for example, in Syria, small NGOs like Felm would not necessarily bring any added value by concentrating on working only with the most internationally high profile, key groups of women—especially since these women often already attract and receive significant international support from actors such as UN Women. The asymmetry of available funding instruments offered by UN Women (big players with budgets of several million) and the small Finnish-based NGOs is obvious. UN Women activity contributes primarily to high-level international advocacy taking place in Brussels, Washington and New York. It supports the emergence of often a somewhat exclusive sphere of women actors who are capable to act and speak in top class tables and meetings.[34] A more effective channel of advancing inclusivity and women's participation in the peace process may then be found through smaller, often but not necessarily local, actors that benefit more from third-party support and collaboration or balanced combination with nation-wide organizations and local organizations. Strengthening the networks and collaboration among national and local women actors and establishing platforms through which they can more effectively make their voices heard are also integral aspects of supporting the work of local women. Still, the representatives of Felm note that in order to guarantee smooth interaction between

[32] CMI Supporting Women's Participation in Libyan Transition, CMI, Oct (2017).

[33] Interview with Miller, May 2017.

[34] Interview with Tarnaala et al., May 2017; See also Väyrynen et al. (2018).

local and national and among different tracks, cooperating with UN Women may be essential despite the simultaneous investment of local NGO partners. Moreover, a difference in agenda but also in worldviews between nationwide elite-related women organizations and local grassroot organizations may be huge. In some cases, like in Burundi, women organizations that are active at the national level are close to government or controlled by government. In this kind of context, it is preferable for international NGOs to work at the local level with local actors since it is not required politically relevant field from government perspective. Vice versa, in Colombia there are strong independent NGOs at the national level with wide networks but there is a need for wider support, national coverage and extension of activity.[35]

Entering into the process by local invitation supports the idea that it is crucial to let the local actors define their needs in terms of forms of support in order to ensure that third parties' activities respect local ownership, local expertise and knowledge on the needs of their own communities and regions.[36] If preserving political neutrality and impartiality of third party were the main challenges of conventional mediation, enabling of the locally designed agenda constitutes a new normative challenge for private peacemakers. Even if all forms of external interventions are still necessarily an act of interference, the footprint of private actors in conflicts is much smoother and much less visible than that of an official actor, but they still need to minimize the intrusive nature of their intervention. Mediators are often seen from outside as norm promoters and, indeed, mandates often do not offer another option for the mediator but many private peacemakers increasingly feel uncomfortable in democracy promotion, for example, if it means pushing elections into a context where it is inappropriate. Instead of defining mediation goals purely by liberal peace norms, mediators approach norms as a pragmatic tool and they recognize their own norms; for example, gender-sensitiveness is a method they apply but not a norm they impose at all costs.[37]

There is an obvious consensus among all peacemakers that their action should always take place with local partners and, for example, dialogue processes are facilitated with and by local partners, but there

[35] Workshop with Colombian & Burundian women NGOs at organized at TAPRI, Nov 2017.

[36] Interview with Tarnaala et al., May 2017.

[37] Hellmüller et al. (2015).

are temptation to select local parties to fit best to overall objective like increase of women participation. Avoiding Western cultural dominance, some international peacemakers in the field say that they cannot include women in these processes if it is not culturally appropriate in the particular country, but from the perspective of Network/FCA, CMI and Felm support for women actors should always be possible; however, peacemakers have to understand prevailing norms from the perspective of the country and the civil society.[38] From FCA and the Network's point of view, their niche to engage traditional and religious actors in the peace process often constituted the most significant obstacle for the participation of women and youth since traditional or religious structures can be quite patriarchal in nature.[39] Therefore, particular attention is placed on generating collaboration between women and youth, and religious and traditional actors. From FCA and the Network's perspective, this becomes a key issue when the traditional and religious structures in place pose obstacles to women's participation.[40] However, the Network interviewees argue that these challenges are no reason to shy away from interaction with local, traditional actors, but rather make it all the more important to cooperate with them in developing local processes to better account for inclusivity. It is underlined that inclusivity has to be woven into the religious and traditional fabric from the inside, rather than artificially attached to the process from the outside for the sake of appearances. While it is crucial to bring the inclusivity aspect into the process, local actors should also be allowed to take initiative in handling the issue themselves, and real efforts should be made to transfer also ownership of inclusivity aspects to the local actors in a sustainable way.[41]

To avoid intrusive Western agenda-setting following the Network's guidelines after engaging with local partners, the first step is to talk to the (local) women (organizations) to understand how they need to be supported. Still, an obvious asymmetry exists between the intervening private actor and the local NGO in terms of knowledge on the whole peace process and capacity of how to change it. Some of the interviewed organizations were better aware of this challenge than others. The representative of the Nework notes that the support of international

[38] Interview with Tarnaala et al., May 2017.

[39] Interview with Abdile et al., Sept 2016, Rytkönen (2014, p. 105).

[40] Network, *Progress Status of the Network Projects.*

[41] Interview with Abdile and Rytkönen, Nov 2016; See also Väyrynen et al. (2018).

organizations and third parties can be necessary and highly beneficial on the one hand but harmful and destructive on the other hand, depending on the execution of such international support efforts and the context in which they take place. Sometimes international support is welcome and supports the perceived legitimacy of the work of local actors. At other times, international actors may end up 'hijacking' the agenda and activities of local NGOs, hindering the effectiveness of their work and damaging their reputation in the eyes of local stakeholders.[42] Whether this is done knowingly or by accident and with good intentions, such damage may prove fatal to local peace efforts and the crucial work carried out by local women actors. Building operations on the support needs identified by the local women actors themselves again becomes important in order to ensure international involvement does no harm to local peace efforts.

Martine Miller of the Network notes that international private organizations need to work closely with women's movements, asking them what kind of help they need and how to achieve this while maneuvering around culture. The international community often fall back to the idea that women need capacity building, but in many case there is a huge amount of capacity (also because of res 1325) and while capacity building may have an important part to play in empowering women locally, it is also even more crucial to know when it is not needed. Local women often have no shortage of capacity, experience, expertise and willingness to engage in peacemaking, but providing an entry point for local women actors usually proves to be significant for the peace process. The core task of the third party then becomes creating this entry point and facilitating and supporting the involvement of women who are attempting to find ways of effectively making their voices heard in the peace process. This is a way to increase not only the inclusivity but also the legitimacy of the peace process.[43]

For example, in the Network's activities in Libya, women peacemakers co-operate with the tribal movement established by tribal leaders.[44] There were previously no youth or women involved in the movement the tribal leaders formed, so within the Network it was considered vital to have women and youth represented in the process. Thus, they pulled

[42] Interview with Miller, May 2017.

[43] Ibid.

[44] Network, *Progress Status of the Network projects* (Helsinki: The Secretariat of the Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers (2016).

together a meeting of women leaders who work on peacemaking to discuss the challenges and opportunities of involvement. They were concerned at first about whether they had be welcomed and whether this would reinforce patriarchal structures. Since tribal movements are key actors addressing security issues in the country, the Network's goal was about making sure that tribal-led peace dialogues would not reinforce patriarchal structures. Therefore, it was seen as necessary to integrate women into tribal movement structures; partly because of their intervention, women are now engaged in the core group, the board of directors, and are engaged in working committees that look at mediation and reconciliation in communities. Although both sides (tribal leaders and women actors) had their doubts about collaboration—and indeed some tribal leaders resisted women's participation—and women were also concerned about reinforcing patriarchal structures by the support of the Network, women are now engaged in the core group of the tribal movement and its working committees on mediation and reconciliation.[45] Thus, the Libyan context offers successful examples in which it has had certain influence on the masculine, patriarchal structure of peace dialogue.

In Libya, women's involvement was not a question of capacity but rather missing entry points into exclusive peace dialogues. Following intervention by the Network, entry points were successfully found and it seems to have been a significant transformative step for whole peace process, not just because it increased inclusivity but also legitimacy in tribal-centric dialogues within civic society, since the current dialogues do not just discuss concrete issues like power sharing but, in broader terms, are depicting new identities for what is seen as Libya. Following this example, it could be argued that creating entry points for local excluded actors that are often women actors may be the way that third parties can have a significant contribution to the peace process (but deeper analysis would require further examples).

The case of the Network's activities supporting Afghanistan women negotiating with the Taliban offers an alternative story about the possible role for the third party as a supporter of inclusion and women's participation. In this case, the request for support came originally from the local women themselves without the active role of private peace mediators. That it is why the content and objectives of support appear to be

[45] Interview with Miller, May 2017.

truly locally designed. Indeed, the request looks at first sight, from the liberal Western perspective, to include elements that contradict the aim of increasing women's role; however, in the end, it appears to be a more crucial push for the transformation towards an egalitarian society in its own terms. Local women organizations introduced a wish to the peacemakers to build up their knowledge on, and ability to use, the Koran, since, in their negotiations, the Taliban used Koranic verses to delegitimize the women organizations. Building their capacity for the use of Koranic verse has allowed women to counter hostile and war-like religious narratives and to respond to the Taliban's attempts to delegitimize them. In this particular case, it was a more a question of strengthening the agency of women organications rather than finding an entry point; similarly, in Libya, it was also a question of strengthening the agency of women organizations.[46]

The Afghanistan case offers an excellent example of partial movement towards the post-colonial approach. The establishment of new kinds of dialogic platforms is supported by private actors and within platforms locals would be able to share their understanding and views of peace, justice and reconciliation. In some cases, design and contest can be described as a bit intrusive or prescriptive, but in the majority of cases, locals have truly shaped agenda and dialogic interaction has been created among them. Still, exploiting the conclusions of these often more holistic platforms for the design of whole peace process and creating a link to track one process is still, in most cases, missing—even if private actors like Felm have particularly aimed to create this kind dialogic relationship between tracks. Furthermore, it has been noted that Western straightforward, problem-solving attitude of negotiation may contradict local ways of communicating and agreeing and may thus be harmful for the legitimacy of peace agreements. This may have had a particular role in why well-designed Western processes have not brought about a long-term transformation toward sustainable peace in the case in Somalia and Yemen, for example. In this regard, the projects and the engagement with traditional and religious leaders that were supported by FCA and the Network represent a clear step towards a post-colonial approach, but simultaneously there is danger of overstressing traditional structures and omitting obvious continuous changes in the social structures of post-conflict society.

[46] Ibid.

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CHAPTER 15

The Dialogic Mediation: The Pragmatic Approach

The role of private peacemakers is still often understated and their role is still seen as supportive to track one processes and, in the best case, the relationship between official and private is understood to be well integrated and institutionalized. Is that the whole picture? It is true that track one-level official peace diplomacy preserves its legitimate position but is also in a crisis, since fewer and fewer violent conflicts manage to be resolved successfully in negotiations at the track one level. In addition, even where agreement is achieved, it is an exaggeration to talk about sustainable peace. Several prominent actors in mediation have called for a new twenty-first century approach to mediation since old practices primarily developed for inter-state conflicts then adapted to intra-state-conflicts are not adequate in current fragmented, contingent and complex transnational conflict setting.

This study departs from the theoretical questioning of conventional peace mediation premises but it agrees that purely theoretical arguments do not as such have value for the revision of practice. What theoretical criticism can do at best is to pinpoint the constraints for change of pratices and to recognize the burden of the resilience of existing practices and the social structures for renewing them. A revision for whole peace mediation practice cannot be based solely on theoretical criticism and in line with the adopted pragmatic approach, such revision has to be combined with empirical observation of on-going changes and the experiences of actors

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in the field of peace diplomacy. Following constructivist ideals, this study has aimed to gain a broader understanding and interpretation of dynamic and complex social relationships and interactions within the peace process given a special attention to the significance of the identification processes. Instead of isolating one epithet of the mediation process and studying how it influences the efficiency of the peace mediation process, this study has been interested in introducing how a completely new, fresh post-management peace mediation practice would look like from pragmatic perspective and how it has taken into account in the experience of private peacemakers. This becomes more relevant since there is a clear correlation with theoretical criticism based on transformation theories, liberal peace critique and complexity thinking with practitioners' in-depth thinking of the basis of their work. Indeed, this study has focused on experiences to cope with wicked conflicts but also how to legitimize and establish role as a mediator in peace diplomacy has been transformed. The renewal of peace mediation practice is not just about reacting to conflict but it has to recognize social relations within peace diplomacy as well as note how third-party intervention necessarily shapes conflict dynamics.

Peace diplomacy (as well as diplomacy in general) is fundamentally based on regulated, resilient and stubborn practices and presuppositions that all resist drastic change. Official diplomacy is very much a world based on traditional procedures and learning through experience (knowing how) and that is why changes in that field often take place slowly. However, during the past two decades, peace diplomacy has been in turbulent change as it has tried to attach to new asymmetric conflicts but also because liberal peace norms have been further integrated into peace diplomacy goal setting. For example, inclusivity has become a principle that cannot be ignored in any mediation or in any other peace effort. Still, adaption of new norms into peace mediation practice has been taking place slowly and renewal of official practices of mediation is changing reasonable slowly. Normative challenges of inclusivity and local ownership are broadly recognized but to a lesser extent realized and adapted to practices.

The last decade and half have been the obvious era of private peacemakers. They are everywhere in peace diplomacy and it is quite impossible to engage in peace diplomacy without their omnipresent role, while in earlier decades their presence was more random. This is also a remarkable change since states have lost their hegemonic position as sole legitimate mediator and tens of private peacemaking organizations have entered into peace diplomacy in very similar way to the way that humanitarian diplomacy has become dominated by transnational organizations.

In similar way to humanitarian diplomacy, there is need for drastic re-evaluation of the scope and practices of peace diplomacy since the previously predominantly state-centric field of diplomacy has enlarged to include an increasing amount of private, nongovernmental and nonofficial actors. Newcomers still need to socialize themselves into existing practices and conventions to gain legitimized position as states have held their position as dominating actor. However, simultaneously, because of the active role of private peacemakers, the relationship between official and private has been redefined through the everyday practices of peace diplomacy in a more flexible and interactive manner. The Finnish case offers an excellent example of the potential symbiosis of private and official actor. Private peacemakers are welcoming actors building up peace where states cannot act and breaking deadlocks to enable official processes. Still, it would be more appropriate to ask how would peace mediation as a whole look with diverse actors and approaches. Mediation or, more precisely, track one mediation, or formal mediation by official actors, would remain there as a sector of its own but beside that a broad sector of informal processes executed by nongovernmental actors have been emerging. This field needs to be better recognized as a sector of its own, free from supplementary and even complementing roles.

The drive for change has become easier from the site of private actors beyond the established official elite of the peace diplomacy field since these actors need to continuously invent new approaches and ways of thinking in order to justify and legitimize their position in the peace process. During the past few years, private peacemakers have been a powerhouse of innovative thinking in peacemaking and have challenged several established and previously unquestioned practices relating to organizing peace processes. They have introduced a new, more nuanced way to distribute complementary roles between official and private actors and, moreover, they have in a smart and soft way contested the fundamental presupposition of conventional mediation practice. New approaches extend peace mediation beyond the tables of the political-military elite, but since private actors need to work within the frameworks of state diplomacy, a complete break with old practices is not possible nor desirable. However, new actors have created new spaces for peace mediation and these new (informal and unofficial) spaces of peace mediation need new practices and premises. Official formal peace mediation still has its own important function that cannot be replaced and (peace) negotiations—the symbolic nodal point of official peace

mediation practice—continue to follow their own logic. However, peace can no longer be made among closed elites or representatives of states, even if, for achieving large framework agreements, this may be important in some cases. Private peacemakers have managed to extend participation far beyond the traditional definition of primary parties to all parties affected by violent conflict but they have preserved and developed various links to official processes. With extended participation and stretching far beyond conventional state diplomacy, new peace diplomacy has transformed into a complex, diverse and heterogonous field in which positions and agencies appear fluid and contingent. This is in radical terms a different kind of sphere of peace diplomacy than what was known earlier and it needs new kinds of innovative and flexible practices and tools. Indeed, private peacemakers are not dealmakers in the classical sense. Their activity includes strong elements of mediation but they are rarely involved and even rarely responsible for facilitating official peace negotiations. However, their presence has created new spaces for peace mediation in which negotiations and agreements are losing their symbolic centrality and are being replaced by an emphasis on dialogues and transformation.

Private organizations rarely arrange classical roundtable negotiations, but instead support different types of dialogues among parties, or within one party of the conflict. Often, dialogues are seen to be more inclusive tools than elite-based negotiations. Dialogue platforms vary from large officially mandated NDs to informal dialogue platforms with selected participants, and the number of participants can vary from thousands to a couple of dozen. Furthermore, the understanding of what the niche of dialogue is may vary a lot. While the majority of organized dialogues are more of the problem-finding kind, there are also those that look to problem-solving or that aim to combine both goals. Besides the very large and nationwide NDs, informal dialogues have become a major tool for private peacemakers to enhance transformation. They can be regarded as a flexible, context-specific, and tailor-made tool that can have various particular objectives. Instead of looking for incompatible interests to be resolved, peacemakers emphasize the need to transform perceptions and antagonistic relationships through trust-building and other efforts. Phenomena like trust and communication channels have become the primary focus of their work. The overall objective is to enable new horizons of peace and thus to break deadlocks and to create moments for peaceful change. A distinction can be made between participatory *dialogues*

and targeted dialogues: the former aims to strengthen the legitimacy of the peace process by enhancing the feeling of a locally owned process, and the latter focuses more on pushing the peace process forward and creating new momentum for the peace process. The former looks for inclusion of large groups so far marginalized from the official process (i.e. women, religious actors), while the latter focuses more on engaging particular individuals who may have the ability to change perceptions (i.e. members of the business elite or radicalized groups willing to be engaged in the peace process) and is thus closer to mediation.

From a broader perspective, it is not just the question of change of practice and agency but a fundamental redefinition of what peace is all about. Conventional mediation has been approaching negative peace in the form of ceasefire or other agreements that end actual fighting. Within the liberal peace frame, peace has been understood as a structural issue but these peace structures are pre-given and fixed. In recent theoretical literature, various new definitions stepping out of the liberal peace framework have been introduced, such as that of popular peace, which recognizes the messy, contingent and context-specific make-up of peace. In a rather similar way, the idea of self-sustainable peace as it is introduced in complexity thinking emphasizes how peace is related to resilience and to the community's ability to self-organize; that is why the complex system emerged "from messy political processes embedded deep within the cultural belief systems of the societies in question."[1] Mouffe's idea of agonistic peace is another related formulation. For her, societies are always conflictual and conflicts are indeed necessary for change, but peace requires the existence or creation of an "ensemble of practices, discourses and institutions which seek to establish a certain order and organize human coexistence in conditions that are always potentially conflictual."[2] Practitioners are not necessarily as precise or as philosophical with their definitions but the basic tone of these definitions is a good reflection of a new broader comprehension that is essential for peace. As peace mediation is about working for peace, revisiting what peace is all about necessarily revisits the whole scope of peace mediation. It also opens up, from the third-party perspective, the fundamental question of how transformation towards this kind of open-ended peace can be best

[1] Brusset, de Coning and Hughes (2016, p. 4).

[2] Mouffe (1999, pp. 754–755).

supported. This indeed indicates a radical paradigmatic change but the response of private peacemakers has been primarily pragmatic.

Private peacemakers, in general, and the Finnish actors CMI, FCA, and Felm in particular, are not uniform in their approach to mediation and dialogue. Some organizations like these three Finnish ones are more willing and ready for renewal; simultaneously, within the private peacemaking sector, more conservative tones also prevail, repeating old self-evidence. However, there are still some characteristics that are common in leading private peacemaking organizations. Indeed, a completely new paradigm of peace mediation has been in development waiting to be codified and recorded into guidelines; before we can talk about paradigmatic change, still more individual efforts for revision need to be recorded by particular organizations. There is no sense in transmitting mediation practices developed within state diplomacy to these informal and unofficial processes. Thus, beyond old conventional frames, private actors have indeed been developing a new approach to mediation and that can be called a *dialogic* one. The dialogic approach describes the new fresh, revolutionary informal peace diplomacy executed by certain private peacemakers. The dialogic approach is not a uniform and coherent tool, but it is possible to detect certain main characteristics, although their particular application varies among various private peace actors. Indeed it is still perhaps at a certain level more an ideal model than a systematically operationalized practice, even if there are efforts to make it the latter. Dialogic approach or dialogic mediation draws from theories on transformation and complexity but even if it holds similar kind elements to the Bakhtinian dialogic approach, the practitioners' debate has not given a particular emphasis to the difference between Habermasian and Bakhtinian dialogues and how Bakhtinian theory in many ways supports their pragmatic conclusions.

Dialogic mediation is founded on a focus on dialogue, long-term change and sustainability, and local ownership. It emphasizes context specificity, localized approaches, and the fluidity and flexibility of concepts and approaches, and derives from local actors' invitation rather than official mandates. There is not only one ideal model available but several fitting different contexts and for different kinds of private actors. Dialogic mediation describes well a new kind of interaction between a third party and the parties in conflict but the same approach can also be labelled a *post-management approach* since it determinedly departs from the hegemonic rationalistic conflict management framework and

its emphasis on incompatible interests. It has contested the meaning of a central symbolic signs of management approach and in particular be aware of controversial role of peace agreements that was previously regarded an uncontested goal of mediation.

Emphasis is now more on transformation, rather than resolution. Resolutions are still needed in goal-oriented fieldwork, but the peace process as a whole is understood as a long-term transformation process. Private peacemakers push for transformation towards self-sustainable peace by 'precision strikes' on well-selected targets. Even if private actors may have an overall vision of the whole peace process, they understand that they often aim to generate rather limited and selective change, which, in the best-case scenario, would have a snowball effect. Thus, the core skill of private actors is to recognize the right spots, design appropriate action to enhance transformation, and find an entry point that enables their contribution. Thinking dialogues in particular as a transformative tool is widely shared among private peacemakers. Many private actors (as well as many official actors too) emphasize how every conflict and its transformation or resolution has to be seen as unique. There are no universal lessons that can adapted to all new cases in a similar way.

Peacebuilders aim to consolidate the local society, and cherish the goal of transformation more as self-sustainable peace. In the ideal situation, private peacemakers depart from the burden of liberal forms of peace support, since the dialogic approach escapes a definitive definition of what peace requires and understands the process as open-ended. However, the question over whether the transformation is completely open-ended or has loosely framed milestones differentiates among the examined private actors. In the most radical interpretation, the third party should not give attention to a long-term end goal since that is purely a matter for locals; yet, when working within the complex international peace architecture, it is not possible to avoid pre-given agenda frameworks and, in practice, the particular objectives may still reflect the ideals of liberal peace.

Instead of making deals and solving incompatible interests, a new focus is on a change in perception. What a peace mediator can do is bring parties together, let them communicate, and create new channels of communication that would change parties' attitudes towards each other and to the peace process. This kind of focus on identities and the identification processes is a novel turn, even if trust-building among parties has always been part of mediators' practical work. However, in the practitioners' discourse, the terms 'identity' and

'identifications' are almost purposefully avoided, as is also talking about antagonistic relationships. This is an obvious deficiency in strategic thinking and has meant that the practitioners' debate has not managed to extend into the rich academic discussion on identities, collective memories and antagonistic relations. The pivotal role of antagonistic identities as a major obstacle for transformation towards peace and how antagonistic identities could depict peace as a threat and how a conflict could empower a community's self-identification are areas to which discussion can be channeled, but how these can be adapted into peace practices is another question. Still, it seems that if, for example, how perception change is explored and exploited by CMI in their pragmatic approach they are already attaching to forms of antagonist identification by recognizing persons and groups holding agency to switch in one way or other collective identity narratives. In more general terms, a narrative turn in mediation is recognizable in which mediation has focused on (identity) narratives but, furthermore, it is possible to also talk about narrative mediation as an essential element of the dialogic approach.

In comparison to the earlier understandings of peacemakers as doctors who aim to recognize the cause of an illness and find an appropriate medicine for it, or even sometimes as engineers that can manage the complicated peacebuilding processes, private peacemakers are slowly being understood as "artisans for peace" who do not just require crafted skills learned by experience and rehearsing, but also sensitive intuition and creative ability to be spontaneous since it is not possible to copy exact models from previous cases, because each is unique. Artisanship or adaptive mediation is about the ability to contact and communicate with the right people, to apply hunches and intuition to one's work in a complex context, and to recognize the right moments for this. It is about taking pride in one's skills and assuming ethical responsibility for one's own action. This kind of self-reflection is still rare, even among private peacemakers, but it is indeed a nodal point of a new kind of understanding of the interaction and social relationship within peace processes regarding the relation with the third party and locals. It appears as gate to distant oneself from the dominance of liberal peace norms without openly contesting the liberal peacemaking industry, but there are obvious constraints for departure since private peacemakers still gain their official legitimization and funding within the liberal peace framework but

they need gain also legtimization for their role as a mediators from local actors who see liberal peace norms as intrusive.

There are various obstacles and restrictions for the work of private peacemakers and limits for their creativity. Previously, it looked as though the mandate-based system with a scarcity of mandates gave full control to the gatekeepers. However, that is no longer the case but the gatekeepers' role has remained central because a major part of private peacemakers' funding comes from public sources. Despite the selection of funded projects, it seems that the culture of results-based management that is dominant in development as well as in the peace sector may be a major obstacle for change. If accepting complexity thinking and transformative goals in a short or even long-term perspective, pinpointing the particular results of a particular action is seen as absurd and impossible, and projects that are too results-oriented will not allow innovative activity. As conflicts are complex, it is not realistic that one intervention would be the crucial strike towards peace. Rather, it is a question of the complexity of peace interventions and very long-term progress with interruptions and setbacks. Conflicts and peace are not manageable, and peace architecture changes often. It is therefore often not possible to clearly identify the outputs of particular inputs. Tolerance towards the uncertainties and unpredictabilities is what is expected from all actors—official and private—within a complex peace architecture. Moments for classical mediation have become rare and, as in many cases, track one actors are incapable of acting in a smooth, invisible and flexible enough way, a third party is needed to enable dialogic transformation in all phases of the conflict cycle, and their role may sometimes be crucial in enabling peace negotiations.

The era of private peacemakers is evident. Peace diplomacy has necessarily changed or, more precisely, change is under way. Dialogic mediation is then a more particular transformative alternative to the rationalistic ideals of peace mediation. It is far away from a uniform and coherent approach and it could receive different a emphasis by different actors, but overall it represents a fresh move towards the adoption of what can be called the post-management practice and it offers a practical example of how it is possible to support the peace process without trusting linear causalities of peace intervention. It is still very much a marginal and challenging approach, even if some of elements are more

widely shared. Still, experiences of CMI in particular indicate that there is room for rather radical reform within peace diplomacy if new actors do not openly contest the position of old one and if they are also capable of working within the frameworks of conventional rules. The following years will indicate whether this approach will win more supporters. From the point of view of the peace mediation paradox, it is not possible to argue from this position would intractable violent conflicts be then better solved. Indeed, the question itself contradicts the whole dialogic approach, which distances itself from possibilities of rational management and escapes of referring to something as a (final) solution. But, from another angle, it gives hope that the peace mediation paradox has not simply undergone minor revision here but that it is possible to exploit a fresh and fundamentally different approach to peace mediation practice.

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Appendix: Private Peacemaking Organizations (Name, Founding year, Home)

1. **Name of the Organization**: Mediation Support Network (MSN)
   Founding year: 2008
   Home: The Mediation Support Project MSP (swisspeace/Center for Security Studies, ETH Zurich) acts as the simple secretariat of the MSN
2. **Name of the Organization**: Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers (Network)
   Founding year: 2013
   Home: FCA acts as the simple secretariat of the Network. Office also in New York and Washington.
3. **Name of the Organization**: Finnish Church Aid (FCA)
   Founding year: 1947
   Home: Finland.
4. **Name of the Organization**: Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission (FELM)
   Founding year: 1859
   Home: Finland.
5. **Name of the Organization**: United Nations Mediation Support Unit (MSU)
   Founding year: 2006
   Home: New York
   Scope of Action:

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6. **Name of the Organization**: Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA)
   Founding year: 2002
   Home: Sweden.
7. **Name of the Organization**: Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD)
   Founding year: 1999
   Home: Switzerland.
8. **Name of the Organization**: Crisis Management Initiative (CMI)
   Founding year: 2000
   Home: Finland.
9. **Name of the Organization**: Berghof Foundation
   Founding year: 1971
   Home: Germany.
10. **Name of the Organization**: Carter Center
    Founding year: 1982
    Home: USA.
11. **Name of the Organization**: Conciliation Resources
    Founding year: 1994
    Home: UK.
12. **Name of the Organization**: Swisspeace
    Founding year: 1988
    Home: Switzerland.
13. **Name of the Organization**: European Institute of Peace
    Founding year: 2014
    Home: Belgium.
14. **Name of the Organization**: US Institute of Peace (USIP)
    Founding year: 1984
    Home: USA.
15. **Name of the Organization**: International Alert
    Founding year: 1985
    Home: UK.
16. **Name of the Organization**: Search for Common Ground (SFCG)
    Founding year: 1982
    Home: USA.
17. **Name of the Organization**: The African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD)
    Founding year: 1992
    Home: South Africa.

18. **Name of the Organization**: International Crisis Group (ICG)
    Founding year: 1995
    Home: Belgium.
19. **Name of the Organization**: Common Space Initiative (CSI)
    Founding year: 2011
    Home: Lebanon.

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