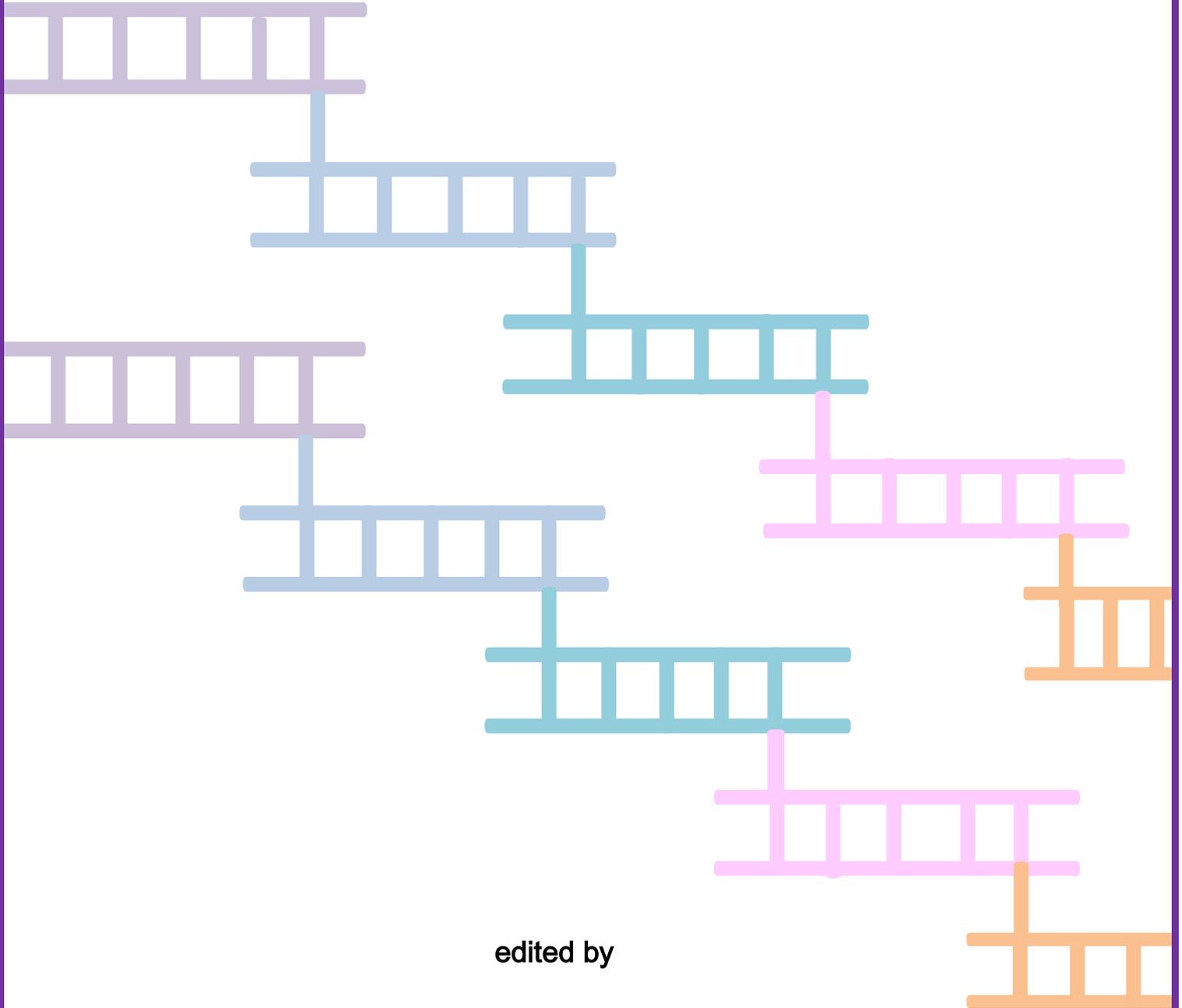


CONFLICT AND CULTURE

FOSTERING PEACE THROUGH CULTURAL INITIATIVES



edited by

Joint Research Institute for International Peace and Culture

Aoyama Gakuin University

The Japan Foundation, New York

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PREFACE

The Joint Research Institute for International Peace and Culture (JRIPEC) was established by the Japan Foundation and Aoyama Gakuin University in 2008 as a joint venture. In my capacity as Senior Fellow of the Japan Foundation, I began research on peace and culture five years ago at the Japan Foundation, and have continued this at JRIPEC since 2008.

In this connection, I have analyzed cultural projects conducted by the Japan Foundation since 2000, and have interviewed Japanese peace-builders working on culture-related projects in areas of conflict. I have also conducted field research in post-conflict areas, most notably two: Timor-Leste and Bosnia and Herzegovina. In Timor-Leste, we have gained insights from the perspective of post-conflict communities who received cultural contributions from third countries, UN organizations and NGOs. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, JRIPEC surveyed the Goethe Institute's literature project designed to help people better communicate the pain they felt associated with their conflict-laden memories.

During the course of this research, we have held nine roundtables: two in Japan, four with German institutions, two in the United Kingdom and one in France. We have benefited immensely throughout from the insights of all participants.

Based on the research outcomes so far, the JRIPEC and the Japan Foundation, New York, together organized the tenth roundtable conference on February 19, 2011 in New York. The JRIPEC presented its research findings, as did experts from the United States, Canada and Australia who also shared their experiences.

The following are summaries of the roundtable presentations. We deeply appreciate the thought-provoking presentations and comments by the experts, Dr. David Adams, Dr. Cynthia Cohen, Ms. Rochelle Roca Hachem, Prof. Michelle LeBaron, Prof. Robert A. Rubinstein and Dr. Polly Walker. We also would like to express our sincerest gratitude to the Japan Foundation in New York, in particular Mr. Isao Tsujimoto, Director General; Mr. Tatsuaki Kobayashi, Deputy Director General; Ms. Masako Umeeda, Program Director; and Ms. Carolyn Fleisher, Program Officer. We also thank Mr. Masao Ito, Deputy Director, Ms. Yuki Hattori, Research Associate and Ms. Saori

Ishii, Program Coordinator at the JRIPEC for helping organize this roundtable, as well as Ms Lidia Rényi for editing support.

We hope that this conference report might serve as a reference for your respective endeavors, and would appreciate your comments and advice.

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March 2011

PEACE AND CULTURE:

FOSTERING PEACE THROUGH CULTURAL CONTRIBUTIONS

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Introduction

How can cultural productions be crafted in order that they might contribute to peace? The question is becoming ever more relevant as we witness manifestations of violence other than interstate wars. Peace accords following such wars divide hostile groups along national borders that provide clear demarcation lines to separate enemies. However, when it comes to the post-conflict phase of a civil war, people who were once adversaries are compelled to live in the same community or neighboring communities. do so, and if they are to live in peace, people must overcome mutual hatred and violence-laden memories of conflict.

Meanwhile, since the end of the Cold War and, particularly, the September 11 terrorists attacks on the United States, it has been argued that, in its broadest sense, which includes way of life and thinking, culture—particularly the Muslim belief system—has been blamed for the many major disruptions that have cost innocent lives.

Samuel Huntington, in his book *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, argues that, since the end of the Cold War, the significant divide that is found in societies no longer reflects ideological, political or economic systems, but cultural differences. In other words, it is the confrontation of identities that matters in the post-Cold War world.¹

At the same time as a culture of peace is being promoted by UNESCO, the existence of a culture of war has also been suggested. Martin van Creveld, in his book *The Culture of War*, observes that wars are fought mainly to expand interests, but that

¹ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations: Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997), 21.

they also attract men and women, as can be seen from decorated instruments of war, such as weapons and uniforms. In fact, it is the culture of war that motivates people to fight on, even at the cost of their lives.² The culture of war includes greed, revenge, the desire to control natural resources, as well as the need to assert identity and the imperative to fight oppression and preserve identities.

Attention has been focused on identities and culture as triggers of conflict, partly because the advent of globalization has facilitated inter-cultural contact that has resulted in acculturation. While this trend has lent added dynamism to cultures and imbued them with universal aspects, it has also caused friction among ethnic groups, social aberrations and, ultimately, resistance to foreign and more universal cultures that are often identified as Western. This has sometimes led to the rise of assertive nationalism, with communities bent on asserting their cultural identities over those of others.

This observation is quantitatively supported by Heidelberg University's Conflict Information System (CONIS) data, collected since 1945. The data identifies cultural conflicts not as those triggered by culture, but those ignited by a cultural element, such as historicity, language or religion. Such cultural conflicts have steadily been increasing since 1945 and, since 1986, have not only outpaced non-cultural conflicts, but have exceeded them significantly.³ According to the CONIS database, of the 762 political struggles recorded between 1945 and 2005, a total of 334 (almost 44%) can be classified as culture-related conflicts.

Given these facts and the large number of conflicts that have been recurring in recent decades,⁴ I believe that conflict resolution in the 21st century requires a cultural slant in addition to the conventional political, military and economic approaches. Below, I outline a possible role for culture in conflict resolution—which includes conflict prevention, peacemaking, peace accords, peacekeeping and peace-building—with the focus on peace-building and reference to cases examined in detail in our forthcoming book. I conclude with observations on the limits and potential of cultural contributions

² Ishizu Tomoyuki, *Senso bunka-ron* (Tokyo: Hara Shobo, 2010). Translated from Martin van Creveld, *The Culture of War* (New York: Presidio Press, 2008).

³ Bertelsmann Stiftung (ed.), *Culture and Conflict in Global Perspective: The Cultural Dimension of Conflicts from 1945 to 2007* (Gütersloh, DE: Verlag Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2010), 34–35.

⁴ Paul Collier, et al., *Breaking the Conflict Trap: Civil War and Development Policy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 83–84.

to peace-building. The ideas expressed herein reflect my ongoing research and are presented for the purpose of discussion at the roundtable in New York on February 19, 2011.

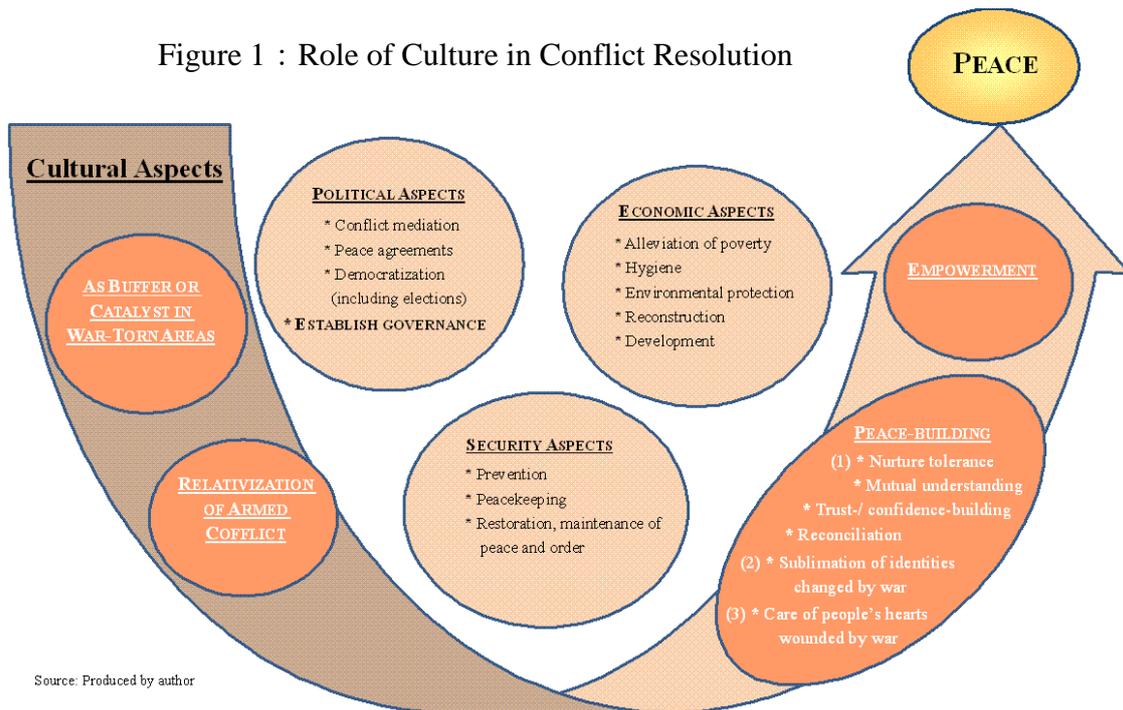
Fostering Peace through Cultural Contributions

Culture can play a number of roles in the promotion of peace. In conflict-ridden areas, international actors, for example—be they governments, international institutions or NGOs—can help promote cultural activities in such a way as will give local people ownership of the endeavors.

These contributions are becoming increasingly important in areas devastated by civil war and in which former adversaries must live in close proximity and lack the dividing line of a national border. Culture can play four roles in conflict resolution, namely, as a:

- (1) Catalyst for peace-building or buffer to foster peace;
- (2) Tool to relativize armed conflict;
- (3) Means of building peace in the hearts and minds of local people—by
 - (a) building tolerance, mutual understanding, trust, confidence and, ultimately, achieving reconciliation;
 - (b) encouraging the sublimation of identities changed by war;
 - (c) caring for and healing those traumatized by conflicts—and
- (4) Device to empower those in conflict-ridden areas (see figure 1).

Figure 1 : Role of Culture in Conflict Resolution



In the first role, culture acts as a cushion or catalyst for peace. When groups are confrontational, they cannot communicate, but culture-related activities can provide a common space for them to meet, communicate and interact. Activities that provide the necessary space include classical music orchestras, soccer practices and games, theatrical productions, painting and drawing groups, and even experiencing a different way of life in a third culture.

When the venue for dialogue or cultural activities is outside the conflict area, neither of the adversarial groups have an advantage over the other, placing them on a more equal footing. Cultural contributions that provide such opportunities enable adversaries to communicate and, thus, gradually see beyond the stereotypical image they have had of the other party throughout the conflict.

Communication which includes both listening and expressing oneself so that the other can hear is the first step in conflict resolution, and culture often can be a medium that helps build confidence to that end.

The second role that cultural contributions can play is to relativize conflicts. In wartime, among the deprivations that people suffer is the lack of cultural activities. When cultural contributions are brought in from abroad, people in conflict areas feel

that they have not been abandoned by the international community and that it cares about their plight.⁵ In addition, local populations can discover a whole new world when, for example, they are exposed to music, theater and dance performances. In addition, by helping preserve local cultures, international actors can enable local populations to relativize conflicts. Moves to preserve traditional local culture—that may be on the brink of disappearing as a result of prolonged conflict—provide hope for the future.

The third role that cultural contributions can play is as a medium for building peace in the hearts and minds of local people. Certainly conflict affects people physically, but it is the psychological wounds they incur that are often the hardest to heal. Physical peace-building may improve the system of government, allow people to participate in elections and promote economic reconstruction. However, should psychological wounds remain, it may not be possible for the adversaries to conduct any substantive peace-building activities. Without peace in the hearts and minds of the people, there can be no lasting peace. Thus it is imperative that communication between the conflicting parties be facilitated by building tolerance, mutual understanding, trust and confidence.

The sublimation of identities that have been damaged by war is equally important. Issues surrounding identity play a major part in conflict, and those that have been fractured during the conflict need to be restored in the interests of peace-building. Cultural activities allow individuals to build a new identity by taking part in theatrical activities, music performances and sports. Post-traumatic stress disorder, which can obstruct peace efforts, often can be cured using cultural means such as painting sessions.

Fourth, cultural contributions can be effective mediums for the empowerment of local people and prevent conflicts from recurring, as happens all too often. While economic development is essential for the alleviation of poverty and to empower local people, true empowerment depends on having a school education and being taught about matters of everyday life, including hygiene, sanitation, landmines and narcotic drugs.

Since those who have suffered through protracted conflicts often are illiterate,

⁵ Based on the author's interview of artists in Ache, Indonesia, in August 2009.

international actors must find creative ways of teaching, using radio programs, theater productions, skits and films. These methods attract audiences who will be happy to watch, listen and learn, for example, about the importance of sending children to school and avoiding landmines while working the land. Such projects combine the pleasure of cultural activities with education. Thus, when straightforward education faces resistance from the people, cultural contributions are better placed to deliver messages. Moreover, cultural productions enable people to express themselves and tell stories, thereby validating their own experiences.

In our research, we have looked at examples of soccer having united Palestinian and Israeli children, and children in Timor Leste; classical music performances that helped both Israelis and Palestinians, as well as Albanians and Serbs; theater workshops in Ache, Indonesia; traditional culture such as pottery-making in Istalif Afghanistan, and *tais* fabric in Timor Leste; painting workshops in Kosovo and Afghanistan; art workshops and exhibitions in Iraq; and literary works that helped individuals transcend memories of war. These are all cultural aspects of peace-building that are discussed in our forthcoming book.

Cultural Contributions: Potential and Limitations

Potential of cultural contributions

The examination of cultural contributions that have been used in peace-building revealed both potential and limitations. While each contribution performs more than one role (see figure 1), there is the potential for fostering peace.

On the whole, the cases we have examined reveal that culture has a vast potential as a medium, catalysts and facilitator for fostering peace. While most cultural contributions are conducted for the sake of the cultural activity rather than for peace-building, some actors consciously employ cultural contributions for peace-building, while yet others emphasize the cultural angle of their contributions and play down or diminish any peace-building aspects.

A cultural contribution—be it theater, an orchestra or sports—that attracts people from adversarial groups will be one that appeals to the passions and interests of participants. Musicians will join a multi-ethnic orchestra first and foremost because they

want to improve their technique and have a chance to perform in an orchestra. Meanwhile members of an audience attend a concert because they are thirsty for good music, which they have missed throughout the violent conflict. People do not take part in cultural contributions to make peace.

However, cultural initiatives do serve as a common language that allows adversaries to communicate. Subsequently, cultural contributions offer opportunities for people who once fought each other to re-identify each other—not as enemies, but as someone who shares their passion and interest in cultural activities. Nevertheless, one should note that, unless the cultural contributions allow people to grapple with their feelings about a conflict, the next incidence of violence is likely to see them return to their respective camps.

Sports such as soccer are often used as an ice breaker to promote dialogue among former enemies, particularly when children are involved. They will go to a joint practice and play a game together simply because they want to play soccer and become good soccer players. Soccer is most often used as a medium for trust-building because all that is required to play is a ball to kick. And when a community has no soccer ball, one made simply by using a stone, wood and cloth will do. Children whose identities were defined by their ethnicity before they got to play with their adversaries, gradually come to be identified by their positions in the game, such as goal keeper, forward or defender.

Classical music has no borders, for which reason musicians from different backgrounds can play together. Since musicians in conflict areas often have no access to good instruments or teachers, they appreciate any opportunity to practice, undergo training, and perform in public.

Initially, they sometimes find it difficult to play with people from a hostile group but, since they have to communicate with others in order to play in harmony, they soon find themselves cooperating to produce musical harmony and perform better as a group. After all, an orchestra is a mini cosmos. By sharing music stands and playing together, they come to respect each other for their respective music skills.

Case studies reveal that musicians may identify each other by nationality and ethnicity in the beginning, but this gradually changes to identification according to musical part. A similar experience was reported by Hutu and Tutsi drummers, who

chose to describe themselves as drummers rather than according to ethnicity.⁶ The challenge, however, is how to make these transformations sustainable. Ultimately unless people grapple with the issues underlying the violent conflict, such identity shift would be transient.

Among all the cultural contributions, producing literary works is perhaps the most private medium. When authors write about their memories of war, people can, in their own private space, read about how war was perceived by different groups. This helps individuals to squarely confront their past, rather than block it off, and so overcome war memories. Writing enables people to express feelings that might otherwise be difficult to articulate.

Painting is another way of expressing oneself and healing the scars and traumas of war. It also enables peace-builders to discover what traumas people, particularly children, have experienced. Children asked to paint something depicting the past, present or future often cannot draw their past and, at best, will use black crayon to present it. Others, asked to paint on a big sheet of paper as a group, will paint separately and so produce patches of work on the paper. International actors sometimes collect paintings produced by children in conflict areas and exhibit those in other countries or show them to groups of children overseas, asking them to draw the impressions they get from seeing the paintings from the conflict areas. Such exchanges allow children in areas of conflict to learn both that there is another world out there, and something about the children who live there, which enables them to relativize conflicts. When paintings are made into greeting cards and Christmas cards, not only does it generate an income for the people in conflict zones, but it serves to give their self-esteem a tremendous boost.

Theatrical productions are also an avenue through which local people can express their thoughts, while compelling them to collaborate and communicate. In the process, they learn how other people think, how they persevere, and how they perceive the conflict. This process also allows them to re-identify themselves and others. When an international theater company is brought into conflict areas, local people enjoy attending

⁶ Cynthia Cohen, "Recasting Reconciliation through Culture and the Arts: Strengthening Peace-building Capacity through The Brandeis International Fellowship Program," Brandeis University, *Program report* (Waltham, Massachusetts: Brandeis University, November 2005), p.9.

the performances, while those who are illiterate feel empowered.

Assistance in reactivating local cultural activities, such as fabric weaving and pottery making, and cultural heritage can also help people to regain their self-esteem while empowering local people to restart traditional industries. This enables localities to attract tourists and generate income.

While cultural contributions have the potential to foster peace in conflict zones, they can also place severe limitations on peace-building activities.

Limitations of cultural contributions

First and foremost, even cultural contributions are affected by political situations and, while such contributions may thwart confrontation, a sudden change in the political environment may cause cultural activities to be suspended. The safety of actors conducting cultural contributions is often threatened, even in post-conflict situations, as there often remain armed skirmishes. For security reasons, Japanese peace-builders often host cultural contributions in Japan, taking people there from conflict areas. Participants enjoy cultural contributions in a third country such as Japan, and find it easier to mingle with their former enemies there than in their own communities. The participants may be able to build tolerance and trust each other during the project but most probably forget such experience once they go home where confrontations continue. Moreover, the souring of the political setting may hamper participation by a group or an individual, thereby nullifying or jeopardizing the continuation of contributions.

Second, cultural contributions conducted by international actors tend to be transient in nature, and may not have a lasting impact in conflict zones. Cultural contributions from outside can be conducted for a certain length of time, but cannot continue forever, so actors must find a way of enabling local people to develop ownership of cultural activities.

Third, it is hard to gauge the outcome of cultural contributions, and it takes time for them to bear fruit, making it difficult for actors to secure funding.

Fourth, immediately after a conflict, people tend to need food and money, rather than cultural events, and may ask for a modern dish factory rather than a facility where traditional pottery can be made, or a modern textile factory rather than have traditional

methods of weaving restored. Thus, unless we understand local needs and provide local people with a combination of peace-related elements, cultural contributions for peace-building may not be accepted by the local people or even be effective.

Fifth, when conducting peace-building efforts to assuage the pain afflicting the hearts and minds of local people, the actors must grapple with sensitive psychological issues such as identity. If the approach taken is not appropriate to the particular local setting, cultural contributions can even be counterproductive.

Sixth, those involved in conducting case studies should note that, at times, interviewees are willing to share their experiences, but refuse to permit their views to be cited or, sometimes, even to be used at all. Such interviewees believe that to do otherwise may jeopardize their mission and endanger their lives.

Cultural contributions for fostering peace comprise a delicate and complex challenge. However, there is no denying that these are potential, and sometimes essential, factors in effective peace-building in 21st-century conflicts. Since there are numerous civil wars, rather than inter-state conflicts, many people find themselves having to live in the same, or a neighboring, community together with those who until a short time before had been their enemies. Thus, the cultural aspect of local communities cannot be ignored. Culture is no longer a luxury, and should be confronted squarely, should we work for lasting peace and to reduce the recurrence of conflicts.

UNESCO'S PERSPECTIVE: DIALOGUE AMONG CULTURES FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION AND RECONCILIATION

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The objectives of UNESCO are the same as other UN agencies: to build lasting peace and security, and promote sustainable development. When the idea of UNESCO formed in the wake of World War Two, the initial concept focused on multilateral postwar reconstruction of schools and protection of physical cultural heritage. But then there was a shift in the thinking of the founders of the Organization - that international efforts in education, and understanding of each other and each other's challenges, would do more in the long run for peace than treaties. Since wars begin in the minds of men and women, UNESCO's role would thus be to construct the defenses of peace in the minds of men and women. This requires respect for our rich cultural diversity, and intercultural dialogue.¹

UNESCO has many approaches to achieve its mandate, which are interdisciplinary – done through education, culture, science and communication. Through all of these a “cultural diversity lens” is used so that actions of the Organization reinforce the fact that diversity does not divide people but actually is a positive element that enriches and strengthens peoples, cultures, and communities. There is a clash of ignorance. Quality education, dialogue, exchange, and inclusiveness can break down the walls of prejudice, stereotypes, discrimination and misinformation. A diverse society that fosters mutual understanding and respect, will be a more innovative, resilient, and stable society. Education is particularly important in this regard. For example, UNESCO works on revision of textbooks and curricula to remove stereotypes and present history in a non-inflammatory way.² The UNESCO “History of Humanity” series, or the UNESCO Guidelines on Intercultural Education, are useful tools for quality education. UNESCO's training of journalists, and media literacy programmes, are areas in the communication and information technology sector that also help break down barriers of

¹ Everything that UNESCO advocates in terms of preserving, promoting and protecting cultural diversity has a human-rights-based approach. Thus, practices that violate human rights are never accepted.

² Examples: *German–Polish Textbook Commission*—The Polish and German National Commissions for UNESCO in 1972 set up the German–Polish Textbook Commission to promote dialogue on the teaching of history and geography, with a view to transforming textbooks into instruments of peace and reconciliation. Their work still continues today.
UNESCO–EU–ISESCO cooperation— UNESCO is working with the European Union and the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) to improve how Islam and Muslims are portrayed in European textbooks, and how Europeans are portrayed in textbooks used in Arab states.

prejudice and misinformation. Through its activities and initiatives, UNESCO works with its Member States as well as UN partners, the private sector, and civil society to develop policies and programmes so that at all levels, including grass-roots, its work can be effective.

Another way of promoting respect for cultural diversity is through UNESCO many standard-setting instruments (Conventions, recommendations and declarations). Conventions, which are legally binding, are particularly effective in harmonizing norms around cultural heritage. UNESCO's Conventions are explicit in recognizing the value of different cultures and diversity. The objective is to protect and preserve such heritage so that it may be appreciated by all, and is preserved for future generations to experience. Valuing in this specific way various forms of heritage serves as a platform for dialogue, understanding, and appreciation of other peoples, histories, traditions, cultures, world views and ways of living. In addition to their symbolism, cultural objects, monuments, world heritage sites and forms of intangible cultural heritage help communities develop socially and economically by providing them with a sense of identity and continuity, fostering cultural diversity, exchange and creativity, and nurturing employment, trade, and industry.

Protection of Cultural Objects in Armed Conflict

The 1954 Convention for the Protection of Cultural Objects in the Event of Armed Conflict. This recognizes that militarily targeting of cultural heritage in armed conflict (ex striking a religious building or a museum) is a way of destroying identities and causing psychological damage. States Parties to this convention agree that in military or combative activities cultural heritage will not be targeted.

Convention on Import/Export/Transfer of Cultural Property

The 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property addresses an old issue that continues to attract significant political and media attention. It concerns not only the looting of museums, but also of private and public collections and archeological sites. In Iraq, for example, digging almost anywhere will uncover cultural objects that represent the history and identity of the people, and for which there is a market. UNESCO focuses on preventive measures and public awareness to combat illicit trafficking of cultural objects. Once taken and sold, depending on the circumstances, the matter of restitution of cultural objects can be legally complex, and present politically sensitive scenarios. UNESCO has an intergovernmental committee dedicated to return and restitution of cultural objects. An example of a return of a pillaged artifact is the 1,700-year-old, 24 meter tall Axum Obelisk. This symbol of African civilization was returned to Ethiopia in April 2005, after having been taken by Mussolini in 1937.

Convention on Protecting Cultural/Natural Heritage

The Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage adopted by UNESCO in 1972, links the concepts of nature conservation and the preservation of cultural properties, in addition to recognizing the way in which people interact with nature, and the need to preserve the balance between the two. States Parties nominate sites for inclusion in the World Heritage List, and this increases tourism to and appreciation of the site, and provides a platform for national pride, affirming national identity. Since these sites are of “outstanding universal value”, it is the duty of not only the State Party to preserve and protect the sites (with the local communities interacting with the site), but it is also the duty of the international community – the whole of humanity – to ensure that such sites are preserved and protected for future generations.

Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

The 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage recognizes the importance of traditions, rituals, and oral expressions of groups and communities. The importance of this heritage lies in the knowledge and skills transmitted from generation to generation.

As was the case in the earlier days of the World Heritage Sites, international recognition of the importance of, art, music and theater has tended to follow a Western subtext of the term “heritage.” Other regions questioned how universal aspects of cultural heritage were being defined, and pointed out that different traditions and cultural manifestations have equally significant values. Since the ratification of the 2003 Convention, poetry, music, oral traditions, folkloric dances, cuisines... have been recognized as representative of intangible cultural heritage. The structure of the Convention is geared to the support of local communities that “own” or “practice” the heritage. But, since the expressions of heritage are evolving, as the practitioners and owners pass them on, the Convention endeavors to have governments work with the communities so that these forms of cultural expression are supported, particularly those that are at risk.

Convention on Diversity of Cultural Expressions

In 2005, UNESCO adopted the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. It focuses primarily on the diversity of cultural expressions, as shared by means of cultural activities, goods and services. It reaffirms the sovereign right of states to formulate and implement cultural policies.

Urbanization: Building More Inclusive Cities

As cultures continue to transform, UNESCO has been drawn into the intersection of human rights, development, education, migration and globalization as they affect

urbanization, as well as how this urbanization impinges on multi-ethnic, multicultural societies. Given that half the world's population resides in urban areas, it is important to see which multi-ethnic communities are working, which are not—and why.

Toronto, Sao Paulo examples—Studies conducted to ascertain how minority groups and members of different ethnicities have integrated in Toronto and Sao Paulo have shown that good results have been achieved through arts and community action supported by local and national government. These cities, with their diversity, growth and immigration, face challenges in education, employment, integration, health care and crime... yet they are veritable hubs of innovation, characterized by a wealth of fluid exchanges between cultures and a degree of creativity and innovation that has made the communities resilient, competitive, and thus able to attract more skilled, diverse and open-minded people. Moreover, when such communities are compared with those that remain segregated, that lack social cohesion, and that leave minority cultures marginalized from and not exchanging with the majority, they fare worse off in terms of stability and innovation. This kind of cultural isolation, reinforced by municipalities, governments and even by what is taught in schools, leads to a breakdown in security, which affect competitiveness and resilience.

The U.K. and multiculturalism—On February 5, 2011, British Prime Minister David Cameron gave a speech at a security conference in Munich. In it he criticized “state multiculturalism” and argued that the United Kingdom needs a stronger national identity to prevent young British Muslim males from turning to extremism or terrorism. The issue seems to hinge on the notion of identity. This UK position should be looked at closely to see in what ways a multicultural society is to embrace its pluralism and its national identity. German Vice Chancellor Angela Merkel made a similar speech last December.

International Year of Youth

August 2010 to August 2011 marks the United Nations' International Year of Youth; the theme, chosen by young people, is “Dialogue and mutual understanding”. Since youth represents a demographically large and powerful sector of society, it seems incongruous that there should be such a paucity of data on both their contribution to dialogue and their role in generating mutual understanding and respect. Youth should be advanced as an important resource and stakeholder, building on its abilities and the power of inter-generational dialogue.

Recently, young people have played a major role in events in Tunisia and Egypt, and have the potential to be a positive force for social change and development. In Pakistan, for example, according to the United Nations, an estimated 103 million Pakistanis, or

63% of the population, are under the age of 25.³ Young people worldwide have long been a major force driving development, innovation, communication (intercultural and interreligious dialogue), and so can be a positive element in any equation according to which a government formulates its development and education strategies, and molds policy to attain social cohesion.

Education for All Global Monitoring Report—Released on March 1, 2011, the latest issue of the annual report, titled *The hidden crisis: Armed conflict and education*, states that armed conflict is robbing some 28 million children of an education by exposing them to violence, attacks on schools and other abuses. Among other things, it calls for more attention to the potential of education to foster peace.

The 2010 report—*Reaching the marginalized*—warns that education in many of the poorest countries is suffering from the fallout of the global economic crisis, and that this could lead to a lost generation of marginalized children in indigenous or minority communities, where drop-out rates are high.

Language

Finally, the fact that a diversity of languages is essential to human heritage should not be overlooked. Each language embodies the unique cultural wisdom of a people and, although there remain some 6,000 languages in the world, many are under threat. Language is an integral part of a person's identity— how we communicate, understand, access information and even how we are excluded from information. UNESCO advocates multilingual education (teaching in the mother tongue particularly in primary school, and teaching the national language and an international language). UNESCO also produces an Atlas of Endangered Languages, which tracks the languages currently under threat of disappearing, which results in a great loss to linguistic and cultural diversity.

³ For statistical purposes, the United Nations defines youth as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years of age, although it does recognize that member states' definitions vary, and thus notes that its definition is without prejudice to that of any member state.

DANCING AT THE CROSSROADS: ARTS AND MOVEMENT-BASED APPROACHES TO CONFLICT RESOLUTION¹

*In occupied Ireland, traditional dances were forbidden.
People met at crossroads in the countryside to dance,
expressing solidarity and resistance while maintaining their culture.*

Michelle LeBaron,
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Abstract

In conflict zones around the world where relations are ruptured and devastation abounds, the arts flourish. Arts are under-acknowledged for their potential to make serious contributions to transforming conflict; instead an emphasis on rational analysis and problem-solving subsists. This think-piece situates arts-based practices as vital to transforming conflict with an exploration of a range of tools for trainers, interveners and parties. I articulate a multi-faceted rationale grounded in neuroscience, intercultural communication and conflict theory for using arts-based practices to increase party and third party creative capacities and to foster new vocabularies of nuance, texture, and complexity. Potential pitfalls and cautions in using arts are also identified. Descriptions of arts-based work in diverse contexts are featured, and there is discussion of how these tools complement analytic approaches, enhancing resilience and versatility.

Introduction

In post-conflict societies, there is always art. People sing their sorrow, paint their grief, dance in the shadows of what once was. One of the most vibrant examples comes from Cambodia, where the rock opera *Where Elephants Weep* was produced in 2008, reclaiming cultural traditions nearly lost in the Khmer Rouge genocide.² The opera itself became a flashpoint for conflict when protests were lodged against the appropriateness of actors playing the roles of religious monks in the piece. This led to an unprecedented meeting between artists and leaders from government and religious organizations to find common ground, making *Where Elephants Weep* one of the few productions to complete the cycle of conflict transformation, circling beyond the stage to improve relations in the social and religious spheres where conflicts often continue.

¹ The author would like to thank Emily Beausoleil for her research and editorial assistance in preparing this paper.

² http://www.whereelephantsweep.net/inner/production_timeline.html. Accessed October 19, 2010.

Not only are the arts carriers of culture, resilient even in the midst of devastation, they are arguably the most reliable conduit to healing in the aftermath of massive damage. Expressive arts scholar Stephen Levine writes: “[T]he experience of trauma demands a new conception of the human being, one that is not based on thinking of humans as subjects capable of mastery of existence through knowledge [O]nly an artistic approach based on what we might call ‘traumatic imagination’ is adequate for comprehending the existence of trauma.”³ *Where Elephants Weep* demonstrates that traumatic imagination can be engaged on a large scale via the arts, creating catharsis, generating transformative conversations and spawning hybrid art forms in the aftermath of conflict.

Traditional peoples have long used dances and ceremonies as rituals marking and facilitating transition, reconciliation and healing. Ancient rituals are still practiced today in Canada, Australia, the United States and New Zealand as ways of smoothing rifts and mending relations. For example, a traditional ceremony called the ‘prun’ is used by the Mallanpara people in Australia to enrich relationships and heal conflict.⁴

These and many other examples bolster the case for partnerships between conflict resolvers and artists in intractable conflict and post-conflict settings. Artistry—the capacity to create with fluidity and flexibility—is a key to effective conflict transformation practice, training and process design. The body with its wisdom and capacity for resilience should not be an adjunct to practice, but its centerpiece. Informed by neuroscience, intercultural and conflict theories and the stark awareness that intractable conflicts feature deep, symbolic fissures seldom shifted by conventional tools, this piece traces ways of reconceptualizing conflict resolution practice.

Experiential Methods: Introducing Complexity into Identity

Many deep-rooted conflicts are characterized by negative mirror-imaging. The task of an intervener is therefore to interrupt negative stereotypes and facilitate experiences where each side becomes more complex to the other. As each develops awareness of the multiple dimensions of the others’ identity, this complexity creates spaciousness for acknowledging the others’ strengths and positive intentions alongside historical negative attributions. In increasing numbers of conflict interventions, experiential work is being used to help enliven conversations, foster originality and generate imaginative possibilities for shifting intractable conflict.

People step out of habitual perceptions and limiting understandings to welcome nuance and texture when their creativity is engaged through innovative process design. Yet, shifting intervention designs and getting buy-in from participants is difficult: in the already-tense terrain of conflict, people are understandably reluctant to step outside their

³ Stephen K. Levine, *Trauma, Tragedy, Therapy* (London and Philadelphia: Jessica Kingsley 2009), 18.

⁴ Atkinson, J. (2002). *Trauma trails, recreating song lines: the transgenerational effects of trauma in Indigenous Australia* North Melbourne, Vic: Spinifex Press.

comfort zones in ways that might seem risky or embarrassing. The arts create new channels for understanding and therefore help parties shift stuck dynamics.

Arts answer the cry for embodied experiences that invoke the pan-human capacity for creativity, even—or especially—in the midst of ashes. Invoking the arts is not a romantic or naïve endeavour. It is to be rigorous in finding ways to transform conflict, acknowledging its complexity while trusting its mysteries. Arts and other experiential approaches invite creativity and imagination into practice and training in ways that make both more compelling and potentially far more productive.

What Are Arts-Based Approaches to Conflict Resolution?

Arts-based approaches encompass a whole constellation of experiential, somatic tools that foster creative expression, from visual and theatre arts to music, dance and poetry. They welcome sensing and feeling—dimensions so-often “managed” or sidelined in conventional approaches—as embodied experiences essential for truly transforming conflict. When we acknowledge that emotions are powerful motivators toward transformation just as they are central drivers in conflict escalation, these approaches come to light as both appropriate and promising, providing fruitful vehicles for imagination and intuition in the midst of conflict.

Arts approaches need not be formal or complex. A wide range of expressive and imaginative tools offer diverse practices for all comfort levels and conflict contexts, whether spontaneous or pre-planned. These approaches are not used primarily to generate artistic products or performances (though sometimes participants choose to continue joint efforts that yield such things), but as conduits for accompaniment and change. They can also be vastly beneficial in training because of their versatility and capacity to help practitioners deepen creative, somatic capacities.

Arts approaches need not always adhere to specific forms. They can be as simple as imagery-based metaphors, as in the example of dialogue between pro-life and pro-choice activists in Canada. Invited to identify their heroes or heroines, people from both sides chose Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela. This commonality surprised them, interrupting the negative labels each had long-assigned to the other. An exploration of what these figures represented to each side—compassionate leadership, justice and emancipation—fostered emergent mutual respect. From this base of respect and recognition of shared ground, dialogue participants were able to collaborate on initiatives that mattered to both sides.

The forthcoming book *Art in Action* includes several case examples of expressive arts applications in intercultural or post-conflict settings, from Iraq to Bolivia; from Sub-Saharan Africa to Israel to Peru. The cases illustrate diverse ways that arts-based approaches serve as robust and significant assets in peacemaking. Conflict resolution Professor Craig Zelizer situates such approaches as part of a larger framework of civil

society-based initiatives for peace-building.⁵ In the next section, I discuss how it is these approaches “thicken” narratives and add nuance to understandings of others, helping parties shift the dynamics of conflict in ways conventional practices often find most challenging.

How Arts-Based Approaches Help Shift Perceptions of “the Other”

Contemporary peacemakers—whether insider-partials or outsider-impartials—are challenged to span cultural divides and connect across multiple differences, countering cognitive habits of enmity. Creativity proves essential in meeting this challenge. Peacemaking scholar Tatsushi Arai defines creativity as “unconventional viability.”⁶ His definition evokes the oft-quoted statement of Einstein that “[w]e can’t solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them.”⁷ What stands in the way of such creativity? Johan Galtung identifies the true obstacle as, “[i]n one sentence: actors deeply engaged not in solving but in winning, victory, the V-word. To conflict parties committed to the goal of winning, Other is the problem, *not the relation to Other*. Bring Other to heel, and the world is right. Other is Evil, up against our good Self, there can be no compromise, no creative ‘transcendence,’ only victory for the Good over Evil. Moreover, Other should not only be deterred from exercising his evil craft, but be crushed never to rise again.”⁸

This tendency, ingrained in many conflict parties’ minds, of seeking to vanquish the other proves difficult in arts-based approaches. Yehuda Amir writes that when people with differing beliefs come together to interact in meaningful ways and establish constructive coexistence, “the in-group member no longer perceives the member of the out-group in a stereotyped way but begins to consider him or her as an individual and thereby discovers many areas of similarity.”⁹ In the nuanced world of the arts, it is difficult to maintain stark distinctions between “us” and “them,” and the black and white terms that maintain them. Arts-based approaches take conflict parties outside “business as usual,” disrupting facile narratives and facilitating communication across psychological, physical and emotional boundaries.¹⁰ When perceptions change, understanding, acceptance and empathy often follow. People emerge from creating

⁵ Craig Zelizer, “The Role of Artistic Processes in Peacebuilding in Bosnia-Herzegovina,” *Peace and Conflict Studies* 10.2 (2003): 62–75.

⁶ Tatsushi Arai, *Creativity and Conflict Resolution* (London and New York: Routledge, 2009), 1.

⁷ Albert Einstein, BrainyQuote.com, Xplore Inc, 2010.

<http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/a/alberteins121993.html>, accessed October 17, 2010.

⁸ Johan Galtung, Foreword to *Creativity and Conflict Resolution*, by Tatsushi Arai. (London and New York: Routledge, 2009), ix-x: emphasis ours.

⁹ Yehuda Amir, “Contact Hypothesis in Ethnic Relations”, in *The Handbook of Interethnic Coexistence*, ed. Eugene Weiner (New York, The Continuum Publishing Company, 1998), 174.

¹⁰ Dena Hawes, “Why Art Matters: How Performance Art Interventions Contribute to the Field of Conflict Resolution” (PhD diss George Mason University, 2007).

images or moving together in improvised dance with new appreciation for each other's dilemmas and complexities.

In outlining the history of the expressive arts field, Stephen Levine's recent work has identified what distinguishes these approaches. One of these features is "intermodality"—a term first used by expressive arts pioneer Paolo Knill; intermodality captures the way a variety of arts practices engage different sensory capacities,¹¹ and helps us understand and conceptualize the body as a multi-faceted perceptual, expressive and relational centre. The creative capacity of the body as a vehicle where words and art come together is what Levine calls *poesis*, the innate human ability to shape and be shaped by diverse worlds.

Levine's approach to conflict based in *poesis* provides practical hope. He reminds us that the very hopelessness we often feel is due to our inherent capacity to imagine our world in multiple ways. Moreover, this imaginative capacity, when engaged through aesthetic approaches, generates creative possibilities that can change not only the imagination, but lived, measurable reality—it is both *self-building* and *world-building*. Levine writes that art-making restores individuals' and groups' capacities for action and agency, giving up control in order to achieve mastery. The work of the arts practitioner, then, is to partner with conflict parties to restore their capacities for *poesis*.

How is this done? The answers are structured and emergent; bounded and open-ended. They involve a range of practices that magnify creativity, steering carefully away from the linear containment that too often characterizes conflict-transformation work. Arts approaches are efficient and effective ways to bring people into collaborative relationships. Cutting through the tension that attends sitting formally with "the other," arts provide people with a focus outside their conflictual histories, evoking spaciousness and creativity before inviting direct communication.

Arts approaches may prepare parties for more direct engagement, generating what Jay Rothman calls "analytic empathy"—an understanding of commonalities that touch essential concerns between disputants.¹² For example, Carstarphen and Shapiro used theatre-inspired role-switching exercises in a dialogue process with Washington, D.C. police and Latino youths in conflict.¹³ Police playing the roles of youths standing outside convenience stores felt apprehension and defensiveness as "police" dressed in bullet-proof vests approached. The youths were surprised at the nervousness and fear they experienced in their roles as police officers approaching gang-involved youths. When parties saw one another's aggression as reactively motivated in relation to real or perceived threats, they shifted away from previously held negative attributions. Shifts like these may help break conflict cycles in which each negative act of the other is

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Jay Rothman, *Resolving Identity-Based Conflicts* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1997), 45.

¹² Ibid, 44.

¹³ Nike Carstarphen and Ilana Shapiro, "Facilitating Between Gang Members and Police," *Negotiation Journal* 132 (April 1997): 185–207.

interpreted as confirmation of negative character traits or motivations. Joint arts-based experiences can set the stage for authentic, emotional expression across divides, generating empathy. In the next section, we consider the science of how and why the arts are such effective tools.

The Vancouver, Canada based-NGO Peace it Together—an organization that brings Palestinian, Israeli and Canadian youth together for dialogue and relationship-building—found that collaborative filmmaking was a potent way of extending group learnings. Youth participants who created films during the summer program reported that showing them in home and other community contexts gave them opportunities to sustain their positive attitudes toward “the other,” and to bring larger groups of people into exploratory conversations outside the well-traveled perceptual channels that characterize historically divided relations. In Peace it Together, arts are both the vehicle for engagement and for knowledge/attitude transfer to broader communities, illustrating how the act of both creating together and sharing such creative works can shift perceptions, behaviors and relations.

Why Arts Approaches Work: Neuroscientific Dimensions

Recent research in the field of neuroscience has begun to explain the science behind the efficacy of arts-based approaches. These findings have called into question long-held assumptions in the field of conflict resolution, by confirming what arts and somatic practitioners have long known.

English is replete with spatial metaphors that point to the usefulness of physically changing positions in shifting points of view; we urge people to “look for different perspectives,” “get on top of a situation,” or “get to the bottom of it.” Neuroscientists confirm folk wisdom that movement changes the way we process information.¹⁴ Studies of neuro-images of tango dancers reveal that, when dance is performed to music, it activates the subconscious human capacity for *entrainment*, or the synchronization of movement to rhythm.¹⁵ Just as humans’ movements entrain to rhythm, people in situations of conflict develop habitual perceptions and responses that are “entrained” to various situations.¹⁶ Dance—a highly synchronized physical activity—gives people embodied experiences of entrainment, and so can be used to enhance reflective awareness of internalized, patterned responses to conflict.

Not only does dance help peacemakers recognize unconscious stances in conflict; it is also a vehicle for rehearsing new, more healthy somatic repertoires. Our Dancing at

14 Stephen Brown and Lawrence M. Parsons, “The Neuroscience of Dance,” *Scientific American* 299 (July 2008): 81–2.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Karen Bhangoo and Venashri Pillay, “Capacities and Skills for Intercultural Conflict Resolution” in *Conflict Across Cultures: A Unique Experience of Bridging Differences*, ed. Michelle LeBaron and Venashri Pillay (Boston: Nicolas Brealey Press, 2006), 112.

the Crossroads Project, described later, explores the use of dance with peacemakers in collaboration with Montreal-based dancer Margie Gillis.

Another key to peacemaking—empathy—has been described by neuroscientists as a human default and embodied process, activated when we observe others, feeling and sensing their experiences.¹⁷ Imagine a scene where you come upon a colleague who has a spider climbing inside her sleeve. She tells you that she feels its legs tickling her arm and you see her trying, with increasing frustration, to reach in and shake it out. Even as you read this, you may feel a crawling sensation. Your brain fires in the same ways as your colleague’s brain as she wriggles to extricate herself from the spider, activating “mirror neurons.” Empathy—instantaneous—connects you to your colleague’s experience who feels accompanied as she struggles with the spider.

How do mirror neurons work? When people observe or plan actions, motor neurons become activated in the same way as they do when the action is actually being performed.¹⁸ Neuroscientists believe that this mirroring arises early in childhood, forming the basis of social interaction, language learning and the capacity to imitate as well as feelings of empathy.¹⁹ When people watch each other move, their brains are essentially practicing ways of relating to one another.

Findings on mirror neurons and entrainment lead to these questions:

- How can we step aside from the security of tables and other fixtures of our processes to welcome kinesthetic wisdom and imagination?
- How might mirror neurons assist parties in learning constructive conflict behaviors?
- How can we use rhythm and entrainment to synchronize positive relational patterns?
- Given humans’ natural empathic capacity, how can we foster it among conflict parties?

Our fieldwork investigates how arts approaches stimulate new neural pathways and shift cognitive habits, generating quality accompaniment and supporting conflict parties to access novel behaviors. Arts-related approaches point to the importance of addressing culture, perception, identity and meaning-making processes in the service of durable and resilient outcomes. In the next section, we explore how arts-based approaches evoke symbolic communication and promote cultural fluency.

¹⁷ Stephen Brown and Lawrence M. Parsons, “The Neuroscience of Dance,” *Scientific American* 299 (July 2008), 78–83.

¹⁸ Ross Cunnington, Christian Windischberger, Simon Robinson and Ewald Moser, “The Selection of Intended Actions and the Observation of Others’ Actions: A Time-Resolved fMRI Study,” *Neuroimage* 294 (2006): 1294–1302.

¹⁹ Giovanni Berlucchi and Salvatore Aglioti, “The Body in the Brain: Neural Bases of Corporeal Awareness,” *Trends in Neuroscience* 20 (1997): 560–564.

Symbolic Tools and Cultural Fluency in Arts-Based Practice

Standardized approaches to conflict resolution—which often work through explicit communication, step-by-step problem solving and direct confrontation—are ineffective and insufficient to address complex issues across cultures, where diverse norms and values limit their usefulness. Diverse norms, complex values, and the symbolic dimensions of conflict are beyond the reach of these tools, existing as it does where largely-unconscious identities, essential narratives, cultural norms and worldviews shape perceptions that keep conflict ignited. When identities or sacred meanings feel threatened, conflict only becomes more robust and long-lasting. Face-saving, honor, harmony-seeking communication and incendiary histories—among many other factors—suggest a need for innovative approaches to help people step out of established patterns of intractable conflict and foster creativity, resilience and hope.

Because conflictual relations are often intertwined with identity and meaning-making, identities and sacred meanings need to be recognized and respected in conflict intervention. Though perceptions may shift in the course of constructive engagement, this does not mean targeting identities or meanings themselves for change. Effective conflict transformation methodologies must access and engage deep-seated, complex identity dynamics, while circumventing the tendency to reify them. For this reason, symbolic assessment and intervention tools actualized through arts-based strategies are vital additions to problem-based toolkits.²⁰

What are symbolic tools? They include metaphor—symbolic language that maps worlds onto one another and opens possibilities for new associations; ritual—patterned ways of enacting change outside of ordinary contexts and dynamics to facilitate transitions through liminality; narrative—witnessed stories that promote voice and build relationship; and myth—seminal explanations for ways of being and seeing that reveal cultural logics and sacred meanings. These tools have been used worldwide as part of artists’ palettes, expressed from time immemorial in diverse languages, images, melodies and roles. Indeed, because of the worldwide use of such symbolic tools, they prove all the more significant for conflict practitioners, as increased symbolic fluency contributes to increased cultural fluency—the ability to understand and work effectively with myths, metaphors, rituals and narratives that reflect a range of cultural and worldview contexts.

According to Tatsushi Arai, cultural fluency has four key components: anticipatory capacity, embeddedness, expressive capacity and navigational capacity.²¹ Anticipatory capacity entails becoming so familiar with cultural patterns and how they

²⁰ Michelle LeBaron and Venashri Pillay, “Conflict, Culture and Images of Change,” in *Conflict Across Cultures: A Unique Experience of Bridging Differences*, ed. Michelle LeBaron and Venashri Pillay (Boston: Nicolas Brealey Press, 2006), 20.

²¹ Tatsushi Arai, “A Journey Toward Cultural Fluency,” in *Conflict Across Cultures: A Unique Experience of Bridging Differences*, ed. Michelle LeBaron and Venashri Pillay (Boston: Nicolas Brealey Press, 2006), 57–79.

shape “common sense” that informed predictions of future behavioral trajectories become possible. Embeddedness involves acknowledgement of deep-seated unconscious assumptions. Expressive capacity relates to empathy, an ability to imagine the feelings and sensations experienced by others. Navigational capacity involves pragmatic joint action to create synergistic collaboration. A brief exploration of how the arts foster these four capacities follows.

Anticipatory capacity comes naturally to us in our home contexts. When someone says “Power corrupts . . .,” we anticipate the phrase “and absolute power corrupts absolutely.” In unfamiliar cultural contexts, peacemakers are challenged to develop anticipatory capacity without stereotyping. The symbolic nature of the arts makes them a rich resource, because they convey local “grammars of being” in ways that communicate gestalts, or wholes. For example, attending a play in France will convey far more to the outsider than just idioms of speech. Attentive observers will learn about proxemics; gender roles; hierarchies; power distance; boundaries between private and public; and a whole host of other aspects of social/relational norms and structures. All of these will be potentially relevant to expanding capacities for self and other awareness, so important to understanding conflict interactions.

Embeddedness refers to the default assumptions that each person carries with her. “Money is wealth” or “Everyone is an artist” are two examples. Unconscious assumptions carried by individuals and transmitted within collectives inevitably play a role in conflict narratives, and astute peacemakers are challenged to constantly examine their own embedded assumptions and cultivate curiosity about others’. The arts provide fecund openings into embedded assumptions because they portray metaphors of identity and common rituals of relating in a culture. Practices that explore the meanings of these metaphors can surface and unpack latent beliefs and values, bringing them into the conversation and engaging them in their complexity.

Expressive capacity involves attunement; it is an ability to imagine the experiences of others and understand them in context. As we have seen through findings in neuroscience, much of how we learn about, and empathize with, others occurs through intercorporeality—by moving together in ways that transcend verbal language.²² And yet, little attention is paid within conflict approaches to these embodied dimensions of communication and interaction. Dance and movement offer rich resources in helping us attune to others, invoking entrainment and fostering empathy.

Navigational capacity refers to the ability to work together with different others to generate synergistic ways forward. This capacity rests on the other three: self and other-awareness is a prerequisite to finding ways to proceed that reflect key features of each culture. Deep familiarity with preferred forms of expression, key images, forbidden terrain and identity-drenched symbols is essential to synergistic process design.

²² Stephanie Springgay, “An Intimate Distance: Youth Interpretations of Intercorporeal Cartography as Visual Narrative Text,” *Journal of the Canadian Association for Curriculum Studies* 31 (Fall 2005): 110.

Examples later in this chapter will illustrate the efficacy of arts-based approaches in engaging symbolic dimensions in analysis, intervention and training.

In summary, cultural fluency involves approaches centered in self and other-awareness that shift old lines of enmity and open multi-directional communication patterns in conflict. The arts' powerful role in bridging differences within and between groups is increasingly being recognized by peacemakers. At the same time, the arts are not inherently useful, but must be handled with care precisely because they tap powerful dimensions. The next section explores some of the challenges and risks of engaging arts-based methodologies.

Cautions and Caveats: Taking Care with Arts-Based Practice

While scholarship of the theory and practice of arts-based approaches shows these practices serve as powerful vehicles for accompaniment and change, it also serves a cautionary function, reminding readers that these approaches should not to be mistaken as soft alternatives to explicit communication about problems. It may be tempting to use improvisational techniques when unsure about how to accompany those who have experienced untold horrors of war, or to elicit stories without first creating a safe container for those who may be re-traumatized by telling or hearing them. Lest these approaches be experienced by vulnerable peoples as trivializing or instrumentally extracting their experiences, practitioners are well-advised to have clear rationales for when and how such approaches are used, and ethical rubrics for implementing them. Here, we explore ethical dimensions of using arts in more depth.

Because arts-based practices tap symbolic understandings, access latent memories, traumas and strong emotions, and touch people at the level of precious identities, they are powerful. For the same reason, they can land the unprepared intervener in turbulent waters, potentially stranding conflict parties in floods of emotion with insufficient support. Ethical practitioners must find safe ways to work with people in tender, vulnerable terrain. Fostering safety might be as simple as refraining from having participants explain or justify their artistic expressions unless they wish; being sensitive to the possible impacts and cultural appropriateness of touch within physical practices; and arranging for psychological support on site. In general, it is vital to design spaciousness around arts-based activities, offer choices about which aspects of expression are named or shared, and integrate professional and community resources into and around processes, both as they unfold and following the process.²³

The arts are also powerful vehicles due to the way the vivid, affective way they bring narratives to life. Theatre, writing, visual art, dance and many other forms can profoundly touch artist and audience, party and intervener in ways that circumvent our usual defenses. Anyone who has had trouble getting a dark movie image or catchy

²³ Arlene Goldbard, *New Creative Community: The Art of Cultural Development* (Oakland, California: New Village Press, 2006), 150–51.

melody out of her mind will recognize this truism. We have seen how the arts have the potential to “thicken” stories, making them more complex and nuanced; however, stories can reinforce as well as disrupt stereotypes; images can reify as well as dynamize identities; movement can threaten and dissemble, as well as empower.²⁴ Conflict approaches that employ artistic strategies must, therefore, not assume they are inherently beneficial, and the arts’ power to shape perspectives and relations must be handled with care.²⁵ Artistic interpretation lends itself readily to revealing and exploring this complexity, and practitioners can maximize this potential by drawing attention to the complexity within any narrative or image. As complexities are surfaced, this can help to prevent simple readings and assimilate and anchor new understandings.

It is also important to be aware of how arts-based practice relates to power. The arts can be a particularly effective form of empowerment—often providing alternative languages with which those excluded by conventional discourses can articulate lived experience, values and beliefs. At the same time, it must not be assumed that empowerment naturally follows from using arts-based practices. Rather, practitioners must be aware of group dynamics—and their own position within them—to ensure processes do not reinforce existing asymmetries. Practitioners should be alive to group dynamics, including how asymmetries inform relations, as well as who feels they can speak, how, and for whom.²⁶

Related to the issue of power are dynamics of cultural differences that play out through conflicts. Some groups or individuals will feel more affinity to various kinds of arts-based practices than others. Professionals are frequently less ready to step outside cognitive problem-solving than people from contexts where arts traditions are part of community and personal quotidian rituals. Moreover, some forms of artistic practices and the embodied, visual, acoustic, and symbolic codes they employ might have different significance or meaning for different cultural groups. Both cultural sensitivity and attunement to the dynamics, resources, and demands of specific groups are required to ensure artistic practices are applied effectively and appropriately.²⁷

Finally, the question of transfer from a training or exploratory setting to real life contexts is important to consider. Artistic modalities excel in engaging the whole body,

²⁴ Carl E. Briscoe, Jr., “The Political Effects of Contemporary Art: Cultural Diversity and the Myth of Art in Popular Culture,” in *Voices of Color: Art and Society in the Americas*, ed. Phoebe Farris-Dufrene (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1997), 2–5.

²⁵ Jan Jagodzinski, “The Politics of Difference: The Fate of Art in an Age of Identity Crisis,” in *Voices of Color: Art and Society in the Americas*, ed. Phoebe Farris-Dufrene (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1997), 98–99.

²⁶ Berenice Fisher, “Feminist Acts: Women, Pedagogy, and Theatre of the Oppressed,” in *Playing Boal: Theatre, Therapy, Activism*, ed. Mady Schutzman and Jan Cohen-Cruz (London: Routledge, 1994), 185–97.

²⁷ Michelle LeBaron and Nadja Alexander “Exporting Mediation Through Roleplays: Intercultural Considerations in Knowledge Transfer,” in *International and Regional Perspectives on Cross-Cultural Mediation Studien zur Interkulturellen Mediation Vol. 5*, ed. Busch, Dominic, Claude-Helene Mayer and Christian Martin Boness (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2010).

shifting perspectives, and cultivating new ground from which to perceive and engage “the other.” However, the very characteristics that enable artistic modalities to help parties articulate and negotiate what eludes conventional discourse makes the task of application beyond these engagements—even to more conventional mediation and decision-making processes with the same group—especially difficult.²⁸ Transferring understandings of complex identities, multivalent meanings, and dynamism underlying apparently-intractable positions is challenging. It is more likely to occur successfully when interveners consider transfer in the design phase, planning ways to apply discoveries generated by arts practices to conventional contexts, as well as engaging broader audiences to deepen understanding regarding these rich—but as-yet largely unrecognized—practices.

While asserting that arts can be pivotal in fostering positive shifts, it is also important to be mindful of vulnerable aspects of these forms of practice. Like any mode of intervention, arts can be used with varying degrees of proficiency. Third parties are well-advised to get training in expressive arts to learn specific ways to minimize risks of escalating conflict or deepening trauma when using these practices.

With these cautions in mind, I describe research/practice initiatives in which the versatility and contributions of arts work have been explored.

Applying Arts-Based Approaches

Numerous opportunities and benefits associated with arts-based practice have surfaced in my research, including that they:

- *involve joint creation of new, more varied possibilities* by taking parties beyond inadequate or too-thin mental maps, assumptions and stereotypes of issues and each other;
- *evoke nuance and complexity*, thickening the territory of conflicts in ways that reveal multiple dimensions of issues and interwoven components of identity and meaning;
- *transcend spoken and written language*, minimizing its framing limitations and strengthening relational bonds across diverse cultures;
- *foster cultural fluency*, countering divisions between in-groups and out-groups, enhancing self and other-awareness by building anticipatory capacity, embeddedness, and expressive and navigational capacities;
- *connect across social, political and historical boundaries*, uncovering ways that values, identities and precious meanings can be expressed and woven into conflict transformation processes and outcomes;
- *engage creativity and imagination*, broadening the range of possibilities from which possible solutions may arise;
- *stimulate intuition*, including felt and sensed wisdom, to inform work with newly surfaced memories, biases and emotions;

²⁸ Peggy Phelan, *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), 2.

- *encourage fluidity, flexibility and health* in peacemaking processes by facilitating mobility and inviting perspective-taking;
- *emphasize interconnectedness* by offering safe containers for parallel or collaborative engagement;
- *catalyze empathy* through evoking mirror neurons. As images of others change through shared experiences, perceptions of issues and conflict behaviors change.

Two research/practice initiatives—the Conflict Resolution, Arts and Intercultural Experience (CRANE)²⁹ and Dancing at the Crossroads (DTC)³⁰ projects—illustrate these facets.

The CRANE project team at the University of British Columbia partnered with members of multi-ethnic communities in Vancouver, Canada and abroad to apply arts-based approaches between 2004 and 2008. Drawing on interdisciplinary scholarship, conflict resolution theory and arts practices, we developed, field-tested, refined and evaluated a range of original arts-based interventions. The DTC Project followed in 2010; it builds on the work of CRANE by using dance and movement to deepen awareness and broaden peacemaking capacities for third parties and parties in conflict. The DTC Project is described in the following section.

Dancing at the Crossroads: Exploring Movement and Conflict Resolution Practice

A focus on dance and movement was chosen because these modalities were among the most powerful in our earlier work on multiple arts modes in conflict. Dance and movement, after all, engage the body directly as a source of wisdom and an instrument of attunement. In the summer of 2010, three dozen mediation and conflict resolution practitioners came together in the Swiss Alps to examine what these modes of expression and exploration could show them about reflective practice, training and intervention. We worked with internationally known dancer Margie Gillis, whose work has long focused on connecting inner knowing with outer behavior, and linking conflict awareness with broadening repertoires of conflict choices. Through this work with experienced practitioners and thought-leaders, we developed the idea of movement-related intelligence as a core capacity for conflict resolution. Dance-related intelligence involves using physical and rhythmic cues and resources in conflict to:

- Sense group, interpersonal and intrapersonal patterns;

²⁹ CRANE, Conflict Resolution, Arts and intercultural Experience, Michelle LeBaron, Principal Investigator; Carrie MacLeod, Project Coordinator. This project involved training and practice in diverse settings exploring the use of multiple arts-based strategies. Funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, 2004–2008.

³⁰ Dancing at the Crossroads Project, Michelle LeBaron, Principal Investigator; Carrie MacLeod, Project Coordinator. Funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, 2009–2013.

- Discern physical movements in individuals and groups that signal internal changes;
- Discern changes in vocal rhythms, tones and pitches that indicate turning points;
- Recognize nonverbal cues that point to processes becoming more or less safe;
- Learn ways of using breath, movement and mindfulness in the presence of strong emotions to promote flexibility, not rigidity
- Incorporate physical, nonverbal awareness in generating intervention strategies that shift negative conflict dynamics.³¹

Based on the Swiss workshop, we are working on an edited book that will contain reflections from many participants on how their experiences have helped them apply these and other insights from movement and dance-based work. Best practices and a toolkit will be devised, informed by participants' feedback.

Preliminary evaluation reveals that participants were interested in continuing to deepen their somatic capacities. They indicated that they will be more attuned to physical shifts in themselves and others during conflict interventions. Many said they would deliberately use more physical language, implicitly and directly inviting conflict parties to attend to physical dimensions of conflict dynamics. They also observed that they would notice how space, place and physical configurations contribute to or undermine intervention efforts. As well, several said that they planned to continue deepening physical practices in their own lives, whether through dance, yoga, walking or other forms.

As the Dancing at the Crossroads Project continues through 2013, we will explore further dimensions of these approaches, field-testing them in Peru, South Africa and North American contexts. As with the wider array of arts-based methods examined in CRANE, dance and movement approaches show promise as important aspects of culturally-fluent conflict practice.

³¹ The contributions of Nadja Alexander, Professor of Law at City University of Hong Kong, are acknowledged in generating this list.

ACTING TOGETHER: PERFORMANCE AND THE CREATIVE TRANSFORMATION OF CONFLICT *

Lessons and Recommendations

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The *Acting Together* project—which, in addition to the production of the two volumes of this anthology also includes the development of a related documentary, toolkit and website, and conversations with many colleagues engaged in peacebuilding and in performance—has been documenting stories about theatre and ritual in zones of violent conflict and oppression. We have been reflecting on those stories, and articulating lessons, questions and issues that we seek to share with others engaged in performance and conflict transformation and, more generally, with all those working at the nexus of the arts and peace.

We encourage critical engagement with each of the case studies in both volumes of this work. Each one is unique; each example's strengths and limitations can offer valuable lessons for people working in the field. In this chapter, we focus on lessons and recommendations based on the project as a whole, including analysis of the body of case studies, as well as insights from conversations and interviews conducted as part of the larger *Acting Together* project.

Lessons from the Acting Together Project

1. Performances are powerful. They embody a kind of power that can be crafted to contribute to the transformation of violent conflict. Performances can capture people's attention, reaching beneath the defensive structures of guilt, shame and rage; to restore capacities for agency and heal relationships; challenge existing assumptions; support expression that is otherwise forbidden; bring reluctant adversaries into conversation; propose new ways of framing issues; and more. Even when confronted with the power of violence and economic, political, gender-based and cultural domination, performances challenge and subvert widely accepted patterns of supremacy, fear, exclusion and repression.

What kind of power is this? Where does it come from? What engenders it? The

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case studies suggest that the power of theater and ritual derives at least in part from the concentration of energy in the bounded time and space of the performance itself. Rituals and theatrical works are energized by the focus, commitment and talent of the actors, artists or ritual leaders involved; the animated attention and expectant mood of the audience and participants; and by the intensity of the preparation, which takes place through processes of set design, improvisation, direction, rehearsal, script refinement and/or planning meetings, etc. (These preparatory activities themselves are part of the “work”¹; they are sites of engagements and re-vision, and therefore sites of transformations in relationships and awareness.) The peace-building performance space is energized also by the mythological, spiritual, historical and other cultural resonances evoked by characters, costumes, music and setting (whether natural or designed).

Peace-building performances, then, are powerful events that can be crafted to engage people compellingly, but non-coercively, in the issues that confront their communities. They are laboratories for exploring relationships, memories, questions and meanings, for experimenting with cross-cultural encounters and for discovering what might be possible. They provide ways of integrating narratives at the intellectual, emotional and physical levels—a dire need in violent contexts where narratives likely have been torn apart. Performances can be constructed in theaters and shrines, to be sure, but also on buses, in abandoned houses, in prisons and refugee camps, on the sites of battles and massacres, and in public plazas—anyplace where human beings gather and where there is someone to bear witness. Performance’s power does not rely on injury or domination; it resides rather in reciprocity, connectivity and generativity.

The evidence of the power of performance as a resource for conflict transformation consists in part of the changes documented in this anthology: the official apology issued by the government of Australia, in which the performance of rituals and enactment of Indigenous ceremonies played a significant role; the testimony received by Peru’s TRC that was enabled by preparatory work of *Grupo Cultural Yuyachkani*; the relationships built among the young Liberian enemies through their participation in HipHop Theatre in refugee camps in Ghana; the abducted children of the disappeared reunited with their grandparents after witnessing plays that are part of the *Teatro X Identidad* cycle. A different kind of evidence also can be found in the examples documented in these volumes: the policies and the threats of colonial, dictatorial and paramilitary regimes, which seek to keep theatres dark, to silence artists’ voices, to forbid Indigenous rituals, and to constrain the range of permitted expression. If performances were not powerful, it is unlikely that illegitimate authorities would bother to repress them.

2. Peacebuilding performances have the potential to support communities to engage with problematic silences and to navigate among apparently conflicting and contradictory imperatives. Whether in the midst of violence and oppression, in their

aftermath, or in contexts of social, economic and political exclusion, communities are filled with unexpressed and unacknowledged stories of injustice. They are flooded with suppressed truths about abuses of power, unexpressed rage and fear, unmourned losses, unresolved conflicts, unspoken remorse and unreconciled relationships. Because they can access sources of resilience in ceremonies, rituals and other collective forms, as well as in the rooted creativity of individual artists and ensembles, peace-building performances are uniquely well-suited to engage these silences.

In the previous chapter, we explored three different ways in which theatre and ritual transform the material that enters into the space/time of performance: by expressing suppressed and repressed ideas, feelings, relationships, and yearnings for the future; by cultivating, nourishing and restoring capacities for communication and building relationships; and by embodying the moral imagination, which we examined in relation to issues of resistance, memory, justice and identity. Although not every example in the anthology illustrates transformations in relation to all four of these themes, by considering the set of case studies as a whole, it becomes clear that, peacebuilding performances in zones of violent conflict can support communities to grapple with complexities such as:

- the need to resist violent assaults, occupation, cultural impositions and other infringements on individual and collective agency—without unnecessarily fueling more violence through one’s reactions, and without becoming passive or self-destructive in the face of one’s apparent powerlessness;
- the need to remember and fully honor comrades and loved ones who have been killed and to dignify the suffering and the injuries of the past—while avoiding the traps of retraumatization and permanent victim and perpetrator identities, while also building relationships and helping communities to imagine a new future
- the need to balance justice and accountability on the one hand, with values of mercy and the need for restoration on the other; and the need to address related disagreements about whether to seek justice through trials, truth commissions, reparation schemes and local community traditions in some combination, or through other means.
- the need for distinct groups to assert, celebrate (and in some cases re-fashion) their distinctive identities while acknowledging the reality of interdependence among all groups as well as the rights of individuals to choose how to express belonging to the multiple groups that, in all likelihood, claim their allegiance.

Hologram-like, these tensions find expression within people, between people, within communities, between communities struggling to coexist, within societies and among the societies that comprise the global community. Where opportunities exist or can be constructed, these tensions are being brought into spaces of performance, where they can be acknowledged, understood in their complexity, and revised. When creative spaces are illuminated by the moral imagination – in particular by the embrace of

paradox and commitments to act in accordance with principles of interdependence -- points of intractable conflict gradually become unstuck, and relationships can begin to be transformed.

3. Aesthetic excellence and socio-political effectiveness need not be competing imperatives; they are often mutually reinforcing. There are many in the fields of both performance and peacebuilding that remain skeptical about peacebuilding performances. Many in the art world worry that performances with a social or political agenda might result in mediocre or didactic art. Those in the world of conflict transformation worry that while arts-based peacebuilding initiatives might produce beautiful works that inspire positive feelings, they in fact do little to make a difference in the dynamics of the conflict, or in “peace writ large.”

However, within this anthology, there are many examples in which the aesthetic power of a work and its socio-political effectiveness are linked, and in fact appear to be mutually reinforcing. According to Dijana Milosevic and others who witnessed performances *Dah Teatar*, it was the focus and discipline of the actors, the excellence of their artistic craft, that protected them from potential assaults of armed paramilitary forces present at their outdoor performances. *Yuyachkani* was able to attract large audiences of European-descended Peruvians in Lima to hear the stories of their indigenous compatriots because of the unquestioned artistry of their productions. It was the artistic power of productions such as *Hidden Fires* in India and *Photographs of S-21* in Cambodia that invited audience members to remain in their seats to grapple, in words or in silence, with what they had witnessed.

The beauty of a work sometimes itself can be form of communication: “The people who live in the camps are bored with the dullness of daily life,” says Iman Aoun of Palestine, whose theatre company travels to refugee camps. “We give them as much as we respect them.

4. Artist-based theatre, community-based theatre, rituals and ceremonies all can be crafted to make substantive contributions to justice and peace. The processes through which material from community life enters into creative spaces are different in community-based theatre, artist-based theatre, and traditional cultural rituals or adaptations of them. Also, the site of transformation is often different: while artist-based theater focuses on transformations among audience members, rituals are designed to transform those who participate. Community-based theatre is generally focused on the empowerment and transformation of those directly involved, with the intention of also reaching their families, neighborhoods and communities.

Nevertheless, all three kinds of performances can be infused with the principles of the moral imagination, and can be crafted to contribute to the creative transformation of conflict. To strengthen the broad field of peacebuilding performance, we invite artists and cultural workers to suspend judgments and stereotypes about their different

approaches, and suggest that peacebuilders be exposed to strong examples of all kinds of performances, and cautions about their limitations. We recommend that opportunities be created to bring practitioners of artist-based, community-based and ritual productions be invited into conversation – with each other, and with peacebuilding practitioners. Educators and policy-makers have a role to play as well, teaching students about the value and limitations of each, and revising cultural policies and funding strategies to acknowledge and support the important contributions of all of these approaches, and increase cooperation among them.

5. The transformative power of the arts depends upon respect for the integrity of the artistic process. The issues confronting communities in the midst and aftermath of violence enter the performance space through many different channels. The case studies illustrate the importance of allowing material to arise from the non-conscious as well as conscious realms, so that information held within the tensions of bodies can be accessed and participants are not constrained by existing political discourse. Prescriptive and message- or agenda-driven theatre may have its place, but such initiatives that run the risk of insulting people's intelligence, undermining local cultural forms, and missing out on potential of performance to build relational and communicative capacities and engage people in exploring and thinking critically about ethical questions and dilemmas.

Effective peacebuilding work requires thinking strategically. This strategizing can be accomplished in ways that are consistent with the integrity of artistic and cultural processes. For instance, artists and peacebuilders can think together about who to invite as participants and audience members, about what kinds of exchanges might be most effective, about what kinds of post-performance dialogues are likely to be most effective. As the peacebuilding performance field grows stronger, we imagine that new collaborations will explore and document ways to engage more fully both the creative power of the aesthetic and the focused power of the strategic.

6. Performances could have a greater impact on societies in conflict if more non-arts agencies and organizations recognized their peacebuilding potential and helped to extend their reach. Under any circumstances, Yuyachkani's work in Peru inevitably would have had a profound effect on the individuals and communities that participated in and witnessed their performances; but the invitation from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission meant that their work could contribute to the inclusiveness and thoroughness of the entire country's official transitional justice process. Collaborations between human rights organizations and theatres in Serbia and Argentina helped to extend the reach and impact of performances. In the Netherlands, it was the government agencies responsible for promoting tolerance which provided the resources for the professional playwright and director; the Community Art Lab associated with the University of Utrecht and the Peace Treaty engaged in the extensive research that allowed the project and its effects on participants and communities to be thoroughly

documented.

Other players in society—educators, activists, community leaders, peacebuilding scholars, practitioners and policy-makers—have major roles to play in extending the contributions of peacebuilding performances to the transformation of conflict. They can bring artists to the tables where conflicts are being negotiated and decisions about public policy are made. They can facilitate the development of the physical infrastructure and networks of relationships required for the field to flourish. They can also notice artists and performances that are making positive contributions to social justice and to peace, and then support and amplify their work.

The challenge is to align the creativity, spontaneity and the heartfelt spirituality that animates performances with the purposeful strategies of activists, educators, facilitators of dialogue, and peacebuilders of all kinds. We believe that the transformative potential of the arts will be realized more fully when artists are invited into conversations where conflicts are analyzed and strategies are crafted, and when peacebuilding practitioners support artists in their communities to think about which different groups could be invited to participate, and how. The case studies in this volume suggest a range of approaches that are consistent with the artistic and cultural integrity that are the sources of a work's transformative power.

7. Peacebuilding performances bear witness to the human costs of war and oppression and to its gendered nature; they tell the stories not primarily of heads of state and military leaders, but rather of the children, women and men whose lives are diminished by the fear and humiliation, shame and dislocation that often accompany violence. Most of the case studies in this two-volume work include references to sexual assault and other acts of violence against women and children. We did not mention these themes in our call for case studies of peacebuilding performance; the emphasis on them was not by design.

This pattern is not surprising, however, especially given the nature of recent wars, more intra-state than inter-state, more likely to be focused on issues of culture, ethnicity, politics and religion than on nationalisms. In the wars of recent decades, rape has been used as a weapon of war and children have been abducted to be killers and sex-slaves. Millions of families have been uprooted from their homes. Taken as a whole, the case studies in this anthology open windows onto the experiences of global civil society; they allow us to witness how everyday people are experiencing the historical, cultural, economic and social forces that shape our world.

* * * * *

The recommendations in the next section of this chapter propose actions that can be taken to strengthen the field of peacebuilding performance. These recommendations emerge from an assessment of both the strengths and the limitations of the examples

documented in case studies in both volumes of this anthology; they are thematically linked with the ‘permeable membrane/moral imagination framework outlined in the previous chapter.

Recommendations

The framework proposed in the previous chapter, and the summary of learnings just above, suggest ways to strengthen peacebuilding performance field. The recommendations that follow are directed toward the multiple players whose policies and actions can influence the vitality and efficacy of peacebuilding performances. These players include policy-makers, funders, educators and students, practitioners, and advocates in the fields of arts and culture, conflict transformation and peacebuilding, as well as people in related fields such as human rights, trauma healing, transitional justice, youth and community development, gender equality, migration, refugee resettlement, recreation, and violence prevention.

These recommendations correspond generally to the ‘moral imagination/permeable membrane’ framework. More specific recommendations, organized according by stakeholders, can be found in the toolkit, in the final section of this volume.

1. Increase the likelihood that feelings, questions, issues, relationships, dilemmas, etc., that are central to communities in the midst of, or recovering from, direct and structural violence are brought into the creative time/space of peacebuilding performance. As was evident in the case studies in this volume, material from communities experiencing violence and injustice enters the space of peacebuilding performances through a variety of channels -- the stories of participants, through the bodies and consciousness of participants and witnesses, through human rights organizations and NGOs that commission or sponsor productions, through agencies affiliated with governments.

There are several strategies for increasing the likelihood that themes central to communities in conflict will be addressed and transformed in the crucible of performance. Knowledge about existing practices can be documented and disseminated, through written volumes, films and websites, and in particular through international theatre exchange, conferences and festivals. New productions can be stimulated through commissions, artist-in-residence programs, or support for collaborations among artists from opposing communities. Regional festivals—including performances, symposia, panels, training in theories and practice associated with peacebuilding and moral imagination—should be supported. Calls for productions can be framed in ways that engage artists’ creativity in exploring the key tensions or paradoxes inherent in peacebuilding performance, rather than being framed in terms that invite didactic or propagandistic works.

Collaboration between the fields of peacebuilding and performance should be

supported by, for instance, joint membership on advisory boards of projects, inviting artists to participate in regional assessments or fact-finding missions and problem-solving workshops, and inviting experienced facilitators of dialogue to lead workshops following performances. Cultural organizations and peacebuilding agencies can jointly plan outreach and dissemination strategies for cultural productions that are effective in peacebuilding terms, strategically composing audiences to include, for instance, opinion-shapers, educators, political leaders, people from opposing communities, etc.

We recommend that policy-makers and funders educate the NGO community, particularly in developing countries, about the possibilities and risks of performative approaches to peacebuilding. In particular, people in such organizations should understand the importance of recognizing and building on local cultural practices and the dangers of becoming agents of epistemic violence by imposing cultural forms that are foreign or do not resonate with local expression. NGO staff members should be introduced to the possibilities for performative approaches to development and conflict transformation that transcend the delivery of messages—and the potential of performance to restore and strengthen capacities, to grapple with ethical dilemmas, to mourn losses, to explore identities, etc. They should also be familiar with the needs (logistical, infrastructural, spatial, etc.) of peacebuilding performance artists, so as to better understand and support their work.

Educational and training programs for artists, cultural workers, practitioners of peacebuilding and related fields should include information about the nexus of the arts (and more specifically performance) and the creative transformation of conflict. At a minimum, such programs should expose students and trainees to possibilities; where possible, more nuanced understandings and skill-building can be included in syllabi and training protocols.

In some political environments, the suppressed stories and yearnings of communities fail to find sufficient expression in performances because repressive regimes attack artists or threaten to do so. The solution to the obstacle in such instances involves strengthening the international human rights protections, and the capacity of artists and peace-builders to respond when particular colleagues are in danger. New social media are being used to expand and strengthen the capacity of networks to respond when its members are arrested or threatened; effective strategies should be documented and shared as widely as possible.

2. Deepen moral imagination—i.e. the ethical understandings, capacities, skills and commitments—of artists, cultural leaders and peacebuilders who usher elements from the real world into the creative time/space of peace-building performance, facilitate transformations, and then propel transformed elements back into society.

As proposed by Lederach and elaborated on in this volume, the moral imagination refers to the capacity to simultaneously stay grounded in the real world, with its suffering and injustice, *and* envision and work toward a less violent, more generative,

social, cultural and political order. It is expressed in the actions and creative works of individuals, and has also been embedded in many of the cultural forms that emerge in communities, such as rituals, symbolic gestures of reconciliation, protocols for decision-making, etc. Impulses to “make it better” or to “sort out” what needs to be sorted are basic expressions of this ethical intention.

Effective peace-building requires both openness to serendipity and the discipline of analysis-informed strategy. It requires attunement to the political and aesthetic sensibilities of different constituencies, and also the capacity to articulate unpopular ideas in ways that open people to consider them.

Peacebuilders, including artist/peace-builders, need opportunities for disciplined thinking about the interdependence of all parties (even current enemies) and the importance of embracing paradox as one resource helpful in meeting the underlying needs of all parties. They need opportunities to understand the tensions that confront communities in times of conflict, and ways of thinking about how to balance competing imperatives about justice, memory, identity, and resistance, etc.

How can such abilities be strengthened? Part of the answer lies in investing in the on-going education of practitioners of peace-building performance. We recommend that funders, university programs, professional organizations, policy-makers, and large NGOs develop and support sustained communities of inquiry in which, over time, sufficient trust can be developed for practitioners to articulate their doubts as well as share accomplishments. We also recommend:

- collaborations among artists, ritual leaders and peace-builders;
- education and training for students and practitioners in the concepts, skills and sensibilities of the moral imagination
- support for apprenticeship and mentoring opportunities
- dissemination through accessible media of stories of peacebuilding
- performances that exemplify aspects of the moral imagination
- creating opportunities for theater reviewers to learn about and use this framework
- support for festivals, symposia, and panels at relevant conferences (in both performance and peace-building fields) that investigate aspects of the moral imagination and how the arts can reflect and cultivate it
- specific lines of funding for peace-building performance in granting programs at private and public agencies and foundations
- prizes and other public recognition for artists and peace-builders whose work embodies these values.

3. Recognize, support, establish and enhance opportunities for the creative time/space of peacebuilding performance, taking precautions to minimize the risk of doing harm. Minimize the use of didactic and propagandistic works that fail to engage the transformative potential of theatre and ritual.

In many conflict regions around the world, peace-building performances of various kinds—indigenous rituals, community-based performances, artist-based performances—already exist. Peace-building agencies should seek out and assess such practices and, where appropriate and feasible, consider offering support. This support could usefully take the form of infrastructure (rehearsal and performance spaces, assistance with publicity and outreach, etc.), access for artists and cultural workers to relevant peacebuilding theory and practice, invitations for collaborations or partnerships of various kinds and funding.

Educators and trainers in both performance and conflict transformation fields should ensure that emerging and experienced practitioners are aware of performative approaches to conflict transformation, of their value and of opportunities to develop the skills and ethical sensibilities required for to engage in this work and to craft effective collaborations.

Artists, ritual leaders and cultural workers on the one hand, and practitioners of peace-building and related fields on the other, should seek each other out to share perceptions of issues, opportunities and dynamics, and to explore the possibility of collaborating in ways that would contribute to the creative transformation of conflict.

While it is possible to create performances that “deliver messages of peace,” it is important to remember the depth and nuance offered by performative approaches. As the case studies in this volume illustrate, cultural productions can be crafted to nourish communicative capacities, to heal traumas, to raise difficult questions, suggest nuanced approaches to potentially divisive issues, to mediate tensions between competing imperatives. They can employ the full range of aesthetic resources—pacing, tone of voice, colors, symbols, costumes, lighting, music, etc.—to engage the attention, imagination and presence of diverse audiences.

It is important to make every effort to “do no harm.” Given the potential of performance to touch people deeply, to bring suppressed issues to the surface and make them available for conversation, it is especially important for people working in this field to be seek training in basic skills associated with trauma, with the facilitation of contentious conversations. Artists and peace-builders should be aware of their own subjectivities and biases, and seek to understand as deeply as possible the cultural, historical and political dynamics of the context in which they are working and any institutional and political agendas they might be supporting with or without their knowledge. Both “insiders” and “outsiders” to conflict regions face challenges in this regard; it is especially important for outsiders to proactively research the risks that local people might face and to discuss these openly with potential participants.

4. Ensure that material that has been transformed in the crucible of peacebuilding performances not only reaches many people, but also reaches key stakeholders; make sure that it strengthens important inter-communal relationships and stimulates necessary discussions, and that new ideas and relationships are

supported to take root in conversations and actions in the real world.

The psychological, educational and interpersonal work involved in developing peace-building performances is substantial. In a sense, ensembles of artists and/or community participants allow their own bodies and consciousnesses to become sites of learning and transformation in relation to issues and questions that whole communities need to confront. Much of this investment falls short of its transformative potential if performances reach audiences limited in size, diversity and/or ability to influence the dynamics of the conflict.

While artists and arts organizations can and do accomplish a great deal to generate audiences and extend the reach of their work, the case studies in this volume illustrate that peacebuilding agencies and organizations also play crucial roles in reaching large, diverse and influential audiences. We see this as an important and often-overlooked opportunity for non-arts policy-makers and organizations to contribute to the effectiveness of this field of work by, for instance, coordinating tours for exemplary productions, contributing to the composition of post-production conversations, arranging for groups from opposing communities to attend performances and meet each other afterwards, inviting government officials, security personnel, and community leaders to attend performances, etc.

Cultural and peace-building organizations can extend the effectiveness of theatrical works and rituals by offering information about specific ways in which those who witness and participate can learn more and take action in the world. Program notes, lobby displays, websites related to productions, follow-up events, etc., all offer support for people to become involved and act on new-found understandings.

In contexts of polarized communities and discourses, artists are uniquely well-suited to interpret the cultural expressions of adversaries to skeptical members of audiences on opposing sides.

The transformations in consciousness of those most intimately involved in productions are likely to be the greatest. We recommend that artists and peacebuilders and their organizations seek opportunities to document these changes, and to make the stories of these transformations accessible—through program notes, newspaper articles, documentaries, talk-back sessions, interviews in the media, etc. Work undertaken at the individual level to embrace seemingly contradictory narratives, for instance, or to mourn losses, or re-frame identities, is sometimes communicated through the production itself. But often, this work is necessary, but tangential to the issues raised by the performance. Especially in these instances, the impact of the overall project could be greatly enhanced if the stories of these personal transformations—the ethical dilemmas, the resistances and breakthroughs, the retreats as well as advances—could be documented and shared in accessible and compelling ways. This would allow transformations accomplished on the individual and interpersonal level to fulfill more completely their potential to contribute to collective psycho-social change.

5. Strengthen the emerging field of peacebuilding performance and work at the nexus of the arts and social transformation more generally.

When Theatre Without Borders and Brandeis' Coexistence International—initiated the dialogues that ultimately gave rise to this anthology, the intention was to support a community of inquiry—a group of professionals with shared interests who would likely benefit from listening in on each other's reflections on their work. What has emerged five years later is the shared sense that a social movement of peacebuilding performers is emerging, a global web of people and organizations discovering the shared values and intentions that bring their efforts into alignment, eager for opportunities to acknowledge and explore dilemmas and to reflect, both appreciatively and critically, on practice.

This emerging field, or social movement, warrants acknowledgement, attention and support. Policy-makers, funders, educators, practitioners and advocates—from both performance and conflict transformation fields—all have roles to play. We recommend the following strategies and directions

- Create and support centers, in universities and other stable institutions, where the practice of peacebuilding performance can be documented and shared, where critical self-reflection can be supported, where methods of assessment can be tested, where emerging artist/peacebuilders can be educated, and where the discourses and practices of performance and of peacebuilding (and other related fields such as development) can be brought into generative and useful relationship. Such centers can serve as hubs for communication, learning and research, grounding a field that, by its nature, shifts and reconfigures itself in response to political dynamics and community needs.
- Support practitioners working at the nexus of peace-building and performance to articulate the theories of change implicit in their work. Less experienced practitioners are eager to hear stories about how more experienced practitioners initially became involved in this field of work; more experienced practitioners continue to find value in learning more about how their colleagues think about and understand their own efforts. Practitioners working in this field should be challenged to think creatively about meaningful ways to document and assess not only the aesthetic power of their work, but its effectiveness in terms of transformations at personal, relational, structural and cultural levels. Such questions need to be posed in ways that respect the integrity of artistic and cultural productions, and that acknowledge the value of aesthetic excellence on its own terms as well.
- Facilitate exchange among and between theatre artists, facilitators of ritual and peacebuilding scholars and practitioners, by building on established festivals, conferences and apprenticeship and exchange programs, etc., along with generating new opportunities when necessary. Cross-border exchanges should be based on principles of reciprocity and mutual respect, undertaken with sensitivity to dynamics of power and cultural differences. Even the relatively small number of case studies

documented in this volume suggest powerful opportunities for “south-south” exchanges.

- Incorporate knowledge about peace-building performance into education and training programs related to fields such as conflict transformation, social inclusion, performance and cultural production.
- Support the development of resources and toolkits, such as books, films, websites, policy briefs, journals and curricula.
- Validate and acknowledge the contributions of ritual, community-based theater and artist-based theatre.

In terms of the changes required to transform a violent conflict, each performance in this anthology embodies both possibilities and limitations. We hope that by bringing them into relationship, and offering a framework, we are suggesting lines of inquiry for reflection on the part of both scholars and practitioners, in both peacebuilding and performance fields. But this chapter is far from an exhaustive treatment—even an entire volume could not cover the rich material presented in the fourteen case studies! We hope, rather, to suggest trajectories for further documentation, reflection and experimentation.

HEALING PERFORMANCE: MEMORIAL CEREMONIES AND RELATIONAL HEALING

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Introduction

In the United States and Australia, a number of Indigenous and Settler peoples are coming together in rituals and ceremonies designed to address colonial injustices and the resulting damaged relationships. These processes are ‘transforming rituals’ – they aim to disrupt the status quo: the alienation and structural violence that mark relationships between many people in these groups. These ceremonies, importantly, are sites of *social healing*, dealing with ‘wounds created by conflict, collective trauma and large-scale oppression.’¹ I maintain that they are also sites of relational healing, dealing with wounded spaces/places in relation to the people in relationship with those Places.

Ceremonies are particularly well suited to transforming conflict in these contexts. They have always been at the heart of Indigenous cosmologies, facilitating celebration and revitalization of relationships with the natural and spiritual worlds. Ceremony and ritual have also been key processes in Indigenous peacemaking and conflict transformation for thousands of years.² And a growing number of Western peacemakers and conflict-resolution scholars are focusing on the peace-building potential of ritual and ceremony.

In this paper, I discuss four annual memorial ceremonies that take place in Australia and the United States. All integrate aspects social healing: significant dialogue, resilience in the face of ongoing violence, and purposeful action.³ I also explore processes involved in these ceremonies which extend beyond social healing, linking the healing of place with social and individual healing. In the following section, I describe the ceremonies themselves. In the second section I explore stories which illustrate the ways in which these ceremonies effect social and relational healing.

Two Rivers Powwow

In the United States, in Twisp, Washington, a group of Methow Indians, other Native peoples, and Settler-descended peoples have been meeting since 2000, sharing rituals of story, deep listening, and communal meals. The culmination of these processes is the annual Two Rivers Powwow, a weave of traditional Native ceremonies and new

¹ (Thompson, cited in John Paul Lederach and Angela Jill Lederach, *When Blood and Bones Cry Out: Journeys Through the Soundscape of Healing and Reconciliation*, Brisbane: Penguin Books Australia (2010: 7).

² Walker, Polly O. 2010, ‘Native Peacemaking,’ *Online Encyclopedia of Peacemaking Psychology*.

³ Lederach & Lederach p. 7.

reconciliation rituals involving Settler and Native peoples. The Two Rivers Powwow is held at the confluence of the Methow and Twisp Rivers, a site of significance for the Methow people. The gathering represents a symbolic “coming home,” as the Methow are formally welcomed into places from which they were forcibly driven by the United States Army in 1886. Throughout the powwow, Native drum groups play, traditional Native meals are shared with descendents of Settlers, and Native giveaway ceremonies are performed. These traditional ceremonies are interwoven with new rituals that integrate Settler descendents: telling the silenced histories of the Methow people and their removal from the valley, apologies on the part of Settlers, and the enacting of new relationships of mutuality through symbolic gift giving and through affirmations of new, more just and equitable relationships.

Myall Creek Massacre Memorial

At Myall Creek in New South Wales, Australia, a memorial is held each year in June, marking stockmen’s brutal massacre of Aboriginal people, mostly old men, women and children, which occurred there in 1838. The memorial involves traditional and contemporary Aboriginal and Settler ritual and ceremony, bringing together descendents of the victims and survivors of the massacre with settler Australians, including descendents of the perpetrators of the massacre. The memorial begins with a pilgrimage to the foot of the hill overlooking the massacre site. There the participants pass through the cleansing smoke of gum leaves, an ancient and contemporary Aboriginal ritual. Then they walk the winding path to the top of the hill overlooking the massacre site. Pairs of young people, both Aboriginal and those of Settler descent, read the history of the massacre and the secret wars waged against Aborigines. This ritual marks each of the 7 memorial plaques along the path. Finally, participants gather at a monolithic stone directly above the massacre site and are greeted by the bass song of an Aboriginal bullroarer. An Aboriginal elder and descendent of survivors of the massacre explains to those present that the bullroarer “is informing the spirits of the Aboriginal dead that we have come to perform the ceremony, and calling everyone to be respectfully quiet.”⁴

As well as honoring the dead, the Myall Creek Massacre ceremony facilitates people expressing their commitment to actions that address contemporary violence and injustice toward Aboriginal peoples living today. Based on the social healing and restorative justice outcomes of The Myall Creek Massacre memorial, it was awarded the Australians for Reconciliation award in 2008.

Stolen Generations Ceremonies

In 1998 in Brisbane, Australia, then Lord Mayor James Soorley collaborated with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members of the Stolen Generations to create

⁴ Friends of Myall Creek Memorial, *Myall Creek Memorial Annual Service of Commemoration Program* (2006), 1.

ceremonies on the sites of former children's homes where Indigenous children were placed when they were removed, often forcibly and without consent, from their parents. The ceremonies held across the city included traditional Aboriginal rituals and the creation of respectful spaces for contemporary members of the Stolen Generations to tell their stories. The rituals also gave voice to the largely silenced histories of Australian governmental policies between 1900 and the late 1970's which legalized forced removal Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families, language and culture. In the memorial ceremonies, Brisbane government officials, civic, church and community leaders apologized, acknowledging the hurt and pain they caused these children, their families and their extended communities. These officials sought forgiveness and pledged themselves to the processes of reconciliation, social justice and cultural healing. In one particularly moving ceremony, Lord Mayor Soorley presented the keys of the city to Aboriginal and Torres Strait elders, a symbolic act of restorative justice to people who had grown up under laws which required them to stay outside of the city boundaries after dark. Since the initial memorial ceremonies, rituals have been held annually on the sites of the former children's homes, renewing relationships and commitment to social justice between Indigenous and Settler Australians.

Nez Perce Memorial

The annual Nez Perce Memorial Ceremony is held at Ft. Vancouver in Vancouver, Washington. It honors the Nez Perce people who were unjustly incarcerated in the War of 1877. During this war, the US military sought but failed to capture Chief Joseph, the leader of the Nez Perce band who was fighting the US Army. In frustration, US Army General Howard captured and incarcerated Red Heart's Band, a peaceful group of Indians who were on their way to a reservation. While Red Heart's Band was held in the stockade for 18 months, they were put on display, ridiculed and shamed. Living in harsh conditions, one of their members, a young boy, died and was buried there in an unmarked grave. These injustices, among many others inflicted on the Nez Perce, left deep grief and unresolved pain and grievances among members of the Nez Perce Nation. In the Ft. Vancouver memorial ceremonies, Nez Perce and settlers, including descendents of people on both sides of the war, tell the history of the oppression of the Nez Perce, they celebrate new more just relationships, and honor the Native peoples who were dishonored throughout colonization. The memorial is based in traditional Nez Perce rituals, including the empty saddle ceremony which pays respect to those who have passed away. New reconciliation rituals are also performed, including the giving of gifts which symbolize resilience in the face of loss, and the celebration of new relationships of mutuality.

Social Healing and Memorial Ceremonies

The kinds of transformations arising out of these ceremonies are in part, what John Paul Lederach describes as social healing which “requires a focus on the local community that takes seriously their lived experience in settings of protracted conflict, with their inevitable need to survive and locate both the individual and collective voice.”⁵ These social healing processes are “an intermediary phenomenon located between micro-individual healing and wider collective reconciliation.”⁶ As will be seen in the stories of participants in these ceremonies, the social healing evidenced in these ceremonies involves spaces processes which build:

1. meaningful dialogue,
2. resiliency in the face of violence
3. purposeful action to redress contemporary and historical violence.”⁷

Meaningful Dialogue: Describe Both before and within Ceremonies

The dialogue that takes place in these memorial ceremonies is not always verbalized. Sometimes it is spoken – at other times it is embodied and symbolic, as will be seen in the illustrative examples in this section.

In the USA and Australia, meaningful dialogue between Indigenous and Settler peoples requires effective worldviewing skills, the negotiation of different social worlds, including different epistemologies. One of the primary weapons of colonization was the marginalization and suppression of Indigenous ways of knowing, and contemporary people have been left with these legacies of epistemic violence toward Indigenous peoples.

Ceremony may be a particularly effective way of reducing epistemic violence between Settler and Indigenous peoples, in part because the time-space of ceremony promotes a shared epistemology. For example, many Native American and Aboriginal Australian ways of knowing seek a balance of mental, physical, spiritual, and emotional experience. Similarly, Western performance studies scholar Tom Driver explains that ceremony and ritual are holistic processes that integrate “the psychological, the socio-political and the material worlds.”⁸ Lisa Schirch also describes ritual as involving “people’s minds, bodies, all or many of their senses, and their emotions.”⁹ Given these similarities, ceremonies may be more likely than mainstream conflict-resolution techniques to facilitate processes which are respectful of Indigenous worldviews.

⁵ Lederach & Lederach *When Blood and Bones Cry Out* p. 7

⁶ Lederach & Lederach *When Blood and Bones Cry Out* p. 6.

⁷ Lederach & Lederach *When Blood and Bones Cry Out* p. 7.

⁸ Tom F. Driver, *Magic of Ritual: Our Need for Liberating Rites That Transform Our Lives and Our Communities* (New York, NY: Harper San Francisco, 1991), 175.

⁹ Schirch, *Ritual and Symbol in Peacebuilding* (Bloomfield, CT: Kumarian Press, 2005), 157.

Reducing epistemic violence may be one of the most powerful contributions that these ceremonies make toward peacebuilding, given the enduring damage and pain it has caused Native peoples. In the United States and Australia, epistemic violence was evident in the planned extinction of Indigenous ways of knowing and being. Richard Pratt, superintendent of one of the largest Indian boarding schools in the United States, summed up the policies there in this way: “Kill the Indian and save the man.”¹⁰ Policies of both planned and “unthinking” disrespect and suppression of Indigenous worldviews are some of the most painful legacies of colonization. The respectful engagement with Indigenous epistemology that is evidenced through the ceremonies described in this paper reduces violence toward Indigenous peoples’ ways of knowing as both Indigenous and Settler peoples witness and participate in Indigenous peoples’ traditional rituals that would have been unacceptable to many—and in most cases illegal—only a few generations ago. These ceremonies could be classified as “transforming rituals”¹¹ - they challenge the continuing marginalization of Indigenous ways of knowing in Australia and the United States.

Facilitating respectful engagement with Indigenous worldviews is not an attempt to “romance the Native.” Rather, it is a cogent and practical process supported by emergent conflict-transformation research, as peacebuilding scholar Cynthia Cohen explains.

. . . even after our intentions not to harm the other are firm, further steps are required to warrant a former adversaries’ trust. To avoid offending or violating the other unintentionally, we must learn about the other’s systems of meaning (i.e., the myths, the narratives and symbol systems that inform and reveal the perspective of the other.) To become worthy of the trust of someone who has been an enemy requires coming to know them and the world through their eyes.¹²

Participants in the ceremonies in the Twisp Valley region share stories of respectfully engaging with Indigenous people’s ways of knowing and being, which may be quite different from Western worldviews. Phill Downey, one of the first non-native members of the reconciliation group there, explains the importance of acknowledging and honoring Native concepts of time in the conflict transformation taking place in the area. He states:

¹⁰ “‘Kill the Indian, and Save the Man’: Capt. Richard H. Pratt on the Education of Native Americans,” accessed January 18, 2010: <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/4929/>.

¹¹ Schirch, *Ritual and Symbol in Peacebuilding*, 23.

¹² Cynthia E. Cohen, *A Poetics of Reconciliation: The Aesthetic Mediation of Conflict*. (Ph.D. diss., University of New Hampshire, 1997), 71.

And with the Natives, you know, they have their own way of doing things and it's generally very lengthy. But they're not wanting white people to come in and fix it for them. I think if you have white people that come in and can just mix with them, and just do the things that they are doing, I think that in itself is a healing for both. And that's just what we've tried to do. We haven't tried to influence them to our way, we've tried to blend in."¹³

Cheryl Race, another member of the reconciliation group in the Twisp Valley, describes how the non-Native people in the group strive to understand and respond respectfully to Native cyclical concepts of time, which differ starkly from linear, time-urgent Western concepts. Cheryl explains that part of their work in reconciliation is to engender understanding of and respect for Native concepts of the flux that characterizes "right time":¹⁴

. . . . As we work at the powwow . . . we have people constantly, from this area, or visitors, come up and say, "So what time is this happening? Isn't it past time?" We're five years into this relationship, and it's hard to go back to square one and explain. I try my best, and I've learned really well from Steve and Georgia (Iukes) that they truly believe that what happens when it happens is what needs to happen.¹⁵

In these memorial ceremonies, meaningful dialogue also involves creating venues for voicing and witnessing silenced or marginalized indigenous narratives. Alan Pinkham, Nez Perce, describes the role these unheard stories play in social healing between Native and Settler peoples:

Although we cannot correct the past, we can express the problems in order to set them aside and create greater understanding between cultures. We can build relationships that will be better for all. Let's remember these untold stories. Remembrance is not a question of blame, it is an attempt to alleviate a deeply embedded pain, a cultural pain that affects the very core of Native American society.¹⁶

Flo Watson, an Aboriginal woman of the Sunset Yulangi people and member of the Stolen Generations in Australia also maintains that sharing silenced stories of

¹³ Phill Downey, interview with the author, April 28, 2007.

¹⁴ John Paul Lederach, *The Moral Imagination: the Art and Soul of Building Peace* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 133.

¹⁵ Cheryl Race, interview with the author. April 30, 2007

¹⁶ Pinkham, Alan, *Ft. Vancouver newsletter*.

Indigenous peoples' loss in an atmosphere of respect facilitates social healing. She is describing her experience of the ceremonies for the Stolen Generations held in Brisbane, Australia:

I have found that we each need healing ourselves before we can be really effective in healing the wounds of colonisation. We heal when we are allowed to tell our personal stories in an atmosphere of respect. And when we tell our stories, it helps us to move on when non-Aboriginal people acknowledge the reality of our history and the pain we suffer because of it, and work with us to improve our lives. I experienced all of these in the Ceremony at Teralba Park, as a member of the Stolen Generations.

Healing the Wounds

On the 8th of March
This year, you know
When the Lord Mayor marched.
We walked from Musgrave Park
To King George Square.
There were five thousand people
To welcome us there.
People involved in the Stolen Generation.

He was the only one that ever said sorry
To the Stolen Generation.
He had a series of breakfasts,
He had a lot of events in all the parks
Where the stolen kids were taken.

I remember helping with the one
At Teralba Park.
That was a very moving experience for me.
It healed a lot of wounds.
It touched a lot of our hearts.¹⁷

As evidenced in Flo's story, sometimes the dialogue in these ceremonies is performative in nature, integrating ritual and spoken communication. In the next excerpt, the Mayor of Vancouver Washington, Royce Pollard, describes the performative dialogue that takes place in the Nez Perce Memorials:

¹⁷ Watson, Flo, Interview with author, Brisbane, Qld., 1999.

And we agreed to have a ceremony of reconciliation. It had been well over a hundred years since the Nez Perce Nation had been to Vancouver. And they held a grudge against this community that whole time. And together we brought the Nez Perce from Lapwai Idaho . . . to Vancouver. And they bring tribal members, they bring horses. They ask us for very little. We offer, they never take anything. The local Native American Veterans Organization puts on a big Salmon Bake after they're done. The community is invited, and they dance and play music. We pass the Pipe among veterans and have traditional ceremonies. The horses parade. The Nez Perce, well Native Americans, they don't let the weather bother them. I mean, I've sat out there in 2 hours of rain. And I've sat out there in three hours of baking sun. And we have a great time, and then we go into the Mess Hall facilities and we enjoy each other's company . . . It has added a new dimension of understanding to this community which we did not have.¹⁸

As can be seen in these illustrative examples drawn from these memorial ceremonies, in contexts involving Indigenous and Settler people, effective dialogue includes: the reduction of epistemic violence toward Indigenous peoples' ways of knowing, performative and verbal dialogue, and the creation of respectful spaces for voicing and witnessing marginalized Indigenous narratives.

Resilience in the face of violence

In these memorial ceremonies resilience is often demonstrated through forgiveness on the part of Indigenous participants. Horace Axtell, Nez Perce elder and spiritual leader of the Ft. Vancouver Memorial, explains that this kind of resilience is challenging to maintain.

I have to go back here, back to the old traditional spirituality, where we are taught forgiveness. We have to forgive before the sun sets . . . you have to forgive but it's difficult, especially at times like we're talking about. I hear from a lot of places and I understood from my elders, that is hard to forgive the unforgivable, but you have to do it. They (non-Native participants in the ceremonies) are just like family to us now. And they feel that way with us, too, so . . . it all comes together when the right things take place.¹⁹

¹⁸ Royce Pollard, Interview with author, Vancouver, WA, 2007.

¹⁹ Horace Axtell, Interview with author, Vancouver, WA, 2007.

Resilience is also demonstrated through the creation of places of healing which shift relationships with places of great wounding. In the following excerpt, Vancouver Mayor Royce Pollard describes the creation of a memorial that encourages people to develop reflexive capacity in regard to injustices committed by American forces at Ft. Vancouver:

General Howard was so frustrated that he couldn't catch Chief Joseph in The War of 1877. He gave orders that "We need to take some prisoners." (You know we do that frequently in The American Army.) And they couldn't catch any real warriors, so they took this Band of Chief Red Heart's, old men and women and children trying to make their way back to the reservation and brought them here, 29 people to Vancouver Barracks. And I would say a disgraceful blow to the United States' Army (and we've done this on occasion). They were badly mistreated. They were put on public display in this community. They were never tried. A small Nez Perce boy died while he was here, buried some place that we don't know. And a few years ago the Nez Perce and the City commemorated that small boy with a dedication of a bench and three trees down in the historic area and a large granite slab in the ground in both Nez Perce and English which talks about this (silence history). People come here and sit in the shade of the trees, read this history, reflect and discuss it. We've moved beyond reconciliation, we've moved into relationship.²⁰

In the memorial ceremonies discussed in this paper, participants demonstrate resilience in dealing with latent colonial violence. They create transformative spaces and processes for voicing silenced narratives of injustice and for nurturing collaborative relationships with descendants of enemies.

Purposeful Action to Redress Contemporary and Historical Violence

Social Healing requires a range of purposeful action to redress both historical and contemporary violence. In these memorial ceremonies participants commit themselves to address all forms of injustice experienced by Indigenous peoples in their communities. For example, in the Myall Creek Memorial Ceremony, all participants are invited to recite, and then put into action, the following commitments:

We acknowledge that we still have a long way to go in building a society where people have comparable opportunities to develop their innate potential. We are here today to commit ourselves again in the hard work of

²⁰ Royce Pollard, Interview with author, Vancouver, WA, 2007.

reconciliation between our peoples. We remember the past so that we may understand the present. We commit ourselves to the tasks of the present so that our children and grandchildren may have a better tomorrow.²¹ We will continue our journey, searching our own hearts and reflecting on our own attitudes which alienate us from one another. Together we will work for a future in which we are all able to contribute our gifts to this nation. We will work to end the injustices and prejudices which continue to sideline indigenous people. We will learn and teach the paths of justice, respect and reconciliation so that we may walk together down this road. We will work till a person's lot is no longer determined by their ancestry or skin color; and young people no longer bear a grudge against the society because it treats their history and culture unfairly. We will work 'til the history of 60,000 years is honored together with the history of the last two centuries; 'til the glorious parts are celebrated with pride, and the dishonorable parts are acknowledged with shame.²²

As ritual scholar Tom Driver suggests, ceremony can be a powerful force,²³ markedly changing not only individuals, but the societies in which they live. Some of these transformations are evidenced in people's increased engagement with processes of social justice. A number of the people involved in the ceremonies described in this paper recount ways in which they have taken their commitment into the wider community and are working to effect reconciliation and build a just peace.

Paradoxically, these transformational ceremonies may at times seem to exacerbate conflict between Indigenous and Settler people. In colonized countries, Indigenous peoples are often marginalized and the issues they face are suppressed within the wider community. In these situations, historical and latent conflicts must be made visible before they can be addressed. In the Twisp Valley, for example, Carolyn Schmekel describes how their group worked to raise awareness of the historical and contemporary violence against the Methow Indians who formerly lived in the valley:

Some people would be saying, "Well, what conflict? There's no conflict. There's not anybody around to be conflicting with." And so really what we did is we created a situation where there could be conflict, saying, "Well we need to get together with these folks." We could have just said, "Everybody is fine. We're here (Settler peoples in the Methow Valley). They're there (Native peoples on the reservation). Everything is fine. Everybody's got their

²¹ Friends of Myall Creek Memorial, *Commemoration Program*, 2006, 2.

²² Friends of Myall Creek Memorial, *Commemoration Program*, 2006, 4.

²³ Driver, *Magic of Ritual*, 166–192.

lives and that's the way it goes." However, a huge, huge, thing is missing from the fabric of what our valley should be, and it's just too sad to let that happen.²⁴

Another purposeful action to address historical violence is creating Inclusive histories, which is an aspect of all of the ceremonies discussed in this paper. Donna Sinclair, staff member of the Center for Columbia River History, describes her vision for a history inclusive of Indigenous perspectives of Ft. Vancouver.

Perhaps as community members and tourists travel down the tree-lined streets of Officer's Row at Ft. Vancouver, the images they see in the park-like setting will include not only United States military leaders like General Howard, but also Native American leaders like Red Heart. In an inclusive history, visions of military battles would be accompanied by the recollection of an innocent groups' daily confinement and an infant's funeral held in "true Indian style."²⁵

Symbolic action is an integral part of redressing historical violence in these ceremonies. Wilfred Scott, Nez Perce Tribal Chairman at the time of the first Ft. Vancouver memorial, describes the deep importance of symbolism in building significant relationships between members of former enemy groups:

When we went over there to the first Memorial . . . the Nez Perce People, when we do these memorials we have a lot giveaways. In honor of that young boy that was buried there at Vancouver, a two year old, we took a little Pendleton blanket. We put it on a chair and put it out there on the Buffalo Robe. So when we'd done our horse ceremony and our people had done the sharing of their gifts, I asked for somebody with a two year old, or a baby, to come forward. When she got up, she was sitting on the far side of the circle, and she came across and she had that little baby boy with a blanket wrapped around him, she was packing him and when she came across and I asked her for her name...and as soon as she said, "Mary Wood" I knew who she was (direct descendent of US cavalry staff in the war of 1877). She's been a supporter of the memorial every year since it started. She holds a dinner the night before, so Friday night everybody is invited out there. They have their own house that they call "Woods Landing." They have a creek there. They call it Chief Joseph's Creek and that's their place . . . That's how our relationship came about, and it's been a good relationship, a good experience.²⁶

²⁴ Schmekel, interview with author, 2007.

²⁵ Donna Sinclair, Ft. Vancouver Newsletter.

²⁶ Wilfed Scott, interview with author, 2007.

Sometimes the social healing in these ceremonies involves new kinship relationships as well as more general types of relationships. For example, Beulah Adams, one of the descendents of the perpetrators of the Myall Creek massacre, has been adopted into a kinship network of the Aboriginal people who were survivors and victims of the massacre. Beulah explains how this took place when she attended a dialogue for the first memorial:

“Lyall and Sue and the Aboriginals actually said that I was to become their sister, a member of the Wiriyaraay tribe. I’ve never had a sister and Sue said, “I would like you to be my sister.”²⁷

In the flux of space and time that is facilitated through ritual, participants have the freedom to perform new identities such as that of kin, rather than “other,” which they may continue to nurture after the ritual or ceremony is completed.

Participants in these ceremonies describe the rebuilding of social networks that are occurring through these gatherings. Carolyn Schmekel talks about the links between social/economic well-being and honouring the Indigenous peoples involved in the Two Rivers Powwow.

I think most of the Native people we’ve met that are interested in this are interested in it because they see it as helping their people . . . that’s the only reason . . . they believe that rooted some of the issues of keeping people in poverty and an inability to move on is the pain and hurt from prior conflicts that have not been resolved. So I think that is why so many of these people have finally come to a point where they say, “This is the only way we can move forward and find a new place to be in the world.”

Carolyn goes on to describe how the reconciliation group has begun to heal the damage that has been done to the social fabric of the Twisp Valley with the removal of the Methow Indians from the Valley,

We feel like something is missing here and we’re kind of poorer because of what’s missing, so let’s talk about it, or find about how this can be part of our life here²⁸

Purposeful action may be quite dramatic, as in new legislation being passed to redress colonial injustice, or Settler people being adopted into Indigenous families. However, at times, purposeful action of significance may seem quite simple/everyday. Participants in these ceremonies explain that relationships are facilitated through rituals

²⁷ Adams, Interview with author, 2007.

²⁸ Schmekel, interview with author, 2007.

such as meal sharing, as well as the more complex ceremonies described in this paper. Lisa Schirch describes the ways in which seemingly simple processes can support the transformation of complex conflicts, such as those between Indigenous and Settler peoples:

. . . informal rituals of eating, drinking, walking and relaxing together are essential to a process designed to transform awareness of issues of race, class and politics—for they allow space for building relationships.²⁹

Carolyn Schmekel describes how the Two Rivers rituals of eating meals together, sharing stories, and deep listening have facilitated respectful relationships between the Native Americans and Settler peoples involved. She emphasizes the central role of the relationships that developed out of smaller rituals leading up to the ceremony:

The ceremony [the Two Rivers Powwow] was a culmination, a stake in the ground to say, “this happened here.” But all that led up to it was really part of it. . . . What had to happen was a safe place and a place where you could say whatever you were going to say and it was okay. And that meant that . . . as immigrants (which I’m not one because part of me is rooted here for thousands of years) we would have to sit and hear how unwelcome we are at this point and how angry people are at what the immigrants have done. And to just sit there and listen and not come up with excuses or reasons or defenses, and that’s pretty hard, that’s pretty painful. It’s hard not to say, “Well I’m not the one that did that.” . . . So here it is. Here it is. Let’s just listen, understand and say, “Okay is there anything to be done?” Well, what we found out through all these talks, there was nothing to be done about it, except relationship. That all it came down to is: I want you to hear, I want you to understand where I am coming from, and I don’t you to walk off. I want you to still be there, and be there, and be there, and be there. That’s why seven years of being there [has led to this relationship]. A lot of White people have been willing to be there. And Native people have been willing to be there and hang out. And the ceremonies (which could be any number of ones that we’ve just talked about—the naming, the gifting, the honoring the Vets, which is a huge important ceremony), all of these ceremonies are just the celebration really of the fact that we are still hanging out.³⁰

²⁹ Schirch, *Ritual and Symbol in Peacebuilding*, 12.

³⁰ Schmekel, Interview with the author, 2007.

These ceremonies have also engendered significant social action in other locations, as John Brown of the Myall Creek Massacre Memorial explains how other ceremonies which memorialize massacres of Indigenous peoples are being patterned after the one at Myall Creek:

Some of the people who have come there have come from long distances, interstate, to be there. I've heard them tell me afterwards that they went back and began to work on issues in their own area, or, in another case, to build another memorial (in relation to a massacre) . . . over on the coast at Ballina.

John goes on to describe people's commitment to an ongoing search for justice, which he has observed in the rituals of the Myall Creek Memorial:

The Myall Creek Massacre monument is on public land, it's a public memorial . . . we hold a service there. . . . Which again, is a clear, brief acknowledgement both of the history and of the continuing struggles for justice.

So that ceremony is not simply an acknowledgement of the past but it's a re-commitment of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people together, to work for more justice. I don't know whether you ever have absolute justice but you can at least get more justice, or a more just resolution of issues. And so that ceremony is a re-commitment of people to those goals every year. . .³¹

Significant social justice initiatives have risen from the Myall Creek Massacre Memorial. A group called Friends of Myall Creek is politically active in the New South Wales Parliament, bringing wider recognition to reconciliation and social justice processes through a series of discussions in the state parliament. They also have plans to reach a wider audience by building a historical center at Myall Creek and developing a feature-length film about the peace-building and restorative justice processes taking place there.

There are also a number of restorative justice initiatives growing out of the rituals and ceremonies in the Methow Valley. The Native and Settler people involved in the reconciliation processes there have developed legal agreements for sustainable access for the Methow people to gather traditional foods, in particular roots, from lands now owned by ranchers and residential estates. These agreements both respect the traditional, and often ceremonial, root gathering of the Methow, as well as homeowner and rancher interests. In other restorative justice processes in the Methow Valley, land has been donated for a Methow Indian Cultural Center, and the Twisp public schools have

³¹ Schmekel, interview with author, 2007.

requested a Native curriculum that would integrate Native history, experience, and knowledge into the currently largely Anglo-European curriculum. In conjunction with the 2008 Powwow, for the first time in the history of the valley, a group of Native and Settler youth camped together prior to the ceremonies, and participated together in the powwow.

Although it is perhaps difficult to establish a direct cause-and-effect relationship between the rituals and ceremonies and these continuing restorative justice initiatives, there appears to be a connection between the capacities and relationships facilitated through ceremony and people's abilities to envision and effect relationships of mutuality and social justice processes outside the ceremonies.

Social and relational healing

People internal and external to these processes have expressed concerns that the gains through these relational processes may not be sufficient to effect significant change in the face of the massive injustices and structural violence that Indigenous peoples in the United States and Australia continue to experience. Nevertheless, these ceremonial processes seem to effect a kind of emplaced social healing that is of deep significance to the people and communities involved.

Lederach explains that these local processes “emphasize a social unit that includes but goes beyond individual processes of healing, while at the same time it provides a context of more direct, accessible experience than is commonly experienced in national processes.”³² These ceremonies provide support for Lederach's assertion that social healing is always possible in human lives even when “the possibilities of a far more vigorous reconciliation may be partial and incomplete, remote or even impossible.”³³

There are many more examples of social healing that have taken place through these ceremonies, which this paper cannot fully explore. In the next part of this paper, I would like to expand on Lederach's notion of social healing which focuses primarily on living humans. It seems that the kinds of healing described by many of the Indigenous and Settler people involved in these ceremonies incorporate more inclusive notions of healing, including humans in relationship with ancestors, coming generations not yet born, and the natural world. At present, the terminology that seems to fit this concept is relational healing and I would like to offer some description of relational healing drawn from these ceremonies.

John GrosVenor, an Echota Cherokee who is one of the founding members of the reconciliation processes in the Methow Valley, describes the relationships between ceremonial participants and land, when he states, “When we dance, in theory, every

³² Lederach & Lederach, *When Blood and Bones Cry Out*, 2010, p. 10.

³³ Lederach & Lederach, *When Blood and Bones Cry Out*, 2010, p. 10.

time a foot hits the earth, it's a prayer, and the singing, eating and drinking are also part of that spiritual connection to the land."³⁴

The rituals in the Two Rivers Powwow link Native peoples to their ancestors, and to the coming generations, as explained by Stephen Iukes, a Colville elder: "The Ancestors of these ones from the valley are still here, the Spirits are still here. By singing these songs we sing that they might be awakened again, to know that they are not forgotten."³⁵

Georgia Iukes, of the Colville/Wenatche Nations, and one of the founding members of the reconciliation processes in the Twisp Valley, explains how the rituals of reconnecting with Place, and with animal and plant relations helped to heal the sorrow of separation from the extended networks of Native relationships :

This is where our Indians used to camp. This is the river that they got salmon from for drying for the winter months. Up in these mountains back here, that's where they gathered berries. And today I got a taste of our roots again and it just brought joy. This is what we need to do—is learn how to share.³⁶

Participants in these ceremonies also describe the ways in sites of violence themselves can be transformed. The places where these ceremonies are held might be described as "wounded space," as places that have "been torn and fractured by violence."³⁷ In responding to this aspect of colonial violence, a number of participants in these ceremonies describe a type of "healing of place" that has occurred through the ceremonies held on these sites. For example, John Brown, one of the settler Australian founders of the Myall Creek Memorial explains:

I remember Aboriginal elder Lyall Munro saying as clear as anything . . . "I have traveled down that *road (by the massacre site) hundreds of times but never before today (the day of the first memorial)* have I stopped here. This has been a bad place for Aboriginal people but you've helped us to reclaim it." So, the process was a reclaiming of this place, an honoring of the spirits of those who have died and a washing of the place, as it were. "This is an okay place for us to be because the truth has been told and it's reclaimed it in a way."

³⁴ John Grosvenor, cited in Marcy Stamper, 'Getting to the Heart of the Methow,' *Methow Valley News* (Aug. 17, 2006) 3.

³⁵ Stephen Iukes in *Two Rivers Powwow*, DVD (Chatsworth, California: Greenleaf Street Productions, 2005).

³⁶ Iukes, Georgia, 2003, cited by Sue Misaw in "Powwow is just the Start of Healing,' *Methow Valley News*, Aug. 20, 1.

³⁷ Rose, Deborah B. 1997, "Rupture and the Ethics of Care in Colonized Space," in *Prehistory to Politics John Mulvaney, the humanities and the public intellectual*, Tim Bonyhady & Tom Griffiths, eds. Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne University Press.

One of the odd things that happened, quite independently of this, relates to that reclaiming. You know that there were skeletal remains of Aboriginal people that were taken to universities and museums in the United Kingdom. One was brought back and it was a girl from the area. The Aboriginal Land Council was given responsibility for the burial and they came to us and said, “We would like to bury these remains at the Myall Creek Memorial. Would you allow us to?” For them, the significance of that decision was: “this land is now reclaimed and it’s safe for us to be here.” So they came and they held the ceremonies and buried the remains there on that land quite near the actual memorial rock. Those things illustrate exactly that point.³⁸

Relational healing as a process of restoring balance and harmony to an extended network of relationships between humans and the natural world is both ancient and contemporary. The terminology may be new, crafted to link with contemporary scholarship in conflict transformation, social healing and reconciliation. However, the concepts are deeply embedded in many Indigenous cosmologies. Consider the words of Native American scholars Gerald McMaster and Clifford E. Trafzer when they describe the connections Native rituals are designed to nurture:

Among many different Indian peoples . . . holy rituals keep the Earth alive and moving. The grass grows and rivers flow . . . We sing our songs, perform our dances, and pray. In many ways we remember the old traditions, and by telling our stories of being, we re-enter and renew our sacred circles. With each song, story or ceremony, the Native world is recreated, linking the present with the past. In so doing, we bring ourselves into the larger circle of Indian people, nurtured by sweet medicine that lives today. Native Americans stand in the center of a sacred circle, in the middle of four directions. At this time and for all time, Americans Indians are in the presence of, and part of, many vast, living, and diverse Native universes.³⁹

Conclusion

Rituals help people recognize the ties that connect them as they experience changes in roles, relationships and identities. Rituals are times outside of ordinary time; they focus us on our relationships as they connect past, present and future. Rituals provide containers for feelings, offering ways to acknowledge and share them even as losses,

³⁸ John Brown, Interview with the author, 2007.

³⁹ Gerald McMaster and Clifford E. Trafzer, eds., *Native Universe: Voices of Indian America* Washington DC: National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution, with National Geographic, 2004), 44.

celebrations or transitions are marked. Rituals connect people across difference, answering an instinctive need to come together when something momentous or profoundly changing happens...—Michelle LeBaron⁴⁰

It seems that the processes taking place in these ceremonies effect some measures of social and relational healing, dealing with “wounds created by conflict, collective trauma and large-scale oppression.”⁴¹ The healing evidenced in these ceremonial process is personal, social and relational, reconnecting people in respectful ways with each other, with land, with the cosmos, with ancestors and with generations to come.

The Two Rivers Powwow, the Myall Creek Memorial, the Ft. Vancouver Memorial, and the Ceremonies for the Stolen Generations facilitate transformation “at the personal and societal level, marking new identities and creating common ground.”⁴² They shift perceptions, re-humanizing people who have formerly been seen solely as “enemy” or “perpetrator.”

These rituals and ceremonies are not “platform reconciliation,”⁴³ which many Native Americans describe as processes in which individuals meet publicly, shake hands, and walk away, while doing little to facilitate relationships or significant change. Rather, these rituals and ceremonies are building relationships of mutuality and respect as the peoples involved acknowledge each other’s stories, grieve over the suffering involved, and work together to address the contemporary impact of those experiences.

Measures of restorative justice are implemented through these processes, and Indigenous ways of knowing and being, which have been marginalized and suppressed, are engaged with in respectful ways. These processes provide measures of healing to groups, individuals and places, while building capacities for more just relationships and societies.

⁴⁰ Michelle LeBaron, *Bridging Cultural Conflicts: A New Approach for a Changing World* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2003), 278.

⁴¹ (Thompson, cited in Lederach & Lederach, *When Blood and Bones Cry Out* 2010:7).

⁴² Schirch, *Ritual and Symbol in Peacebuilding*, 52.

⁴³ John Grosvenor, quoted in *Two Rivers Powwow*, 2005.

REPRESENTATION AND RESPONSE: CULTURE AND CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

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1.0 Introduction

Culture is back as a category of analysis and action in international affairs after a long absence. It is no exaggeration to say that culture is implicated in nearly every conflict, whether those are between states, between states and non-state actors, or among actors within states. Culture can also be an important aspect of efforts to transform destructive conflicts into more constructive social processes.¹ Yet, what culture is and how culture matters in conflict is itself contested. In this note, I seek to articulate a view of culture and to explore briefly how it relates both to the generation of conflicts and to the potential transformation of conflict. To do this I use the images of representation and response, as I suggest that these processes are at the core of understanding the cultural dynamics of conflict escalation and de-escalation.

I approach the discussion of culture from an anthropological perspective. In contrast to the background materials framing the discussions for this workshop, an anthropological perspective on culture suggests that works like Huntington's *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, Croissant's, Wagschall's, Schwank's and Trin's *Culture and Conflict in Global Perspective*, and Martin van Creveld's *The Culture of War*, are not especially helpful for advancing an understanding of how culture affects conflict. As well, this perspective treats some of the kinds of interventions highlighted in the background materials as cultural conflict resolution initiatives—sports, music and art—as contested sites. These potential vehicles for conflict transformation are always contingent and constructed and treating them as a class of problem-solutions can in fact be counter productive.

2.0 Representation

The anthropological perspective on culture which I adopt is a symbolic-cognitive one. This perspective treats culture as a symbolically based system which allows people to create meaning from the complex world of experience. As R.G. d'Andrade describes this view:

. . . culture as consisting of learned systems of meaning, communicated by means of natural language and other symbol systems, having representational, directive, and affective functions, and capable of creating cultural entities and

¹ Kriesberg, Louis 2006 *Constructive Conflicts: From Escalation to Resolution*, 3rd Edition.

particular senses of reality. Through these systems of meaning, groups of people adapt to their environment and structure interpersonal activities.²

One of the implications of this view of culture is that it is a dynamic set of processes, contingent upon the experiences of individuals as well as group. It implies a recognition of and respect for variation within cultural groups.

This approach recognizes that culture is enacted within a social framework which provides structural constraints on the way people act. These structural constraints can express relations of power, as can the control of the cultural lenses through which representations are created.³

This kind of view of culture thus contrasts sharply views of culture like those used by Huntington and Croissant, which characterize large social grouping as sharing homogenous, stable cultural properties. These views do not adequately recognize the temporal and spatial variations inherent in cultural settings. Treating the cultural context as a stable, homogeneous phenomenon commits the “fallacy of detachable cultural descriptions.”⁴ This fallacy entails three things that can lead to misguided cultural analysis. When culture is taken to be a stable ‘thing’, analysts and interveners base their work on systematically oversimplified understandings of complex situations. This oversimplification of complex cultural settings leads to an assumption of homogeneity for people in the society. This can lead to expectations about how people in a society will interpret and react to the complex and contested situations which are not open variation. Yet, we know that there is great variation in the ways that culture is understood and enacted among people within a society. The assumptions of stability and homogeneity together lead to thinking about people in terms of stereotypes; that is, presuming that the important aspects of a culture can be captured in a description that need not be revised, and that this description applies uniformly to all people in the society, makes it possible for analysts and interveners to treat a few aspects of cultural and social life to represent what is actually a very much more complex reality. Since it is to this simplified, closed model that analysts and interveners refer their experience, the model is reified. The more it is offered by professional analysts and interveners the more it becomes impervious to modification.⁵

In contrast, a view of culture as dynamic, symbolically based and meaning generative allows conflict analysts the opportunity to understand how contested experiences are used to create *representations* which can exacerbate conflict or serve to

² d’Andrade, RoyG. 1984. “Cultural Meaning Systems”

³ Bhatia, Michael V. 2005. “Fighting words: naming terrorists, bandits, rebels and other violent actors.”

⁴ Rubinstein, Robert A., 1992. “Culture and Negotiation”

⁵ See, Keles, Fethi 2007 “The Antinomies of Samuel Huntington: Some Anthropological Reflections,” LeVine, Robert A. & Donald T. Campbell, 1972. *Ethnocentrism: Theories of Conflict: Ethnic Attitudes, and Group Behavior*.

transform it into more constructive social processes. These representations take place in three areas of human experience; representational, directive and affective functions.

2.1 Ontological Representation

On the anthropological view of culture I use here, what elements of experience count as important aspects of a person's environment are constructed through the symbolic prism of a symbolically based cultural system. Thus, things like who counts as a friend or foe, partner or competitor, are culturally constructed. This means that actions do not have inherent meaning, but they are dynamically given meaning. Elsewhere, I have described how the actions of a community in Somalia seeking to distribute food aid according to their indigenous understandings of reciprocity were seen by peacekeepers as constituting them a mob.⁶ The community members' understanding of the observed behavior leads to a view that the activity is legitimate and pacific, the peacekeepers that it is illegal and violent. One view leads to the exacerbation of conflict, the other to its transformation, yet the peacekeepers and community members observe the same things, but make them into different realities.

2.2 Directive Representation

Social situations, perhaps especially troublesome situations, are culturally constructed, represented, as a particular kind of recognizable object of process. Once this happens, people, who might initially have been uncertain about how to react and respond are able to deal with those situations because the cultural system within which they operate suggests representations about what actions are appropriate in those kinds of situations. This is true both for members of a specific group, but also for professionals who seek to understand or intervene in those settings. The acceptable ways of acting, of problem solving, are culturally appropriate heuristic representations.⁷ When, for example, peacekeepers made sense of the actions of the Somali community by referring them to the peacekeepers' understanding of thievery, their response was drawn from the cultural heuristic of how to respond to such threats, they responded with force, escalating the situation.

2.3 Affective Representation

Cultural processes are not simply cognitive. They also help to shape the affective responses people have to complex situations, including conflict settings. How one feels about a social context, or indeed about other people with whom they deal, is often a reaction that takes place nearly instantaneously, and which occurs outside of our consciousness. Yet this affective response can play an important role in how one responds to conflict situations.⁸

6 Rubinstein, Robert A. 2008 *Peacekeeping Under Fire: Culture and Intervention*, pp. 35-36

7 Schön, Donald 1983 *The Reflective Practitioner*.

8 Apter, M. J., 1989, *Reversal Theory : Motivation, Emotion and Personality*.

3.0 Culture, Sport and the Expressive Arts

Anthropological analyses of sports, expressive arts and other performative activities focus on seeing these activities as representing deeper social and cultural aspects of a society. Verbal performances are structured to reflect basic cultural models in society, as are dance and other “cultural” events, including sport and various expressive arts.⁹ For this reason these “cultural” activities can become symbolic foci around which groups coalesce, and through which they enact and represent their shared identities. But, as I discuss below, the fact that these activities are cultural says very little about whether they will contribute to conflict escalation or to the transformation of destructive conflicts into more constructive relationships.

Neil Jarman’s discussion of parades and other visual displays in Northern Ireland demonstrates that these activities can contribute powerfully to the construction of common identity and purpose.¹⁰ Parades and displays are symbolic acts through which the people among whom Jarman studied (both Republican and loyalist) expressed their collective memories concerning the conflicts. Not infrequently, parades by one community had the effect of antagonizing the other, escalating conflict.

In contrast, many conflict resolution practitioners make use of sport and expressive arts as a technique for transforming destructive conflicts into more constructive relationships. Vanessa Noël Brown, for instance, describes the Search for Common Ground’s (SFCG) use of an arts-based intervention approach to address the Congo conflict.¹¹ SFCG to help transform fear of “the other” and a desire for revenge into more constructive social relations.

The most popular film in Egypt in the early-1990s was, arguably, a movie entitled *Terrorism and Kebab*. Starring one of the leading Egyptian actors, Adel Imam, the film is described by its distributor as “a farce denouncing the absurdity of bureaucracy in modern Egypt.”¹² The film skewers almost every affectation seen in Egyptian society, from the pretensions of high-level bureaucrats, to the self-absorbed civil servant, to misplaced expressions of piety, to the hapless state military. The film is instructive when thinking about culture because it shows how within a single society several different ontological, directive and affective representations can be used to give meaning to the events depicted in it. Close attention to the Iranian cinema in the 1970s revealed patterns that suggested shifts in the cultural models most widely used in the

9 See for example, Billings, D.K., 1987 “Expressive Style and Culture: Individualism and Group Orientation Contrasted,” and Koch, B.J., 1983 “Presentation as Proof: The Language of Arabic Rhetoric,” I put the term cultural in quotation marks here because, as I explain below these activities are no more cultural in nature than other human activities.

10 Jarman, N. 1997 *Material Conflicts*.

11 Brown, V.N., 2010. “Foundations for Repatriation and Peace in the DRC”

12 <http://www.arabfilm.com/item/139/>

country prior to the Islamic Revolution there.¹³ Similarly, Egyptian movies, like *Terrorism and Barbeque*, reveal increasing concerns with human dignity that propelled the popular movement which unseated the Mubarak government.

4.0 Response

The way that people respond to problematic situations is shaped by the way they deploy their cultural representations to give meaning to those events. Whether differences in beliefs and values contributed to conflict escalation or to constructive de-escalation depends upon recognizing which cultural frame is operative.

Since all human social behavior is culturally conditioned, and since the expression of cultural heuristics is contingent upon context (and indeed, culture can itself be used as part of the context, and expression of power),¹⁴ it is important to be clear that any conflict or response to conflict will be cultural in an important sense. This is why, for instance, Croissant's description of the increasing importance of culture as a motive for war is a *non sequitor*; the sense of culture it uses is a trivial one.

Despite their excellent intentions, for me, the difficulty with Croissant's analysis rests squarely on the way that culture is treated—they say it must be quantitatively measurable, which reproduces the fallacy of treating culture as a stable homogeneous thing—and in the loose way in which “cultural conflict” is used. On the one hand, they say that their study looks empirically at conflicts where “culture is the issue,” yet their definition of cultural conflicts says that:

Cultural conflicts are political conflicts in which culture serves as the conflict issue. In designating a conflict as “cultural,” the focus is thus not on the causes of the conflict or the motives of the actors but, rather, on the issues that the actors refer to over the course of their statements or actions and the meaning they assign to them. Accordingly, in a cultural conflict, cultural factors such as religion or “ethnic” differences are not necessarily the cause of the conflict.¹⁵

In other words many of the conflicts they count as cultural are actually other kinds of conflicts about which cultural claims have been made by those interested in using culture to intensify conflict. Thus, their study conflates the rhetorical presence of cultural claims with cultural causation, despite their good intentions to avoid doing so. My own belief is that this is a direct consequence of trying to capture culture through quantification.¹⁶

¹³ Bateson, Mary Catherine 1988 “Compromise and the Rhetoric of Good and Evil”

¹⁴ Avruch, Kevin 2011 *Context and Pretext: Essays on Culture, Identity, Power and Practice*.

¹⁵ Croissant, A., U. Wagschal, N. Schwank and C. Trinn 2010 *Culture and Conflict in Global Perspective: The Cultural Dimensions of Conflict from 1945-2007*.

¹⁶ Rubinstein, Robert A. 1989 “Culture, International Affairs, and Multilateral Peacekeeping: Confusing Process and Pattern”.

For this reason conflict interventions through sports or music or art are no more cultural than is any other response. In fact, thinking of these as uniquely cultural reproduces the kind fallacy of cultural descriptions that underlie Huntington's work.

I do not mean by this that interventions based on these modalities are never cultural, just that they do not in themselves constitute a cultural response except, perhaps, that they reveal something about the professional culture of conflict interveners.

4.1 How cultural models distract

Perhaps it bears repeating that all people participate in several systems of cultural meaning construction. This is equally true of people in conflict and of interveners. In a fascinating article about his experience in Albania, Elton Skendaj describes how the cultural heuristics of peace educators led him to misinterpret a conflict situation in which he sought to intervene.¹⁷ Skendaj describes intervening in a conflict at a boarding school and finding that his professional cultural presuppositions were quite misguided. Broadly, he found at the boarding school a conflict between two groups of students, those from the city and those from the rural area. While trying to institute what he calls cultural activities to bring the kids together –including, debating and sports—he found that the city kids refused to go along with these activities. Among the reasons they offered were that the rural kids smelled bad. Skendaj says that he took this to be a derogatory slur, the kind of negative stereotyping that is common in identity conflicts, and he tried various things to work around this. Having taken the difficult situation that he found and turned it into a problem, he was able to address it through the kinds of “cultural” activities that peace educators use to transform those conflict. None worked.

Skendaj then relates,

one day, we went for a visit to the school dormitory where the rural kids were staying, and I was startled by the stench. The dorm director explained the simple facts: because their families lived in mountainous villages, the rural pupils would typically go home every two weeks, but had clean clothes only for one week at most. The dorm director had petitioned the municipality for a washing machine, without success.¹⁸

4.2 What's Cultural about Cultural Responses to Conflict?

One of the very interesting and productive approaches to transforming conflict is using a variety of activities in which members of conflicting groups engage together in a common activity. These can be sporting activities like football or artistic activities like music or drama. Because, such activities are important social contexts in which conflicting parties might reframe their relations with one another these kinds of activities have been productive in transforming conflicts into more productive relationships. But, it is, I think, a mistake to treat them as uniquely cultural activities.

¹⁷ Skendaj, Elton 2009 “Peace Education as a Democratizing Process”

¹⁸ Ibid, p. 70.

Indeed, while such joint activities have proven hugely useful tools for intervening in some conflicts, as Cynthia Cohen's work shows,¹⁹ as the Albanian example suggests, they are not always successful. Moreover, the ways in which these activities *are* cultural, in the anthropological sense discussed in this note, suggests that their meaning is transacted and conditional. Constituting them as a class of problem solutions that is then thought about as technically applicable for the transformation of conflicts generally can misdirect our efforts and be counter productive to efforts to create constructive relations among conflicting parties.

Here an empirical example is useful. The 1970s and 1980s were a period of intense, state sponsored violence in Guatemala. Although the state called the conflict a civil war, most of the violence was directed against the indigenous highland Maya. Indeed, for many commentators on *la violencia* the violence looked like a genocidal effort. In the context of post-conflict Guatemala, some efforts at reconstruction and reconciliation focused on so called cultural interventions.²⁰

Among the Maya of highland Guatemala, cloth and weaving has always had a special cultural significance. Weaving appeared repeatedly as a metaphor that helped structure Maya life, and once *born* the cloth that weaving produced became part of the assemblage of characteristics that people used to construct their identities. Thus, it seemed like weaving might be a useful activity to incorporate into post-conflict work.

At first, this intervention seemed a felicitous one. Weaving among the Maya is done on a backstrap-loom, which has special cosmological aspects attached to it. Women, especially those who had been widowed in *la violencia*, came to the interventions, and the interventions became quite popular. However, because the interventions were organized from the perspective of an economic activity, there was:

... a shift in the relationship between the women and their cloth, although the technology of production has remained unchanged. In one sense, cloth has become a site of subtle control and dependency: women's livelihoods now depend on what is produced, and the content of that product is dictated by outside forces.²¹

Despite the focus on a cultural activity—both in the sense of culture as art, and as the system of meaning through which people symbolically construct, create and contest their social world—these interventions proved counter productive.

¹⁹ Cohen, 2009 "Recasting Reconciliation through Culture and the Arts: Strengthening Peacebuilding Capacity Through the Brandeis International Fellowship Program"

²⁰ On the importance of weaving and cloth among the highland Maya, and its use as a post conflict tool, see: Rowe, A. 1981 *A Century of Change in Guatemalan Textiles*, Rubinstein, R.A. 2001 *Fieldwork: The Correspondence of Robert Redfield and Sol Tax, 2nd edition*, Prechtel, M. and R. Carlsen 1988 "Weaving and Cosmos Amongst the Tzutujil Maya in Guatemala," and Green, L. 1999 *Fear as a Way of Life: Mayan Widows in Rural Guatemala*.

²¹ Green, L. 1999 *Fear as a Way of Life*, p. 132.

5.0 Conclusion

A cultural approach to conflict and conflict transformation can help us identify and understand the underlying dynamics of conflict settings. Examining how culture creates the contexts within which people represent and respond to conflicts, both as participants and as interveners, is critically important for helping in the transformation of those conflicts into constructive rather than destructive relations. In this sense, one must attend to the underlying symbolic systems from within which the “cultural interventions” will be constituted as cultural representations of the world, of how to deal with it, and with how to feel about it. Attention to culture in this sense does not ensure success in transforming conflicts, but by resisting the reification of our analytic heuristics it keeps us alert to potentials for innovative action.

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THE HISTORY OF THE CULTURE OF WAR AND THE FUTURE OF THE CULTURE OF PEACE

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Introduction

In their correspondence in 1931, Freud and Einstein came to the conclusion that war must be abolished because the new weapons make it likely that the world itself can be destroyed by war.

This was a new conclusion. In the past, war was considered to be a necessary evil. Some even went so far as to say that warfare was the "midwife of history" bringing into being new historical eras.

But the advent of weapons of mass destruction changed all of that. Hiroshima and Nagasaki are concrete reminders of what happens when nuclear weapons are used.

We should not forget that in 1983 Colonel Stanislav Petrov of the Soviet High Command refused to push the button that would have launched World War III, as he did not believe the radar information that American missiles would arrive in five minutes. Fortunately, he was correct and it was a computer error. But then, and other times, as well, we have come very close to destroying the planet.

I have tried to understand how we have come to this state of affairs and have written a history of the culture of war and a strategy for arriving at a culture of peace.

But before laying out my own point of view, I need to criticize the points of view that are held by most other people, including experts, concerning war and peace. Perhaps, it is arrogant for me to believe that I am correct and others are not correct, but I have come to my opinions through a rather unique set of experiences. I lived and worked in the old Soviet Union and watched a culture of war crash - from the inside. I worked at a high level in the United Nations system, being responsible for the UNESCO Culture of Peace Programme in the 1990's and the United Nations International Year for the Culture of Peace in the year 2000. And since then I have been responsible for the World Civil Society Reports on the Culture of Peace to the United Nations. Therefore, the following critiques and proposals are the result of a long and unique process of development.

What Do We Mean by "Culture"?

The term "culture" has many meanings, all of which are related to some extent to the origin of the word that meant to raise plants or animals, i.e. agriculture, etc.

In the documents under discussion at the present meeting, "culture" has been presented in the restricted meaning of the arts (music, theatre, literature, etc.).

In my own work, I use culture in the anthropological sense, which is the complete range of behaviors, traditions and beliefs of any group of people who trace a long history of living together. I start my own writing from the following quotation from one of my favorite books, *The Evolution of Culture*, by the anthropologist Leslie White:

We may think of the culture of mankind as a whole, or of any distinguishable portion thereof, as a stream flowing down through time. Tools, implements, utensils, customs, codes, beliefs, rituals, art forms, etc., comprise this temporal flow, or process. It is an interactive process: each culture trait, or constellation of traits, acts and reacts upon others, forming from time to time new combinations and permutations. Novel syntheses of cultural elements we call inventions . . .

. . . The interrelationship of these elements and classes of elements and their integration into a single, coherent whole comprise the functions, or processes, of the cultural system . . .

For certain purposes and within certain limits, the culture of a particular tribe, or group of tribes, or the culture of a region may be considered as a system. Thus one might think of the culture of the Seneca tribe, or of the Iroquoian tribes, or of the Great Plains, or of western Europe as constituting a system . . . But the cultures of tribes or regions are not self-contained, closed systems in actuality, at all. They are constantly exposed to cultural influences, flowing in both directions with other cultures.

To take seriously the anthropological approach, one must say that ultimately there is only one culture, and that is the **human culture** since no individual culture is completely isolated from all of the others. Similarly, when we talk about culture in the restricted sense of the arts (music, theatre, literature, etc.) it should be clear that this is only one aspect of human culture, and that all aspects of human culture are inter-related.

When I was responsible to define the culture of peace in the United Nations system, I proposed to use the broad anthropological definition, not the restricted definition of the arts. Hence, article 1 of the Declaration on a Culture of Peace adopted as A/53/243 by the United Nations General Assembly states the following:

A culture of peace is a set of values, attitudes, traditions and modes of behavior and ways of life....

It should become evident that the broad definition of culture of war and culture of peace requires a far more radical and profound analysis than the definition of culture as being limited to the arts.

The traditional point of view has been that war and peace are different phases of history. Peace is considered to be the period between wars. It is a temporary state of affairs. The idea behind the League of Nations and the United Nations was to prolong the periods of peace between wars by means of diplomacy and military intervention by the “great powers.”

In the past, we could afford such a concept of war and peace but, as Einstein and Freud argued, we can no longer afford this. Even if the periods of peace between wars are prolonged, there is still the danger that when war does come, we will destroy civilization, if not the planet.

We need to replace the culture of war with a culture of peace. This is a much more profound and radical approach than war and peace. By a culture of war, I mean ALL of the aspects of our culture that makes war possible, and by a culture of peace, I mean a new culture where none of the necessary cultural aspects for war are any longer present. This is the analysis that we got accepted by the United Nations in 1999, A/53/243, the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace.

Notice that culture in the above definition of culture of war and culture of peace, includes the full range described by White (*Tools, implements, utensils, customs, codes, beliefs, rituals, art forms*) and by the UN definition (*values, attitudes, traditions and modes of behavior and ways of life...*). It includes beliefs (“belief in power that is based on force”), attitudes (“having an enemy” versus “tolerance, etc.”), modes of behavior (“authoritarian governance” versus “democratic participation”), tools and implements (“armament” versus “disarmament”) and institutions (“education”).

The Culture of War: Where Does It Come From?

It has often been said that humans have an “instinct for war.” It has been easy for people to believe this because the culture of war has been universal throughout human history. Even where there were no wars, there was still a culture of war.

However, there is no instinct for war. This was the conclusion in 1986 of a high-level conference of scientists from around the world and all the relevant disciplines: anthropology, sociology, psychology, animal behavior, genetics, neurophysiology, etc. We addressed the simple question “Is war part of human nature?”

The key data were provided by two famous scientists, one an expert in animal behavior, the other an expert in genetics. The animal behavior expert explained that war is a human invention; there is no equivalent among animals. In this regard, he explained how the concept of “ant wars” is a completely invalid scientific concept, and he explained that the so-called “chimpanzee wars” are not wars at all, but the kind of territory patrol and attack that one sees in most land animals.

The genetics expert explained that there are (and there cannot be) special genes for war. The Seville Statement on Violence, written in 1986 and later adopted by the United Nations and major organizations of social scientists, concludes that war was an invention and “the same species that invented war is capable of inventing peace.”

If war does not come from our animal ancestry, where did it come from? The best answer has been provided by cross-cultural anthropologists who have shown that war was the best means in prehistory to survive in the case of natural disasters such as extreme

drought. The culture that could raid and steal the food from another culture would be the culture that survived. Long before the beginning of recorded history, the culture of war already had all of its modern features: weapons and soldiers, enemy images, authoritarian social structure, secrecy and control of information, male domination and education that teaches every new generation that war is an essential part of our history.

War was transformed with the beginning of recorded history as it was essential to the ancient empires such as those in Egypt, China, Mesopotamia and Central America, and later empires such as the Roman empire. War was the source of slaves and raw materials and, hence war was the means of the expansion and enrichment of the empire. This has been true ever since then and up until the present time.

In my book, the History of the Culture of War, I show how over the course of history, war has been progressively monopolized by the state. Non-state cultures, local enterprises, city-states, etc., that used to make war were “pacified” by the state, and the state allowed no one else to make war. Warfare became a “state monopoly.” To put it another way, war is the basic “right” of the state. The definition of the state, according to the great sociologist Max Weber, is “the organization that has a monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory.” And the definition of a failed state is a state that has lost its monopoly of violence, e.g. today in Somalia or Afghanistan.

States say they want peace but they are talking about peace as the absence of war, not about the culture of peace. In fact, the culture of war remains the basis for the power of the state.

It is fashionable among political scientists to say that some states are more peaceful than others. But, if we look at this closely, it turns out to be hypocrisy. As my African diplomat colleagues pointed out when I was running the culture of peace programme at UNESCO: “You may say that the Europeans have culture of peace and the Africans have a culture of war, but ask yourself three questions: 1) where do the weapons come from? 2) where do the violent television programmes come from? and 3) where are the terms of trade decided that make the rich countries richer and poor countries poorer?”

Can the State Be Reformed So That It Is No Longer a Culture of War?

On the basis of my long experience in the United Nations system, where I was responsible for the culture of peace, I have come to the conclusion that the state cannot be reformed. Each time we would develop an initiative in the UN system that would promote a culture of peace in an effective and profound way, the UN Member States would intervene to stop it.

As long as we have a system of states, they will continue to maintain their power through the culture of war. Even countries such as Costa Rica, that have officially abolished the army, remain comfortably within the general state culture of war in all other respects. Time and again we see that the state system falls back on the army when it needs to maintain control. This is true for all states, whether the rich states of the North

such as France and the United States where I know best, or for the smaller states of the South.

What Is the Alternative?

To attain a culture of peace, we must develop an alternative to the system of states in the world. This was beginning to be evident when we drafted the UN documents on the culture of peace in 1999. Anticipated that the leadership for a culture of peace should come from the civil society instead of from states and inter-state organizations, we wrote the following that was adopted in the final resolution:

Partnerships between and among the various actors as set out in the Declaration [including the civil society] should be encouraged and strengthened for a global movement for a culture of peace. A culture of peace could be promoted through sharing of information among actors on their initiatives in this regard.

During the ensuing Decade for a Culture of Peace (2001–2010), I worked with the Culture of Peace Foundation to present reports in 2005 and 2010 from the civil society. Data were provided to the United Nations from over 1,000 civil society organizations working for a culture of peace.

Although the civil society is important, it does not represent all of the people of the world. It holds no elections for democratic legitimacy. For that reason, I think it is best to work at the level of municipalities which are democratically elected. For many centuries, cities and towns have no longer had a culture of war. They have no enemy, no army, no city walls to be closed, no military-industrial contracts. So I work on the proposal to develop a global network of cities and towns that could take charge of the United Nations the next time that the state system collapses. If they ran the United Nations, they could work for a culture of peace.

You may ask me when the state system will collapse. Usually, it collapses several times each century, for example, in World Wars I and II and in the great depression of the 1930's. I witnessed the collapse of half of the world's states at the end of the Cold War, when I lived and worked in the Soviet Union. Now, I see in the United States the same tendencies that I saw then in the Soviet Union. In fact, I am convinced that the state system will collapse too soon, because we do not have enough time to prepare an alternative.

What Should We Do?

We should continue to reinforce the Global Movement for a Culture of Peace, as called for by the UN resolution. I have worked with an international youth team to prepare the report from the civil society to the United Nations at the end of the UN Decade for a Culture of Peace. As a follow-up to the World Report, we are establishing an Internet

News Service for the Culture of Peace that will continue to provide news on a timely basis of what people are doing to promote a culture of peace. I will welcome your participation in this.

Japanese culture can play a special role in the transition to a culture of peace, because only Japan has seen the consequences of nuclear weapons used against people. In fact, the nuclear weapon is the ultimate form of terrorism. It kills innocent people in order to achieve a political goal. So far, the approach to nuclear disarmament has failed because the peace movement has tried to change the attitudes of governments, to lobby governments to accept nuclear disarmament. This approach will continue to fail, in my opinion, because the state cannot be reformed. The culture of war is the basis of its power.

Here, it is proposed that there should be a different approach. Instead of trying to change governments and states, we should work together to support an alternative to the system of states, involving the civil society and municipalities.

If nothing else, this approach needs to be debated. Until now, it has not even been discussed.

References

I have seen the promised land, A utopian novella. <http://www.culture-of-peace.info/books/promisedland.html>.

The Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace, UN Resolution A/53/243 1999. I had the privilege of drafting this at UNESCO in 1998. Unfortunately, the UN Member States insisted on removing all references to the culture of war. For the adopted version, see http://www3.unesco.org/iycp/uk/uk_sum_refdoc.htm For the original version, see <http://www.culture-of-peace.info/annexes/resA-53-370/coverpage.html>

The History of the Culture of War. <http://www.culture-of-peace.info/books/history.html>.

World Peace Through the Town Hall. <http://www.culture-of-peace.info/books/worldpeace.html>.

World Report on the Culture of Peace <http://decade-culture-of-peace.org/>.

Joint Research Institute for International Peace & Culture, Aoyama Gakuin University,
and the Japan Foundation

In response to these questions, Aoyama Gakuin University's Joint Research Institute for International Peace and Culture (JRIPEC) has collaborated with the Japan Foundation to initiate research on conflict and culture, to which end we have conducted surveys on peace-building operations that include cultural elements. JRIPEC has researched the topic based on survey results and visits to post-conflict areas, most notably two: Timor-Leste and Bosnia and Herzegovina. In this our third year of research, we are collating our findings for publication. Please visit our website for the preliminary results.

At the New York roundtable, JRIPEC will report our research output and ask experts present for critical comment and advice for further research. Selected speakers will be asked to present their views on conflict and culture, mindful of the above-mentioned questions. The presentations then will be published together and made available on the JRIPEC website.

The roundtable, organized by the Japan Foundation and JRIPEC, will be held in the Foundation's Center for Global Partnership (CGP) conference room in New York. Participation is by invitation only and the conference working language is English.

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PROGRAM

09:00 Light refreshments

09:15 Opening remarks: Mr. Isao Tsujimoto, Director General, Japan
Foundation New York; Acting Director, Center for Global Partnership

09:30–10:30 Presentations and discussion

TOPIC: Conflict and Culture—Fostering Peace through Cultural
Initiatives

SPEAKER: Dr Akiko Fukushima, Senior Fellow, the Japan Foundation;
Research Fellow, JRIPEC, Aoyama Gakuin University

10:30–10:45 Coffee break

10:45–12:15 Presentations and discussion (45 minutes/person, including questions)

Moderator: Dr Akiko Fukushima

10:45–11:30

TOPIC: Dialogue among Cultures: Conflict Prevention and Reconciliation

SPEAKER: Ms. Rochelle Roca Hachem, Programme Officer for Culture,
UNESCO, N.Y.

11:30–12:15

TOPIC: Inviting Persephone to Dance: Arts-based Approaches to
Intercultural Conflict Resolution

SPEAKER: Prof. Michelle LeBaron, Law and Director of the Program on
Dispute Resolution, University of British Columbia

12:15–13:15 Lunch

13:15–14:00

TOPIC: Acting Together on the World Stage: Emerging Frameworks,
Lessons and Recommendations

Joint Research Institute for International Peace & Culture, Aoyama Gakuin University,
and the Japan Foundation

SPEAKER: Dr. Cynthia Cohen, Director, Program in Peacebuilding and the
Arts, International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life,
Brandeis University

14:00–14:45

TOPIC: Representation and Response: Culture and Values in Conflict
Transformation

SPEAKER: Professor Robert A. Rubinstein, Anthropology and International
Relations, the Maxwell School of Syracuse University

14:45–15:00 **Coffee Break**

15:00-15:45

TOPIC: Indigenous Ritual and Ceremony, Hybrid Memorial Ceremonies to
Address Colonial Violence, Trauma in the U.S. and Australia

SPEAKER: Dr. Polly Walker, Australian Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies,
University of Queensland

15:45–16:30

TOPIC: History of the Culture of War; Future of the Culture of Peace

SPEAKER: Dr David Adams, Former director, Unit for the International Year
for the Culture of Peace, UNESCO

16:30–17:30 Open Discussion

17:30 Closing Remarks

18:30 Working Dinner

Thank you for your participation.

SPEAKER PROFILES



DR. AKIKO FUKUSHIMA is a Senior Fellow at the Japan Foundation and Visiting Scholar at the Joint Research Institute for International Peace and Culture, Aoyama Gakuin University. Dr. Fukushima earned a Ph.D. from Osaka University and an M.A. from Johns Hopkins University. She has been Adjunct Professor at Keio University, Director of Policy Studies at the National Institute for Research Advancement, Visiting Professor at the University of British Columbia, and serves on committees such as the APEC Study Group of the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry. Her publications include *Japanese Foreign Policy: The Emerging Logic of Multilateralism* (MacMillan, 1999), *A Lexicon of Asia Pacific Security Dialogue* (Keizai Hyouronsha, 2003), *Rethinking Human Security: Responding to Emerging Global Threats* (Chikura Shobo, 2010), and *Culture, Conflict and Peace: Fostering Peace through Cultural Initiatives* (Joint Research Institute for International Peace and Culture, Aoyama Gakuin University 2010).



DR. MICHELLE LEBARON serves as Professor of Law and Director of the Program on Dispute Resolution at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada. Her work as a scholar and practitioner of conflict resolution spans intercultural, international, family and commercial contexts. Professor LeBaron is passionate about bridging cultural differences, and writes on ways that the arts can foster belonging in the midst of diversity. Her current research examines how neuroscientific findings on expressive arts can transform practice in peacemaking across cultures. Her books include *Bridging Troubled Waters*, *Bridging Cultural Conflicts*, and *Conflict Across Cultures: A Unique Experience of Bridging Differences* (with Venashri Pillay). She offers short courses internationally, and has recently given keynote speeches in Ireland, New Zealand, Switzerland, Austria and across North America. Previously, Prof. LeBaron taught conflict analysis and resolution and women's studies at George Mason University in Virginia.



DR. POLLY O. WALKER is the director of Partners in Peacebuilding and lectures at James Cook University and The University of Queensland. She is of Cherokee descent and an enrolled member of the Southwest Cherokee Township. Her research focuses on transforming conflict between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples. Formerly she was a research fellow in the Australian Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies and, prior to that, a lecturer in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit at the University of Queensland.

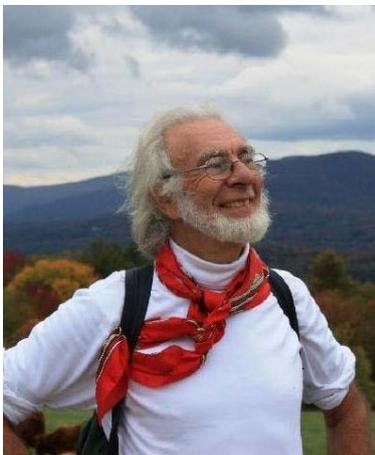


DR. ROBERT A. RUBINSTEIN is professor of anthropology and international relations at the Maxwell School of Syracuse University where, from 1994 to 2005, he directed the Program on the Analysis and Resolution of Conflicts. His Ph.D. in Anthropology is from the State University of New York at Binghamton, and his MSPH is from the School of Public Health at the University of Illinois at Chicago. He has published widely including 100 journal articles and book chapters, and has authored or edited nine books, most recently *Building Peace: Practical Reflections from the Field* and *Peacekeeping Under Fire: Culture and Intervention*. His work has been supported by numerous foundations, including the Ford Foundation, National Science Foundation, the John and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the United States Institute of Peace, and the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research. He was a founding member, and current co-chair, of the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences Commission on Peace and Human Rights. The American Anthropological Association awarded him the 2010 Robert B. Textor and Family Prize for Excellence in Anticipatory Anthropology. He has been a member of the Board of Directors of the Ploughshares Fund since 1999.



DR. CYNTHIA COHEN is director of the program in Peacebuilding and the Arts at Brandeis University's International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life. She is an internationally recognized educator, peace-building practitioner and researcher who focuses on the contributions of the arts to conflict transformation. Currently, Dr. Cohen is the principal investigator for the Acting Together project, a five year inquiry with theater artists and leaders of ritual working in conflict regions around the world, undertaken in collaboration with Theatre Without Borders. The project is producing a two-volume anthology, to be published by New Village Press in 2011, a

documentary, and a toolkit. She also serves as a co-convenor of the Arts and Peace Commission of the International Peace Research Association. Previously, she directed a fellowship program entitled "Recasting Reconciliation through Culture and the Arts," supporting visual artists, filmmakers, theater artists and musicians working in Burundi, South Africa, Cambodia, New Zealand and Sri Lanka to document and reflect on the ethical dimensions of their work.

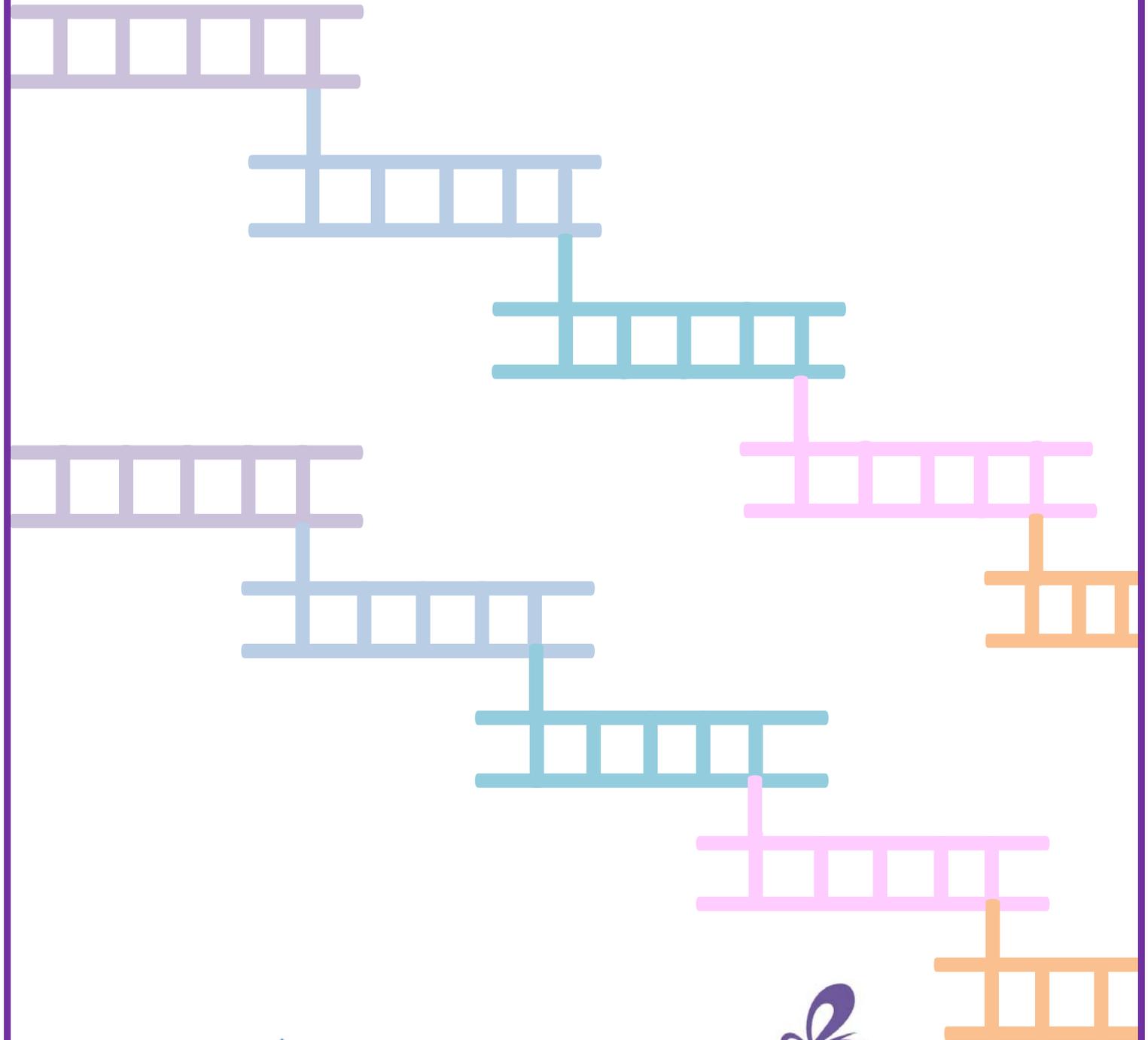


DR DAVID ADAMS, since his retirement from UNESCO in 2001, has continued to devote his energies to the Global Movement for a Culture of Peace, having established the websites Culture-of-peace.info, the Culture of Peace News Network; the Civil Society Report to the United Nations on the Culture of Peace; and the culture of peace game. At UNESCO, he designed the Culture of Peace Programme and helped develop national programs in El Salvador and Mozambique. He was the director of the United Nations International Year for the Culture of Peace, drafting UN documents, including the Declaration and Programme of Action on a

Culture of Peace, and supervising the Manifesto 2000 campaign with its 75 million signatures. Prior to that, he was an authority on the brain mechanisms of aggressive behavior, as well as peace psychology. He has recently published a trilogy of books: *World Peace through the Town Hall: A strategy for the global movement for a culture of peace*; *I have seen the promised land: A utopian novella*; and *The History of the Culture of War*. All are available to buy or read online at the culture-of-peace.info website.



Ms Roca Hachem is the Officer for Culture in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Office attached to the UN in New York. Her liaison position covers a wide scope of cultural issues including cultural diversity, tangible and intangible cultural heritage, multilingualism, indigenous peoples and intercultural dialogue. An American lawyer, Ms Roca Hachem was based at UNESCO's Paris Headquarters from 1994 to 2006. Prior to her arrival in New York, she worked in UNESCO's Division of Cultural Heritage, focusing on illicit trafficking in, and return and restitution of, cultural objects. In this connection, she published several handbooks for UNESCO, as well as independent articles. Before joining UNESCO, Ms Roca-Hachem practiced in a private law firm in Washington, D.C.



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